INTRODUCTION

OF THE ORIGINAL FRENCH EDITION

The letters of Father Chaminade have been but little known until now, and that only through extracts included in his biography and ***The Spirit of Our Foundation.*** *How many religious of the Society have been able to take consistent notice of them in the few copies of the incomplete collection which had been made of them, to say nothing of the original texts? The number of these religious is very small. As for myself, it was only in 1923 that I had the occasion to read them in their chronological order and in their entirety.*[1] *What a revelation this direct and personal contact with Father Chaminade was for me, since in the midst of his active life, so filled with work, he seemed to reveal himself, even without wanting to do so, and to show me more vividly and more truly his character, which I had thought I knew! Hence the deep-seated desire that quietly arose within me to see these letters, whose reading had seemed to me so interesting and profitable, made generally available to the religious of the Society of Mary and of the Daughters of Mary, as well as to the Ladies of the Miséricorde.*

The ever-increasing movement of Filial Piety, which leads souls toward Father Chaminade and has as its immediate purpose to obtain his glorification, could not but strengthen my desire. The funds gathered on the occasion of the "Chaminade Days" supplied the means for putting it into execution. It is with great joy, therefore, that I present this first volume of Father Chaminade's letters today by way of a first realization of this desire.

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The Collection of Father Chaminade's letters, like ***The Spirit of Our Foundation,*** *had been prepared by Father Klobb, the active and devoted secretary of Good Father Simler, under whose inspiration he had formed the plan and gathered the material. The former work retouched and completed constitutes the present publication.*

Here, briefly stated, are the principles and the method followed.

The letters are arranged in chronological order, with occasional exceptions for the purpose of grouping letters that treat of the same topic.

All the letters of Father Chaminade known at present are included, except a few that are no longer of interest. A few important passages excepted,[2] *they are fully reproduced with only the addition, modification or rearrangement of certain words to give greater clearness to the text. These minor changes, however, have been carefully indicated.*

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[1] Good Father Sorret was under the impression that he had at hand the complete collection of the letters of Father Chaminade. It is evident from the number of inserts in the present edition, as compared with the original French edition, that such was not the case.

[2] This does not apply to Letters 1-100 of the present English edition, in which nothing has been omitted, neither whole letters nor parts of them.

The origin and the nature of the manuscripts are indicated at the head of each of the letters. Some of them are really autographs, that is, written by Father Chaminade himself. A greater number were dictated and signed by him; their original text has been preserved. Of others, finally, only the rough draft or a transcript remains.

A certain number of letters, although signed by Father Chaminade, were not dictated by him, but were composed by Brother David Monier. These may be easily recognized by their style, which is less clear and more complicated. They are but an exception to this vast correspondence.

Supplementary notes, without pretending to retrace the entire life and activity of Father Chaminade, will at least help to understand better the sequence and drift of the letters. Either in the text itself or at the bottom of the pages, certain references that seemed interesting and useful have been inserted. These indicated in ***The Spirit of Our Foundation*** *and special detailed studies in the Apôtre de Marie. They include especially short notices, which are due in part to the patient research of Father Rebsomen and touch the most outstanding correspondents of Father Chaminade, and more particularly those of his first disciples who played a more important role in the Society or who left upon it a more profound impression.*

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The publication of the letters of Father Chaminade fulfills a wish often expressed by the religious of the Society. It will be a happy supplement to former studies about his person, his works and his teachings.

His biography retraced the circumstances of his life and the development of his works. ***The Spirit of Our Foundation*** *gave a synthesis of his doctrine. In his letters he shows himself as he was in life; he is seen, heard, followed from day to day in the midst of overwhelming occupations, attentive to things as a whole as well as to their details, and always filled with God, whose will and glory are his only concern, completely devoted to the august person of Mary, whose reign he desires to advance by combating at her side and under her command.*

In the light of the facts, as revealed in his letters, Father Chaminade's doctrine becomes clear, his personality appears in all the simplicity of reality and in all the splendor of truth. The reason is that these are definitely not the letters of one who wishes to speak of himself, who considers himself to be living and acting in the presence of an onlooker. He hasn't the time to pose like that for himself and his correspondent; he is beset by endless work, which makes demands upon him from all sides, often forces him to interrupt what he is doing and to postpone even the completion of a letter; he writes and he dictates in haste. Often, to gain time he unexpectedly breaks off his line of thought, interrupts his sentence, leaving it to his correspondent to complete the thought; he does not always reread what he has written and cares little about literary defects. Besides, his letters are always business letters in the broadest sense of the word. In them he provides for all sorts of practical details, guidance, organization, execution; he hasn't the slightest ideas of slipping in a useless word or any reflection concerning himself. Least of all does he think that what he writes and dictates may one day be published.

In these letters, then, he reveals himself without affection, just as he is. Without realizing it he permits the reader to contemplate at his ease, to study as in life and from every angle his admirable personality, so kind and sympathetic.

His humanity appears there with its rich qualities of goodness, righteousness, sincerity, set off by an exquisite politeness or the most delicate "honnêteté", to use the current expression of his day; his thoughtful, balanced and observant mind, enriched with an extensive culture and endowed with a wealth of practical sense and sound judgment, permitted him to enter securely into even the least details. We are struck by his calmness, that fruitful source of wisdom and prudence, which does not in any way exclude boldness in views and projects. No less striking are, first, his unalterable serenity in the midst of affairs and afflictions, shown by his peaceful self-possession; secondly, the strength of soul and courageous energy with which he undertakes, develops and sustains his works; finally, the prudence with which he foresees, consults and reflects before making up his mind and acting.

These altogether human qualities, with which he is so well endowed, blend harmoniously with the incomparably richer dispositions which transform and supernaturalize them. In Father Chaminade's it is the man of God, above all and always, who appears; he is also recognized by certain traits more forcibly emphasized in his letters.

First of all, there is his strong, profound and unshakable faith, the fruit of prayer, a faith which inspires all his actions, guides all his steps and leads him to seek only the will of God and the extension of his Kingdom. It shows itself in his complete confidence in and filial abandonment to Providence in difficulties, contradictions and failures; in that enduring patience, which he recommends to his Sons by word and example; in his benevolent, merciful and indulgent goodness toward all, particularly toward those who cause him pain; finally, in his unfailing respect for all authority, ecclesiastical as well as civil. The spirit of faith, the foundation of all religious life, is revealed in the letters of Father Chaminade by another dominant trait of his character, zeal for the salvation of souls. To what prodigious activity does not this bear witness! In it we see Father Chaminade, in spite of age, fatigue and infirmities, at one and the same time directing the most varied enterprises: sodalities of the Immaculate Conception, religious institutes, schools, seminaries, retreats for teachers and still other works. He is always besieged by work, as he himself admits; yet he is always ready to accept more when it seems to him according to the divine will. His zeal is so ardent that he was ready to go to the end of the world if God had called him there. And these multiple activities have but one end: the glory of God through the multiplication of Christians and the salvation of souls.

Finally, there is one trait which completes the picture of Father Chaminade's character and gives him a very distinctive appearance among the servants of God. It is his enlightened, profound, robust and total filial devotedness to the Immaculate Virgin Mary. In his own words, Father Chaminade breathes only to propagate devotion to Mary. Of course he never forgets that he is a minister of Jesus Christ. He is indeed his minister, as zealous as he is pious, but he loves and serves Jesus in the august person of the Virgin Mary, because he is convinced that the best way to bring back souls to Jesus is to win them for his most holy Mother. He is, therefore, an apostle, an outstanding apostle of Mary. Full of confidence in her whose missionary he is and from whom he does not separate her glorious spouse, Saint Joseph, full of zeal to make her

known and served, he tries hard, from the very start, to make of his disciples pious and devoted apostles of Mary, because he has determined to constitute them permanently and irrevocably by a special vow, that of stability, in the state of servants of Mary with the mission of propagating her knowledge and her cult.

Here, in broad outline, we have the characteristics of Father Chaminade's letters. We shall find them in this collection, not condensed, as in this Introduction, but in the form of scattered elements.

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The letters of Father Chaminade are generally, as we have said, business letters treating of practical, precise and highly varied questions concerning the actual life of persons and works, descending at times to the least details, yet going straight to their objective without any digression from their ultimate purpose.

Despite all this the personality of the author reveals itself in them through the outstanding qualities that distinguish it, and this manifestation is all the more charming as it is the more spontaneous, the more discreet and the less intended.

On the other hand, these letters give little information regarding the history of the eventful epoch in which his long life was passed; they just barely allude to certain great personages or to some events of considerable importance. Father Chaminade is all taken up with his mission of combating the great heresy of his time, religious indifference, and he leaves to their particular role his contemporaries, illustrious in politics, in literature and in the arts and sciences. His correspondence would, therefore, be of little interest to the general public.

But it will interest his sons and daughters in the spiritual order. The humble beginnings and the providential development of the works confided to their devotedness will not fail to impress them. The grandeur of the mission accomplished by Father Chaminade in such difficult times, with such limited means and imperfect instruments will appear to them amazing. In reading these letters, they will experience, above all, a twofold sentiment: pious admiration for their Founder and complete confidence in the work which he has bequeathed to them.

Nivelles, April 12, 1930

On the Feast of the Interior Life of the B.V.M., the Anniversary of the Decree of Praise of the Society of Mary.

Ernest-Joseph Sorret,
Superior General

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

to Volume 1 of the English Edition

This volume of the English edition includes the work done by Father Joseph Bruder, SM, on the first one hundred letters of Father Chaminade. Father Bruder revised and augmented the translation of Brother Thomas Poitras, SM, by adding letters that were not published in the original French edition and by restoring all passages that had been deleted from the original edition.

The first fascicle of Bruder's revision was published in 1963 and included Letters 1-50. By 1973, Father Bruder completed the manuscript for a second fascicle, which included Letters 51-100, but it was never published. The entirety of Father Bruder's revision is published in this volume, including corrections and improvements he made in the first fascicle.

ABBREVIATIONS

Apostle: The Apostle of Mary

L'Apôtre:	L'Apôtre de Marie
Arch.:	Archives
Arch. FMI:	Archives of the Daughters of Mary
Arch. FSC:	Archives of the Brothers of the Christian Schools
Agmar:	Archives of the Society of Mary
Aut.:	Autograph Letter
Orig.:	Original Letter
Spirit:	The Spirit of Our Foundation

I.
BEFORE THE REVOLUTION
(1761-1789)

Only three of Father Chaminade's letters have come down to us from this period. All are business letters. The first of these[1] is addressed to the Intendant of the Province of Guyenne. In it Father Chaminade describes to the royal administrator some real estate which had had examined at this Excellency's direction and recommends its purchase through a benefactor who had offered to procure some property for the seminary at his own expense. The purchase could not be made without a royal permit, since the seminary had been approved as such by Louis XV in 1761. The required permit was not received for the purchase of these properties, but for that of certain sites and buildings adjoining the seminary which it had previously had to lease.

Oa. To M. Boutin, Intendant of Guyenne, Bordeaux
(Aut. – Arch., Department[2] of the Gironde)

Mussidan, October 12, 1784

Your Excellency:

If we have delayed somewhat in carrying out Your Excellency's orders, it was to make sure of the preference of our benefactor and to safeguard the interests of the seminary. We have finally looked over the property of M. de Villecourt, and we hereby submit a report on its condition and boundaries.

It includes two farms. That of La Roche is situated half a league from Mussidan on the right bank of the Isle River, which it borders on the west. On the south and on the north[3] it stretches along the road which separates it from the property of M. de Gamencon and extends on the north as far as the parish church of St. Martin. This farm includes fifty acres[4] of cultivated land, twenty-three acres of vineyard, about forty of brush, and a meadow, which, including an island in the river, covers about twenty acres. A quarter of a league away is the other farm, called Fougerot, an annex of La Roche, which depends upon it for its wood supply, and which the seller does not wish to detach. Its area is about 300 acres, of which a small part has been put under cultivation, the rest being brush or tall woodland. Only the La Roche farm has a house for the proprietor. The value of the entire property runs to about sixty thousand livres.[1] Your Excellency, we did not find any other property in the outskirts of Mussidan which suited the seminary's benefactor. Furthermore, several little houses, whose acquisition we are requesting to complete the seminary, belong to this property. We have been hoping, Your Excellency, that you will

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[1] See *"Father Chaminade's Earliest Letter"* by Reverend Herbert G. Kramer, SM, in *Maryhurst Messenger*, March 1957, and an article by Reverend J. Verrier, SM, in *L'Apôstre*, 1957, 37:13-17.
[2] One of the originally eighty-three, now more than ninety, major divisions established at the beginning of the French Revolution (1789-1790) for the purpose of local government and as the basis for representation in the national legislature.
[3] The east is probably meant.
[4] The French acre, called also *arpent, journau or journal* (the term used in the original is *journeaux)* represented the area that could be plowed by a team of oxen in a day, *journée*. As might be expected, this standard varied with the locality. The Paris arpent, still in use in French-speaking areas of Canada, was almost the equivalent of our English acre, namely .84 of an acre. The *journal* of Bordeaux amounted to .788 of an acre. That of Mussidan was probably not much different.
[1] French pounds, *livres*, though the term *franc* was already in use at this time. The *livre* was worth 19.1 cents at the time of its official replacement in 1796 by the franc, then worth 19.3 cents.

consider our present circumstances and, through your powerful patronage, give this very useful establishment the means to support and develop itself.

I have the honor of being with the deepest respect Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

Wm. Joseph Chaminade, Business Manager[2]
of the Seminary[3]

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The following letter requests official permission for an extension of time to act upon a bequest, in order to be able to decide whether to accept or to refuse it. It was sent from Mussidan without date, as was customary in the case of such documents. The note, communication—Intendant, *in the upper left-hand corner was added and signed by Giniès, the subordinate official who received it.*

Ob. – TO THE INTENDANT OF GUYENNE,

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[2] The title used by Father Chaminade is *syndic*, which occurs also in English; New, York, Harvard and Cambridge Universities still have their sydics, *administrative officers*. However, even in French, the word is rare today, as appears from the fact the Father Simler in his *Life of Father Chaminade – Guillaume-Joseph Chaminade*, Paris (1901), p. 26 – says he held the title *de syndic c'est-à-dire d'éconme.* Brother Garvin – *William Joseph Chaminade*, Mt. St. John (1914), p. 17 – translates it simply by saying Father Chaminade "took charge of the stewardship." The term *steward* is less used today in this connection than it was fifty years ago; both Father Kleist and Father Spencer, in their versions of the Gospel of St. John (16:1), translate the Greek word *oikonomos* no longer by *steward*, as did the Rheims-Douay version, but by *manager*.

[3] It was really a minor seminary combined with a boarding school (*collège* in French, whether it be on the primary or secondary level) for non-seminarians.

BORDEAUX

(Orig.—Estate of Mlle Chastanet,
Saint Médard-les-Mussidan, Dordogne)
(Late June or Early July, 1787)

Communication to the Director of State Properties
to supply an answer
Bordeaux, July 13, 1787
In the absence of the Intendant
Giniès

My Lord:

The directors of the seminary of Mussidan very humbly beg Your Lordship, declaring:

that the Widow Carré, nee Catherine Constantin, bequeathed to the Seminary of Mussidan the sum of thirteen hundred livres[1] in her will November 8, 1784, probated January 21, 1786, in return for a foundation in perpetuity, which she established by the said will, of twenty Masses a year and a mission every eight years;

that M. de Cressonières, collector of amortization duties and estate taxes[2] of the said city of Mussidan, has obliged them to pay three hundred livres for the rights obtained therefrom;

that in view of the meagerness of the foundation, the remoteness of the date when they will begin to be obligated, and in view above all of the difficulty in which they find themselves to advance such a sum, they presume to entreat you, My Lord, to allow them the time to decide to refuse this foundation or to put themselves into a position to make such an advance.

They will not cease to offer their prayers to Heaven for the preservation of the precious days of your Lordship.

(Reverend) William Joseph Chaminade,
Business Manager of the Mussidan
Seminary

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The following is a formal petition for a benefice to support the seminary in Mussidan. It is without either date or signature and written by a calligrapher, as was the custom with such documents. Its date can be approximately determined by the reference to the convocation of the

[1] See Letter Oa., n. 5.
[2] Both of these were feudal fees abolished by the Revolution. The former had to be paid once only by institutions, originally to the estate; the latter, at intervals by commoners after obtaining a fief. Here it is extended even to a non-feudal estate.

States-General to present to the king the wishes and grievances of the people desirous of large-scale reforms. This took place in 1789.

Oc. TO HIS MAJESTY KING LOUIS XVI.
(Orig.—National Archives)
(1789)

(Generality[1] of Bordeaux; Election [2] of Périgueux; Seminary founded at Mussidan and Authorized by royal patent in 1761; Registered in the Bordeaux Parliament[3], 1762.)

During these precious moments when the beneficence and wisdom of the King allow all the French people to bring their wishes and grievances to the foot of the throne, the directors of the Mussidan seminary and boarding school[4] have the presumption to break their silence and explain to His Majesty: that the house which they have founded under his protection has hitherto been supported only by the combined sacrifices of their patrimonial assets; that to support their establishment, to pay the professors and teachers necessary, who number fourteen at present, they found themselves reduced to a fixed income of two hundred livres, and that after exhausting all their resources they had no hope other than the bounty of His Majesty; that a benefice of some abbey *in commendam* would give them the means to continue the assistance to the youth of the province which it has long been receiving there for its education. They will never cease to offer their prayers for the preservation of the precious days of His Majesty and the prosperity of the realm.

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[1] A treasury division of France before the Revolution.
[2] A treasury subdivision of the generality before the Revolution.
[3] In France, before the Revolution of 1789, parliament was not a legislative body as in England, but a court of justice. The parliament of Paris, established by Saint Louis IX (1214-1270), was the supreme court of the land. The feudal lords were officially its members, but in practice their functions came to be discharged by the trained jurists brought in as their assistants.
[4] See Letter Oa., n. 7.

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II.
DURING THE REVOLUTION
(1790-1795)

Apart from the letters of direction addressed to Mlle de Lamourous, only a few have survived from the revolutionary period. The oldest of these is a declaration for the revolutionary power behind the tottering throne of the asset of the seminary, for on November 18, 1789, in virtue of a decree which placed all the possessions of the clergy at the disposition of the nation, a royal act had prescribed that the titulars of benefices and superiors of houses or ecclesiastical establishments make a declaration of all the items attached to their benefice, house or establishment. Together with his superior *Father Chaminade made this declaration in the following document.*

Od. TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE DORDOGNE
(Orig. – National Archives)
(February 27, 1790)

We, the undersigned directors of the seminary of Mussidan, declare truthfully that we are living in a spacious house divided into several rented apartments requiring, however, extensive repairs at our own expense; its original endowment was too insignificant. Its furnishings, almost completely renewed, also represent our funds to a great extent, as we found no resources in the revenues with which it was provided. The letters patent which the King granted it in 1761 and since then, 1781 and 1785, the considerable increase of the buildings, the careful distribution of the classes with their respective prefects, the activity of the director in maintaining order and moral integrity have made it one of the most considerable establishments of the province. It is made up at present of about eighty persons, not counting the day-students who come to it for lessons.

The following are in detail the benefits we enjoy with their obligations:

1. an annuity of 5 livres to be paid by the heirs of Cosmas Limousi in consideration of five Masses to be said annually, settlement of January 11, 1750;
2. a small meadow, called the hermitage, which had been leased for 6 livres, debited to the acquittance of five Masses for the repose of a certain M. Gisse;
3. an annuity of 5 livres from John Olivier of the parish of Saint Front for six Masses for the repose of Mlle Feyrière;
4. an annuity of 10 livres of M. Lavergne, heir of M. Bruneau, for 20 Masses for the repose of barber Peter Dulac;
5. a small meadow, called Dupeyrié, rather poorly situated, of above 1 ½ acres[1], in consideration of 24 Masses for the repose of M. and Mme Charles; the foundation of M. Charles is inserted in his will of May 29, 1726;

[1] See Letter Oa., n.4.

6. an annuity of 5 livres as acquittance for 10 Masses for the repose of Jane Tissandler de la Jambertie;
7. an annuity of 5 livres from John and another John Richon of Sourzac;
8. an annuity of 15 livres from Coli or Dominé of the parish of Saint Front for six Masses which Reverend Neulet, superior of the seminary, left in his will of November 22, 1780, for the repose of his soul;
9. an annuity of 5 livres from George Bagoi, settlement of June 2, 1756;
10. a foundation of 150 livres paid by M. Subrégie for a Mass to be said every Saturday at Notre Dame du Roc and for parish-assistant service;
11. an annuity of 48 livres from the clergy;
12. an annuity of 50 livres from M. Rambeau Dupinier, transaction of May 17, 1771;
13. annuities from the Paris city hall, one of 65 livres payable by M. de Courmon, the other 75 livres by M. Despeignes, both together 140 livres less the acceptance duty, expenses of acquittance, postage;
14. an annuity of 60 livres from the foundation of Chastenet Sergeur of June 8, 1714, paid by Mme du Reclus, for a weekly Mass of Requiem for parish-assistant duty;
15. a foundation with a capital of 1300 livres by the Widow Carré, nee Constantin, for a Mission to be given by the seminary every eight years and the celebration of twenty Masses a year for the repose of her soul;
16. an annuity of 250 livres which Reverend Moze and Chaminade have pledged themselves to pay the seminary by a deed of October 6, 1782, for the personal effects of the founder sold in their name as donees of the heir of the founder, authorized hereto by patents of the King, duly registered in the parliament[2] of Bordeaux;
17. a donation of an annuity of 1500 livres, redeemable by a capital of 30,000 livres, made by M. de Martonne, squire and patron[3] of Vergetot and affiliate of the seminary; the act of the donation is dated, March 18, 1784. According to the royal patents granted n the month of October, 1781, we shall not be able to benefit by this annuity until after the death of the donor;
18. a house and meadowland which the late pastor of Bourgnac has just left to the seminary by his will of January 29, 1787, on condition that the seminary pay a certain Perette, his housekeeper aged 46, an annuity of one hundred fifty livres. The deeds of acquisition enter the cost of the house at 400 livres and of the meadow at 800 livres. The house appears to be worth more than 400 livres, doubtless due to an increase in the property and the repairs made;
19. a foundation of Reverend Vatine, pastor of Saint Médard, dated February 9, 1731, providing a cash-endowed annuity[1] of 35 livres with a capital of 700 livres for help as assistant of the parish of Saint George;

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[2] See Letter Oc., n. 3

[3] One who had the right of presentation to an ecclesiastical benefice and the obligation of protecting the rights of the Church within the parish.

[1] The term *cash-endowed annuity* is here used to render the French *rente constituée*, which in former days, when interest was still forbidden by Canon Law, was a method of assuring a fixed income periodically to an individual or to a group. Since this income could not be interested on an investment, it was not a loan but an outright gift, duly notarized, in return for which the donee agreed to pay a certain amount each year to the donor for life or in perpetuity, i.e., also to his heirs. The annuity for life was called a *rente viagère*. Another form of annuity in use was the *rent foncière*, which might be rendered property-endowed annuity.

20. lastly, a cash-endowed annuity of 5 livres to be paid by M. Planteau of Lavaur by contract of May, 1756. We owe eleven thousand livres of loaned funds or bills payable. The assets and liabilities almost balance.

This we, as superior and business manager of the said seminary, attest to depict the true present state of this house and to be free from any deliberate omission of whatever could contribute to make it known. In witness whereof we have signed.

Mussidan, the twenty-seventh of February, one thousand seven hundred ninety.

Moze, superior, approving the above written

William Joseph Chaminade, priest and business manager of the seminary of Mussidan approving the above written[2]

Synopsis

Annuities		Obligations
1. current	984 livres	1. 200 Masses, nearly half of them at N.D. du Roc or Saint George
2. eventual	1500 livres	2. 150 livres in annuities
3. to be paid off	150 livres	3. maintenance of a spacious subsidiary building
		4. parish-assistant service
		5. debts to pay off, eleven thousand livres
		6. taxes

This synopsis is in conformity with the above-declared. In witness whereof the same day and year as above:

William Joseph Chaminade, Priest and Business Manager of the Seminary.[1]

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1[2] – TO M. STEPHEN LACOSTE[3]
Businessman Bergerac
(Aut. – Agmar)

Mussidan, August 16, 1790

[2] "William Joseph Chaminade . . . above written" in Father Chaminade's own hand.
[1] "This synopsis . . . of the seminary" in Father Chaminade's own hand.
[2] The numbers without lower case letters refer to the enumeration of the Letters in the original French edition.
[3] See Letters 2a and 33a.

Sir:

Sometime during the present month, please pay to M. Dubreuil, bookseller Périgueux, or to his order, the sum of one hundred fifty livres for value received in merchandise from the said gentlemen, which amount I shall apply to your account for arrears in your payments to me according to information received from:

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

(Rev) William Joseph Chaminade,
Business manager of the Seminary of Mussidan.

(Cover address: M. Stephen Lacoste, businessman Bergerac)

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The following letter of Father Chaminade from this period offers real interest. It is dated Mussidan, February 2, 1791. The Revolution had already broken out, and the oath of loyalty to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy[4] was beginning to be required. Father Chaminade, then 30 years old and business manager of the Seminary of Mussidan, is writing a business letter to Father Pontard, pastor of Sarlat. This letter offers him the opportunity to make supreme attempt to save his fellow-countryman, who is already tottering n the brink of a precipice. It is for this reason that the conclusion is so discreet and touching. The addressee, however, remained unmoved by this apostolic appeal. On the 16th of February he took the oath of loyalty to the Constitution and on March 27th he became constitutional bishop of the Dordogne. He soon married and apostatized with a great flourish. Nevertheless, he preserved Father Chaminade's letter, calling him, even after his downfall, a "Saint".[5]

2 – TO FATHER PONTARD, PASTOR AT SARLAT
(Aut. – Agmar)

Mussidan, February 2, 1791

Reverend Father:

I have just received the full amount of the sums advanced to M. Foucauld. From the account given me by my messenger, of the means he used to collect it, I fear that he proved a nuisance to Mlle de Rastignac. If that is the case, I deeply regret it. I did not suspect that his zeal would be so energetic. I should be obliged to you, if you made my sentiments known to this respectable lady. I should, in fact, have done this myself, had I not feared that a letter from me

[4] This Constitution, decreed by the French National Assembly July 12, 1790, arrogated to itself control of the French clergy regardless of the Holy See, and provide for the recruitment of priests and bishops through elections.
[5] See the facsimile of part of the original letter in *L'Apôtre,* 1927-1928, 19:233.

would be lost, were I to address it to her at Fongolfier. She instructs me to send M. Foucauld back to his parents. This I cannot do immediately, because the child is still confined to bed. However, his health will soon permit him to make this little trip. I should be very much obliged to Mlle de Rastignac, if she would let me know by return mail, whether the sentence of banishment is irrevocable.[1] The current quarterly amount of the boy's board should be about due at this time. I am making this remark merely to prevent her from being surprised if she is asked for it later on.

I was very happy to learn that all the pastors of your district had to take the oath only with suitable restrictions. You may depend upon it, that in this district there is a firmness worthy of the first centuries of the Church. I am, Reverend Father, with profound respect,

Your humble and very obedient servant,

(Reverend) William Joseph Chaminade

(*Cover address:* Reverend Father Pontard, Pastor at Sarlat)

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The following is a brief note without address or signature possibly a mere entry. France is still a kingdom, as Louis XVI was not deposed nor the Republic proclaimed until September 21, 1792.

2a. (Aut. – Agmar)

February 15, 1791

I have given M. Moyner, royal notary at Bergerac, the sum of forty-eight livres to negotiate for me with M. Gravier Lacoste.[1]

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Relieved of their functions by a newly passed revolutionary law, the directors of the Collège of Saint Charles risked being evicted at any moment. Father Chaminade as business manager went to Périgueux to plead his cause and that of his colleagues with the directorate of the department. After consultation, no doubt, he presented the following petition which was referred the same day to the district directorate for its advice. Three days later the latter passed it on to the municipality of Mussidan requesting its remarks. In the archives of the Department of the Dordogne the petition is registered under date of June 21, 1791, as follows: "Statement of Reverend Moze and Chaminade, superior or professors of the Collège of Mussidan essaying to

[1] Father Chaminade is using figurative language here. The meaning is: whether the decision to withdraw the boy from school, perhaps because of the poor marks he had received, is beyond recall.
[1] See Letters 1 and 33a.

be sustained in the proprietorship and use of a house and annex, enlarged and rebuilt by them and constituting the said college today.

2b. TO THE ADMINISTRATORS OF THE DIRECTORATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE DORDOGNE

(Aut. – National Archives)

June 21, 1791

Gentlemen:

Reverends Moze and Chaminade humbly solicit you with the declaration that they are obliged to appeal to the justice and authority of the directorate against a projected spoliation which is as opposed to the beneficent views of the Assembly as contrary to the sacred rights of property.

In February, 1761, the bishop of Périgueux requested and obtained from the King letters patent to establish a seminary at Mussidan with permission to acquire for this establishment by way of donation a house of Reverend Dubarail, the adjacent property, amounting to some two acres,[2] and a sum of 6,000 livres in Paris city hall bonds converted into the principle of an annuity, so that the income might serve to support the house. This law was not acted upon until February 13, 1766, by the donation, which Reverend Dubarail made to the business manager of the clergy, of the house in question and of the other items noted in the letters patent—actually not the whole house, because by a rare circumstance it happens to belong to two landlords. It was not possible to negotiate with one of them and the part belonging to him was left alone for a more favorable moment.

The donor, Reverend Dubarail, died in 1771 after appointing as his heir Reverend Durieu Ducluzeau, who, on May 14, 1782, ratified by an express donation on the same day the seminary's possession of the reserved part and waived all claim to the vestments in the sacristy deriving from the estate.

This house and the properties attached to it doubtless have a certain value. A report of Reverend Moze reveals the state in which everything existed at the death of Reverend Dubarail, and we may make bold to propose that the over-all value was not in excess of 12,000 livres, and that, if in its present condition these items together with the various constructions that have been added have a real value of more than 100,000 livres, that is due to the fact that Reverend Moze, and after him the Reverends Chaminade, put into it their whole fortune, all their income and immense sums.

Reverend Moze was the first to add considerable buildings at the very time that Reverend Ducluzeau, the heir of Reverend Dubarail, was superior of the seminary. From 1772 to 1778 he used 24,610 livres of his own personal property and patrimony. The invoice will be submitted. A

[2] See Letter Oa., n. 4.

proof, moreover, of his sincerity is the fact that the late Reverend Ducluzeau gave him a statement in 1782 which agreed to his availing himself of the income of the seminary to reimburse himself for the sum total of his advances, a thing he never either did or was able to do.

After Reverend Moze the Reverend Chaminade brothers also used their inheritance, their fortune and their earnings, their sister's inheritance, her dowry rights, very considerable sums borrowed from their brother, altogether amounting to 35,400 livres and more, to add to the buildings of the seminary, to adapt it to its purpose and to improve its appearance for the benefit of religion, the nation and their fellow-citizens.

Undoubtedly both Reverend Moze and the Reverends Chaminade, in advancing such considerable sums, were very firmly determined to benefit the nation after themselves; but it would be necessary to blind oneself and to close one's eyes to the light in order not to see that they intended to enjoy their possession during their lifetime. It is nothing but an ultimate destination and this destination could not become a legal title for the nation except by their death. There can be nothing more evident.

Since that time the decrees which place the former Church property at the disposition of the nation were published. It is thought likely that the National Assembly really intended to nationalize that of the old foundations and to turn it over to the nation rather than to the old founders or to their heirs. But this ought, naturally, to apply only to the old foundations pure and simple, whose founders are dead, and in no way to the foundations not yet completed nor to those whose founders are not yet deceased; namely, to those originally made only in their interest before all others.

Now such is the nature of the one concerning Reverend Moze and the Reverends Chaminade. There is no doubt that they intended to enlarge for the state the original foundation of the seminary of Mussidan by using their fortunes and those of their next of kin to do so. But this enlargement has not been completed. They have built only to provide lodging for themselves first. They spent their whole fortune only to live there first. *Nemo enim praesumitur liberalis in necessitatibus.*[1] Without an express gift, which does not exist, it is not allowable to believe that they had intended to donate only to die of hunger, not before their death, the inevitable end, where all duties of humanity cease.

Therefore, in nearly similar cases we see the National Assembly, always wise, prudent and just in its enactments and decisions, deciding without hesitation, that such beneficiaries as happened to have built or rebuilt cannot be expropriated, except to the extent that they have been previously reimbursed and indemnified by the nation, lacking which they are authorized to enjoy their possession until their death, in order that the sacrifices which they desired to make for the public welfare may not turn to their detriment.

Nevertheless, the district directorate intends to expropriate the suppliants. They, therefore, make bold to beg for justice from the directorate and to conclude that it will be pleased to direct that the suppliants shall be supported and protected in the enjoyment of the properties and buildings in question constructed by them, until the effective reimbursement of the funds

[1] No one is presumed to be liberal in a state of necessity.

advanced, the liquidation of which will be conducted according to the usual forms. In any event, should the said Moze and Chaminades have to leave, they request that at the time of their departure from said house each of them be provisionally granted an advance of 1,500 livres payable by the tax-collector of the Mussidan District, all attachments to the contrary notwithstanding; and that in said case, the directorate have the National Assembly consulted regarding this particular situation, or in any event, permit the supplicants, while maintaining the opposition which they declare to be raising to the spoliation of their estate, to summon the Honorable Procurator General before the courts in order to have him enjoined to pay to the supplicants their said financial advances, even a provisional sum, save contrary exceptions, and you will do justice. . . .

Pèrigueux, June 21, 1791

(Reverend) William Joseph Chaminade

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The following declaration brings that of February 1790, up-to-date.

2 c. – TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE DORDOGNE
(Aut. – National Archives)

July 4, 1791

In February 1790, the directors of the seminary declared a total of eleven thousand livres in debts as well as in trust funds. They declared besides, that there were other liabilities, but that they were nearly counterbalanced by the assets.

Today, July 4th, the state of the account presents a considerably different aspect, but one which the nature of the succeeding events has called for. The debts amount to 5,271-8-2 livres[1]; the assets may total some 2,000 livres. A sum of about 3,271-8-2 livres, is, therefore, required to balance this account.

The main causes of this deficit are:

1. The illness of M. Castai, which has occasioned very considerable expenses.

[1] The French pound (*livre*), which was replaced by the decimal monetary unit in 1795, was divided into 20 sous: each sou was in turn subdivided, like the British shilling until 1970, into 12 deniers. The French term, *denier,* is from Latin *denarius*, whence the British symbol for penny, *d*, was derived. Though the decimal monetary system is the only official once since 1795, the old system continued in popular use (cf. Letter 42) for some time thereafter. Even today yet the term, *livre*, is used instead of *franc* in certain French expressions, especially such as refer to annuities.

2. A payment of 35 or 36 pistoles[2] instead of the 8 livres and some sous which were formerly levied on the seminary.
3. The increase in the price of food which reached a record high last year. Even if the boarding fees had equaled the total cost of provisions for the house, they would not have sufficed for the support of the 18 to 20 persons employed by it.
4. We were obliged to advance the vacation one month. As a result it was necessary to support the whole staff for more than three months without receiving any fees.
5. The boarders returned very slowly, and this year their number has hardly reached the number of persons needed to run the seminary.
6. The total privation of charitable help.

The three thousand two hundred and some livres would not have been enough to obviate so many disadvantages, if they had not subjected themselves to a very austere diet and if they had not some time ago made a loan in their own names. They have not failed to explain to the administration the impossibility of supporting this establishment any longer in the painful pass to which events have brought it. First, they explained it to the general assembly of the administration of the department, and in March they did the same to the directorate of the department.

Capital of annuity due the widow Laulanie, nee Chaminade	5,000	5,000
Due the Ladies of Saint Ursula of Périgueux	1,000	1,000
Due M. Montjon	2,000	2,000
Due M.F. Chaminade, business man of Périgueux	2,762	2,672
Due Mlle Janneton of Cinq Sols	364	364
		11,036

The following is an explanatory note:

The amounts[1] entered as at our disposal in our declaration of February, 1790, total 984 only, including the income which the seminary was considered to be drawing or capable of drawing from Bourgnac. This income was estimated at the time, by the business manager, to be 80 livres, and since then he let it out for ten livres more. The following are the partial amounts which added up to the total of 984 livres:

	Presumed Assets		Real Liabilities
1.	5 livres	5	masses
2.	6	5	
3.	5	6	
4.	10	20	
5.	50	24	
6.	5	10	
7.	5	6	
8.	15	52	

[2] Originally a French coin equivalent to 10 livres, later to 10-12 livres. Finally, a mere term, meaning 10 livres to 10 francs, used in monetary calculations.
[1] Autograph of Father Chaminade.

9.	5	52		
10.	150	20		
11.	48	200	At ½ livre	100 livre
12.	50		Perrette Annuity	150
13.	134		La Fayancerie rent	250
14.	60		Rent payable to seminary	300
15.	65 mission		Rev. Vatine annuity never yet	
16.	250 La Fay. house		received by the seminary.	35
18.[2]	80 Bourg.		Mission annuity null	65
19.	35 never rec'd		The Paris annuity is destined for	134
annuity			house maintenance. In this respect it is null and even inadequate, since the founding patents demanded a 300 livre annuity for this purpose.	
20.	5			1034

Might not the parish-assistant service at Saint George's be entered in our favor as a liability? The meadow called "Dupeyrié", entered as No. 5, is posted rather for what it could yield than for what it actually yields or has yielded up to the present. Ought not the fact that we could be considered under obligation to send a priest every Saturday to Notre Dame be regarded as a liability? Can such as number of small annuities of five livres or six livres scattered throughout different parishes and dependent upon poor individual be considered an advantageous income? Despite all these consideration the present liabilities, according to the above-made statement, amount to 1034 livres.

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Following upon his appearance before the municipality Father Chaminade supplied ampler details concerning the financial situation of the seminary and added new remarks to the balance sheet to explain the increase of the deficit since 1790. The debts and credits are entered facing each other on the inside pages of a folio.

2d. -- TO THE MUNICIPALITY OF MUSSIDAN
(Aut.—National Archives)

Between July 4 and 10, 1791

Debts and Credit of the Seminary of Mussidan

DEBTS

[2] No. 17 is omitted because it will not be realized until after the death of the donor. See Letter Od.

The 5,000 livres capital of cash-endowed annuity[1] due to Widow Laulanie, nee Chaminade, is entered among the sums claimed by the petition of Reverends Moze and Chaminade to the directorate of the department as also the sum of 2672-7-7 livres due to M. F. Chaminade, businessman at Périgueux. The seminary is also obligated for an annuity of 50 livres from a capital of l,000 livres in favor of the Ladies of Saint Ursula of Périgueux. It owes arrears for two years since September 21, 1790.

OTHER CREDITORS OF THE SEMINARY

Arrears of annuities due to Widow Laulanie, nee Chaminade, not including the current year,

Due to M. Durand, businessman at Libourne,	395-13-2 livres
to M. Aubanel, printer-bookseller at Périgueux,	810-15-6
to M. Bubreuil, bookseller at Périgueux,	104-9
to M. Mainard Sr. businessman at Mussidan,	338-1-9
to M. Gintrac, bookseller in Bordeaux,	390-11
to M. Montjon	2000
to Mlle Janneton of Cinq Sols,	384
to Margardeaux of Beaupouyet,	87
to M. Mazieras of Issac,	250
to M. Eybrard, local miller,	1184
to M. Dubourg of Lévignac for balance of board,	28-9-6
to M. Cherchouly near Thiveirs for the same,	40-9
to M. Lavessière for the same,	52
to M. Chastaner, butcher	802-5-6
to M. Mayma, shoemaker,	80
to M. Bessines, local businessman	237-14-3
to M. Louis Lévis, storekeeper of Bergerac,	57-3
	7655-8-2(sic) livres

Due to Souffron, hatter, some small articles.

Notice that the account which M. Durand of Libourne had made out for me is for 832-3-6 livres, although it should be for only 810-15-6 livres, because 167-16-6 livres instead of 145-16-6 livres.

CREDIT

Due from M. Renier of Abzac for balance of board or of advances,	136-8 livres
from M. Aubertie, justice of the peace of the Lesches District,	186-18
from the same for damage costs,	17-13-3

[1] See Letter Od, n.4.

from Mme Constanin for one month of music for son 3-10 (overlooked)
from M. Beau for a classical program a book 4-12
from M. Riguadie for the same 4-12
from M. Romagère for classics 12-14
from M. Domine of Saint Front annuity arrears or expenses, about 60
from M. Subrégie for annuity arrears, account to be made out
from Mme Dureches for the same, at least six years 360
from M. Gaidon for the annuity of Widow Carré, about two years 130
from the Paris city hall, about 1 ½ years 214-10
from M. Cosmas Limousi several years of a five livre annuity
from Jean Olivier the same
from Jane Tisserand de la Jambertie, at least ten years 50
from Bagoi the same
from the clergy about 3 ½ quarterlies 84
from M. Dupinier (account to be made out)
Dupuy, *called* the Sourzac dog's paw, ought to pay 25 livres annuity a year. It has not been entered in the declaration because the seminary has never called him to account due to his great poverty. He has arrears over 187-10
The deed of this annuity was notarized by M. Pontard.
from M. Sansané by a promissory note 72
from M. Maumi by a promissory note (poor) 76-4-6

LIST OF THE NEW PAPERS SENT TO THE MUNICIPALITY

Sundry Records, 8 items, No. 1

Account-book for Chastaner, butcher, No. 2
Accounts for M. Bessenes, No. 3
Aubanel, bookseller at Avignon, No. 4
Settlement with M. Mayma, shoemaker, No. 5
Chaminade, business at Périgueux, 4 packs: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, No. 6
Durand, businessman at Libourne, No. 7
Dubreuil, bookseller at Périgueux, No. 8
Sintrac, bookseller in Bordeaux, No. 9
Louis Lévis, No. 10
Renier of Abzac, No. 11
Sundry receipts, No. 12
Nine items regarding the annuity of Widow Carré and one affidavit concerning the arrears in the annuity from the clergy, No. 13
Papers if M. Aubertie, No. 14
Account-book of M. Mainard, No. 15
Six items: viz. two letters from Bp. Macheco regarding the hospital, waiving of right of way by Simon Parroutaud in favor of M. Peter Dulac, receipt of auditing, receipt of payment to Perette, promissory note of M. Sansané, No. 16
Little account-book of advances to boarders, No. 17
Book of boarding fees, No. 18
Register, No. 19

LIST OF SUMS SPENT ON THE SEMINARY OF MUSSIDAN
BY REVERENDS MOZE AND CHAMINADE

By Reverend Moze

1. Sale to M. Magardeau, July 1, 1776, of a farm and meadow	8600 livres
2. Interest paid by M. Margardeau, 6 years and 8 months	936
3. Sale to M. Boneau, December 20, 1776	550
4. Sale of property to M. Pomerie, March 19, 1773	770-16-8
5. Ditto to the same, May 8, 1775	120
6. Sale of property to M. Branchu, October 14, 1776	525
7. Ditto to his sister	100
8. Ditto to Mlle Lespine,	400
9. Funds for services at the hospital from 177 (sic) to September, 1777	1750
10. Stipends for Masses during 12 years	1800
11. Interest on property sold during 14 years	8400
12. Effects sold with his brother:	658-3-4
	24610 livres

By Reverends Chaminade

1. Sums received from M. Montjon in 1778, 79, 80, 81,	2400 livres
2. from 1781 to 1779 inclusive, 1200 livres each year,	12000
3. Sums received from Reverend le Boeuf,	1600
4. from inheritance	1200
5. from professional fees	3600
6. from Masses	2000
7. from loans from their brothers, more than	2600
8. from loans from their sister's inheritance,	5000
9. from interest on their estate,	5000
	35400 livres

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2e. TO THE DIRECTORATE OF THE DISTRICT OF MUSSIDAN
(Aut.—National Archives)

July 27, 1791

Reply of Reverends Moze and Chaminade to the Observations of the Municipality of

Mussidan

Since the municipality has not, so to say, arranged its observations in any order, Reverends Moze and Chaminade have decided, in order not to compound the confusion, to number each paragraph of the document of the municipality and to insert their reply to each article there. Under the same number by this means the two directorates, one of which has to give its advice, the other to render a decision in this case, will be enabled the better to evaluate the reasons and means used by the two parties.

No. 1. It is quite true that Reverends Moze sold property of his not exceeding 11,723 livres in value, but it must not be concluded from this that he brought to the seminary only, 11,723 livres from his patrimonial estate. The credits from his father's estate, the arrears of interest were his patrimony as much as his property, and when he turned over to the seminary the 936 livres of interest owed him by M. Magardeau, it was just as if he had done that with an equal amount obtained from the sale of an additional meadow or any other piece of land, because for him who made the sacrifice, the 936 livres derived from arrears was worth as much as 936 livres obtained from the sale of the land.

Besides, it is easy to understand that Reverend Moze, working ceaselessly for the seminary, working from morning to night for this establishment and in the public interest or that of the nation and devoting to it the best part of his life, ought to receive from it at least his board as the reward for his work, according to the teaching of Saint Paul, perhaps ever more broadly expressed in the Gospel: *dignus est omnis operarius mercede sua.* He had worked elsewhere, either as a parish assistant or in any other way, he would at least have earned his living and his support and would have laid aside his whole income. Instead of keeping it, or using it for his own benefit, he sank in into the seminary. And yet it was his property, his estate, his fortune, as well as the capital assets. Why, then, when the time has come to settle accounts with the establishment which he shaped, or with its proprietors, should he not reclaim the revenues lawfully belonging to him, revenues with which he supplied them each year? They benefited by them, they have not been lost. Is it just for the nation or any other to be enriched at his expense? *Nemo debet locupletari ex jactura aliena.*

Carefully combine these principles which are all true in moral as well as in political philosophy, in the law of nations as well as in positive law and it will be evident that Reverend Moze far from having inflated his statement has not even entered upon it all that he could have.

No. 2. The account of the Reverends Chaminade is more considerable and no less just.

It[1] is useless to criticize it because of the part which they entered as received from their father.

During the lifetime of their father, it is said, the children have not the least right to claim an inheritance. There is nothing more true, but apart from the fact that a son may receive his share of the inheritance by way of an advance, there are cases where he is justified in requesting it.

[1] What follows is written in an unknown hand.

One of the Chaminade brothers was married in 1777. Their father and mother appointed him to pay his brothers their share of the inheritance, while each of them kept two thousand livres and their interest. They subsequently gave up everything. Thereupon, doubtless, their brother being in full possession of everything was able to be compelled to give them some of the food at least.

Is it very strange under these circumstances that all together received directly a modest sum of 1200 livres as their share of the inheritance? The moderateness of the amount proves the sincerity of the assertion.

Besides, they borrowed from their brother for the seminary and although the merchandise borrowed had been destined for the seminary, and although their brother acquired thereby a direct share in its assets, they are too respectable not to charge this loan to their own estate, should their brother suffer the least contradiction on the part of the administrators of the nation.

He is already so threatened, inasmuch as the municipality is taking the liberty to say that the obligations of the administrators of the seminary toward these individuals date with certainty only from April, the time of the presentation of the contract and its registration.

But in this the municipality is mistaken and is reckoning without its host. The books of dealer F. Chaminade are in order. They note the debt and are valid evidence before the law. If the municipality or the other administrators ever try positively and seriously to question such a claim, M. Chaminade's books will be promptly produced and the doubts will be dissipated, unless new laws are to be devised with a retroactive effect for the nation to judge cases in which it is to some extent interested differently than it does those of the generality of French citizens.

The Reverends Chaminade have dealt with their sister's inheritance in the same way, sinking it into the establishment of the seminary. Their sister has an IOU which at least would have been sacred in the days of the despotism which undoubtedly it is not desirable to have her regret.

There is no date on this item earlier than April any more than on the preceding once, the municipality goes on to say. However, it is equally and still worse mistaken, for: 1. the mortgage which Mlle Chaminade[1] presents is signed by one of her brothers who died before the time when it was possible to believe that the creditors of the seminary of Mussidan would one day have to defend the lawfulness of their titles against the administrators of the nation or any one other than their signatories; 2. the payments of the interest on the capital made to Mlle Chaminade since the date of her title justify her claim. They are established by titles beyond suspicion, since for the most part they were drawn up by the debtors of the seminary in virtue of mandates and delegations which the distance separating them obliged the administrators of the seminary to send to Mlle Chaminade so that she might receive her annuity at Périgueux.

[1] According to the custom in France at the time widows resumed their maiden name and title *demoiselle* (Mlle).

No.3. Without doubt each member of the staff upon entering the seminary promised to work as much as possible for both the temporal and the spiritual good of the seminary, to use the expressions, however unsuitable, of the municipality. Upon having himself named to the staff, each one dedicated himself to this holy task and it was no longer permissible for him to be negligent with regard to the temporal goods of the house any more than with regard to the Christian education of the boarders whose childhood had been confided to him. But this obligation did not make it incumbent upon anyone of them to bring his fortune to the seminary or to pour his income into it any more than his capital in order to make it temporarily productive. The meaning and the force of such an obligation are merely that each staff member is to direct his efforts toward the faithful administration of the belongings of the house and not at all to increase them with his whole fortune.

It is therefore not proper to conclude that what each of them has brought with him is to be presumed to have been given to or acquired by the seminary, and still less that it has been so irrevocably given that the pretended donor may not recover and reclaim it on leaving , whatever the event which obliges him to leave the establishment to which he had devoted himself.

The municipality does not render properly what is included in this regard in the record of Reverend Moze's admission to the staff. Above all it distorts the meaning. At the time of his admission Reverend Moze had already brought a part of his fortune to the house. The record contains a mention of it. It is a certificate of acknowledgement which the superiors who admitted him believed they ought to give him, nothing more. Such a certificate could neither destroy his right nor diminish it, neither could this right be diminished by the imperious circumstances in which he has found himself since, as have also his colleagues.

It is ridiculous to hear the municipality say in this regard that their refusal to submit to the law *which despoils them* does not authorize them to go back on their gifts in order in turn to despoil the nation.

We should like to have the municipality take the trouble to explain what it understands by law of spoliation. Nothing of the kind has ever been known and, if under some evil influence the national assembly has passed any such, it would need nothing ore to make its doings detested and to draw down upon itself the contempt of the sensible people of all nations. A law should be just and it is evident that a law of spoliation would be unjust and by no means a wise and just law.

This is, in fact, what the defamers of the national assembly said, namely, that its regulations concerning the clergy and their possessions were spoliatory regulations, but it is scarcely to be expected to see a municipality acting as their echo.

The national assembly has neither despoiled nor wished to despoil anyone, no spoliatory decree is known among its decrees. The one which serves as a basis and foundation of all the others concerning ecclesiastical possessions declares merely that this sort of possessions is at the disposition of the nation. It merely states that the possessions which belong to the clergy and the Church of France at the moment of its issuance are at the disposition of the nation and since then no other has been either made or issued to authorize the nation to seize the possession of

individuals, to despoil them of their properties, to use again expressions of the municipality, under the vain pretext of their being merged with those that have been declared at the disposition of the nation.

On the contrary[1] a host of decrees have been made regarding the former, which all oblige the nation to pay the cost of the Church properties and which testify powerfully that the assembly did not intend to despoil anyone.

At that rate, one word will settle the difficulty regarding the possessions which the petitioners claim: did or did they not belong to the Church when the first decree was made? The whole question reduces itself to this one fact. If they had been irrevocably acquired by the Church they are at the disposition of the nation, for this decree has these very precise terms, that all the possessions of the clergy are at the disposition of the nation. If they had not been irrevocably acquired by the Church, to the clergy, they are not at the disposition of the nation; for, by decree, it has at its disposition only the possessions belonging thereafter to the Church.

Now, at the time of the decree the possessions which the petitioners are claiming were neither Church property nor property of the clergy. No matter how much it is supposed that the petitioners had the intentions of giving them to the Church or even if it be pleasing, that they were not brought to the seminary to be reclaimed, nothing of all that constitutes a donation or a sale or any other kind of transfer of property. These possessions had not yet been either given or sold or transferred to the Church by any deed whatsoever. They have, therefore, not become at the disposition of the nation by the decree that places Church property at its disposition. No other one has appeared since, whatever they municipality may maintain, which despoils individuals to unjustly bestow upon the nation the belongings of another. At least, the petitioners know of no such spoliatory decrees, and if the municipality knows of any such, let it cite them and do so very exactly, for otherwise it could appear to be only an atrocious calumny against the national assembly in alleging *that the refusal* of the petitioners *to submit to the law which despoils them* justifies depriving them of their whole fortune.

It is ridiculous after that to hear the municipality say that there is no question here of simple presumption, that all that characterizes a donation, the will and the fact, combine to establish the gift.

The Municipality agrees therefore that a donation cannot be established by presumptions. Consequently, deeds are required to justify it. When then are these deeds which prove that the petitioners had given to the Church, before the pretended decree of spoliation, the belongings which they claim? The will and the fact combine, it is said, but where are the documents that prove this will and this fact to establish the pretended gift. The only known fact is that the petitioners brought their whole fortune, capital and revenue to the seminary, and from this fact, the only one true, proved and agreed upon, the municipality concludes that the petitioners donated. What does it mean? To whom does it think it is talking?

[1] The rest is again written Father Chaminade's hand.

It says further that under the old regime the claims of the petitioners would not have been admissible and this is the report of the agents of the clergy[1] of 1740. But it is mistaken and harboring a misunderstanding.

It is mistaken, because under the old regime, if one of the petitioners had left the seminary at any time whatsoever, he would not have unsuccessfully reclaimed the amount of the advances made by him. The courts of the time would not have allowed the seminary to be enriched at the expense of those who had brought their fortune to it. M. Greleté of Peix had not brought a penny of his fortune to the major seminary at Périgueux, he had contributed only his labor throughout the best part of my life and when he left it his claim against the others at the seminary was not rejected by the Bordeaux parliament.[2] The old courts, which would not have ridiculously listened to the unbecoming allegation of a law of spoliation, did not despoil anyone. They knew that a person who leaves a society for whatever reason is entitled to take with him the amount he has brought with him, and they always authorized him to do so.

The report of the agents of the clergy of 1740, which never became a law in France and which the courts certainly did not take to be laws, still has nothing contrary to that. It states merely that the possessions, given and joined to the seminaries do not belong to the congregations that administer them, and it is not very clear what this principle, which is very true, could have to do with the present kind of contention in which the petitioners, far from believing themselves to be proprietors of the establishment or of any of the assets which have been donated to it, merely claim what they themselves have brought to it and deposited and the advances which they were willing to make to it from their whole fortunes.

The repairs and extension of the buildings are without a doubt so many additions made to the former ones. But to conclude from this that these additions fall into the category of the report of 1740 is to presuppose a donation which does not exist. The increases in construction which a contractor makes in the buildings of a seminary are so many additions to its previous buildings. Must it be concluded that as soon as these additions are made the seminary may keep them without paying the contractor? Undoubtedly not. But why? Because, although there is an addition of new constructions to the old ones, there is no corresponding donation on the part of the workman, and there must be donation and union to permit the seminary to appropriate the object. The conclusion follows automatically: the petitioners have indeed materially added to the seminary the repairs and enlargement which they had made with their whole fortune, but they have made no donation. It is therefore impossible to suppose that the seminary became the proprietor of the money spent on these enlargements and that, thanks to a non-existent law of spoliation, the nation may take advantage of them at the expense of the petitioners and keep the enlarged property without paying them a just price for the enlargements which they have made.

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[1] From 1560 to 1788 the clergy of France held a general assembly every five years to discuss doctrinal and financial matters, especially their heavy contributions to the finances of the crown. To assure the continuity of their action and to maintain their influence in the intervening period two procurators, called agents-general or agents of the clergy, were elected from 1580 on to protect the rights of the Church in religious and financial matters in the king's council and in the law courts. They gave an account of their administration at each assembly, and were generally rewarded for their work with a bishopric.

[2] See Letter Oc., n. 3.

No. 4. The capital is due, the interest likewise. The municipality agrees in effect that they are on an equal footing, and if it is says a word to point out a difference, that word is wrong. The petitioners are not asking for anything that has been used up and they freely admit that, if their minor capital sums were used up and lost of the house, they would not have any right to reclaim them. They do not wish and do not intend to establish and base their claims on any other than an unshakable principle, according to which no one ought to be enriched at the expense of another, the Church any more than the nation. They are not reclaiming their advances of capital and interest, except insofar as the seminary, which formerly belonged to the Church and today belongs to the nation. They are not reclaiming their advances of capital and interest, except insofar as the seminary, which formerly belonged to the Church and today belongs to the nation, has become more considerable, richer, of much greater value through their advances of either capital or interest: *in quantum locupletior factus est.* Before their advances the seminary was an object of 100,000 livres; this means that it increased 88,000 livres in value. It is not just for the nation to profit by this and for those who have put their fortune into it to lose it: *Nemo debet locupletari ex jacaturâ alienâ*.

That the nation should keep and maintain all the additions made to the seminary through the economic efforts of the petitioners, there is nothing more just. They owed their efforts to the seminary, the fruit of their efforts and of their vigilance belonged to it, and the nation has without a doubt the right to take it over; it is its property. But they did not owe the seminary their fortune any more than its fruits and incomes, the interest any more than the capital. They did not give it to the seminary. It is therefore just that, when they leave for whatever reason, they withdraw what they brought to it to the extent that the seminary became richer because of it, since otherwise the nation would enrich itself at their expense. That would be neither just nor reasonable.

The municipality thinks it has a comprehensive answer in the remark which, it says, is extremely simple and which is so in fact; namely, that, as it says, the petitioners owe an account of twenty years rental of the house and use of its income, since they pretend to have done everything for themselves and nothing for the nation. The preceding considerations reply to this remark of unequaled simplicity: the petitioners do not intend to request reimbursement either for their time or their trouble or their efforts or for the better part of their life used in fulfilling the duties of a member of the seminary staff and of an instructor. They do not therefore owe any account of the use of a house which has been more profitable to the individuals of the nation for whom it was established than for those who administered it.

No. 5. What[1] proves better than could be proved in words that the assets of Reverends leBoeuf and of M. Montjon were used for the expansion of the seminary is the fact that the seminary has actually increased. This is an admitted fact, it is an evident fact, it is a fact whose proof is easy to gather; namely, that the seminary buildings have increased immensely since its foundation. They did not grow without any resources and by themselves. The petitioners ordered the expansions; they paid for them; whatever amounts they cost came from their hands. They were not obliged to give an account of their fortune or to explain by what channels the funds which they used had reached them, and when they say that they received them from so and so, as the existence of the repairs proves that they had received them from somewhere, their simple

[1] Here the same unidentified hand as above resumes.

declaration suffices afterwards to establish the fact that it is rather from one source than from another. That is enough to authorize the to reclaim the repairs or their value, unless the nation proves that they are the donations of individuals made to the seminary. That is what it will never prove. Meanwhile it is apparently well proven that nothing had been given to the establishment and that everything had been given to the administrators, who did not exaggerate in declaring that they had exhausted their fortune and that of their friends in order to expand the seminary and to establish it.

No. 6. There is no questions at all here of funds acquired separately by Reverends Moze and Chaminade. The nation did not seize them and it is likely that it will not even dare to try to seize them. There is no deed for it, no donation, no merger. If it is true that the acquirers used some funds of the seminary to pay for objects, the law is peremptory and sure: *res empta es pecunia mea, non est nes* (sic). The seminary or the nation has only to reclaim whatever funds it proves to have been used to make the purchase. The petitioners are prepared to compensate with part of what is owed them. That is all that they are obliged to do on this point, and it is astonishing that the municipality, which speaks with such ease in another place of the old law could have failed to recognize the provisions of the edict of 1749 regarding proprietors of mortmain[2] to the point of putting forward the pitiful fallacies which it permitted itself to advance.

The lack of letters patent alone before the acquisition would suffice to nullify it and to restore their personal belongings to the administrators, once they had acquired it in this capacity. How is it possible to suppose that without letters patent, especially when one is forced to admit that there were none at the time of the sales, the sale made in their own name acquired for the seminary an ownership which it neither would nor could have acquired, even though the acquisition had been made for it.

And the letters patent of 1785 do not prove anything to the contrary. Far from it; they prove very directly that nothing had been acquired for the seminary, that the seminary was nothing but the tenant. They prove that the administrators desired to acquire, they received the authorization, but they never acquired and the ownership of the assets never belonged to the seminary. There is nothing clearer.

No. 7. It is impossible to understand what the municipality wished to say in the excess of its observations, and therefore it is quite useless to try to reply. The declarations made by the petitioners could be in error, but that error could not damage their right, above all when it is seen clearly that they erred merely in identifying themselves in a way with the house which they looked upon as their work and their property.

But they committed no error whatsoever, and it will be easy to become convinced of this by reading the complete text of their declaration and avoiding the little inconsistency into which the municipality has fallen, which wishes only to read or allow to be seen what it is pleased to cull from it without minding this maxim of jurisprudence, that a wise administrator should never lose sight of: *nisi tota lege inspecta, incivile est judicare:* read everything or refrain from judgment.

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[2] Inalienable property, originally only church property, later also the property of certain corporations.

The petitioners say, first of all, all in this declaration, that they are living in a spacious house, almost all newly built at their expense. They add that the furnishings also represent a great part of their funds.

That is word for word what is read in the declaration. To pretend after that, that they agreed that the seminary owed them nothing, is that not to make sport of reason and of justice?

True, in concluding they declared that they owed eleven thousand livres, either borrowed money or money required to settle their account. They added, besides, that their assets and liabilities nearly balanced.

The municipality uses this as a starting point to criticize them with unparalleled bitterness. “You agree,” it says, “that the house owed only 11,000 livres and you are claiming 60,000 livres as its creditors. What a contradiction!”

Now where has the municipality found in this declaration the avowal that the seminary owed only 11,000 livres? Nowhere, if you please. It actually found that the administrators owed only 11,000 livres by contract or to settle outstanding accounts, but nothing more.

We owe, they say, borrowed money or the amounts of unsettled accounts. These words, we owe, after the first declaration stating that their fortune had been used to remodel the buildings and to furnish the house mean nothing else than this, that apart from 11,000 livres borrowed money, all the rest had been done at their expense, and not at all that the nation may and ought to take and keep everything while paying the 11,000 livres owed to strangers.

This is, above all, necessarily the way to explain and understand a declaration made at a time when the administrators had no reason to expect that one day their conscience under pressure would oblige them with reason or from prejudice to abandon an establishment to which they had devoted themselves.

The comment of the municipality is just as inconsistent and misplaced. It is inconsistent because from whatever expressions and petitioners may have it is clear that they neither said nor intended to say anything else than this, that the current credit established without[1] contract and without[2] written statements balanced with the debts.

It is beside the point, because there is question at the moment only of right. The accounts will come later.

The petitioners have used the sum 60,000 livres in capital, yields and income, interest on their patrimony or whatever other resources and assets belonging to them, which they could have used anywhere else: they have used it for the expansion of the seminary. If all has been used up, so much the worse for them, they must necessarily lose everything, but if it is to be found in the

[1] The word *without* (sans) seems to have been written over *by* (par) in Father Chaminade’s hand.
[2] The word *without* seems to have been written by Father Chaminade above the same word which had been written over another word and so appeared doubtful.

value of the seminary which passes over to the nation, since the nation may not enrich itself by that much[3] at their expense, it must reimburse them.

Now it is a fact agreed upon, that the seminary has acquired all of that and even more in value. Reimbursement is therefore due. That is clear. This is the case of the petitioners.

Reverend Moze, approving the above script. Mussidan, July 23, 1791. Reverend William Joseph Chaminade approving the above.

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As the conclusion of Father Chaminade's letter of February 2, 1791, leads us to expect, the professors of the seminary refused to take the constitutional oath and dispersed.

Father Chaminade went to Bordeaux toward the end of the same year. His correspondence, which became very rare after that, points to his being there.

3. – TO M. VACQUIER, BORDEAUX
(Aut.—Agmar)

Bordeaux, July 19, 1792

Would M. Vacquier kindly give the bearer two hundred livres in government notes[1], which I shall pay back to him upon request? Pardon me for all the trouble I am causing him; I am forced to it by circumstances.

(Rev.) William Joseph Chaminade

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3a. – A MORTGAGE IN FAVOR OF
MME MARIE FORT
(Aut.—Agmar)

I, the undersigned, acknowledge receipt from Mme Marie Fort of the sum of three thousand livres in government notes, for which I sum I allow her from all my present properties

[3] The expression *by that much* (en), lit. *by it*, was added by Father Chaminade. On July 27, 1791, the Board of Directors of the Mussidan District again sent this appeal to the municipality for whatever further observation it chose to make.

[1] The term used in the original is "assignat", which was a note issued as currency by the French revolutionary government (1790-95). It was based on the security of the land which had been seized by the State.

an annuity of one hundred fifty livres, current from this day forward until I shall be pleased to refund the principle of three thousand livres together with any arrears of the said annuity still due. I reserve the right to withhold each year from the annuity of one hundred fifty thousand livres the amount of the taxes to which it is subject, and I agree to notify the said Mme Fort three months in advance of my ability to refund the capital.

As security for these presents, I appropriate and mortgage my property located at Saint Lawrence on LeTondu[2] Road.

In witness whereof, Bordeaux, March 19, 1793.

William Joseph Chaminade

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4.– TO M. DURANTY, BORDEAUX
(Aut.—Agmar)

Saint Lawrence, LeTondue Road
April 6, 1793

Sir:

I am forwarding to you the amount of your bill. I am sorry that I was not at my country-place at the moment you took the trouble to come. My health obliges me to come to or rather to remain in Bordeaux many a day, for there I am closer to the help that my condition requires.

Please let me have your receipt later on, and rest assured that I remain very respectfully, Sir, your very humble servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The M. Rivière to whom the following letter is addressed was a gardener, the next-door neighbor of Father Chaminade at his Villa Saint Lawrence. His name appears in the deed of purchase of this property.

5.—TO M. RIVIÈRE, BORDEAUX
(Aut.—Agmar)

Bordeaux, April 28, 1793

My Dear Rivière,

[2] LeTondu was a village on the outskirts of Bordeaux.

I have seen your bill. It is quite correct, and I am asking my father to pay it. Please take good care of my trees. I hope that my poor health will not prove to be chronic and that I shall be able to show you my gratitude in person. My stomach is fairly good, but my head and my legs are useless.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

The Reign of Terror followed shortly (May 31,1793). It lasted till the fall of Robespierre (July 27, 1794), which ended the first phase of the Revolution. Thereafter efforts were made to restore peace. Since Father Chaminade had been unwarrantably listed among the priests who had fled the country during the Revolution, he had nevertheless to fear the effects of the laws directed against them. This explains the following letter.

6.—TO THE CITIZEN-ADMINISTRATORS
OF THE DISTRICT OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, 18 Thermidor,
Year III August 5, 1795
(Aug.—National Archives)

William Joseph Chaminade, a priest, calls to your attention his great surprise at learning that he has been listed among the émigrés.[2]

Please examine the certificate of residence which he received from the city authorities, this past 21st Messidor[3], and you will be convinced that he never left the territory of the Republic. This authentic papers makes his stay in Bordeaux go back without interruption to the month of May 1790.[3] There can be no difficulty, therefore, in removing his name at once from the list of *émigrés*, where it could have been placed only upon the insistence of some ill-intentioned individual.

He trusts in your sense of justice, and citizens, and hopes that you will not hesitate to order his name struck off the list of *émigrés*.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Father Chaminade opened an oratory at 14 rue la Sainte Eulalie (now 28 de la Paul Louis Lande) in the house presently occupied by the headquarters of the flourishing Catholic Students' Association of Bordeaux. There he received the abjuration of priests who had taken the

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[2] Those who had fled the country during the Revolution.
[3] The tenth month of the French revolutionary calendar, extending from June 19 to July 18. The 21st Messidor, therefore, corresponds to July 9.
[3] It was on this date that Father Chaminade, though still residing in Mussidan, took up his legal residence at 8 rue Abadie, Bordeaux.

constitutional oath. This difficult function had been entrusted by the diocesan authorities to Father Chaminade, then still a young priest, only 34 years old, and a newcomer in Bordeaux. But his zeal, prudence and holiness were already evident to the eyes of all. It is to the exercise of this function that the following documents refer.[4]

Father Joachim Rousset, an ex-Franciscan of Libourne, writes to Father Chaminade on August 24, 1795:

Reverend Father, I learned rather late about the threats of His Holiness against those who took the constitutional oath to obey the law. Unfortunately, I am of this number. I acknowledge my guilt. I come with confidence to ask you to let me know what I must do to make amends for this fault, which I committed more through fear than through malice. I am old and so decrepit and full of infirmities that it is impossible for me to travel, but I will act in accordance with the instructions of your early reply. Now eighty-two years old, thirty-two of which I spent at Libourne, where I was superior three times and a good friend of your brother, the Franciscan, I shall feel all my life that "whoever does not have the Church as his Mother cannot have God as his Father." *Fundata est supra firman petram*.

I am drawing from the government a pension, which is very small considering the high cost of living, but I hope God will lend me a helping hand and that as a native of the same region[1] you will grant me permission to retain this pension. Please, Father, accept the expression of my profound respect and believe me to be your humble servant.

The following is Father Chaminade's reply:

7.—TO FATHER JOACHIM ROUSSET
FORMER FRANCISCAN, LIBOURNE
(Copy—Arch. Department of the Gironde)

Bordeaux, August 29, 1795

Reverend Father:

It will be a genuine pleasure for me to be of service to you in your present situation. Your age, your profession, the positions of trust with which you have been honored in your Order, have influenced a greater number to imitate your example. You owe it to yourself as well as to them to take very definite steps toward retracting your errors and repairing the scandal you have given the Church by joining the schism.

I presume that you have ceased to exercise any function of the holy ministry by way of an initial act of submission to the Church and to its Head. The second thing for you to do is to retract in detail all the schismatic acts occasioned by your taking the oath, and to do this with the sentiments of repentance and obedience toward your canonical Superiors which ought to

[4] See the Life of Father Chaminade and *L'Apôtre*, 1910-11, 7:309.
[1] The term in the original is *patrie*, which in the Dordogne dialect = *compatriote.* A similar usage in other French-speaking areas is that of *mon pays* in the sense, not of *my country*, but of my *fellow-countryman*.

accompany the declaration. Your age and your infirmities dispense you from coming here in person to make this declaration, but you will send it to me that I may give it the necessary publicity. As soon as I have received it I shall outline for you what remains to be done to merit your reconciliation.

Until then, meditate at the feet of Jesus Christ upon the gravity of your desertion from the Church. Probe the wounds of your soul in order to show them in all their depth to the minister of Jesus Christ who will have the task of plunging you into the Pool of Probatica. Show publicly to all those whom you may have led into error the sorrow you feel and the desire you have of repairing the scandal you have given; but, above all, place yourself completely into the hands of Providence as far as your temporal needs are concerned. A pension which can be claimed only be declaring oneself a transgressor of the laws of the Church cannot in conscience be accepted. In the school of Saint Francis you must have learned that the help of Providence never fails his true children.

I have the honor, Father, of being respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant, etc.

* * * *

A coup d'état of September 4, 1797, suppressed the elections held after the Fall of Robespierre which had returned a number of royalists to power, and the earlier phase of the Revolution was revived except for the fact exile was substituted for the guillotine. Father Chaminade was obliged to leave for Spain.

The life of Father Bouet (in manuscript form) has preserved for us a curious letter addressed from exile by Father Chaminade to Mme "Random"[1] of Bordeaux.

This lady, a native of the Diocese of Cahors, had been brought up in Bordeaux at the home of a relative who had her marry a very respectable young man, a baker by trade. She already had several children when the Revolution broke out. It afforded her the opportunity to manifest all the liveliness of her faith and the ardor of her charity. During the wretched days of the Terror her modest home became the place of refuge for the faithful priests. She took in at times more than fifteen together, and when upon reports of secret informers her home was raided, she knew how to ward off danger by the calmness of her bearing and her extraordinary presence of mind. Hounded in the streets by the mob, heaped with abuse and handed over at last to the revolutionary court, she escaped the guillotine only by a miracle. Wearied eventually by the terrible scenes that the Revolution constantly presented to her, she had made up her mind to leave the world and to retire with her husband into solitude after consecrating her children to God in order to help them keep their innocence unsullied and finally reach holiness themselves. She consulted Father Chaminade about this extraordinary project and received from him the following letter in which appear the great prudence and spirit of faith of the servant of God.

[1] Rigagnon? Her maiden name only is known with certainty.

8.—TO MME “RANDON”, BORDEAUX
(Copy—MS Life of Father Bouet – Agmar)

Saragossa, April 28, 1798

You are looking for an answer, mother dear[1], but you know quite well that it is not an easy thing to give one.

All Europe is in confusion and Spain in particular seems to be on the verge of suffering some dreadful shocks. For the past two weeks already there has been in effect a decree of expulsion aimed at all the French of either sex, priests and lay people. All are obliged to leave the kingdom within a month. As a matter of fact, however, since yesterday it is thought that this decree will be revoked. Everything therefore seems to oppose your project.

I should not have been too far from favoring your coming along without changing anything in your home and without telling anyone, especially since I learned that Mémine was taking care of your children. Such a long trip, particularly under present circumstances, could not but involve many difficulties which you should seriously consider before God.

As regards the complete carrying out of your project, you must know that, even if the French here are not molested, you as well as your husband would have endless trouble in entering communities and you would surely not succeed. Besides, what would become of your children?

Still, if you continue to believe that such an extraordinary curse fits in with the plans of Providence for you, explain to me as clearly as you can all your reasons and the particular ideas that you may have. I shall weigh them before God, and I hope that in His goodness he will make known to me his will in this regard.

Doubtless you did not think that anything could be done for that little[2] Alexander whom I had referred to you. I am waiting for you to write to me about him. I am quite satisfied with his brother.

Your brother[3], who is my companion here, still has the same inclincation[4]; I have not yet been able to bring myself to the point of giving him complete approval, although I have not forbidden him to make up his mind in that direction. In the short letter that you wrote me there was a sort of ambiguity that made your answer almost useless. You seemed to think that he could join the Trappists for a time and later on leave them in order to preach the Gospel. His intention was not to enter by way of a temporary retirement (he could do that), but to become a monk, to take vows and live in the monastery, which in the ordinary course of events he could never leave. The purpose of these holy penitents is by no means to exercise the apostolic ministry.

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[1] This and similar expressions were a precaution meant to dispel any suspicion of dealing with priests.
[2] Alexandre Duboscq, brother of François Duboscq, companion-in-exile of Father Chaminade.
[3] The reference is to Father Bouet. The remark contained in the first footnote of this letter applied here also.
[4] viz., the inclination to join the Trappists.

Coming back to your project. If you do not have any doubt, any uncertainty before God, regarding the obligation and the time for carrying it out, consider the various means that you will have to make use of in order to succeed. Weigh well the inconvenience which the sale of your houses, etc. would cause your husband and your children. In the meantime write to me in as much detail as you can, and be very careful not to let anything of this project become known.

Yours very truly

Mme Randon did not carry out her plan. She continued her life of charity, and at the time of the Spanish War she devoted herself without reserve to the care of the Spanish War she devoted herself without reserve to the care of the Spanish prisoners held in Bordeaux. Her daughter made the acquaintance of a young officer among the prisoners of war there and married him. Mme Randon followed them to Madrid, where she died of a saintly death, October 4, 1818. She was buried in the cemetery of the Church of Saint Laurent of that city.[1]

[1] See *L'Apôtre*, 1911-12, 8:133 ff.

III
SPIRITUAL DIRECTION OF MLLE DE LAMOUROUS (1796-1800)

Mlle Marie Thèrése de Lamourous was born at Barsac near Bordeaux, November 1, 1754, of a noble family whose members had served in parliament.[1] From her pious mother she received a solid Christian education.

In 1794 she retired with her father to their country estate at Le Pian, about ten miles north of Bordeaux. There she carried on a real apostolate among the inhabitants of those parts.

Her first spiritual guide had been a Carmelite, Father Norbert of Saint Louis. Next she chose in succession Father Seraphim, a Capuchin, Father Viguier, a diocesan priest, Father Lacroix, who emigrated to Portugal in 1792, and FatherRauzan.[2] Finally, in 1795 she entrusted her soul to the care of Father Chaminade, who was to guide her until her death, September 14, 1836.

It was under the guidance of Father Chaminade that in 1801 Mlle de Lamourous founded Miséricorde in Bordeaux and became its superioress. The purpose of this institution was to receive and reform penitent girls. This work, which Archbishop d'Aviau called "the marvel of his diocese," became the cradle of a religious congregation, approved by the Holy See in 1880.

The cause of beautification of Mother de Lamourous was introduced in Rome, November 14, 1923.

For details regarding Mother de Lamourous see her life by Father A. Giraudin, superior of the major seminary of Bordeaux, also the Life of Father Chaminade and L'Apôtre.[1]

The following letters written by Father Chaminade to Mlle de Lamourous during the revolutionary period are ranked among the most precious remains of his correspondence, for they show what a heroic degree of virtue these two great souls had already reached at this point in their lives.[2]

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[1] See Letter Oc, n. 3.
[2] See Letter 38, n. 4.
[1] 1908-09, 5:204; 1910-11, 7:316; 1912-13, 9:121; 1924-25, 16:209.
[2] The date was added by Mlle de Lamourous.

9. – TO MLLE DE LAMOUROUS, LE PIAN
(Aut.—Agmar)
Bordeaux, May 27, 1796

PAX CHRISTI

My dear Daughter,

It is with pleasure that I grant your so often expressed desire to have me draw up for you a plan of spiritual conduct suitable to the present state and dispositions of your soul.

You have already made some progress in virtue. But God inspires you above all with a great desire to belong entirely to him. I must nevertheless tell you, like the angel who urged the prophet Elias to eat the mysterious bread that he had prepared for him: *Thou hast yet a great way to go.* You must still reach the holy mountain of Horeb, that degree of perfection in which you will no longer give in to your nature, your senses, your imagination or your own mind, but obey God himself who wishes to reign within you are your sovereign Master. How great is your happiness, my Daughter! You are beginning to realize it, but you will never know it except insofar as you taste it and you will never[3] taste it until you are upon that holy mountain.

The purpose of this letter is not to tell you all you will have to do in the course of your journey, but rather what you are to observe at the present moment. When by the grace of God and your fidelity you have carefully carried out what the Holy Spirit prescribes for you through my ministry, I will see what else I ought to tell you. Then you will return this message to me, after adding your dispositions with regard to the various points it contains. In the meantime I will explain to you little by little what I am merely touching upon here. In this way you will form a plan of spiritual conduct for yourself. We will call it *your guide.*

1. It seems to me that you have not yet fully grasped the distinction to be made between the life of nature and of your own spirit, on the one hand, and the spiritual or supernatural life, on the other.

2. The acts of virtue which you perform are still very imperfect, because they are governed more by your reason or your imagination than guided by grace.

3. You must often ask God to activate in you the powers whose purpose is to get us to perform supernatural acts of virtue. Just as in the natural order our soul acts through its three powers or faculties: namely judgment, memory and will; so also what we call in ourselves *the Spirit*, acts through these faculties which we have received in baptism: namely faith, hope and charity.

[3] The French text has omitted these words of the original: *connaîtrez qu'autant que vous le goûterez et vous ne*, i.e., know it except insofar as you taste it and you will never. . . .

4. Your imagination has gained great influence over you. It is the principal cause of the habitual anxieties which trouble you.

5. I dispense you from all vocal prayers except the ordinary morning and evening prayers, the prayers said in common and offices at which you can be present, the prayers imposed as penances by your confessor and those of some pious association or other, provided they are short.

6. You will add to your morning prayer a meditation lasting at first a good quarter of an hour. You will then begin by adoring God interiorly and by saying to yourself: Though I am but dust and ashes, I will enter the presence of my God! (If you are alone you will prostrate yourself upon the floor to make the act of adoration. Then, you will recite the Creed on your knees with your arms outstretched).

   After you have made these preparatory acts you will keep yourself in the presence of God with the greatest possible recollection. The disposition of your soul in this recollection ought to be that of a simple sentiment either of faith, of hope, of charity or of resignation to the will of God. You will conclude your meditation by asking God to give you the grace to remain collected all day and to act solely from motives of faith, etc.

7. You will try and find another quarter of an hour, at least, in the evening, to repeat the same meditation.

8. Every day you will make at least a quarter hour of spiritual reading. You may read *The Spiritual Combat* or *The Foundations of the Spiritual Life*. When you are able to dispose of your time, you may make your evening meditation after your spiritual reading. In order to be more recollected you may make your spiritual reading seated, but I advise you to make your mediations on your knees.

9. After your night prayer you will make an examination of conscience, whose special object will be to see if you have been faithful to the practice of recollection.

10. You will go to confession every week if nothing prevents it. You will accuse yourself of your faults with simplicity, without any sign of embarrassment, without any movement of either you head or hands, without exclamation, sigh, etc. After reciting the *Confiteor* and listening to the exhortations of your confessor, if you have any trouble or difficulty in your spiritual conduct you may make it known to him outside the confessional. To prepare for confessions you will recall for a quarter of an hour the daily examens you have made. You will spend about another quarter of an hour in exciting yourself to sincere contrition. To this end you will keep yourself recollected in a disposition of deep humility and sorrow.

11. Ordinarily you will not receive Communion on the days when you go to confession nor after nights during which you were troubled with impure thoughts, unless a

Sunday or a feast day happens to follow them, nor on the first days of your periods, unless some great feast occurs or you feel an intense desire for Communion, nor when you travel or have important business affairs, as you would not feel courageous enough to remain recollected at such times. You will make your preparation and thanksgiving for Holy Communion by way of a meditation of recollection.

12. As regards your bodily health, take all the nourishment you need to maintain your normal strength. Always take three meals except on days when fasting is of obligation or required by some particular circumstance in which you have been permitted to fast. I am not allowing you to perform extraordinary penances or mortifications like wearing a hair-shirt or sack-cloth or taking the discipline or keeping excessive vigils. By the way of compensation I advice you to practice great interior and exterior abnegation. This will be the fruit of your meditations and of the care you take to remain recollected. I have noticed in you a certain taste for simplicity in your manner of dressing and acting; I invite you to continue, but do away with everything superfluous and to allow yourself only what your condition calls for.

    This will suffice, my dear Daughter, to settle for some time to come what you have to do. If you had to advance all along I should enter into greater detail, but since I shall have occasion to see you from time to time, I shall develop little by little the various points I have merely touched upon so far. I have the greatest confidence that you will advance quite rapidly if you are faithful. On several occasions I remarked to you that you must absolutely abandon all those disturbing ideas with which you allow yourself to be oppressed. You come back to them continually under various pretexts. This illusion could become very dangerous for you.

    May the blessing and peace of Jesus Christ be with you.

* * * *

Father Chaminade's spiritual guidance did not remain sterile. In December of the same year, 1796, Mlle de Lamourous offered herself to God as a victim in expiation of the crimes committed during the Revolution. Her personal notes, which we include here for edification of the reader, are dated from January 1797.

I renounce the devil, his suggestions, his delusions, his deceits. I desire God only, his glory, his honor.

I sincerely renew the offering I have made of myself to be his victim. I wish to live this way all my life and to be his victim in every possible and imaginable sense of the term. I agree to the immolation of every particle of my being with a view to his good pleasure alone and his glorification as my Creator.

It is without personal interest that I offer him my entire self, my tastes, my inclination. In a word, I offer in a spirit of sacrifice, all that can depend on my liberty, whether interiorly or exteriorly. It is for him alone who alone is worthy of our homage.

From my offering I exclude nothing. I abandon myself to him. His glory is the only good that I desire. Unworthy creature, miserable, proud, downright sinner that I am through the blackest ingratitude after so many benefits, I still dare to tell him I wish to belong only to him! I know very well that of myself I can do nothing; but God, who has brought me into existence, is all-powerful. It is he who gives me the desire or the wishfulness, however weak, to bow to the blows of his justice; but if any illusion lurks as yet in what I am writing here, may this infinitely powerful God, this Father infinitely good, turn it to his glory. May he thwart my enemy and convert to his utter confusion all the foolish fancies with which he would wish to envelop me. If it is my imagination or my passions which are supplanting proper sentiments in me, may he destroy, stifle and banish these futile phantoms. May they depart from me and cease to deceive me. May grace come to replace them, the grace of immolation, the grace that will render all the powers of my soul incapable of evil, but ready always and everywhere for the sacrificial knife with which I ask God to arm himself, to fulfill until my last sigh his role as high priest.

As the sole reward for my offering I ask of him the grace no longer to offer him any resistance; and if my sins, my pride, my passions cry out and revolt, may my innermost heart, at least, always bow to the blows which I beg him to deal me.

Nothing is excluded from my offering; it is without reserve. I desire to die to everything, to suffer darkness, desolation, privations, etc., as much as the divine High Priest deems best; for it is to his paternal care that I surrender my whole being. All I ask of him is the strength never again to retrace my steps. I beg him not to reject me, not to hand me over to my enemies. I feel I have deserved his indignation, a thousand times unhappy, a thousand times unworthy creature that I am!

May be deign to accept as a victim, a creature disfigured by such great miseries, a thousand times deserving to be repulsed and compelled to become the prey of the prince of darkness, to be powerless to do anything for her Creator.

Truly, I deserve such a punishment. How many, perhaps less ungrateful than I, have suffered it! But God, you know what I am. You know better than I the depth of corruption that defiles all I do. You also know the . . . (I am at a loss for the right term) that is making me write this. You know that it seems to me, at least, I would sign it with my blood. But you also know that illusions haunt me, that my pride constantly deceives me, that I imagine the sentiments with which it inspires me to be my own. Who will deliver me, who will cure, if not you, O Lord? It is not to you that you wish me to turn? Then give me also the grace of desiring always to address myself to you. Accept the miserable offering that I am again making to you. If you grant me this favor I shall become more especially yours; I shall be your property; you will cultivate it, keep it, and defend it.

Deign, then, to receive this unhappy creature. Receive her as a victim, take possession of her; she is offering herself to you; she is sacrificing her life for love of you. Strike, Lord, cut and immolate her without ceasing. Make known to your friends, to your minister, to her spiritual guide, to all creatures your will in her regard. May our hand guide them. May they redouble their blows if need be. May be destroy and immolate, under your guidance, this wretch who deserves your indignation and their contempt. Take from me all human support, all human consolation, all

pleasure whenever you judge it useful. Only give me, or rather, I beg you to grant me only what you will me to have, nothing else.

Still, I ask you to accept my offering and to grant that by your power I may never in my innermost heart recoil from the blows dealt me. May I draw from it no consolation whatsoever, and if this is one of the knife thrusts I am to receive, I submit here, now and always.

Here, my God, is what I wish to say to you every moment of my life. Every day I will read what I have here written. Today is January 19, 1797. Each day at least once, while waiting for obedience to guide me in this respect, I shall indicate by some kind of mark my consent to all it contains.

O good, O infinitely merciful God, bless this mark and, in consideration of it, pardon the revolts which corrupt nature will stir up. I surrender this nature to the blows of your injustice, but create in me a pure heart and grant me an upright intention.

You know, O my God, that it is under the protection of Mary and of Joseph that I first made me offering to you. They are the ones whom I beg to tie the bonds that are to fasten me to you and to oblige me never to offer any more resistance. Jesus, Mary, Joseph bind me with chains.

* * * *

The following letter was written by Father Chaminade as he was on the point of leaving for exile.

10. – TO MLLE DE LAMOUROUS, LE PIAN
(Aut.—Agmar)

Bordeaux, September 15, 1797

My dear Daughter,

They say we die only once. Quite true, but what lessons we receive from Providence to forewarn us of the fact and to prepare us for it! And each one of these lessons is a kind of death. What is a faithful soul to do in the chaos of events which seem to swallow it up? Sustain itself calmly by that faith which, while making us adore the eternal plan of God, assures us that to those who love God all things work together unto good.

Yes, my dear Daughter, the good Lord will not abandon you. If not a single hair falls from the head of man, except by the will of our Father in heaven, the continual ups and downs that bandy you about, the interior and exterior storms that rage relentlessly and seem almost to bewilder you, are but indications of the genuine love which God has for you. I do not hesitate to say that they are even signs of predestination.

The spirit of darkness will certainly try to persuade you that you must not consider your sufferings to be comparable to those experienced by some saintly souls, and that you cannot hide from yourself the fact that certain causes responsible for the lie within you. But, my dear Daughter, it is not the less true that in these afflictions God always provides means to purify your will, to detach yourself absolutely from everything, to give up those ideas suggested by pure natural reason, which would lead you to pass judgment on the conduct of Providence in your regard. God likewise always provides the means to make yourself practice the most excellent of Christian virtues. These, my dear Daughter, are included in total abandonment into the hands of God, above all when the only results of this most perfect abandonment are affliction, anxiety, uncertainty, etc. Saint Catherine of Sienne, whom God left for some time in a sink of shameful ideas, of unchaste commotions and feelings, in darkness, etc., learned from the Lord himself that he had never been closer to her than at that very time when he seemed to have abandoned her. Now, what was the prayer that this holy virgin repeated most often before the consummation of her spiritual nuptial? It was, *Lord, increase my faith*. You know they happy result.

I have often told you, my Daughter, that you would find everything in faith. I have even advised you to make a kind of meditation of faith, and I am convinced that it is an excellent means of sustaining you and of advancing you in virtue. At the same time it will afford you a kid of interior refreshment and be a preservative against the advice, either too lax or too strict, that you might receive from some who would guide you rather by natural prudence than by the conduct of the Spirit of God. Always drop every idea, judgment and feeling that your imagination might suggest, so as to be led by that holy simplicity which I have always recommended to you.

To remove you the less from it, or rather to bring you the closer to it, make use of your *rule*[1] according to the state of soul you may happen to be in, but do so promptly. You have nothing to fear so much as whatever might trouble you and, especially, prevent you from abandoning yourself to God in the meditation of faith and of recollection. By this means God will let you know in a very salutary way all that displeases him. Every other way of dealing with our faults will do you harm.

As I am not sufficiently acquainted with the priests of Bordeaux to tell those who guide themselves and others with supernatural prudence only, from those who do not, I am at a loss to whom to recommend you. What are you to do, then? Pray with confidence and simply go to the one to whom you feel yourself drawn by a spirit of faith. Another idea has just come to my mind; I shall pass it on to you.

In any case, my dear Daughter, may nothing cause you to turn away from the advice which your spiritual Father has just given you and which he explained to you on various occasion. I have complete confidence that with the help of God, in whose presence I have written

[1] A set of rules of conduct which Mlle de Lamourous had received from her directors to combat her scruples and excessive fears. Father Chaminade refers particularly to the rule of Father Lacroix, who required of his penitent “not to ask anything of anybody and to act by herself, while doing only what she found herself obliged to do, and that too, with such certainty that she could swear to it.” Father Chaminade had confirmed these rules in the following terms: “You will follow them, my Daughter, with simplicity, and I do not doubt that you will come to the point of making your meditation well and of acquiring the liberty of the children of God, a real union with him.”

this letter, I have included in it only what would be agreeable to him and useful to you. I promise to remember you expressly in my prayers. I shall not cease to consider myself your spiritual father who ought to be the more concerned about you, the farther he sees himself removed from his children at the very time when they need his presence most. I ask our common father that this removal, effected solely by an order of his providence, may not hinder the accomplishment of his plans for you. I ask you to recite the Litany of the Blessed Virgin daily and, as your spiritual Father, I wish you the grace and peace of Jesus Christ.

P.S. I shall be obliged to you, if you prudently looked after my little temporal affairs.

From Saragossa Father Chaminade wrote almost every month to Mlle de Lamourous. Portions of these letters, copies by Mlle de Lamourous herself, have been reserved for us. However, two pages of these excerpts have been lost.

A note found among other papers of Mlle de Lamourous refers to one of the lost letters:

10a. – June 3, l798

Father Chaminade, in a letter from Spain dated June 3, l798, while again recommending me to follow my rule of life, directs me to add to it that I am not to go over the past, over what I have already said and about which I might have something more to say, as also over what I might have completely omitted through lack of understanding, reflections, examination, memory or even through carelessness. I may continue, he says, to pass over details, even such as might be hardest to omit, and to mention only what I can be quite sure was entirely voluntary, basing myself always upon my rule. I may add all this at the end of the other articles.

* * * *

The following are the portions referred to above. We reproduce them in full, just as they have come to us, according to the text in Mlle de Lamourous' own handwriting, preserved in the archives of the Society of Mary.

10b. – October 20, 1798 (10th letter)

NOTHING[1]

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11. – December 8, 1798 (11th letter)

If only we had the generosity to surrender ourselves entirely to the Spirit of God! How he would guide us! How he would turn everything to our best advantage!

Read Father Rigoleuc[1], since you feel that he does you good. His writings really contain much that is excellent. Nevertheless, since they are very succinct and perhaps obscure at times, you must be careful not to believe that all he says is to be taken literally or that it can be carried out in a short time.

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12. – December 28, 1798 (12th letter)

Are you satisfied with the year that has just ended? In one of your last letters you blame yourself for many negligences and infidelities. You have united yourself, my dear,[2] to a Spouse who has heaped you with kindness and who has an infinite wealth of it still in store for you; but be careful, for he warns us himself that he is a jealous Spouse. Be entirely his, since he is yours in such a special manner.

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[1] Mlle de Lamourous merely notes the date and serial number of this letter and adds the word, Nothing, at the tope of the first page that has been preserved.

[1] Father Jean Rigoleuc (1595-1658) a Jesuit, disciple of the celebrated Father Lallemant, whose doctrine he has transmitted to us. Regarding this author, see Bremond's *History of the Religious Sentiment in France,* t. 5.

[2] Father Chaminade had not doubt written "My dear *friend*" (as in Letter 16) or "My dear *Child*" (as in Letter 19) or "My Dear *Therese*" (as in Letter 21). The ellipses are in the transcription of Mlle de Lamourous.

How beautiful, how happy is the lot of spouses of the spotless Lamb! Why does Jesus Christ choose the lovely name of *lamb*? It is because like a lamb he has been immolated for us to the justice of his Father. What should not be the sentiments of a spouse toward a Spouse sacrificed for her in order to unite himself to her, to be but one with her! To belong to this Spouse who died for her, who was sacrificed for her like a lamb, living still and nevertheless continuing still to immolate himself, what a mystery of love! How can we be so negligent, my dear . . .? How is it that our hearts are so cold, hearts that pretend to unite themselves to the most lovable and the most loving of spouses?

The Holy Spirit has long since been urging you to offer yourself constantly to the Lord as a victim. This is a disposition which will lead to excellent results, if you make good use of it. In order to know what should be the qualities of the victim and the manner of offering it, look at your Spouse. He is a victim, a victim of love. He has offered himself of his own accord and continues offering himself and us also, provided we unite ourselves to his sacrifice of love. Jesus Christ is so much in love with this condition of victim, that he retains its marks in his heavenly glory. This is the way he appeared to Saint John when he wanted to show him the happiness and the privileged condition of virgins in heaven. As you know, he still kept the five wounds received on the Cross when he went up to heaven on Ascension Day. What does this all mean? You know well, my dear . . . This year you must make new efforts to be faithful. You must do your best to adorn yourself with the virtues that are most pleasing to your Spouse: humility, charity, the spirit of sacrifice and abandonment to his providence, purity. Next you must penetrate yourself with a love so ardent, so generous as to induce him to unite himself to you as your Spouse and for that purpose to sacrifice, to immolate himself, to become your Victim.

I should like you to borrow for your own use the Life of Saint Vincent de Paul. Read in a Christian way, it will surely do you much good and will perhaps be of service to you for the rest of your life. I am sending you some cotton.

13. – January 15, 1799 (13th letter)

I thank God for having his goodness cure you entirely of your deafness. May his holy will be accomplished in you.

Take care of your health. I have a feeling that your life must be painful. So many uncomfortable trips, often in such bad weather and on such bad routes, must be real torture.[1] Take good care to reduce them and to ease their strain. Sanctify them by making them with the same intentions and the same dispositions with which our Lord and his blessed Mother made their journeys while on earth.

May this activity of your mind and your zeal in being of service to your neighbor not stifle in you the interior operation of grace. May they not interrupt the continual abandonment of yourself as a victim into the hands of God. A certain moderation in the exercise of charity often helps one to do more good than giving full rein to one's activity.

Be careful, above all, to act only in a spirit of humility and of self-abasement. In vain would you offer yourself to the Lord as a victim if these were not already your sentiments. God wants only humble victims. If you wish God to make something of you, then be entirely submissive to his grace, relying on the inspirations of his Holy Spirit.

Be glad that you are always feeling the pinch of poverty, so as to imitate somewhat the poverty of Jesus Christ, who did not own even a stone on which to lay his head.

Love to relieve the suffering members of Jesus Christ. In case you are unable to do this, pray for them to the Father of mercy that he may assist them, mindful of the fact that his divine Son, Jesus Christ, did not disdain to adopt them as his brothers.

How much good you could do to those of your sex if you were really humble and charitable! How many persons in Bordeaux are materially as well as spiritually uncared for! And worst of all, some of them are exposed to lose an eternity of happiness, while losing their honor

[1] Mlle de Lamourous often went from Le Pian to Bordeaux and the trip across the barren lowlands was not without danger. These travels to and fro were undertaken from motives of charity, as the letter indicates. In the *Life of Mlle de Lamourous* are to be found many interesting acts of remarkable devotedness even such as on several occasions, made her risk her life.

in this world.[2] Long live humility and charity which makes us no longer our own, but the property of Jesus or of his suffering members!

If the good Lord brings us together, we will make up our minds definitely what to do with your country home. In the meantime continue to take care of it with humble generosity.[3]

I was pleased to learn in your letter that you were sometimes exposed to considerable disrespect, not because it caused you suffering—God knows how much I wish you to be happy—but rather because these are opportunities to conquer human respect, one of your greatest enemies. Furthermore, you are now less removed from our Model, in whom we see but humiliations and self-abasement. Courage, then dear . . . courage! May all your wastelands, briers, shrubs, vines[1] cry out to you: "Courage, courage! Why should you neglect yourself, you who have had the happiness of knowing the truth?" etc.

I regret leaving off here. May Jesus and Mary shower you with abundant blessings.

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14. – February 1, 1799 (14th letter)

To suffering the spiritual order are often joined those of the temporal. So, dear . . . you are at grips with all sorts of trouble. Now, against every blow you must hold up the shield of faith. This shield cannot be pierced by the enemy's darts, no matter what their nature. It seems to me that I hear my brave child constantly saying in a spirit of faith: "Yes, poverty is worth more than riches; poverty is the road to heaven; the Spouse of virgins had no where to lay his head, etc. Humiliation is the seed of eternal glory; humiliation is the most beautiful adornment of the Christian. Jesus entered into glory only through humiliations." So, be courageous, above all because you have an invincible weapon.

I regret to break off here. May the Spirit of the Lord animate you for you cannot have courage without his aid.

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15. – March 2, 1799 (15th letter)

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[2] Father Chaminade is here recommending to Mlle de Lamourous the very work to which she is to devote her whole life later on.

[3] Mlle de Lamourous was thinking of selling this country place, the maintenance of which was a burden to her, because the Revolution had reduced her family to very narrow circumstances. Father Chaminade here advises her against carrying out this plan in the hope that this property might be of use to them for their future works. The Le Pian property was actually kept and is still of great service. It has now become the site of an institution for retarded children and the seat of the district administration, since their fusion in 1971, of the Sisters of Mary Joseph and of the Sisters of the Miséricorde.

[1] Le Pian is located where the lowlands meet the vineyards of the Médoc, a wine-producing region north of Bordeaux.

We shall never be happy, my dear . . . we shall never have peace of soul until our wills are entirely conformable to that of God. May our submission and our resignation to the dispositions of Providence render our calm independent of changing events.

I am taking advantage of a last minute before the mail leaves, to exhort you to give yourself to God more sincerely than ever. Accustom yourself to watch over your heart. Direct all its movements to God alone and to his service, not with an effort of the mind, but with love. Your natural activity might harm this interior life which makes us seek God in everything and nothing but him.

In conclusion I wish you the grace and peace of Jesus Christ.

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16. – April 13, 1799 (16th letter)

When I wrote to you dear[1], on New Year's Day, I had no intention of getting you to make any vow. I can even tell you sincerely that I wasn't thinking of it at all and that I wrote to you as I felt at the moment. Is it really necessary to make vows in order to bind oneself to Jesus Christ? Is he your Spouse only through vows? Vows are a good thing; they are acts of religion. But after all, God does not ask of us all to serve him in the same manner. My dear friend, you can have the happiness, the honor and the advantage of being the Spouse of Jesus Christ without making any vows.[2] You, least of all, should imagine there is in my letters anything else than what I say in them, because I prefer to tell you everything, taking for granted that you are openhearted enough to let me know in your answer if I have not foreseen everything. That is really what you ought to do.

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17. – April 27, 1799 (17th letter)

You understand, my dear . . . the difficulty of carrying into effect the offering you have made of yourself as a *victim*. Presumably, the more you try to do it, the greater the repugnance your nature will feel. It may even struggle like a victim being slaughtered; but your faith, your love for the Lamb of God who was sacrificed, the knowledge of the value of the sufferings and humiliations that Jesus Christ has divined in His adorable Person, the justice of God which just be supernatural considerations, if they deeply penetrate your soul, will cause you to smile at what, at times, seems to crush you. The thought of your present situation often comes back to me, etc.

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May 17, 1799 (18th letter)

[1] Here there is no ellipsis. Was this an oversight on the part of Mlle de Lamourous?
[2] Father Chaminade probably spoke to her in this way because of her scruples. Two years later, after his return to Bordeaux, he began to permit her to take vows.

Nothing

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18. – July 19, 1799 (19th letter)

Courage, my dear . . . all your letters give me pleasure, the last one most of all. Do renounce yourself in everything and for everything.

I am working at two bouquets—one for you, the other myself—which I will bring to the Blessed Virgin on her next feast day. . . .

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19. – September 23, 1799 (20th letter)

Let us rise, my dear . . . above our senses: You, by overcoming your impatience to suffer through the power of hope and love, I by combating my sensibility and compassion through considerations of faith. I must admit, since you wish me to tell you everything, that if I listen to my nature I fee sorry for you, but if I take the viewpoint of faith I immediately say: Thérèse is happy; she is suffering—and, if at that moment you were here, I should congratulate you even heartily because, you see, my dear Child, although I am the most cowardly and the most sensual of men, I nevertheless have a firm faith that those who suffer are happy. I believe it as firmly as I believe in the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.

But in what does the happiness of suffering consist? I shall take care not to answer this question directly, for I am afraid that I would hurt the love of sacrifice with which the good Lord has inspired you for his sake and that of the divine Victim of Calvary and of our altars. I shall simply tell you: take care not to let the fire go out. Often give it more wood. The question of knowing just how you are to conduct yourself in your present position is more difficult to answer.

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There is a gap here due to the loss of the sheet which contained the excerpts of seven letters written between the months of October 1799 and July 1800.

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20. – July 5, 1800 (28th letter)

Enclosed herewith are thirteen little pictures from the life of Saint Thérèse. They are not so beautiful as I should have like them to be. Still, if they helped you to grow even a single degree in the love of God, I should be quite pleased with this little find.

I confess that it will please me greatly to see you often devote your attention to this great lover of Jesus Christ. Over and above the obligation you already have of doing this as one who is under her special protection and bears here name, (another arises from the fact that) the good Lord seems to have destined you to love him as a great more than even fervent Christians ordinarily do. Why then would you not give yourself over entirely to the love of God as Saint Thérèse did with such success? Here is a subject worthy of serious reflection.

I should be very glad to discuss a topic so rich and so rewarding, but will limit myself to a single recommendation in its regard, namely, probe and examine your heart often, in order to see whether it is influenced by anything other than God or the interests of God. This examination leads to inferior mortification, to the spirit of sacrifice, etc., but in the end it brings you to the love of God.

My dear Child, if only I had the happiness of seeing your heart all given over to love and keen to nothing but the interests of the Beloved! What a pity! Divine love would perhaps have wounded it already if you had a father who was himself deeply penetrated by it. Pray always that the good Lord may be merciful to him and not to permit his sins to be visited upon his children.

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21. – July 26, 1800 (29th letter)

Without having anything in particular to tell you, my dear Th(érèse), I feel urged to write to you nevertheless. So, without knowing what I am going to say to you, I am taking up my pen. I am acting like a mother who would have the vanity to make her daughter very beautiful, or rather to dress her well, but who does not have the wherewith to do it. There is this difference, however, that the sentiment which would make me desire to adorn my dear Th(érése), to make her more agreeable to her Spouse, is not a vain sentiment, although my poverty is only too real. You tell me you have a great desire to please him. I believe it. It is also very necessary for you to have it. It should even by very intense because, my dearest Daughter, the cost of having yourself made attractive is no small one. I could say to you what my deceased mother said to me one day when I was probably putting up to being washed and combed: *To be pretty,* she said, *you must pay the price.*

Had I not, fortunately, told you at the start that I was writing to you without a set purpose, you would be shuddering; you would be thinking that I want to prepare you to undertake something very trying and very difficult. No, for the time being I have nothing particular to prescribe for you, although I am very glad that, in general, you are ready for anything. It may well be, and there is hardly any doubt even that the good Lord will have you undergo great trials. And, confidentially, if he did not do it, who, after all, would have the courage to do it? Who could humiliate you and make you go down, in a way, to less than nothingness? Who should make you suffer in your whole body and uproot the sensuality that is hidden away in all your senses? Who etc., etc.? I do not wish to frighten you. Your spiritual father loves you dearly, but would to attach you to the cross and keep you nailed to it until the old man in you has expired? And you yourself, who, after all, wish to primp yourself and put on the nuptial

robe, would it even have occurred to you to wallow for years in contempt and to reduce yourself to such destitution? So you see clearly that the good Lord must himself take the matter in hand. Oh, but his hand is so heavy, isn't it? There is no doubt about it, but have you understood well to what an extent pride and sensuality have penetrated, what deep roots they have struck in your soul?

Oh, the goodness and the mercy of God, that never appear better then when they seem to overwhelm us!

I tell you, my dear Th(érèse), that I will never let you in peace until I see you smile at poverty, at suffering and at humiliations. Will you tell me that you find these three terrible sisters very lovely? Etc.

* * * *

22.—August 26, 1800 (30th letter)

Courage! Time and the years are rolling by. We are moving on, my dear Th(érèse); we are getting on in years, you and I; we are both of about the same age. Our bodies are wearing out, and as yet we have accomplished nothing. There is question now of starting for good and of doing something for the glory of Jesus, our good Master. Think it over for yourself; I will do the same. It seems to me that you would be ashamed to die without having done something really worth being offered to your Spouse.

23.—September 6, 1800 (31st letter)

I rejoice in the Lord at the good sentiments with which grace inspires you. Have no doubts about my doing all I can to cultivate them and to make them produce all the fruit that divine Providence has the right to expect of them. I am very glad to note that you are growing more and more in devotion to Saint Thèrése.

* * * *

Mlle de Lamourous makes no excerpts from the letter of October 11, 1800, in which, without doubt, Father Chaminade announces his early return. She is satisfied to note: "Nothing for my soul." The next one is entitled by her: "the thirty-third and last letter." It is not dated, but cannot be later than the beginning of November 1800. In it there is question of a pious agreement that is to regulate the conduct of their interviews, but its exact nature is not known.

24.—(October or November, 1800)
(33rd and last letter)

I heartily agree to the mutual sacrifice that you propose to me, and I offer it from this moment on to the Sacred Hearts of J.M.J. It will begin at our first meeting. Nevertheless there must be nothing affected outwardly, and we shall be able to talk about affairs that could not be easily be delayed.

* * * *

As a sequel to this correspondence between Father Chaminade and Mlle de Lamourous we are transcribing some later notes, useful in revealing to us the effectiveness of this guidance. In the first two Mlle de Lamourous renews the offering of herself as a victim after she has taken charge of the work of the Miséricorde.

NOTES APPARENTLY DATING FROM 1796

O my God, I have tried to take every means to carry out what you have inspired me to do, and, if I have not discovered completely what I am to do, I am confident that Your Providence, to which I submit my conduct, will help me to do what my blindness has prevented me from seeing. What am I without You, O limitless Power! I cast myself into your arms, O most tender Father; I unite myself with my Savior; never do I wish to separate myself from him. I embrace his cross, I honor, I love and I reverence it. It is for me that he has taken it upon himself and it is also for him that I wish to carry it—yes, for him! For, although I need most to expiate my own sins, I am surrendering to Jesus the recompense which his mercy is pleased now and hereafter to grant for the sufferings, sacrifice, etc.—in a word, for the cross he judges proper to impose upon me. I am giving it back to him that he may use it to expiate or to obtain whatever he wills for anyone but me. He is left complete Master for the disposal of all that belongs to me, all of which I am giving to him. Myself I entrust to his tenderness, to his mercy, and confide all that concerns me to his divine goodness. I renew the offering I made of myself to him long ago and to which I have been unfaithful. I renew it today all the more seriously since experiencing for the past four years that it is difficult on certain occasions to live up to it, and that it is much easier to make the offering while praying than while suffering. This experience, and that gained at the same time, of my weakness, my cowardice, etc., but encourage me to renew my offering, since I now know it to be the more valuable. Receive then O my God, the offering I am making in your of myself and of all that belongs to me. I offer myself to you as a victim. Do with me whatever you wish, and use according to your pleasure whatever your grace will enable me to merit. I am withholding nothing, as I desire but your greatest glory, and I resign myself to whatever you will be pleased to give me.

Renewed four years after 1796, namely, in 1800.

NOTES OF NOVEMBER 21, 1802

May Jesus and Mary live in the heart of their unworthy servant. I, Marie Thérèse Charlotte Lamourous, from this day, November 21st, until October 8, 1803, offer dedicate and consecrate to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary all the good that I will do and that will be done for me after my death, so that the will of these divine Hearts may dispose of all according to their good pleasure and in favor of whomsoever they please, among living or the dead. I, Marie Thérèse Charlotte, formally declare that I voluntarily dispossess myself of everything during this period, with the exception of my determination to be united to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and to love them for their own sakes. I intend also by the present act to renew the offering I made to God in December 1796, of my entire being as a victim without reserve. At that time I made, this offering in expiation of my own sins and those of others; at present, however, and for the length of time determined above, I am making it without any conditions or intentions other than that of leaving its entire disposal to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary while abandoning myself to their mercy, to their tenderness, for all that is or may be to my best interests. In witness whereof I have signed the present act with my own blood, and in proof of the permission I have received to make this offering, the signature of him whom God has inspired to give it to me will be added below.

Renewed with permission, October 8, 1803 until next February 2nd, the offerings in the other part as well as the vow of chastity.

Renewed with permission, March 25, 1804 till next May 20th, Pentecost, the act as well as the offering with the vow of chastity.

Finally, among the successive rules of life which Mlle de Lamourous imposed upon herself with the consent of her director, we transcribe the last one that has come to us, that of 1809.

INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR RULE OF CONDUCT

To which I oblige myself, not by vow, but under pain of disobedience, so as to confess any violations. Furthermore, I pledge myself to give an account of it to my confessor every two weeks, barring a real impossibility, in order that he may make whatever changes in it he may judge useful to me.

INTERIOR RULE

My main object should be to detach myself from everything created; thus

1. I will work every day at the purification of my intentions and as accustoming myself to sacrifice all thoughts, affections and sentiments which might nourish in my heart the tendencies which draw e away from my last end, which is God alone.
2. I will perform at least four actions daily, apart from such as are of a religious nature, as purely as I can, because God wills them. I will perform them as God wills them and out of love for him.
3. I will ignore all exterior and interior suffering. I will be patient in times of adversity and will change nothing in my conduct. If I cannot make meditation, I will pray vocally. I will make acts of faith, etc., and will ask God to take pity on my ignorance and help me to accomplish his holy will.
4. I will not speak of myself without real necessity, and then I will raise my heart to God, so as not to go beyond the bounds of my duty.
5. In treating myself with prudence and gentleness, I will perform, even when sick, at least four acts of interior mortification and will try to be faithful in performing one at the first opportunity each, offering it to God as a first-fruit.

EXTERIOR RULE

1. I will get up at the sound of the bell for rising, barring unusual illness, in order to be able to say the prayers in common and outline the meditation for my Daughters.

   On rising, I will prostrate myself face down on the floor to adore God. I will make the intention of gaining the indulgences attached to my actions of the day. In offering myself to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I will place at their disposal, not only the indulgences, but also the merits of all my good actions, that they may bestow all of them on anyone they wish.
2. After the meditation I will assist at Mass. The thanksgiving will serve as the first quarter hour of my meditation. I will finish with five Our Fathers, to gain the indulgences, the Magnificat and one more Our Father, according to my custom.
3. After breakfast my first duty in the house shall be to visit the sick, then the workrooms, staying longer where it is most necessary.
4. At 11 o’clock I will make spiritual reading for my Daughters and give them an instruction of at least a quarter of an hour.
5. At 11:30 I will leave and pass the time alone till noon in devout reading or meditation.
6. In the workrooms, at least three times a week, I will take part in the rosary or recite it myself.
7. At 4:30 I will leave to read and mediate until five o’clock. Then I will pay a second visit to the sick.
8. At 7:00 I will give a public instruction to the sick.

9. Before supper, if possible, I will make a quarter of an hour's examen and reflection upon my infidelities during the day, and follow with an act of contrition and with new resolutions.
10. I will subject myself to the hours of the rule, particularly for night prayers, so that the hour of retiring may not be delayed. Before going to bed I will prostrate myself, to humble myself for the faults of the day.

May 27, 1809

The approbation of Father Chaminade follows. It was renewed on several successive date.

Renewed for two weeks, June 11, 1809
June 25, 1809
July 9, 1809
October 8, 1809

IV.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE DIOCESE OF BAZAS

(1800-1802)

Shortly after his return to Bordeaux in November 1800, Father Chaminade was appointed administrator of the Diocese of Bazas by the Archbishop of Auch. Being unable to reside in Bazas, he appointed two priests, Fathers Fabas and Pouget, as vice-administrators. These two vice-administrators had been chosen by Father Chaminade to investigate and regulate the accounts of two laymen whom he had commissioned to procure the repairs which had become necessary for the Church of Saint Jean in Bazas, but who had gotten into financial difficulties. Father Chaminade added the following endorsement to the memoir and settlement drawn up by the two priests:

24a.—(Orig.—Arch. Archdiocese of Bordeaux)

We, the Vicar General and Administrator of the Diocese of Bazas, approve the present decision reached by Fathers Fabas and Pouget in accordance with the powers received from us by virtue of a special commission, and we will that it be executed according to its form and tenor.

Done at Bordeaux, this 3rd of February 1802.

William J. Chaminade, Adm. of Bazas

* * * *

Of the letters written by Father Chaminade after his return to Bordeaux (November 1800) the first one which has been preserved relates to the administration of the Diocese of Bazas.[1] It is dated 1802.

Archbishop d'Aviau, to whom it is addressed, had not yet taken possession of his See. Further information about this prelate, who was an honor to the hierarchy of his day, is unnecessary. The reader is referred for this to the various passages concerning him in the Life of Father Chaminade. His life was written in two volumes by the future Archbishop Lyonnet of Albi.[2] It was completed in the History of the Seminaries of Bordeaux and Bazas *by Rev. Bertrand[3] and by the publication of some of his letters in 1901. In his introduction to* A Century of the Church of France *Archbishop Baunard has brought into bold relief the preponderant role by Archbishop d'Aviau in the reaction against Gallicanism.*

25. To Archbishop D'Aviau of Bordeaux (Aut.-Agmar)

Bordeaux, June 19, 1802

[1] See L'Apôtre, 1926-27, 18:411.
[2] Paris: Lecoffre, 1847.
[3] Bordeaux, 1894. 3 volumes.

Your Excellency:

It is with great pleasure that I am availing myself of the occasion being offered to me of transmitting to you one of my letters to express to you the joy which the entire Diocese of Bazas shared with me upon learning of your nomination to the Archdiocese of Bordeaux. You are being awaited generally with an impatience such as is caused by the delaying of an ardently desired good. The happy frame of mind of both clergy and people is a favorable omen of the success awaiting you in your new jurisdiction.

The greater part of the Diocese of Bazas has been incorporated by the Concordat with the Archdiocese of Bordeaux, as forming part of the Department of the Gironde. For the present I shall not enter into any details concerning the condition of this diocese. I shall have the honor of presenting to you upon your arrival the lists of the civil districts with all the information I have been able to gather until now regarding the qualities of the priests as well as the location of the parishes and the condition of the churches. Although, your Excellency, I am devoting myself to this work with considerable interest, it will still be quite imperfect. All kinds of official papers, including even the diocesan register of benefices, have been burned.

It is only some eighteen months since the saintly Archbishop of Auch obliged me, in a way, to accept the administration of the diocese. Due to my sympathetic and respectful desire to be of service to him and still more to the love with which God has inspired me for his church, I accepted his pressing invitation and added this heavy burden to the numerous occupations that the condition of the city of Bordeaux and the forlorn condition of its young people, especially, had already imposed upon me.

May my efforts, your Excellency, have procured some glory to our divine Master, Jesus Christ; may they have even in some slight degree contributed to the re-establishment of our holy religion, and have made it easier for you to cultivate this portion of the Lord's heritage of which divine Providence has made you the chief shepherd.

I am, your Excellency, most respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade,

Adm. of the Diocese of Bazas

V.
THE SODALITIES
OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
(1803-1814)

Of the letters written by Father Chaminade at the time of the Empire, there remain only a few poor copies. Most of them deal with the Sodality.

The first one reproduced here is the petition addressed to the Holy Father, Pope Pius VII, through his Legate, Cardinal Caprara, to obtain for the Sodality the transfer of the indulgences formerly granted to the Confraternity of the Workers of Bordeaux.

For details of this period see the Life of Father Chaminade and L'Apôtre.[1]

26. – To His Holiness, Pope Pius VII, Rome
(Orig. – Agmar)

Bordeaux, May 26, 1803

Most Holy Father:

For some years the Church of Jesus Christ has had the consolation of seeing established in the City of Bordeaux and growing considerably from day to day a group of young people of both sexes placed under the patronage and bearing the name of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, Mother of Youth.

Priests and laymen of mature age and solid piety have particularly devoted themselves to encouraging and guaranteeing this salutary work, and we have every reason to hope that by the grace of God this interesting nursery of servants of Mary is called to propagate the spirit of religion and of fervor in the various classes of society which its products are destined to enter eventually.

Your Holiness, to whom all the Catholics of France recognize their indebtedness for the return of the public practice of the Catholic religion in their country, will learn, not without intense satisfaction, of the graces which the divine mercy has so kindly bestowed upon this interesting portion of the flock confided to your care in an age so exposed to the lure of bad example, and that too in a country so long given over to the excesses of error and of impiety.

Trusting therefore, Most Holy Father, in the broadness of your charity always so preoccupied with the salvation of your children, we beg of you kindly to receive the petitions presented to you through the priest who is their director and in accordance with the wish and special approbation of His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, by the members of this pious association of young people and of persons of mature age, both men and women, devoted to this interesting work by a special consecration to Mary. Deign in their behalf and in that of all the members to open the treasury of heaven by permitting them to share the same favors, indulgences and privileges with which Pius VI, your predecessor of happy memory, enriched all the members affiliated to the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin established in the Convent of the Capuchins at Bordeaux.

We do not request any extension of this favor beyond what is urgently called for by the particular circumstances in which religion is presently placed in France. May Your Holiness, in consideration of these circumstances, be so kind as to authorize this priest or the priests who will

[1] 1911-12, 8:393; 1912-13, 9:121; 1913-14, 10:391; 1924-25, 16:313.

in future be placed at the head of this association by the authority of the Archbishop of Bordeaux or his canonical successors to grant in the forum of conscience and without any publicity the said favors, indulgences and privileges to all those outside of as well as within this association to whom your charity will be so kind as to extend them.

Prostrate at your feet, the suppliants humbly beg your Apostolic Benediction.

William Joseph Chaminade, priest

This petition, but without extension[1], *was sent by Archbishop d'Aviau with the following postscript:*

I have the honor of assuring His Eminence, the Cardinal Legate of His Holiness, that the pious association for which this humble request is presented fully deserve being granted special favors by reason of its regularity and fervor.

Ch. Father Archbishop. of Bordeaux

* * * *

Of the following years until autumn 1801 there remain, besides rare notes addressed to Archbishop d'Aviau and to M. (later Brother) David Monier, only the two letters to Very Rev. Bro. Frumentius, F.S.C., discovered in 1943 by Father Verrier.

27. – To Archbishop d'Aviau of Bordeaux

February 25, (1805?)

Your Excellency:

[1] See Letter 71, par. 3.

On February 23, I received the honorable invitation you extended to me in your letter of the eighteenth to join me to the Chapter and to the clergy of the city at the ecclesiastical conferences which are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Archdiocesan Chancery, Archbishop's Palace.

I have a general meeting with the Fathers of Families every Tuesday at the same time. I will make every effort to find someone to replace me. My personal needs, and the advice you were kind enough to give me in your pastoral solicitude, are for me laws I will strive to follow exactly.

I am with deepest respect, Your Excellency, Your very humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

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28. – To Archbishop d'Aviau, of
Bordeaux
(Aut.—Agmar)

Friday evening, May 9, 1806

Your Excellency:

Next Tuesday, May 13, will be the feast of Our Lady of Martyrs.[1] It happens to be the second of the Rogation Days. In a case like that you advised me, I believe, to transfer it to the following Sunday. I was on the point of announcing it when I remembered that all the parishes would have their procession on that day. I am quite willing to postpone preparations for the feast until the following Sunday if in that way I should the better conform with your views.

I am, your Excellency, most respectfully your very humble servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.[2]

29. TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU, OF BORDEAUX

(Aut.-Agmar)

Wednesday, June 22 1808

Your Excellency:

Year after year you have had the kindness to grant to the Married Ladies' Sodality the celebration of the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin. They are taking the liberty to request you to confirm this permission, which includes that of exposing the Blessed Sacrament at both the High Mass and Vespers.

I am Your Excellency, most respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(Cover Address: His Excellency, the Archbishop
Bordeaux)

[1] One of the principal feasts of the Married Men's Branch of the Sodality.
[2] This is the first instance in the extant letters of Father Chaminade's use of this title. He is made Honorary Canon of the Cathedral of Bordeaux, June 15, 1803.

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In this letter Father Chaminade reports on the failure to acquire the house to which it was intended to transfer the novitiate of the Christian Brothers. He also requests a dispensation from an impediment for a young applicant.

29a. –TO VERY REV. BROTHER FRUMENTIUS F.S.C., SUPERIOR GENERAL

(Aut.- Arch. F.S.C.)

Bordeaux, July 11, 1808

Venerable Brother:

Your whole Bordeaux family is conducting itself to the satisfaction of His Excellency, the Archbishop, and of the whole city. I have delayed this letter a few days in the belief that I could inform you that His Excellency had procured a separate house for the novitiate, but there are still some obstacles, not on the part of this saintly prelate who is prepared for all sorts of sacrifices, but on the part of an individual who goes back on his word to get a higher price.

A young man of good character, the very virtuous son of clockmaker in town, has come to the Brothers' novitiate. Though without any remarkable talents, he ha all the qualities necessary for a good religious. His only drawback is his red hair. Brother Seraphim and the director of the novices thought I ought to write to you to ask you for a dispensation from this impediment. He has kept petitioning for three months now with an unshakable persistence. It is thought here that this will not be a hindrance to his doing good. I should be obliged to you for a favorable reply to his desire.

I am, Venerable Brother, with very deepest respect your very humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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29a.- TO THE VERY REVEREND BROTHER FRUMENTIUS, F.S.C., SUPERIOR GENERAL

Bordeaux, October 6, 1808

This letter has been lost, but from a rough draft of Brother Frumentius' reply some idea of its contents may be gathered.

Reverend Father, I have the honor of your letter October 6th in which you try to dispel my apparent apprehensions. No, Father, I have never doubted and will never doubt your zeal for our Congregation after all that His Excellency, the Archbishop, and you have done and after all that circumstances lead me to hope for the future. My only fear was that it was thought permissible to place subjects without the consent of the superiors of the Institute and that that might raise an obstacle to the mutual relations that should exist among them. But I see, on the contrary, that your intentions, which I had not grasped as perfectly as I do at present, had as their purpose only the most exact observance of our rules and customs. Consequently, Father, kindly give your zeal all the latitude you please.

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(Cover address: His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux
Archbishop's Residence)

The Archbishop appends his answer to this same letter as follows:

"Father, I authorize whatever you find suitable to do in this matter.
-Ch. Father, Archbishop Of Bordeaux"

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Archbishop d'Aviau showed the same obligingness at all times. The following note which he wrote to Father Chaminade, January 28, 1807, is of interest:

The almanacs or calendars for next year did not fail to furnish matter for some observations which were presented to me regarding the great number of days of devotions granted to the Chapel of the Madeleine and its advantages over the parish churches. I grant the Exposition for the Vespers of the Purification in the hope that the scandal will not be noticeably increased. As regards evening prayer during Lent, I hoped, as a matter of fact, to see it established here as it has been in Paris and elsewhere. You might be able , Father, to talk it over with your neighboring pastors, because the better way would be for this prayer to be made in common in each parish. Should they find some inconvenience arising from it in their parishes, and should you find none in your chapel, your chapel would serve with all edification.[4]

I have the honor of greeting you, Father, while recommending myself to your holy sacrifices.

Ch. Father, Archbishop of Bordeaux

[4] This is the first instance in the extant letters of Father Chaminade's use of this title. He was made Honorary Canon of the Cathedral of Bordeaux, June 15, 1803.

The following note brings us in touch with M. David Monier, whose name often recurs in the correspondence of Father Chaminade.

M. David Monier is one of the most unusual characters connected with the beginnings of the Society of Mary, in which he played a very important part. Born in Bordeaux in 1757 of an honorable family which gave two priests to the Church, he became a lawyer and had just got himself admitted to the Bar Association when the Revolution broke out. He then went to Paris, where he was fired with enthusiasm for the ideas of the day. However, the excesses of the Reign of Terror shocked him into joining the forces of reaction. Soon he rushed into the most daring adventures all over Europe in the hope of restoring the monarchy to France. Arrested in October 1799 and thrown into the prison of the Temple, the former headquarters of the Knights while awaiting execution, he was almost immediately set free, but came back to Bordeaux disgusted with politics and more indifferent than ever in matters of religion.

“A man of great talent,” writes Father Lalanne, "and of fearless audacity, a most brilliant, irresistibly persuasive conversationalist, who had seen everything in his day and had forgotten nothing, experienced in handling the weightiest as well as the thorniest affairs.” This was at the very time when Father Chaminade, back from exile, was organizing his remarkable associations of young men and married men. M. David Monier was brought into contact with him and very soon came under his influence. He made a long retreat under the direction of his new guide, and came out of it transformed. His life after that was entirely consecrated to works of charity and of the apostolate close to Father Chaminade, whom he called “his venerable Father” and at whole service he unreservedly placed his pen, his gifted tongue and his experience. For many years he was Father Chaminade’s most active secretary, Writing our for him with great ease, but in a style often obscure, letters, memoirs and regulations, thus permitting him to devote his attention more freely to the care of souls. Father Lalanne has said that M. David’s oral style was as good as his written style was bad. By his talks and conferences full of doctrice and eloquence, “M. David”, as he was called for short, was in fact a valuable assistant of Father Chaminade even in the direction of his religious societies: for, after his conversion the former disciple of “the philosophers” had passionately put himself down to the study of Holy Scripture, of Church History and of the ascetical writers, and had a required a remarkable competence in them. Finally, with his knowledge of law and his experience in affairs, M. David rendered Father Chaminade the most valuable services in all matters of administration and litigation.

It was first of all in the Sodality that M. David exercised his zeal. From 1804 o, he was its mainspring. At the time of the foundation of the Daughters of Mary he played a part no less active. After writing out their constitutions and regulations under Father Chaminade’s guidance he paid the Daughters of Mary several calls to comment upon them.

“How could I describe to you,” wrote Sister Therese to Father Chaminade, “the good done to us by the visit of your respected son, M. David Monier? He gave us a conference which left us all with the most vivid and the most salutary impressions. Each one of us took

notes of what she found most striking, so that reading them from time to time we might all pass from knowledge to practice." When the time to found the Society of Mary had come, M. David did not hesitate to ask for admission into it. As he was already past sixty, Father Chaminade advised against it; so, on September 5, 1818 he merely united himself to the founders with this humble declaration: "In your prescence, Father Director, I pledge my complete devotedness and constant fidelity to the Institute of Mary for all the days that still remain of my life on earth." But he kept insisting so much that at one of the following retreats, that of 1821, he was admitted to the profession of perpetual vows and joined the community on Menuts Street. In the Society the role of Brother David consisted not only in drawing up regulations—for example, the first *Constitutions of the Society of Mary*, submitted to the Archbishop of Bordeaux for his approbation, and the *Guide for the Institute*—he was the chief instrument used by God for the development of the work. Under the guidance of Father Chaminade, whom, however, he drew at times into acting with unaccustomed haste, Brother David negotiated the first foundations at Agen, at Colmar and at Saint Remy, starting points for the first three Provinces of the Society. His extravagant imagination and his attachment to his own ideas were to give rise later on to serious difficulties for himself and his venerated Spiritual Father. Yet, the faith which was so deeply rooted in his soul always brought him back to the line of duty.

The last years of his life were passed in retirement. He lived at the Madeleine in a room located above that of Father Chaminade. It is there that he died, January 16, 1849, a year before his revered Father, assisted by Good Father Caillet and by the religious of the Madeleine. Long afterwards there lingered on the memory of this little man with his ruddy complexion, piercing glance and lively gestures, his hair still tied, after the fashion of the old regime, with a ribbon and falling back over his long Prince Albert. Brother David Monier had received from Father Chaminade an ardent devotion to Mary. Numerous addresses written by him still witness to this fact, as also the Introduction to the 1815, 1821 and 1825 editions of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*. His memory will always be inseparable from that of the early days of the Society of Mary.

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In the following note Father Chaminade gives M. David Monier suggestions for the preparation of an address to the Sodality.

30. – TO M. DAVID MONIER
COUNSELOR-AT-LAW, BORDEAUX

(Aut.-Agmar)

Monday morning, August 19, 1806

My dear Friend,

It occurred to me that, to make your treatment of the feast of the Assumption more complete, you might do well to read in full the passages of the old authors who have spoken about it and especially the notes of M. de Tillemont on the subject.

I am sending you the first volume of what we call *The Montpellier Catechism*.[1] All the quotations found in the translation are given there in full I have put the bookmark at the page where they begin.

William Joseph Chaminade

(*Cover address:* M. David Monier, Counselor-at-Law
Saint Columbia Square)

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The following note calls upon M. David's legal knowledge for drawing up a contract.

30a. –TO M. DAVID MONIER
COUNSELOR-AT-LAW, BORDEAUX

(Aut.-Agmar)

Wednesday morning, May 27, 1807

I have the honor of bidding M. David Monier good-day and of notifying him that I have agreed with Mme Fouignet to pay her in cash the sum of fifteen hundred livres by way of settlement in full, so that nothing further may be asked of me under any pretext whatever. I beg of him to take the necessary precautions to render this arrangement permanent.

[1]See *Spirit*, No,103, note.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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The following is the first of Father Chaminade's letters which come down to us concerning the re-establishment of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Bordeaux. It is evident from its text[1] that several preceded it, but have not been preserved. In it he advises the acquisition of a separate house for the novitiate and recommends two of his former sodalists for admissions to vows as Christian Brothers. On February 4, 1808, Archbishop d'Aviau had written as follows to Brother Frumentius concerning his and Father Chaminade's interest in the re-establishment in Bordeaux of schools conducted by the Brothers:

I will always have at heart to uphold your holy Rule, whose advantages are known. Moreover, I believe I can say that such are also the dispositions of that respectable priest, Father Chaminade, and it is with this conviction that I have put him in particular contact with your dear Brothers.

30b.: TO THE VERY REV. BOR. FRUMENTIUS, F.S.C., SUPERIOR GENERAL

(Orig.—Arch. FSC)

Bordeaux, March 9, 1808

Venerable Brother:

Your solicitude may have been disturbed by my latest letters. It is only with regret that I decided to write them to you. As I do not wish to do anything except with you and according to your views, I believe also that I ought to keep you informed of everything. Today I have nothing but consoling news for you. The novitiate established with your authorization under the auspices of His Excellency, the Archbishop, is doing as well as we could ever have wished it to. It consists at present of seven novices. Brother Paulinus[1], their director, enjoys the confidence of all; all respect him and obey him with pleasure. Brother Seraphim[2] seems quite content and has the satisfaction of seeing the number of these good and fervent novices increase. His only regret is that the house of Saint Eulalia, where the whole Community and two schools are located, is so small. He would like, and reasonably so, to have a separate house assigned to the novitiate. This is the more necessary as we hope that the number will increase more and more. I have consulted His Excellency, the Archbishop. His kindness and zeal have moved him to adopt this plan. I

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[1]As also from Letter 38, On *Numbers 63 and 64.*
[2]William Darbignac, in religion Brother Paulinus, one of the first sodalists of Father Chaminade, appointed master of novices, when the novitiate of the Christian Brothers as opened in Bordeaux in 1807.
[3]He had been sent with another Brother from Lyons, in 1806, by Brother Frumentius to form with Darbignac and Lafargue the first community of Christian Brothers in Bordeaux after the Revolution.

hasten to submit it to you. I have in mind a house which is in the neighborhood of that of Saint Eulalia. I am awaiting your reply to carry out the plan.

Our whole correspondence, Venerable Brother, is submitted to His Excellency. The establishment of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in Bordeaux is, so to say, his favorite work. His interest in it is deep-felt. You and I ought to consider ourselves quite happy to help in realizing the holy prospects which inspire him. Bordeaux has already reaped quite precious fruits from it: eight schools[3] opened enable 800 children to instruct themselves and prepare themselves for the practice of virtue.

Brothers Paulinus and Eligius[4] asked you at the beginning of this year for the permission to pronounce their vows. I have the honor of attesting to what their modesty forbids them to believe, that they deserve this favor, that they really have the spirit of their state, that they also have the talent and the knowledge that they have been putting it into practice according to the full rigor of the Rule for more than six years, not counting a first year of examination and preparation. There has never during this long interval been either variation of disinclination. I have never lost contact with them; I have guided them in the choice of their state; I have tested them; the long trial which they made of it was almost always under surveillance. I could say much more in their favor, but you have had the opportunity to hear them spoken of for the past several years. They have always been true to themselves. Your Order will make a really good acquisition in them.

I am very respectfully your very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

The archbishop appended the following note to this letter:

Venerable Brother, Father Chaminade wrote and addressed this letter to you after consulting me. I am very well satisfied with the novitiate, but it is too cramped in the Saint Eulalia establishment and I will gladly go to some expense to make it more at ease in the nearby house referred to, without any change in its guidance.

I recommend myself to your prayers, Venerable Brother, and greet you with all my heart.

Ch. Father, Archbishop of Bordeaux.

In his reply to this letter Brother Frumentius expresses his gratitude to Father Chaminade and his full confidence in his guidance and grants permission for the

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[1]i.e. classes, cf, Verrier, “La Restauration des Ecoles Chretiennes a Bordeaux sous le Consulat et l’Empire, “*L’Apotre*, 1953, 35:115.

[2]Louis Arnold Lafargue, a disciple of Father Chaminade as early as 1796, had been elected the first prefect of the Bordeaux Sodality in 1801.

admission to vows of Brothers Paulinus and Eligius and the acquisition of new quarters for the novitiate.

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During the autumn of 1808, thanks to M. Lafon, a sodalist of Bordeaux[3], Father Chaminade was brought into contact with Mlle de Trenquelléon, his future cooperator in founding the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

Mlle Adele de Batz de Trenquelléon, a scion of one of the noblest families of Gascony, was born in the Chateau of Trenquelléon near Agen, June 10, 1789.

Obliged to emigrate during the Revolution (1797) she spent part of her childhood in Portugal and in Spain. Back in France when only twelve she became at fifteen the soul of a pious association for the re-Christianization of the country. The very active correspondence which she carried on at the time with her associates has been preserved in great part and would merit publication for all its wealth of interior life and apostolic zeal.

The meeting of Adele de Trenquelléon and Father Chaminade was to be fertile in the fruits of salvation. The young lady placed herself under his guidance, and the Agen association established close contact with the Sodality of Bordeaux.

In 1816 the association gave rise to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, whose motherhouse was set up in Agen and whose first Superioress-General, under the name of Mother Mary of the Conception, was Mlle de Trenquelléon.

Mother de Trenquelléon died, January 10, 1828 in the odor of sanctity. The Institute of Daughters of Mary was approved by the Holy See in 1888.

For details regarding Mother de Trenquelléon see her Life by Father H. Rousseau[1], the Life of Father Chaminade and L'APOTRE[2].

The letters of Father Chaminade to Mlle de Trenquelléon have been preserved, thanks to the care of the Daughters of Mary. The first one, which is not dated, supplies

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[3] Hyacinth Lafon (1766-1836), born at Pessac-sur-Dordogne, about 30 mi. from Bordeaux, was an aspirant to the priesthood and had already been ordained deacon when the Revolution broke out. He therefore donned civilian clothes and dedicated himself to teaching. In 1801 he joined the Sodality and served three terms as its prefect. In 1808 he taught in the secondary boarding school at Figeac Noailles, was arrested and imprisoned. 1n 1812 he was party to the abortive plot of General Malet against Napoleon, but made good his escape. Under the Restoration he was rewarded with an appointment to the office of assistant instructor of the royal pages and made a knight in the Legion of Honor. In 1826 he was ordained a priest and retired to his native region.

[1] Paris: Beauchesne, 1921.

[2] 1909-10, 6:425

interesting details about the Sodality of Bordeaux, with which the Agen Association desired affiliation.

31.- TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON, THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut.-Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, Autumn 1808

Mademoiselle:

I received with equal pleasure and interest both your letter and the list of the young ladies who desire to be affiliated with the Sodality. I was noticeably touched by the fervor which seemed to reign among so great a number of young unmarried ladies. When, at a general meeting of the Young Ladies' Sodality, I made known the wishes of your pious society and satisfaction that I felt, and all shared them with me. All promised to look upon you in future as part of the Sodality and to remember you daily in their prayers, etc.

The Young Ladies' Sodality has a Mass of its own every Sunday and feast day. It is customary during the Mass to put on the altar a book containing the names of all. Those of the postulants and of the affiliates are not entered in this book. To give you a proof of the particular interest which your society arouses in us, you names and those of the young women that you will receive in the future will all be entered in this book which has no other purpose and which is reverently kept in the church of the Sodality.

M. Lafon did not give me a clear idea of your society. He knew it only very imperfectly himself and was not able to pass its regulations on to me. So I should be obliged to you, Mlle, if you let me have a copy of them. It is with this imperfect idea given to me by M. Lafon that I sent him notes for the married women affiliated to the Sodality instead of those intended for the young ladies.

The complete Sodality is composed of five branches, if we may really call the different kinds of meetings branches. The first is that of the young men it is most numerous. The second is that of the married men, distinct from that of the young men, though linked with it to some extent. M. Lafon is in the first. He served several terms as its prefect, that is its chief officer. The third is that of the young ladies; the fourth is that of the married ladies, called here the Ladies of the Retreat from one of their principal practices, which is to devote one day each month, the first Wednesday, to the exercises of a spiritual retreat. The fifth is that of the priests. Let us go back to the third, which ought to be of greater interest to you.

The Young Ladies' Sodality, which more than 250 members, not counting the postulants and affiliates, is divided into two large sections, the first and the second. Each section is subdivided into four groups. Each of the eight groups bears the name of one of

the mysteries of the Blessed Virgin. Thus, we speak of the Conception Group, the Nativity Group etc. Each group has its own special officer; each section, its general officer; and the Sodality, its supreme head, whom we call the mother. Mlle de Lamourous is the Mother. Barring good reasons to the contrary, members are admitted only up to the age of thirty. The fact that your society has the same practice led me to affiliate it to the Young Ladies' Sodality in particular, although you share the prayers and good works of the whole Sodality.

The Ladies of the Retreat have as their daily practices, the act of resignation to death and the prayer of Saint Bernard to the Blessed Virgin. The young ladies recite daily the Little Officer of the Sacred Heart of Mary with a *De Profundis* for their deceased Sisters. I advise your whole society to recite this Little Office every day in place of the prayers I had suggested before. This Office is quite short, but very beautiful and appealing.

I had a handy sized book, entitled *Manual of the Servant of Mary*, printed in Bordeaux. Besides the offices, prayers and instructions of the whole Sodality, it contains most of the offices of the Church. I can, if you wish, send 50 to 60 well-bound copies to Agen for you. We have to sell them for 3 livres apiece here because of the considerable expense this edition has been to us.

With this, Mlle, I will close for the time being. I will acquaint you gradually with our customs and practices. If I could only let you experience the happiness of belonging in a special manner to the Mother of God! We pride ourselves here in the title of Children of Mary. We believe we form part of her privileged family.

All that I have the honor of telling you or that I may still be able to tell you later on is intended generally for each member of your Society.

I am, Mademoiselle, respectfully

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

32.- TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON
THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut.-Arch. FMI)

For Mlle de Batz de Trenquelléon

Bordeaux, December 23, 1808

Mademoiselle:

I received, in due time, the letter you had the kindness to send me along with the copy of the regulations of your pious society, and have made both known to the Young Ladies' Sodality. I was eager to find a suitable moment for the honor of answering you.

All our sodalists are overjoyed and greatly edified by our little correspondence. They have asked to me to express to your society their sentiments of gratitude for the share they will have from now on in the First Friday Mass.

By its constitution, your society very much resemble the Young Ladies' Sodality, and but its principal practices, the Association of the Ladies of the Retreat, whose aim is a continual preparation for death. That is why they daily recite the act of resignation to death, which you will find in the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*, and why they have a day of retreat each month, the first Wednesday. The act of resignation is recited publicly on this day before the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. On the first Wednesday of January they try to receive Holy Communion with the dispositions they would like to have when receiving Holy Viaticum.

Our young women have asked me to acquaint you with *The Association of the Actual Love of Mary*[1]. Since this practice does not demand any time, but merely attention and zeal, they thought it would greatly appeal to your society. This practice is not a rule of the Sodality, but something optional which they adopted nearly two years ago. I shall neither praise it nor enlarge upon it here, as it has been set forth in print in a little book, *Motives for Confidence in Mary*, which must surely have come into your hands by now. If you do not have it I will have a little excerpt from it made for you, enough to give you a good idea of it.

I have appointed a correspondent for you, Mlle Lacome, the oldest daughter of the Lacombe de Puigueraud family[1]. She will be able to give you all the details you wish. She knows several of your associates and must also be known to them. She is zealous for the glory of Mary. Her intense eagerness to increase our membership made her accept this charge with great pleasure. She lives in Bordeaux with the Sacred Heart Community[2], on rue Lalande. We live on the same street.

Mlle de Lamourous received the marks of your kind interest and respectful attention with great satisfaction. On her part, she wishes to express to you her tender regard for both you and your whole society. She is ill just now, but there is no danger.

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[1] See *Spirit, No. 153*

[1] Concerning Mlle Felicity Lacombe de Puigueraud consult the Life of Mother de Trenquelléon

[2] The Daughters of the Sacred Heart, founded during the Revolution by the Mlles Vincent, a Community which later joined the ladies of the Sacred Heart of Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat.

Sometime in January I am going to send Mme Belloc[3] a dozen copies of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary* by some trusted boatman, without any other notice than this. The amount will be collected from her eventually[4]. I shall be much obliged to you if you kindly notify her of this in advance and assure her of my respectful remembrance.

For the young ladies who might find themselves too burdened with prayer by the recitation of the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary, I agree to their replacing it by the prayer of Saint Bernard to the Blessed Virgin, *Remember*, etc. Invite them to repeat, whenever they can, ht act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin that all sodalists recite in public on the day of their reception and which they renew publicly also and in a body twice a year.

I am with respectful affection,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mme. Belloc, nee Diche

Near the Precture[5], Agen)

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[3] Mme Belloc, wife of a doctor of Agen, a childhood friend of Mlle de Trenquelléon and one of the most active members of the little association. She became a widow in 1812, and from that time on devoted her life entirely to the education of her four children and to good works.
[4] See Letter 33.
[5] Prefecture, i.e. the capital of one of the more than ninety departments into which France proper is divided. (See Letter Oa, n.2). Agen is the capital of the Department of Lot-et-Garonne.

32a.- PROPOSED REPLY TO HIS LETTER FROM THE MINISTER OF JANUARY 19, 1809.

(Copy- AGMAR)

January-February (?), 1809

The documents which the Minister asked to be produced lead to the belief that Father Chaminade may have explained his position poorly, since His Excellency did not understand that there was nothing further to be done than add the royal sanction to the ecclesiastical and administrative acts which in 1804 validated the prior existence of the oratory in question.

In fact, the oratory of the Madeleine was successively held by several different priests before the time of the Concordat. As a consequence of the reorganization of the Church of France in 1802 and of the lame of Germinal in the year X, it became necessary to get authorization for the exercise of worship in this chapel from the dual power. The decree dressed the request of the faithful interested in the continuation of this oratory, the assent of the three respective pastors, everything shows that the preliminary conditions were fulfilled, that there was nothing missing but the seal of sovereign authority for carrying out in their entirety the dispositions of the law. It is to this area that the question formed today by Father Chaminade is confined.

A single hypothesis would be able to modify the communication to the vestry council, then to the municipal council which is indicated by His Excellency: this would be such if the expenses or the exercise of worship were the responsibility of the vestry and, subsidarily (in case of insufficient revenue from this source), the responsibility of the city. This is what would happen if parish services were held in said oratory, just as in an auxiliary church.

But the Madeleine Chapel does not fit into this case. The chapel building was sold during the Revolution. Its rental is the responsibility of the chaplain as are all the expenses of worship. It does not enjoy any subsidy, no parish services are held there. This chapel, in spiritual just as in temporal matters is truly a private oratory, it was designated as a subsidized oratory only to extend its use to several parishes south of the city of Bordeaux whose churches are rather distant.

It is also evident that the faithful of the three parishes and their pastors were heard concerning the usefulness and necessity which existed for continuing this chapel: but no in order than any parish services be held there; the neighboring pastors had no inspections to carry out there. Neither did the vestry councils to take on responsibility, which insufficient revenue would have required them to assume. Further more it would not be known which parish was one to which appeal be made because the oratory individually provides service

to the parishes of three pastors, without being subsidized by the three of them together or by the collective assemblies of any of them separately.

The priest who celebrates the Holy Mass there voluntarily supports the costs of existence of his chapel. No commitment, no other obligation besides his zeal binds him to be of service. He will do this as long as he is able and willing. The oratory is essentially his property. It is public only by the admission which is extended to the faithful of the neighborhood.

The location makes this admission useful; it is the reason which led to authorization in time. The authorization sought before the king can only be to maintain the establishment under the title of private oratory and to admit faithful for exercises other than parish services, without change to the vestry councils.

His Excellency will believe, in consequence, that he ought to be satisfied with the original agreement of the neighboring pastors, the opinions of the Archbishop and the Prefect, to propose to His Majesty the approval of the continuation of the oratory of the Madeleine which usefully serves the faithful.

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The following letters reveal how overburdened with work their author was and often limit themselves to answering the questions of the correspondent in the briefest terms with disconnected sentences.

33. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON
THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut.- Arch FMI)

Bordeaux, February 28, 1809

Mademoiselle:

I am recovering from an illness that has interrupted all my correspondence for some time.

During my convalescence I did not stop forwarding your letters to the Young Ladies' Sodality. It would take too long if I were to express in writing all the sentiments of affection and esteem with which the *third section*[1] inspires them. The third section! That what I could like to call your whole society, and I am going to use the opportunity, or, rather, take the

[1] Each of the five branches of the sodality of Bordeaux was made up of two sections. See Letter 49. the sodality of Agen was, therefore, the third section of the third branch.

means to make you full-fledged sodalists. I shall have the honor of informing you of it before the end of Lent. Please let me know the officers elected for each group as well as the chief officer. It will be best to reserve the name of Mother for the head of the three *sections*.

I am sending you at once six *Manuals of the Servant of Mary*.

Enclosed you will find an extract on the booklet on the *Association of the Actual and Perpetual Love of Mary* about which I had the honor of speaking to you[2]. All the affiliated young ladies who desire to adopt this pious practice will kindly let you know the hour of their choice. I will postpone having the roll of the Sodality drawn up until I have received your list.

Our young women are very appreciative of the request you made for their names and more particularly of the motive that led you to make it. I have a remark to make to you on this point and will try to think of doing so some other time when I again have the honor of writing to you.

The melody of the *Hymn of Sodality* is the same as that of the famous song of the people of Marseilles, *To arms, citizens*.... The young women are also looking for the melody of one of your hymns.

I am enclosing in this letter a reply that Mlle de Lamourous has the honor of sending you. I should have also enclosed the reply of Mlle Lacombe had it been less bulky. I will send it along with the Manuals.

A short while ago we lost five sodalists: two very virtuous young men, one in Bordeaux, the other in Paris; two young women one in the country, the other in Poiteres, both of them also very virtuous; and a Lady of the Retreat, who died as she had lived, very holily. We are in the habit of having a solemn Requiem Mass for each sodalist in the church of the Sodality as soon as we receive the news of his or her death, and an anniversary Mass for each class of sodalists. The one for the young ladies is offered on the first day that is free after the Feast of the Annunciation; the one for the Ladies of the Retreat, after the Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin.

Each member of the Sodality who has the means signs for a little contribution each month. These little contributions are used to defray the general expenses of the Sodality and those special to each class. They also serve to provide for the wants of the sick and the needy on certain occasions. Do you think that are dear associates would like to share in these good works? I leave the decision to your zeal and prudence. Possibly they may not all be sufficiently convinced of the excellence of these works.

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[2] Cf. Letter 32.

The Young Ladies' Sodality will not on consider Mlle Anne Fourteau and Mlle Phillipine Loriac as affiliates. These young ladies now enjoy all the benefits and advantages that go with affiliation. Continue making conquests, Mademoiselle.

M. Lafon greatly appreciates the makers of your kind remembrance. I have the honor of offering you the assurance of his respect.

The address of Mlle Lacombe is: Lacombe, Sr., rue Lalande, c/o Sacred Heart Community, Bordeaux.

Your good and esteemed mother is affiliate to the Ladies of the Retreat. These ladies were particularly happy to admit her because of her personal worthiness, and also because she is your mother. They know your society and our correspondence.

I have the honor here of assuring Mme Belloc in particular of my respectful remembrance. If she has not yet received a little sight draft for 36 livres[1], she will surely do so in the near future. I handed it over a few days ago in payment of goods purchased. I shall try during this fair to send the six Manuals by some businessman of Agen, so as to avoid all expenses. I am very well pleased, I can even say I am greatly consoled to see this respectable lady join to her household occupations the practice of works of zeal.

We made the novena as soon as we received your last letter. From time to time I shall recommend prayers for the conversion of that Protestant father[1].

I believe I have treated all the points contained in your letters. Please continue confidently to keep me informed of everything.

I have the honor of assuring your of my devotedness as well as of deep respect of with which I am Y.V.H.S.[2]

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* As on[3] Letter 32)

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33a. –TO M. PELOUX, FINANCIER

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[1] See Letters 31 and 32. Letter 1 concerns a somewhat similar transaction.
[1] Mlle de Trenquelléon was just then working at the conversion of a Protestant family and, in fact, had the consolation of seeing it return to the bosom of the Church.
[2] Your very humble servant. Cf. Letters 4 and 28.
[3] As envelopes were not in use, the reverse of the letter sheet was left blank. After the sheet had been folded, somewhat like our air letters, with the blank reverse outside and sealed with sealing wax, the address was written upon it. Cf. Letter 61, n. 1.

(Aut. Rough Draft- Agmar)

Bordeaux, March 16, 1809

Sir:

Your aunt has inspired me with the greatest confidence in you. It is this which prompts me now to take the liberty to apply to you for the necessary information concerning a financial affair of mine in your hometown.

Toward the end of 1789 or during the first months of 1790, Father Le Boeuf, a priest living at Bergerac, signed over to me two "cash-endowed annuity contracts"[4], which M. Gravier Lacoste[5] and his father-in-law had drawn up in his favor. At the time of the transfer payments were several years outstanding—I do not recall anymore just how many; I believe the capital of the two contracts was hardly more than 3,000 livres. I do not have either of the contracts nor the deed of transfer. I had to leave everything with M. Moynier, a notary public of your city, a reliable person whom Father Le Boeuf had recommended. On February 15, 1791, I paid him 48 livres in advance[6] to cover possible expenses in connection with the transaction of M. Gravier Lacoste. I have at hand only letters of Father le Boeuf, M. Moynier and M. Castaing, the joint friend and legal advisor of M. Moynier, Father le Boeuf and myself. I have also a letter of M. Gravier Lacoste of June 15, 1790, in which he describes his sorry plight along with the soundness of my credit, based on his wife's patrimony.

Touched by the troubles of M. Gravier Lacoste and somewhat reassured by his promises, I did not want to crush his dependent children with expenses. Then the repeated blows of the Revolution made me leave this matter in the background. I am afraid that today I may be unjustly blamed for my silence.

It would be a question, Sir, of finding out, without the Gravier Lacoste family's knowledge: first where these contracts and their deeds transfer me to happen to be (should M. Moynier or M. Castaing not have them, you might inquire who passed them on); secondly, what are the dates of the agreement in favor of Father le Boeuf as well as the transfer to me by Father le Boeuf; thirdly, what is the value of said contracts and how long arrears have been due; fourthly, what, briefly, is the condition of the Gravier Lacoste family.

Confidentially, Sir, I feel that due to the remoteness of the date of these contracts still further delay will put this family in a position to claim prescription against me. I shall be truly obliged to you if you bend every effort toward gathering and forwarding to me the

[4] See Letter od, n. 4.
[5] See Letters 1 and 2a.
[6] See Letter 2a.

exactest possible information, so that I may at one adopt the means best suited to regularize my position.

Pardon me for all the bother. I am taking so much liberty upon the invitation of your aunt. If in turn I can be of any service to you here, I am ready to prove to you that I am only too eager to be, Sir,

Very truly yours

34.-TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON
THE CHATEAU DE TRENQULLEON

(Aut.-Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, March 28, 1809

Mademoiselle:

I received your letter of the twenty-first with as mush interest as I did those that preceded it.

I shall begin by answering a question you put to me in a postscript to a note of February 4th which I overlooked while writing my last letter. You ask me if I was not formerly at the college of Maffi-in-Perigord. I never knew any Maffi in the Perigord region. However, I presume that you confused Mussidan with Maffi. I spent at least twenty years in the seminary and boarding school of Mussidan-in-Perigord.

You are anxious to know what means I intend to make you once and for all Children of Mary. Your eagerness both pleases and edified me. I was thinking of letting you know about it only sometime after Easter: I am going to satisfy your desires right now. A round which would take in from four to six of the chief towns where there are groups of the little society, our present third section, would seem to me a way of seeing all my new children in as many groups or meetings as the places we chose to visit. Each group would be received, etc. I have not yet tried to foresee, still less to overcome, the difficulties that such a project would, so to say, necessarily entail. I am so desirous of bestowing upon you the favors and privileges granted to the Children of Mary that I disregard the discomfort of this long trip. You might consider for yourself: first, whether carrying out of this project is possible within a tolerably short space of time, because I have very little time at my disposal; secondly, how it could be carried out; thirdly, what precautions ought to be taken. These things must be little spoken of, if at all, until the project is ripe and we have come to an agreement on all points.

As regards the list of the hours chosen for the *Actual and Perpetual Love of Mary*, please send it to me when it is completed. Should anyone forget her hour or be unable to

observe it, she could replace it with another hour. But no one ought to wear herself out over it. Wherever you may happen to be or whatever your occupation, you can easily observe your hour if you have really entered into the spirit of the practice.

I am quite willing to approve the proposed officers if they have been generally accepted. The choice seems to me quite good. As for the duties of their respective offices, I will have the note regarding them passed on to you as soon as the process of their nomination has been completed, unless its completion coincides with the carrying out of our project. In that case I would bring along with me all the instruction, I would explain, etc.

I greatly appreciate, Mlle, the good work you and your dear associates have begun[1]. This work is even eminently worthwhile, and I should certainly regret its being abandoned, unless the children disappointed the hopes of their benefactresses. I would seem to me, nevertheless, that a middle course might be followed, to accomplish everything up to a certain point. For example, might you not use two thirds of the contributions for the education of the two children, and the rest for the purposes I had the honor of pointing out to you? The two thirds would soon come near the original amount, for: first, since this good work was started, several have entered the society and swelled the contributions; secondly, others will enter, etc.; and thirdly, several of the old members, who could surely have joined in this good work, may not even know of its existence.

The nomination of the group officers will make the general correspondence of the society very easy. Please note well that I am not giving any orders where, but am merely proposing in all simplicity what seems to me good and useful.

Please have the kindness to convey my regards to Father Larribeau[2]. I am still bound to him by a sense of the sincerest and deepest respect. This reverend pastor would be the assistant moderator of the society, at least as far as the third section is concerned, although he deserves to be head moderator, but it is impossible to do otherwise until Providence again affords us some easy way of communicating with the Pope.

Mlle de Lamourous had a slight relapse just recently. I passed your letter on to her privately. I have also acquainted the young ladies of the Sodality with its contents. They all request me to express their feelings of affection for the third section. They were delighted last Sunday to sing the new hymn which you sent them.

I join with the Ladies of the Retreat in assuring your good mother of our respectful regard for her.

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[1] The reference here is to their supporting, in a Catholic boarding house, two poor girls, born of a Catholic father and Protestant mother. See H. Rousseau, Adele de Trenquelléon (Paris: Beauchesne, 1920), pp. 229-230.

[2] The pastor of Lompian, near Trenquelléon.

We are all the happier at your new conquests as they are becoming ours as well. The names of these devout young ladies are going to be entered in the roll of the third section.

I have just sent you a boatman from Agen by the name of Boi six more copies of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*. I have the honor of assuring Mme Belloc of my respectful remembrance. In a few days I will send her a small sight draft for the twelve copies.

I am, Mademoiselle, with respectful devotedness,

Your very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. This letter was not yet sealed in the envelope when a serious accident happened to our little church called the Madeleine. Toward eight in the evening of Holy Thursday, a half hour after the services, the monument caught fire. A great number of precious effects were destroyed. He who gives can take away, He who takes away can give again. May His holy Name be ever blessed.

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 32)

34a. –TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU, OF BORDEAUX

(Aut.-Agmar)

Saturday morning, May 6, 1809

Your Excellency:

This year the Feast of Our Lady of Martyrs falls on the Saturday before the Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension. Saturday is a day not very suitable for gatherings, especially since in this case there is already a feast during the week. If your Excellency things it proper I will postpone the Feast of Our Lady till the next day, Sunday.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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35.- TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON
THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut.-Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, April[1] 1809

My dear Daughter,

Your uneasiness on my account, as well as that of your devout affiliates, fills me with gratitude. By it you give me a new proof of the interest you have in me without any personal merit on my part, but only because God in His goodness has willed to make use of me to impart to you a number of new favors and a greater wealth of graces. For my part, I cannot help being consoled and edified, and giving thanks to the Lord for it.

I am far from having lost sight of your dear affiliation. It is only an excessive amount of work that made me put off from day to day the pleasure of corresponding with you. Although I had fairly well foreseen the obstacles you point out regarding the project we have at heart, I did not neglect to tell you about them; first, because in that way I show you my good will and because, in the second place, I was glad to see if these obstacles were as real as they seemed to be. Often difficulties disappear on being explained. Your note very well the difficulties discovered with respect to fervent affiliation. There are others which would hardly be easier to overcome. Nevertheless, let us not give up a project which can only give rise to good sentiments and draw closer and closer the precious bonds which unite us. Furthermore, it may lead us to perfect our work in other respects.

Let us hope for all kinds of success from the protection of our Mother. Under her auspices we have succeeded here in matters far more difficult.

I am not authorized by the Sovereign Pontiff to delegate the power of receiving affiliates. Patience, zeal, perseverance! Let us hope that everything will be arraigned in its own good time. I did all I could for you; unless you wish that in my capacity of Missionary Apostolic for France I adopt you all as my Children; but in a way, have I not already done so? From feeling rather than from reflection, in speaking to you have I not called you *my dear Daughter*?

We must not use pressure either for collections or for contributions. Those to whom God will give a strong desire for the support of the work will know how, little by little, to put aside small sums and from time to time pass them on to their officers.

I am going to send you, still to the same address, six copies of *The Servant of Mary*. You may leave the louis d'or[1] with Mme Belloc. I will collect it by a draft on her for the louis as well as for the books.

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[1] This letter could hardly have been written before Pentecost 1809, i.e. May 20th.

[1] The louis d'or was a gold coin first struck by Louis XIII, in 1640. Later the 20-farnc piece, worth $3.86, was so called.

I enjoyed your little story about Condom very much.

The sodalists make their act of consecration in a body publicly twice a year, on the feasts of the Conception and of the Annunciation, between the sermon and the Benediction, the Blessed Sacrament remaining exposed. You realize that I am speaking of the Young Ladies' Sodality; for the married ladies or Ladies of the Retreat, the married men and the young men all have different celebrations, at which they renew the same act of consecration.

Mlle Lacombe received Mlle de Lachapelle's[2] letter in good time. I will remind her to answer it. I will pass your note on to Mlle de Lamourous.

I am answering your letter immediately after receiving it. When it was handed to me I was on the point of seeking privacy for a few hours in order to dispatch a number of matters long overdue, and it is from this privacy that I have the honor of answering you. My preoccupation at present prevents me from giving free rein to my feelings regarding the little Society. Please do me the favor of telling its members that they are all enshrined in my heart and are often present to my mind before the holy altar. In all of this, my dear daughter, you have a very special part, for you represent the third section and give so many evidences of zeal for the glory of the Mother of God.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Please let Mme Belloc find here the assurance of my respectful remembrance.

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35a. -TO THE ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU OF BORDEAUX

(Aut.- AGMAR)

May 6, 1809

Your Excellency:

This year the feast of Our Lady of Martyrs falls on the Saturday before the Sunday within the Octave of Ascension. Saturday is a day little suited for gatherings, above all there already having been one feast during the week before. If your Grace deems it appropriate, I will postpone the feast of Our Lady to the next day, Sunday.

I am, your Excellency, with deepest respect your very humble and very obedient servant.

[2] Charlotte de Lachapelle, of Condom, later a Daughter of Mary under the name of Mother of the Incarnation and superioress of the boarding school on Condom.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

Archbishop d'Aviau added the following lines to this letter:

I consent on this occasion to what Father Chaminade here requests and I pray that he let me know the meaning of these words from a letter of M. LeBlois: "the observation which Father Chaminade had the goodness to make to me concerning my change have made me decide to address the present to you, Your Excellency, to know if the Archbishop wants to send me to Noailles, etc." I have the honor, etc.

Father Archbishop of Bordeaux

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36.- TO M. PETER PIERRE
STATE POLICE SUPERINTENDENT,
BORDEAUX

(Aut. Rough Draft- Agmar)

Sunday, September 24, 1809

M. Superintendent:

M. Lafon had me called to hear his confession immediately after his arrest, as his confessor was way at the time and even far from Bordeaux.

I did not think I out to refuse him the help and consolation of my ministry; so, the following evening I went to the prison. Realizing since that the police might be interested in knowing the reason for the visits M. Lafon was receiving, I did not want to continue my services to him without informing you of their object and without having your formal consent. I am ready to call on you, if you think these considerations might require a longer interview.

I am with profound respect,

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The arrest of Lafon and the orders of the Emperor for the suppression of all prior associations threatened the very existence of the Sodality. Father Chaminade allows his anxiety to appear toward the end of the following letter.

37. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON
THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut.-Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, November 7, 1809

My very dear Daughter,

I greatly appreciate your concern with news about my health. If I have kept you and your dear Sisters waiting so long, it is not precisely because of illness, although for some time my health has not been of the best. I delayed, first because I intended to send you a *Directory* suited to each of the officers. That is the name we give the instructions destined for each office. But very important affairs intervened, flowed by retreats that I usually conduct during the vacation.

I am beginning to dispatch what is overdue and am turning my attention first toward the third section, which is so close to my heart. All the news I have from it, directly or indirectly, I have passed on to the first two sections. The expression of your sentiments regarding contempt of the world, its vanities, its trappings, often even of its indecent styles, cannot fail to be very useful in your meetings, provided there is no evidence of affectation. You have an occasion for such as expression when, for example, you tell me about some new affiliate. You would have had a very good one when informing us of the death of Mlle Amintha Motier—I have recommended her to the prayers of the Sodality and have prescribed special prayers for three days.

Regarding your letter, we brought up the question in a meeting, whether really Christian women were to rejoice of be sad at the death of their friends who die in the love of God. We seemed to understand that the greater their friendship, the greater also should be their joy. I might think this is also the sentiment of the third section. Nevertheless, you might, at your leisure, consult each one of its members through the officers at the head of the groups. You could then give me a summary of their opinions and of the reasons supporting them. Meanwhile, do not let the delay caused by these consultations prevent you from writing to me about anything that might be of interest to you; but, my dear Daughter, never any mere gossip. If I noticed that you and your devout companions had anything else to do but pray, I should take care to give you a lesson.

You must have received the four *Manuals of the Servant of Mary* which I had sent to you. I also made out the little draft for the 15 livres you told me about, as well as the one for the Manuals.

Speaking of things material an idea occurs to me with which I wish to acquaint you. I own a little property near Bordeaux where grapes are grown which produce a wine that is generally very popular. It is called Haut-Brion Saint-Laurent, because it is located in that

part of the Graves[1] district called Haut-Brion[2] and near the old chapel of Saint Laurent. I have been selling some of this wine locally and for some time now even farther away. This year I had some sent to Chaors, to Figeac, to Paris and elsewhere. It is a general favorite. The oldest vintage I still have is in its fifth year. Due to the drop in the price of wine I let it go this year for 500 livres a barrel at the winery. If you could have some sold for me in your part of the country, you would gratify me. It is easy, by the way, to ship anywhere along the Garonne.

I am, my dear Daughter, with all the feelings of a tender father,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Please assure your mother of my respectful remembrance.

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 32)

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The fears of Father Chaminade were only too thoroughly justified. On November 17th, the police raided his home, seized his papers and prohibited meetings of the Sodality. Father Chaminade did all he could to save it. His first attempt was made at the State Police Superintendent's.

38.- TO M. PETER PIERRE
STATE POLICE SUPERINTENDENT, BORDEAUX

(Aut. Rough Draft – Agmar)

Bordeaux, November 21, 1809

M. Superintendent:

I noticed you were impressed by the hasty report I had the honor of making to you about the regrettable consequences which would follow upon the suppression of the Sodality. As you know, I submitted to it without a complaint and I have remained silent about it if aware of the good that these youth gatherings have done had you not invited me to furnish you with a brief report on it to be brought to the notice of His Excellency, the Minister of the State Police. Your invitation soothed somewhat the bitterness of my soul and gave me a ray of hope.

[1] The *Graves* (our *gravel* is derived from its diminutive form, *gravelle*) is a sandy and gravelly region of vineyards to the southwest of Bordeaux, on the left bank of the Garonne.
[2] The finest red wine are those of Chateau Haut-Brion. The white Graves wines are sold under the names of the estates where they are produced.

In the remarks that I take the liberty of passing on to you, I see to speak only of the Young Men's Sodality, because you had the kindness to tell me that you thought the Government would allow the Ladies' Sodality to continue, and because all that can be said about the former applies all the more so to the latter. How many scandals have been checked these past nine years!

I am with deepest respect, Sir, your very humble and very obedient servant.

The following is the text of the memorandum, in the form of Notes, which accompanied this letter.

NOTES ON THE SODALITY FURNISHED BY FATHER JOS. CHAMINADE,
HONARY CANON OF THE CHURCH OF BORDEAUX

(COPY – AGMAR)

To judge this association by others organized at different times, which have nothing in common with it but a certain terminology, would be to misunderstand it. The Bordeaux group was organized before the Concordat, when the Catholic religion was still subject to a sort of proscription. Its practices began only after the local authorities had been notified. They were submitted, besides, to M. Portalis, the Minister of Religion, by the Vicar General of the diocese. The publicity that was given to the Sodality from its origin is thus an initial guarantee of the fact that there was nothing contrary to the interests of the Government either in its methods or in its purpose.

Its object was to preserve young people from the corruption of vice and to withdraw from it those who might have had the misfortune of falling into it. For this purpose it was though useful to hold meetings on holidays at the hours when the young people are idlest. These meetings were public and always remained so. The time was taken up by talks, dialogues or papers on some point of religion or morality. The one who was called the prefect and his two assistant had no other function than to maintain order and discipline.

Attendance at these meetings, as also at certain devotional practices, had always been free. The clergyman who held the title of director had no other authority over these young people than that born of confidence. His well known character, his moderate principles, his conduct in all the circumstances of his life, whether during the Revolution or thereafter, all served as guarantees for the authorities.

Considering the Sodality in itself, in its practice of piety or in its meetings, no ground for fear could be found, no fanatical religious ideas, no remissness in the respect or submission due to the laws and their guardians. Nine years of irreproachable existence would make all further proof unnecessary, but it is with confidence that we appeal to the testimony of the State Superintendent of Police, whose vigilance over all that is of interest

to the Government or that concerns morality has always been focused upon this institution.

Not only did it present no danger; it was on the contrary unquestionably useful in preserving morals by the improvement it produced among the young people. Should the Government be pleased to consult the local authorities, it will be convinced that no other institution has done greater good in this regard. In the religion or moral instructions given to its young people all the sentiments that make for better sons, better citizens, better subjects were inculcated. To cooperate with the welfare work among these young people, a number of exemplary married men had associated with them and helped them in their desperate need, often snatching them from the cruel choice of misery and crime.

What we are saying about the young men holds even more so for the young women. The Sodality has been for several of them a safeguard from corruption. Their innocence was shielded in the midst of the dangers so widespread in this big city.

In view therefore of its great usefulness in maintaining morals among youth, the suppression of the Sodality is a distinct disservice to society. Deprived of the instructions and of the good example received there, the majority of the young people who are still virtuous will be corrupted by idling about on holidays, associating with loose companions, haunting dangerous public places, and even as a mere consequence of extreme poverty. We shall see the list of scandals, perhaps eve of crimes, lengthen and shall have ample reason to bewail the loss of an institution that was dear to all decent people.

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Many papers had been seize in Father Chaminade's quarters by the police during the November 17th raid. The inventory of these items has been preserved. It consists of 72 items referring mostly to the Sodality- regulations, addresses, etc.- and closes with this remark: "No. 72. Several engravings, of which we are holding the only two, which Reverend Chaminade said were known by the name of Heart of Jesus." Some of these documents seem to have attracted the attention of the police, and Father Chaminade thought it advisable to write the following note in his own defense. Some of its passages are not without historical interest.

OBSERVATIONS FURNISHED BY FATHER CHAMINADE
ON VARIOUS ITEMS IN THE LIST OF HIS PAPERS

(Aut. Rough Draft – Agmar)

On the First Eight Items. The first eight copybooks contain only very rough notes, some extracts or portions of extracts. In them there is little order and sequence. When Father Chaminade had to speak on a topic touching morals or religion, he jotted down a few ideas on a loose sheet of paper. When he thought he had mastered his subject, he

stopped writing. Most of these writings have had no editing whatsoever. All of these loose sheets were collected a few months ago by his secretary. Two of these copybooks were not covered yet.

The same applies to Father Chaminade's other little copybooks. He never wrote any of his talks or instructions except to select a theme-idea, and most o the time he did not even write down his selection.[1]

On Number 23.- Vindicatory memorandum.[2] This memorandum was drawn up in a time of trouble to still qualms of conscience and to acquaint Catholics with the true principles calculated to make us submissive to and dependent upon public authority. Father Chaminade recalls the plan of this only very imperfectly. He merely remarks that it is not surprising that certain precautions were taken to attain the proposed objective. To judge the treatise it is necessary to consider it as a whole together with its objective, not just a few expressions deemed necessary for the type of reader the speaker had in mind. This document makes known the principles of Father Chaminade and the spirit of moderation that has always animated him.

On Numbers 43 and 44.- The two little copybooks contain an answer given by a certain individual to various assertions which had harassed him. The answers were not delivered. Father Chaminade put an end to the worries of both parties[3] orally. That is, at least, what he thinks he remembers.

On Number 58.- Father Chaminade never read this copybook. He recalls that during the first year of the Revolution a priest whom he did not know and whose name he has forgotten brought it to him for examination. He waited for him so as to examine it with him, but never saw him again.

On Numbers 63 and 64.- The Christian Brothers were admitted into the city of Bordeaux. The task of helping and expanding this new establishment was entrusted to Father Chaminade. Subjects for the various schools called for by the city had to be found and trained. Brother Frumentius had at first been unfavorably disposed toward these measures. I wrote to him and at the same time to Father Rauzan asking the latter to see him. That was the reason for Letter Number 35.[1] The secret to be kept and confided only to

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[1] These copybooks are kept in the archives of the Society. A number of passages have been reproduced in *The Spirit of Our Foundation.*

[2] It was drafted in collaboration with Messrs. Mutardier and Gassiot re the legality of the Oath of the Year III (November 27, 1795). This document is no longer extant. Possibly autographic fragments on obedience and conscience recovered in 1909 were part of it.

[3] i.e. the one who had made the assertions and the one who had attempted to answer them in writing.

[1] Father Jean Baptiste Rauzan, founder of the famous Society of the Missionaries of France and sodalist of Father Chaminade, had been appointed by the Archbishop of Bordeaux to arrange with Brother Frumentius, Vicar General of the Institute of the Christian Brothers, for their coming to Bordeaux (1806-07). Father Rauzan's letter is presently in the National Archives. It is printed in *L'Apôtre*, 1953-54, 35:112-113.

the Archbishop referred to the director of the Bordeaux Establishment, because he did not seem at first to understand why certain measures had to be taken. After all parties had been heard there was perfect agreement, as is evident from the letters of Brother Frumentius.

On Number 67. – You will kindly permit Father Chaminade to withhold the name of the person who wrote him this letter, although he recognizes the hand. It is a confidential letter. The writer is his penitent and it is easy to see from the very form of the letter that the troubles of conscience which lead its author to submit to him still further difficulties spring only from his frequent presentation, even in the tribunal of penance, of the principles which oblige us to respect and submit to the supreme power which governs us and to those vested with its authority.

On Numbers 68 and 69.- The little church of the Madeleine is private property. Father Chaminade holds it as a tenant. The lease runs for five years. The church was built by the Archbishop as a secondary oratory. Located near the limits of three large parishes, Saint Eulalia, Saint Paul and Saint Eloi, it was requested by a large number of members of the three parishes. The three pastors agreed to its construction, as well as to its control. The Prefect of the Department was consulted.

The observation on the following number were attached to a sheet which bore the title, "Association of the Twelve." This sheet has been lost.

On Number 71.- Observation on the sheet entitled, *Association of the Twelve*.

The dangers to which youth is exposed, the daily increasing breakdown of morals and the general distress of the times led me some three years ago to jot down on a loose sheet of paper a plan for an association of twelve young men, the most solidly grounded in virtue that I could find. I expected a sort of leaven among the young men, keeping ever alive the principles of morality and religion. The original ideas were never even put into shape. As a matter of fact no meetings of the twelve were ever held.

Some rather strong or obscure expressions need a brief explanation because at the time I was writing only for myself.

1. *In the event of its suppression,* as stated in this note, *the Sodality would survive among the twelve.*

At the time I was in serious straits respecting means of support. Time and again I Considered myself on the verge of abandoning my work. I envisaged the painful necessity of personally disbanding the Sodality in order to take up some gainful occupation in town. I

did not want to lose the fruit of my past efforts.[1] I would achieve these results if the institution of the twelve continued despite this dissolution. Some prudent persons encouraged me. I sold various objects which I could, strictly speaking, dispense with; I received an amount of money from my family; I recovered from this dark distress. Things remained unchanged

2. In the plan that I was forming, this association of the twelve, their meetings, their discussions were to be *secret*, that is, the young men of the Sodality were not to notice anything, otherwise the zeal of the twelve would have been ineffective and the young men would have taken them for unwelcome watchmen.

3. The zeal of the twelve was to redouble at the time of the *missions*. In the Sodality, this term *mission* designates the assignment secretly given to or three of the most fervent sodalists to contact and stir up the most tepid, the most careless, or to bring back those who had gone astray.

4. Correspondence with the sodalists away from Bordeaux was to be entrusted to them, in order to fortify their virtue against the scandals likely to be met with in the various places to which they might have gone.

5. Such is the clear and candid explanation of this little note which ought, moreover, to show concern of my heart for the preservation of the morals of youth. I submitted without a protest to the suppression of the Sodality. My submission to the orders of the Government was beyond question at all times. My desire is really to be useful to society, but never in ways that are hidden and obscure. That is why everything in the Sodality has always been public. That is why the meetings of the twelve have not taken place. All that is secret, all that seems to border on the mysterious, however good it may have seemed, has always been repugnant to me.

Full of interest at the time in this project of association, I jotted down on a bit of paper the names of some young men in whom I thought I had noticed signs of a sturdier virtue.

6. One of the twelve, chosen by his confreres, was to be the moderator of their undertakings and, as it were their very pivot.[2]

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[1] *The following lines were crossed out:* This lack of a livelihood made me fear the early collapse of the Sodality and led me at the same time to forestall losing the fruit of my past efforts.

He personally made corrections between lines as follows: This lack of a livelihood was going to oblige me to disband the Sodality either by returning to my home of by taking up some gainful occupation. However, I did not wish to lost the fruit of my past efforts.

[2] See *Spirit*, Vol III, No. 219

The efforts of Father Chaminade to save the Young Men's Sodality proved futile. He made a supreme effort to save at least the Young Ladies' Sodality and that of the postulants by resorting to the influence of Archbishop d'Aviau with Cardinal Fesch, Archbishop of Lyons, uncle and grand almoner of the Emperor. Father Rauzan[1] just happened to be in Lyons at the time and could lend his support to the attempt.

39. – TO THE ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU, OF BORDEAUX

(Aut. Rough Draft – Agmar)

After December 14, 1809

Your Excellency:

In order to spare you the trouble of looking through the various notes that I have written to enlighten their Excellencies, the Ministers of Religion and of the State Police, and in conformity with the views of Father Rauzan, I am availing myself of the liberty you have granted me to present for Your Excellency's consideration what I deem suitable to place before and petition His Most Eminent Highness.[2] Your Excellency need only suppress, alter or add whatever the friendship with which you honor me and your wisdom will prescribe.

First of all, I would have His Most Eminent Highness acquainted with the event which is alarming so many good people, the suppression of the Sodality whose devotional exercises were for the past nine years being performed so quietly and with such abundant fruit. You will only be paying homage to the truth in assuring His Eminent Highness that the clergyman who was called the director never meddled with matters political, but touched upon them only for the purpose of forming faithful subjects and of teaching them the same principles of respect and submission to the supreme authority and its representatives, etc.

1. His Most Eminent Highness will not be surprised at your requesting him to solicit the re-establishment of the Sodality such as it was, if you inform him of the impossibility of ever otherwise compensating for the good it was doing, not only for religion but also for the Government; that during the past nine years there was never any complaint about it, although its meetings form the first had always been public; that non-members had always been courteously welcomed in its meetings; that, usually, representatives of the police were present at them; that the abuses deemed possible by the Government, because such may have been found in some other sodality, are practically impossible in that of Bordeaux, because by its very constitution no meeting of any kind can ever be held without the director's being present; that the misconduct detected by the Government in M. Lafon, a Bordeaux sodalist, is completely personal and utterly his own; for, neither the Sodality nor

[1] See p. 101 n.2.
[2] The postulants of the Sodality.

its director have ever in any way had anything to do with his connections or correspondence.

2. Should His Majesty refuse to rescind his order for the suppression of the Young Men's Sodality, the Minister of Police, at the request of His Most Eminent Highness, might permit the meetings of the children.[1] By children we mean the boys who have made their First Communion, but who are not yet sixteen years of age. Their meetings are impossible in the parishes, as experience has proved only too clearly. Without the Sodality these meetings will at least[2] be very hard to hold and will not produce the same results, for the lack of good example and motives of emulation the children found in Sodality. I shall always strive to safeguard the greatest possible number from vice.

3. The Young Ladies' Sodality was suppressed at the same time, but this is only an extension by the State Police Superintendent of the order received from His Excellency, the Minister of Police. His Most Eminent Highness could have at least have the order confined to its original compass and permit the existence of this Sodality which has preserved so many young women from the corruption of vice

4. All my papers, seized by the State Police Superintendent, are in his office. His Most Excellent Highness could very easily have the Superintendent ordered to return them to me.[3] They have been examined over and over again. Was anything ever found in them except the sincerity and good faith with which I permitted the seizure of everything that might reveal what I have always been?[4]

Father Rauzan, who has the honor of being with His Most Eminent Highness, could give him all the information he might desire. For further evidence you might join your letter the copies: first, of the Minister of Religion's letter together with the circular of the Minister of Police to the State Police Superintendent; secondly, of my remarks for the Minister of Religion; thirdly, of my notes for the Minister of Police, with the letter I wrote to the Superintendent when I sent him these notes.

Your Excellency will see whether you could still add by way of comment that you would not request the restoration of the Sodality of Bordeaux, if the general procedure of suppressing the sodalities did not manifest a motive not applicable to this particular one; that His Majesty would be pleased to find fewer offenders than he thought and to be able to preserve the institutions whose character guarantees against abuses and contributes

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[1] The postulants of the Sodality.
[2] The *neanmoins* of the original is possibly a slip of the pen for *au moins*.
[3] These papers were actually returned.
[4] The succeeding lines, which were crossed out, a few unintelligible ones being omitted here read as follows:

If your Excellency deems it pertinent, you might add that Father Rauzan, who is with His Most Eminent Highness, could supply full details concerning both myself personally and the Sodality . . . and explain the great evils produced by its suppression. He was a frequent witness of what is happening.

effectively toward perfecting a small portion of his subjects and attaching them to religion and to his own person.

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This appeal was ineffective, not could it have been otherwise, as Cardinal Fesch was powerless to save even the Missionaries of France, whose foundation by Father Rauzan he himself ha sponsored and with whose work Napoleon had himself been so well pleased that of his own accord he had granted them subsidies to defray their expenses. They, like the sodalities, were sacrificed by the Emperor to vent his spleen upon Pius VII.[1]

Until the end of the Empire Father Chaminade limited his correspondence to what was strictly necessary as Letter 40 implies.

The following note was appended to a letter addressed to Father Chaminade by his brother.

39a. – TO M. DAVID MONIER
COUNSELOR-AT-LAW, BORDEAUX

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[1] The Society of the Missionaries of France was established in 1808 at Lyons, whither Cardinal Fesch, who took a special interest in the projected foundation, had invited Father Rauzan upon the recommendation of Archbishop d'Aviau. Before long, however, the young Society was suppressed by Napoleon, despite the favor he had previously shown it. But in 1814 after the Fall of Napoleon, it was reconstituted in Paris at the suggestion of Cardinal Fesch. Father Rauzan was joined at this time by Father Forbin-Janson, afterwards Bishop of Nancy, who eventually founded the Association of the Holy Childhood. The re-establishment was greatly encouraged and aided by the advice of Father Liautard, the founder of Stanislas College (a secondary boarding school and minor seminary somewhat along the lines of that of Mussidan; c.f. Letter 0a, n. 7). Upon the resignation in 1824 of Father Liautard, who had been appointed by Louis the XVIII private tutor to the young Duke of Bordeaux, the whole staff of this famous school, which was to be taken over by the Society of Mary in 1855, joined the Society of the Missionaries of France. The Revolution of 1830, which definitely dethroned the descendents of "the Sun King", Louis XIV, once more completely undid the work of Father Rauzan. Thereupon he left France and went to Rome, where Pope Gregory XVI encouraged him to found a new Society which was to be known as the Fathers of Mercy. In 1839 Bishop Forbin-Janson was invited by Bishop Hughes of New York to introduce the Fathers of Mercy into the United States. They began their American Apostolate in the Diocese of New Orleans, later started a college in Alabama, then came to New York City to look after the growing French population in Manhattan where they took charge of Saint Vincent de Paul Parish, and in Brooklyn, where they conducted Our Lady of Lourdes and Saint Frances de Chantal parishes. The headquarters of the Society were even established in Our Lady of Lourdes Parish and continued there until 1960.

"In September 1960 the Fathers of Mercy relinquished all their city parishes and became a mission community in the strictest sense of the word. Our Constitutions are in the process of being changed and approved by the Sacred Congregation of Religious in Rome."(Letter of Rev. John O'Brien C.P.M., Mission Procurator, under the date of December 14, 1961, to Brother Adolph Kalt, S. M.).

Their general administration was then transferred to Cold Spring, New York. Outside of foreign mission territory their entire membership at the time was in the United States, where they engaged also in home mission work. They, too, added to the other religious vows the vow of stability. Since 1968 they are no longer listed in the *Annuario Pontificio*.

(Aut. – Agmar)

Friday evening, July 6, 1810

My dear Son,

I hesitated at first to send you my brother's letter for fear of being bothersome. I thought it over and quickly convinced myself that you have too good a heart to feel any annoyance at the way I am handling this matter. M. and Mme Lalanne are leaning on Tuesday for Mont-Dore[1] and will pass through Périgueux. If your account is ready they could take it along with all pertinent papers.

Very friendly greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

(*Cover address:* M. David Monier
Saint Columbia Square)

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40. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON
THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, August 27, 1810

Feast of the Piercing of the Heart of Saint Therese.

My dear Child,

Both of us have long been silent. I had neither seen not heard anything of your good messenger since she handed me your letter. Now she appears at the very moment a person who has some papers you would have welcomed is away in the country.

About a month ago I forwarded Agen the four little volumes you had asked me for. My man called twice at your esteemed friend's home to see her, but was not fortunate enough to meet her.

[1] A thermal station in the Auvergne Mountains in southeast central France near Clemont-Ferrand. It has been sought out by sufferers from respiratory troubles since the time of the Romans. It is now also a center for winter sports.

The person in whom you are interested,[2] through whom we became acquainted, is doing fairly well. He has lately allowed himself to be heard from. We have great hopes of seeing him again, possibly before the end of the year.[3] I believe that I am interpreting his sentiments in recommending him to your prayers and to those of your friends.

I recall, my dear Child, that you once asked me what the young ladies who held office in the Sodality were or what they had to do. Whatever may be the motive of your curiosity, I shall answer you in a few words. Each officer became a kind of center to which the young ladies confided to her care directly resorted. Thus a group officer took care of all those who made up her group. A head officer looked after all the group officers that were in her section and settled all the difficulties that might arise in the groups. A good officer was expected to watch constantly over the maintenance of fervor among her companions, encouraging them to be exact in observing the practices and customs of the Sodality, inspiring them to frequent the sacraments and reminding them of the various feasts and General Communion days. The Young Ladies' Sodality was generally very edifying. Divine Providence permitted its suppression. I did not complain about it, although I did regret it because of the good it accomplished. Since its suppression the virtue of its former members is less doubtful. They conduct themselves very well, as a rule. There must not be many among them who have forgotten their consecration to the Blessed Virgin.

I invite you, my dear Child, to make this act of consecration with all your heart on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, if you have received this letter. This would also be good advice to give to all your friends. I am in a way astonished at the graces and blessings received by all those who make it wholeheartedly and who persevere in the sentiments that inspired them to do so. How happy are the true children of Mary! The Mother of Jesus really becomes their Mother. Perhaps, you will say, but Mary cannot be my mother as she was the Mother of Jesus. Without a doubt this is so, if we fail to consider things from the spiritual point of view. But we should look upon her divine Maternity much more form the spiritual than from the natural viewpoint. According to the words of Jesus Himself Mary was more blessed for conceiving Him spiritually than for doing so according to the order of nature. If you do not quite understand this truth I have scarcely touched upon, I shall gladly come back to it in another letter.

I am, my dear Child, your good Father in Jesus Christ, our Savior,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mlle de Batz de Trenquelléon

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[2] Hyacinth Lafon, prisoner in "La Force", a Paris prison dating from the Revolution, but suppressed in 1850.

[3] It was at this time that efforts were being made to have Lafon liberated, as Alexis de Noailles, who had been sentenced as the Leader in this affair, was at large already since April, when he had been granted an amnesty on the occasion of the Emperor's wedding.

Trenquelléon near Port-Ste-Marie)

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These are extracts (all that is extant) from a letter of Father Chaminade in which he congratulates the newly elected Superior General of the Christian Brothers, gives a brief history of the re-establishment of the Christian Brothers in Bordeaux and relates how their novitiate was finally transferred from its original location to his own Villa Saint Lawrence.

40a. – TO VERY REVEREND BROTHER GERBAUD, F.S.C., SUPERIOR GENERAL

(Excerpts – Arch. FSC)

Bordeaux, December 19, 1810

Venerable Brother:

Since your promotion to the Generalate I should like to write to you first to express the archbishop's and my satisfaction at your election. We already know with what wisdom and zeal you have worked for the good of your Institute. Your circular to all the houses fills us with consolation. We have found there again the true spirit of Father de la Salle. As my letter was to be sent together with the one which Brother Paulinus planned to write to you, it was delayed because of his illness. After the various delicate circumstances I have taken the liberty to write to you directly in order to acquaint you exactly with the true situation of the Brothers in Bordeaux and the purposes of their establishment. I will number the topics as they occur to my mind.

1. Long before it was possible to hope that the Institute of the Brothers might reappear in France, two young men[1] embraced this state by diving inspiration and followed the Rule faithfully except for the habit. The Brothers appeared in Lyons. The archbishop requested some for Bordeaux. Brothers Seraphim and Alexander were sent by Venerable Brother Frumentius. They were at first received at the residence of the young men. The city returned to them the former house of the Brothers at the Saint Eulalia Gate and had six schools[2] opened. Brother Seraphim had had a few members come from Toulouse....Two other schools were opened in the seminary buildings. Brother Seraphim had a number of other Brothers come....The archbishop requested the Venerable Brother Frumentius' permission to establish a novitiate in Bordeaux. The permission was granted. I was charged with establishing and looking after it....

[1] See Letter 30b. Lafargue began his initiation into the religious life following the Rule of Saint Jean Baptiste de la Salle under Father Chaminade's guidance, May 6, 1801, and opened his first school in Bordeaux, Jan. 2, 1802. About the middle of 1802 he was joined by Darbignac. See J. Verrier, op. cit. L'Apotre, 1953, 35:118, 119.
[2] See Letter 30b, n. 4.

2. The Saint Eulalia house did not seem adequate for lodging the Brothers engaged in the school and novices in addition. The archbishop wrote again to the Venerable Brother Frumentius and received permission to separate the houses. From the beginning he had also obtained for Brother Paulinus the title of the director of the novices. The difficulty of finding suitable quarters led me to offer the archbishop a part of a country-house which is very close, only twelve or fifteen minutes from the house of the Brothers of Saint Eulalia and of the parish church. This little country-house is a real solitude, entirely surrounded by walls. In the part occupied by the novitiate I had repairs made which were necessary for healthy living and for being independent of the part which I reserved for myself and for the country folk. I had a chapel made adjoining their quarters. The Blessed Sacrament is kept there. I say Mass for them every Thursday, unless some feast prevents me. This part of the house can accommodate only twelve novices.....

3. Our dear Brother Paulinus acquainted me a few days ago with a prospectus which you had passed on to Brother Seraphim....

4. This year the Saint Eulalia house met at the novitiate for its retreat.

5. His Excellency, the Archbishop, Father Boyer, his first Vicar General, and I desire only the prosperity of your Institute. We desire also to have it serve as a support of religion without any change in its forms and customs....Brother Seraphim is a very good religious, full of the spirit of his state....

Pardon me, Venerable Brother, if I have wearied you with too many details and too lengthy reflections. I wish to have you see my love for your Institute and the confidence I have in you together with the esteem I have for the wisdom of your administration. I will add only my very sincere wish for a happy year and the assurance of the profound respect with which I am, Venerable Brother, your humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

Rue LaLande

In a letter dated December 31, 1810, Very Reverend Brother Gerbaud thanks Father Chaminade for his service to the Institute and informs him that he is compelled to transfer the novitiate to Toulouse because of imperial restrictions which obliged him to limit the number of novitiates, and that consequently a house for 30 novices became indispensable. He promised to supply as many Brothers, already formed, as needed in Bordeaux and relieved Father Chaminade of all responsibilities toward the Christian Brothers apart from the general supervision of the satisfactory conduct of the schools taught by them.

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41. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLEON,

THE CHATEAU OF TRENQUELLEON

(Aut.- Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, March 11, 1811

My dear Daughter,

Busy as I am, I shall not let this opportunity pass without writing you a few words at least.

I received your letter with real pleasure. The details into which you enter are proof to me that you are attentive to everything, Be prudent in whatever your zeal inspires you to do by way of continuing the good work you have undertaken among your friends.

Your friends! There are, nevertheless, some of them who scarcely deserve the name. Friends are expected to share the same sentiments, and these are far from doing so. What is more opposed to the spirit of Christianity which animates you than vanity and indecency in dress? I should be greatly tempted to tell you to no longer recognize them as friends. But before breaking with them completely, reprove them severely; some of them may, nevertheless, be willing to correct themselves.

Furthermore, it seems to me more suitable for you to take as friends only young women. Married women are happy only in the company of those in the same state of life. Still, should a young lady with whom you happen to be on intimate terms get married and want to remain your friend, why would you want to break with her?

Our friend[1] is still in Paris. His affairs there are not yet settled.

I must leave you now. The Lord's blessings be upon you and your friends. This wish comes from the tenderness of a father who is entirely devoted to you.

(*Cover address:* For Mlle Adele)

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In the following letter Father Chaminade settles with the Archbishop, who had assumed responsibility for it, the accounts of the novitiate of the Christian Brothers which was about to be transferred from Villa Saint Laurent to Toulouse.[2]

42. – TO ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU

[1] There is still question of Lafon.
[2] See the note after Letter 40a.

OF BORDEAUX

(Aut.- Agmar)

Bordeaux, April 27, 1811

Your Excellency:

I have the honor of transmitting to you the little list furnished by Brother Seraphim[3] in response to the letter of the Minister of Religion. It is the second one he has sent me; the first one seemed to me too defective. I doubt whether it will be satisfactory to you; but, to have in the form which was acceptable July 30, 1808, I should be obliged to you, if you had a search made in your secretariat for the old model. I shall have it filled out promptly.

I have just settled the accounts of the novitiate of the Brothers. I find myself with a credit balance of 1,587 livres, 5 sous, 9 deniers.[4] In my last dealings with Brother Paulinus[5] I retained for myself, on the one hand, the arrears of the annuity that were to accrue to the benefit of the novitiate and that I will try to have entered to your credit; on the other hand, I withheld a small sum of 100 livres which is fully guaranteed. Taking for granted the remittance in full of all these funds, all that would still be due me would be 1,027 livres, 5 sous, 9 deniers.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. If the account is made out in sous and deniers, it is only for the sake of exactness, not of exaction.

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43. – TO ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU, OF BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Agmar)

Bordeaux, May 2, 1811

Your Excellency:

[3] Superior of the Brothers in Bordeaux.
[4] See Letter 2c, n. 1.
[5] See Letter 30b, n. 2.

I had intended to sent your letter to Father Daurensan, [1] when his counsel begged me as a favor to delay its dispatch. Fearing that this might displease you, I wrote to him that it was hard for me to hold Your Excellency's answer etc. He sent me the enclosed reply which I take the liberty of passing on to you. A little later the lawyer himself came and gave me information that very strongly justified the last trip with Father Daurensan made to Bordeaux. If the facts are such as he related them to me—and they are very easy to verify—Father Daurensan could hardly have done otherwise than come and prosecute. During a period of apparent peace his opponents were secretly undermining his position and would have outrageously ruined him had he not taken countermeasures in time. I had previously been unacquainted with these circumstances; they are very serious.

I am sending your secretary the financial status of the Christian Brothers which His Excellency the Minister of Religion is requesting of you.

I have learned, Your Excellency, that the Council definitely set for the 8th or 9th of June. Until then I shall not cease asking God to fill you with the spirit of fortitude and intelligence that will be so necessary to you in the face of a circumstance which will undoubtedly be the most important, as also the most difficult, of your life.

Upon your return to Bordeaux, Your Excellency, if you have a moment to spare, I should like to acquaint you with a little document. It will only take a few minutes.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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[1] Former assistant pastor of Bazas, close friend of Father Martic de Bonnefond, the saintly pastor of Marmande, and a renowned preacher in the dioceses of Bordeaux and of Bazas. This letter concerns an authorization requested by Father Daurensan to appear in court. – On Father Daurensan, *M. Martin de Bonnefond*, pp. 26, 65, 100, and the correspondence of Father Sasausse with Father Chaminade.

How Archbishop d'Aviau realized the hopes expressed by Father Chaminade is a matter of general knowledge. At the Council of Paris, says Msgr. Bernard,[1] the Archbishop of Bordeaux was unaffected by the groveling glibness of that creature of the court, Maury, and all the court prelates were thrown into consternation on hearing him hurl at the imperial favorite this thundering challenge: "Well, judge the Pope, if you dare! Condemn the Church, if you can!" The Archbishop was saved from prison only by his reputation for virtue. "That man is a saint," the Prefect of the Police had told the Emperor, "if you lay hands on him everybody will be against us."

As for the work which Father Chaminade is supposed to have composed at this time, it is impossible to determine which one is meant.

The following three additional letters to Mlle de Trenquelléon are the only ones of the last years of the Empire which have been preserved. The frequent allusions in them to the suspicious scrutiny by the imperial police of everything that had any connection with the Sodality is striking.

44. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. –Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, October 24, 1811

My dear Child,

The reception of your last letter, dated October 14th, gave me great satisfaction. The one before was lost by the person bringing it. You will realize from this little mishap what discretion we must use in writing. Do all the good you can, directly or through others, but by word of mouth. Fire your friends with enthusiasm, get them to do all the good you think they can, provided it appears to me in the plans of Providence. But never let your correspondence have any other purpose than to spur each other on to virtue. If you happen to have something special to tell the others, reserve it for a favorable meeting, etc.

I myself write very little, practically nothing that could not be displayed in broad daylight in case of an accident. Do not interpret my silence as a sign that my sentiments have cooled. You have a special place in my heart; each of your friends also has her own niche. When you happen to see any of them, assure them of this again and again, as they do not seem sufficiently convinced of it. I seemed almost a stranger to the young ladies of Tonneins who came this summer.

[1] One Century of the Church of France, Paris: Bookshop of Saints-Peres, 1907, p.35

I have not yet seen the person who lost your letter. She wrote to me, and I had someone call on her. I understood that she was being bothered by her mother.

Mlle Lacombe is doing some good to the young people of your sex. She is winning over to virtue and religion all those who come to her. Several see her often. Judging form the confidence and intimacy that reign among them, you would say that she is their mother.

The lady with eye trouble might supply for the prayers, she is unable to read by reciting fifteen *Our Fathers* and *Hail Mary's* in honor of the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary and recalling one of these mysteries at each *Our Father* and *Hail Mary*.

The Manuals being sold at Tonneins and elsewhere must be a pirate edition. I had a thousand copies printed at the time on condition that no more would be produced. I paid accordingly. This fraud does me considerable damage. I still have on hand a very great number of loose copies that I have bound as the demand arises; but this is at present practically nil. I will send to Agen or to Tonneins, whichever is more convenient for you, as many copies as you think you can sell. Make whatever arrangements are best.

I remain very respectfully yours, my dear Child, and give you my fatherly blessing with all my heart.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I have the honor of offering your mother the assurance of my respectful remembrance.

I am very well pleased with what you told me about the mystery of the Presentation.

(*Cover address:* To Mlle Adèle)

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45. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut.- Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, April 19, 1812

My dear Daughter,

I do not wish to let the bearer of your letter leave without giving you a little sign of life, despite the additional work that the exercise of my ministry gives me.

I received your various letter with ever-renewed pleasure and interest. Use every opportunity you have to write to me, if only to say: Ï am well; everything is going along nicely" or "All my family is well," etc. Do good with as much courage as prudence.

Your good friend, Mlle Lacombe, has been ill since the beginning of winter, but in spite of it she is doing more work than two healthy women could. God blesses all she does.

Here everything is moving along, though with difficulty. My dear Daughter, often recall this saying of Holy Scripture: *What things a man shall sow, those also shall he reap*.

May the grace and peace of the Lord be with you always.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Please assure your mother of my deep respect.

The bearer has been asked to bring you six Manuals. In a few days I will send a little draft for their price.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Trenquelléon near Port-Ste-Marie)

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46. – TO MLEE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, July 29, 1812

My dear Daughter,

A few days before receiving your last letter, I had the honor of writing to you in behalf of M. Roland. I presume that you received the letter, thanks to the precaution this gentleman must have taken to insure its reaching you. He expects good results from it.

I will do my best to find a worthy wife for your brother, realizing your own ideals and those of your mother. I should be obliged to you, if you furnished me a sort of sketch of your brother: his age, build, personality, character, virtue, financial status, etc., for we must not try to couple the incompatible.

I perceive with real pleasure, my dear Daughter, that fervor is being maintained among your friends. You will have the consolation of seeing them persevere in the practice

of virtue and piety, if you get in touch with them frequently. Never let them out of mind, first, by praying for them; then, by corresponding with them. Urge them to meet and to write to each other, but only with a view to stimulate each other to love God.

While writing these last words, I thought it might be possible to get some notes to you, either by the boats or by sending them to AGeneral Even if there were no letters, these would keep you informed. You would make use of them for yourself and for others also. Neither you nor anyone else can be compromised by the exchange of mere notes having absolutely no purpose other than the service of God or the glory of our heavenly Mother. From today on, I am having Mlle Lacombe see to it. It will be up to her to ask me what to furnish for her bulletins. Let us always try to swell the number of the Children of Mary. Let us steel ourselves against the assaults of hell.

I am, my dear Daughter, with respectful and profound fatherly feelings.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Port-Ste-Marie)

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On March 12, 1814, Bordeaux flung wide its gates to the Duke of Angoulême,[1] and a few days later the Government of Louis XVIII was proclaimed in Paris. These events filled Father Chaminade with joy, as appears from the following letter whose date must have accompanied the conclusion on a sheet that has been lost.

47. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, April[2], 1814

My dear Child,

God's mercy has finally declared itself in the favor of France, with Bordeaux enjoying its first fruits. Is it because devotion to the Blessed Virgin is highly esteemed in Bordeaux? Because she is constantly honored and invoked here by a great number of the faithful of every age, sex and condition in life? I should make bold to believe it, if we children of Mary were also more fervent in the service of God. I am nonetheless filled with joy at the thought that it was a faithful sodalist[3] who had what I believe the first white flag to flutter in France hoisted above the belfry of Saint Michel's in this city. Let us, my dear Child, cling more closely than ever to the cult of our heavenly Mother. Yes, Mary is truly and lastingly our Mother!

Mlle Lacombe died, January 23,[4] or rather she began on that date to live a live that is alone worthwhile. Her virtue never wavered or weakened toward the end. We had agreed, as soon as she seemed beyond human help, that she should never betray the happiness she experienced in suffering a great deal, and the joy that she felt at going to her heavenly home. During her life her yearning for penances and humiliations was insatiable. She thrilled interiorly with joy as she noticed the hour of her death delaying more and more,

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[1] See Letter 50, n. 2.
[2] This date is more probable than that of the French edition.
[3] John B. Estebenet, 1777-1848, dean of the past prefects of the Sodality, who was principal of one of the best reputed boarding schools in Bordeaux. After 1830 he entered the Society of Jesus and died a member.
[4] Mlle Lacombe did not die on the 23rd, but on the 25th of January, as appears from this transcription of the official record of her death made by Father Joseph Verrier from the document in the archives of the city of Bordeaux:

State civil of Bordeaux (Sud)-1814- Death. No the 255. 26 of the aforesaid months (January) it has given verbal made by the comissarie to the deaths, of which it resulted that MARIE-THERESE LACOMBE of PUYGUERAUD, age of surroundings 34 years, native of Saint Cibard, departure. from the Gironde, celibataire, demeruant has Bordeaux, street Lalande No.4, girl of few Simon Lacombe de Puygueraud, owner, and of Jeanne MONTARD of LASSAIGNE, are decedee yesterday morning has 5 h. Sure the declaration of Simon Laclaverie, owner, and Charles Leberthon, officer reprocesses, both same hands, temoins major; and have sign verbal the depose with files LED the town hall, division of the tate civel. The assistant of the amire. sign: Labroue "

enabling her to suffer still more before her final departure. She passed nearly a month in very acute pain. During the last eight or nine days she could not move without the aid of a companion. On the last day this person noticed that, when the patient realized that the time when I usually visited her was approaching, she had herself turned in order to suffer the more and to deprive herself of the pleasure of seeing me. She had long been making one of the stations of the Way of the Cross every hour, and during the last three weeks of her life, at each station she received her sufferings for one of the Young Ladies' Sodality groups. I have never witnesses a livelier and more lasting zeal for the salvation of young women. Cloaked with great modesty and deep humility, she had for the past several years been ceaselessly busy instructing them, encouraging them and rendering them all kinds of services and praying for them.

For a week now I have been coming back to this letter without being able to finish it. If your uncle has left I will ask your cousin to send it to you.

I missed a great deal in not being able to see your brother.[1] I met his father-in-law at his inn without realizing it. As he went simply by his title of Mayor of Agen, I was not aware of his relationship. I should have congratulated him on his new son-in-law, just as I should have congratulated your brother on his marriage. I believe your sister-in-law assists you in your good works. Please let me know how matters stand.

From now on we will no longer bother to plan convenient means of corresponding, but whenever we are able to write we will use the mails, unless there is some difficulty in doing so. As for the expense this correspondence might entail, we might make provision for it.

Another week has just passed without my being able to take up my pen. Patience. Still, I must confide to you an inner feeling I have long since had, and which may have caused some delay. I would say to myself at times: "Let's see how Mlle Adèle will take these delays in answering her letters, if...., if...., if, come what may, she is still completely convinced of my sentiments toward her and toward all the young ladies whose leader she is." For my part I think that the religious bond which unites us is forever indissoluble. I will explain myself at greater length at the proper time and place.[2] I wish to finish this letter by all means and put an end to the trial that I had in mind.

Please send me a complete list of all the young ladies, their family name, Christian name, age, home, or rather their address, and the status of their parents. Be sure that all the family names are very legibly written. Indicate the officers and their groups, those also who have made their Act of Consecration.

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[1] Charles de Trenquelléon, who had just married Mlle Ad1èle de Sevin, daughter of the Mayer of Agen.
[2] We cannot but find in this passage a first allusion to the projects for religious foundation entertained by Father Chaminade. In fact, we have but to compare it with the letter of August 30, 1814, in which Father Chaminade admits to his future co-worker that since 1813 he has been thinking of her for his projected foundation and the meaning of these words, "I will further explain myself," seems clear and to the point.

As a reward for this work, I promised that, as soon as I have this, I will have the names of the young ladies entered in the Mass Book. We call "Mass Book" a large register, neatly bound, in which until now the names of the young men sodalists were written. The young women had a Mass Book of their own. In future all the names will appear in the same register. On Sundays and holidays, after the recitation of the Office, when I have gone to the altar to celebrate Holy Mass, the first three chief officers of the Young Men's Sodality come up to the lowest altar steps, and the Prefect hands me the Book and says aloud: "Reverend Moderator, the young men devoted to the worship of Mary recommend themselves to your prayers. May their names be transported from the altar of the Lamb immolated for us to the Book of Life." The Book remains on the altar during the Holy Sacrifice. I will see what is to be done to complete the work of organizing you. Let me hear from you often and in sufficient detail. Always speak to me with the frankness and sincerity of a child to its good father.

Mlle Chagne[1]has replaced Mlle Lacombe. Not only has the Sodality lost nothing by this replacement, but in all justice it must be said that it gained greatly. It seems the good Lord created her for the express purpose of filling up this difficult position. Sweetness, firmness, prudence, uprightness of mind, humility, docility, engaging manners, knowing when and how to speak, well educated, the most stubborn characters end by yielding to her. All love her and respect her has their mother. Many of the young ladies attribute the happiness of having her at their head to the prayers of Mlle Lacombe.

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The following letters are connected with the re-establishment of the Sodality.

In the letter of June 4 there is question of a person named Lafon, distinct from the Sodalist of the same name. Apparently he was a priest of the diocese, and it is clear from these lines that at this time Father Chaminade still acted as intermediary in the affairs of the diocese. But from now on he will free himself more and more from this work in order to devote himself wholly to the Sodality and to his future religious foundations.

As regards the difficulties with the board of trustees of Saint Eulalia's, the parish within whose territory the Madeleine Oratory of the Sodality was located,[2] the Life of Father Chaminade gives all the details.

48. – THE ARCHBISHOP OF D'AVIAU OF BORDEAUX

(Aut.- Agmar)

[1] This young lady undoubtedly belonged to the Chagne family at whose place, rue Abadie 8, Father Chaminade had had his legal residence all during the Revolution. Cf. Letter 6, n. 3.
[2] Cf. Observations on Numbers 68 and 69 (in the list of Father Chaminade's papers seized by the police). p. 102.

Saturday morning, June 4, 1814

Your Excellency:

Yesterday evening I received an answer from M.[3] Lafon. Despite all the diplomacy that I used in transmitting your answer to him, it seems to have piqued him. I have the honor of forwarding to you the first letter he wrote to me.

I have also received from you a resolution of the board of trustees of Saint Eulalia's. I will draw up my answer to it early next week. I am not at all surprised that Satan is beginning to bestir himself. It is a little indication that with courage and prudence it is possible to do great good for religion by continuing the work of the Sodality on the level reached at its restoration.

Since I can now more regularly consult you without fear of compromising you by the disclosure of the thoughts of my heart, I will tell you everything with the confidence of a child in the best of fathers.

I am most respectfully Your Excellency's very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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The letter of July 19th treats of the reprinting of the Manual of the Servant of Mary, as the editions of 1801 and 1804 had been quickly sold out, proof of the vitality of the Sodality.[1] The 1801 edition was discovered some 50 years ago by Father L. Cousy.

The "Contract of Reorganization," to which allusion is made in the following letter, is the "Contract of the Youth of Bordeaux" signed April 30, 1814, shortly after the abdication of Napoleon, by the members of the Sodality restored to life.[2]

49. – TO M. DAVID MONIEY, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW, BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Agmar)

Tuesday morning July 19, 1814

My dear friend,

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[3] According to French usage no distinctive title need be given to diocesan priests, though "Monsieur l'abbé" is often used. Hence the uncertainty concerning the status of "M. (Monsieur) Lafon."
[1] See *Spirit*, No. 171.
[2] See the Life of Father Chaminade and L'Apôtre, 1914-19-20, 11:1.

M. Hirigoyen came to me yesterday on behalf of his friend, M. Duguet, a printer in Libourne, and requested me to award him the contract for reprinting the Manual. He was taking, so to say, upon himself to induce his friend to be satisfied with 110 livres per page of print. I offered him 100. He is to write to him by tomorrow's mail for his final word. M. Hirigoyen would, moreover, like to have us see other local printers, to make sure that M. Duguet is a giving us a better deal than any other. This M. Duguet, he says, is a very good printer. Before buying the Libourne presses he managed the printing establishment of M. Baume for many years.

M. Artaud and I no longer disagree on any point except the cost of the tiling in the hall on the first floor. I am offering him 300 livres, expecting him to have the tiling done. He wants 300 livres and the job to be at my expense, though he would supply a little lime and sand that he has on hand. I am a bit afraid that some day I shall regret my delays.

Several of our men are asking for the Statutes of Contract of Reorganization. The register had been bought. If it did not appear, it was because Father Vincent had been ill. One of the advantages of this little document is the solemnly adopted article concerning the assistance to his parish, etc. After all, as you remarked, it is hardly necessary for all to sign their own names, of for the names of those who are connected with the Society to be entered below them. The document contains absolutely nothing new, only a clearer expression of some practices and of the sentiments that brought about their adoption.

Greetings to you as friendly as ever.

William Joseph Chaminade

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 30)

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49a. – TO M. DAVID MONIER,
COUNSELOR-AT-LAW,
BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Agmar)

Friday morning, July 22, 1814

My dear Friend,

I am in agreement with M. Artaud regarding the rent for the house which we looked at together the other day. I am giving him three hundred francs a year. The first floor of tiling will be done at joint expense; that is, I will pay half the cost of the materials he will have to buy, and of the labor. The lease will run for five years. The rent will be due from the day on which he tells us he can let me have the keys.

I shall be obliged to you if you forward the contract to me in duplicate, as you know better than anyone else how it is to be drawn up. It may include a receipt for the first quarter. I will pay when I sign it.

With best regards I am your friend and devoted servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 30)

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49b. – TO M. DAVID MONIER
COUNSELOR-AT-LAW
BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Agmar)

Monday evening, August 22, 1814

My dear Friend,

Mlle Isabelle would like to take up again the affair of Mlle Lacombe's will. She is more than anything else afraid of finding herself at fault regarding the registration-tax collector of Libourne.

Do you think M. Artaud would sell the house he is renting to me? If you think you can deal with him, do what you think proper, bus as if acting of your own accord, and not as an agent. I have not as yet had the contract notarized; I will try not to forget it.

Have you any news about our printer? I shall be obliged to you, if you take care that he does not overreach me.

Very friendly greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 30)

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In the summer of 1814, to Paris Sodalists, Counts Jules de Polignac and Alexis de Noailles,[1] members of the retinue of the Princes,[2] secured an introduction to the Bordeaux Sodality. They were offered the titles of honorary Prefects with the gold-plated silver medal of the prefects of the Sodality.[3]

50. – TO COUNT JULES DE POLIGNAC
PARIS

(Aut. Rough Draft – Agmar)

Bordeaux, September 29, 1814

My Lord:

The Council of the Young Men's Sodality of Bordeaux is entrusting to M. Estebenet,[1] one of its former prefects, the honorary-prefect medal. It was struck for you in accordance with the resolution, of which it had the honor of forwarding a copy to you recently. Had you been present, I should have had the sweet satisfaction of investing you myself with the livery of the Blessed Virgin and of suspending upon it the emblem of the authority you are

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[1] Jules, Count, later Duke, of Polignac, 1771-1847, was a brother of the prime minister of Charles X, whose policy upheld by the king precipitated the Revolution of July 1830. He emigrated during the Revolution of 1789, was a party in 1804 to an abortive plot aimed at overthrowing Napoleon, was arrested and condemned to death. His sentence being commuted to life imprisonment, he succeeded in escaping, became aid-de-camp to the Count d'Artois and re-entered France with the allies. He held an important position at Court during the Restoration and retired to his estates after 1830.

Count Alexis de Noailles, 1783-1835, son of Viscount Louis de Noailles, who had distinguished himself in America with his brother-in-law, Lafayette, during the American Revolution, was one of the first and most devoted members of the Paris Sodality. In 1809 he was the heart of resistance offered to Napoleon's oppression of Catholic consciences and did not fear, at the risk of his life, to disseminate copies of the Pope's bull of excommunication while His Holiness was a prisoner in Savone. Thrown into prison he owed his release to the efforts of his brother, Count Alfred de Noaillees, aide-de-camp of Maréchal Berthier, who had fought in the American Revolution and subsequently became one of Napoleon's marshals. Elected a deputy in 1815, he placed his powerful influence completely at the service of religion. He continued his very cordial relations with Father Chaminade and worked in concert with him for the creation of normal schools in a number of Departments of south-central France; but the Revolution of 1830, which overthrew the government of Charles X, put an end to all their projects. His death followed soon after in retirement.

[2] The Princes at the time were: the Count d'Artois, brother of Louis XVI and Louis XVIII, whom he succeeded as Charles X, and his two sons, the Duke of Angoulême, the last dauphin of France, and the Duke of Berry.

[3] See the *Life of Father Chaminade* and *L'Apôtre*, 1914-19-20, 11:6.

[1] See Letter 47, n. 2.

receiving in the Sodality of Bordeaux. This rank imposes upon you the obligation to support, to the best of your ability, the family of the august Mother of God and never permit the introduction into it of any abuse that might alter the nature of its constitution. The prefects are regarded as the foundation and pillars of the Sodality. They are often invited to become ever more perfect models of true sodalists.

I had intended to write to My Lord de Noailles, but I am hard pressed for time. M. Estebenet is leaving with the mail. Please allow this letter to be intended for both of you. I had the honor of writing to him in Lyons. I suspect that M. Franchet, his secretary, did not give him my letter; for what motive I do not know.

I am with respectful esteem,

VI

THE FOUNDATION OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY

(1814-1818)

With the letter of August 30, 1814, there begins an important correspondence, which leads up to the foundation of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary two years later.

Mlle de Trenquelléon had just made known her intention of consecrating herself together with several of her companions to the religious life, and she had begged the local director of the Sodality, Father Laumont, pastor of Aiguillon near Agen, to draw up a constitution with this in view.

Now, Father Chaminade himself happened to be preparing certain religious foundations in the heart of the Sodality in Bordeaux. In the following letter, he acquaints his correspondent with his own projects.

51. – TO MLLE DE TRENQULLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, August 30, 1814

For the greater glory of God and of Mary, our Mother.

My dear Child,

I received your little messages in due time through the courtesy of M. Grammont, of the Royal Guard. This young man, whose name you did not tell me at the time, had made an appointment with me, but I did not see him any more. I asked for him through one of his companions who, by the description I gave of him, recognized the person I meant. I do not know where he did anything about the matter; at any rate, I have had not further news of him. I regret the fact, because it seemed to me we should have done some good.

I had the lists of the four groups[1] entered, and I notified the whole Sodality, etc. As I was awaiting the outcome from day to day, I did not acknowledge their receipt. I did not receive the other letter you refer to in your last letter,
Dated August 13th. At the same time I received a very edifying letter from Father Laumont and, three or four days later, a fairly exact list of our entire family upland[2]. It will be promptly inscribed in our registers and transcribed from them into the Mass Book.

Be faithful, my dear Child, to your calling. Work at increasing the family of Mary, but take care, while swelling its number, not to neglect nourishing the piety of the older members and having them grow in virtue and in fervor.

Father Laumont informs me that he will send me your constitutions in the near future. You could tell me at the same time, how they are being observed, whether they are well adapted to the persons who are toe make them a rule of life, whether they seem to strict, too inconvenient, or whether they seem inadequate, etc. We must make serious efforts to insure regularity in this foundation.

My dear Child, you desire your group to be established as a religious community. I will reveal several things to you in strict confidence:

1. Last year, when I expressed a strong desire to see you, it was especially for the purpose of acquainting you with a project which, although not altogether the same, greatly resembles it nevertheless. Some years ago already we started to carry it out. Several young ladies live like religious, take vows, wear a religious habit under their ordinary clothes, etc. Mlle Lacombe was one of those religious. Up to now, I have never allowed the group as a whole to take vows for more than three months, and I did not think it advisable to permit a perpetual profession. I shall have occasion to acquaint you with my motives for this policy. This religious association was made up of the majority of the officers. The sodalists are not aware of its existence. Religious communities, it seems to me, would not fulfill the purpose of this institution. We shall often come back upon this important purpose. In the meantime let us continually request the light of the Holy Spirit, that we may only do what God wills.

2. We have here among the Ladies of the Retreat a young widow of humble rank, but of rare virtue, to whom it seems that God communicates Himself in a special way. She has

[1] See Letter 31
[2] In the Agen district.

kept telling me for the past two months or so, that several communities are going to be formed in the Sodality, etc.

I must close here, to make use of the chance I have to send you this letter. I have the honor of greeting Father Laumont. I will not delay answering him. I should be very glad to receive your constitutions as soon as possible. Do not make any important move toward an establishment without letting me know about it beforehand. I will not delay writing to you to tell you further what I cannot do at present.

I have just seen all the leaders of the Sodality. All of them, especially Mlle Chagne, have asked me to pass on to their dear Sisters the assurance of their most cordial friendship.

The sash is worn day and night, even at the time of burial.

I cannot reread this letter; I am kept so busy. I greet all our dear flock, and pray to the Lord to bestow upon it the abundance of His blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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In the following letter Father Chaminade is still more explicit with regard to his projects.

52. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON

THE CHÂTEAU DE TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, October 8, 1814

My dear Child,

Father Laumont wanted me to send to your address an answer which he requests of me. At the same time I will add a few words for you too. Work continues to increase here, and the time elapsed between my last letter and this one has made me forget where I left off. I know I was unable to finish telling you everything I had in mind.

The young widow of whom I spoke to you continues to talk to me about religious foundations. She criticizes me for scarcely answering her. She is astonished that I am not going ahead. I am acting in this way purposely to try her.

Although I am sometimes late in answering your letters, do not fail to write to me everything that might interest our dear Daughters. Be zealous and persevering! With the protection of our august Mother, we shall succeed in fulfilling the designs of the God upon us and upon them.

I am taking up my pen to write to you, after several days of interruption, during which I received your little messages dated September 25th. I have not received your constitution and I am speaking to Father Laumont about it.

I am going to tell you my whole secret. Could a father still withhold anything form one of his daughters who surrenders herself without reserve to his direction? Fourteen years ago I returned to France as Missionary Apostolic throughout our unhappy land, subject, however to the approval of various Ordinaries. There seemed to me no better way of exercising these functions than by establishing a sodality like the one now existing. Each sodalist, of whatever sex, age or condition in life is required to become an active member of the mission. Several sodalists of each branch of the Sodality, though still living in the world, would constitute a little religious society. Men and women officers to run the Sodality would always be found in these societies. A number of these religious men, as well as women, have desired to live together. There was every advantage in this. Right now several would like to live a regular community life, abandoning all temporal concerns. This inspiration ought to be acted upon, yet care must be taken that it does not essentially change the work of the Sodality, but that it rather helps it along. A few sodalists have entered different religious communities. We noted this with pleasure. When the women officers informed me of it with a certain feeling of regret, I told them, for their consolation, that we are playing “losers winners.” But here we have something quite different: these are sodalist religious, or rather, sodalists who, while remaining active sodalists, wish to live the regular life of the religious. This is why I told Father Laumont that your constitution was to be carefully drawn up and that I should be very glad to see it.

You may pass this letter on to Father Laumont. You realize how much detail this sort of plan should include when complete. Although up to now I have always busied myself with all the branches of the Sodality, I have nevertheless taken greater care of that of young men, as being the most difficult, and the one which for all that could best contribute to the end I had proposed in the mission.

Write to me soon, my dear Child, if your desire to be a religious includes the views and sentiments of a little missionary. Open your heart completely and with great candor at all times. Who are the ones among you that might have a vocation to be religious?

I must leave you now so as not to miss the next mail too. May the blessings and peace of the Lord be upon you and all of your dear flock.

William Joseph Chaminade

(*Cover address:* To Mlle Adèle de Batz Trenquelléon
Château

Port Ste. Marie)

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After receiving this letter, Mlle de Trenquelléon talked the matter over with her companions and it seems that they had no trouble in accepting the ideas of Father Chaminade.

They sent their projected constitution, the work of Father Laumont, to Bordeaux.

53. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, December 1, 1814

My dear Child,

From day to day I was awaiting the result of the council which was to be held at the time you wrote your last letter. I passed this letter almost immediately to the little group of your Sisters who are specially consecrated to the Lord.

I was not able to attend to your, or rather our, constitution until I after several retreats which I had to give, or at which I had to help out. I shall have to go back to it again a week from today.

The first draft of the constitution which you sent me is still far from perfect, according to your own observation. I should have passed on to you that of our young religious, but for the fact that after mature examination I saw that it needed further development.

Two important considerations led me to this work. The first is the determination with which, it seemed to me, several of you were beginning to bind yourselves by vows. The second id the fact that here some are in a position to bind themselves by perpetual vows., which means that they are going to start a real religious Order. Till now vows were made at intervals of three months. I was with them to settle every difficulty or even to dispense them from their vows in case of necessity. But, annual vows and, still more, perpetual vows—I may die an, furthermore, you are far from me. You need a constitution sufficiently developed, detailed regulations, etc. All the basic points for the young ladies and for the Ladies of the Retreat are sufficiently settled to allow us to go on in the near future.

Nevertheless, I still have to add many rules by way of development. Those referring to Christian modesty are the most advanced. You understand that, apart from articles of constitution, rules are necessary, even though these articles are themselves rules.

It is my wish that on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin or during its Octave you and your dear companions limit yourselves to making the one vow of chastity for six months. By then, and I hope even by the Feast of the Purification[1], to be able to have you sufficiently prepared to begin a regular novitiate. Patience and courage! I am so busy that whole weeks pass by without my being able to take up my pen.

Please give Father Laumont my best regards. You would do well even to pass him my letter.

I forgot to forward to you Mlle Chagne's answer to the letter addressed to her for the Sodality. See how much I need kind indulgence?

I am with sincere devotedness very truly yours,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* To Mlle Adèle de Batz Trenquelléon
Château

Port Ste. Marie)

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In the Spring of 1815 Father Chaminade seems to relegate the projects of foundation to second place. He is preoccupied with what is most urgent, above all the development of the Sodality of Agen.

54. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, March 14, 1815

My very dear Child,

[1] i.e., already within two months.

In spite of all the answers I owe you, I will have to be brief. I have just written a very long letter to Mme Belloc, with the recommendation that a copy be sent to you together with a copy of communication that I presented to His Excellency, the Bishop of Agen.[1]

The Sodality is approved by your good prelate in all its classes and forms, as you will see from the copies that Mme Belloc will send you. Since you are less easily reached by the bishop than Mme Belloc, and since, furthermore, I named her head of the Agen group, of the Ladies of the Retreat as well as of the young ladies, it was urgent to instruct her. Everything will move along quite well, but there will be no troubles and difficulties. Still, how should we prove to God and to Mary our zeal in their service, if it meant nothing to us by way of hardship? Love is nourished by the labors undertaken for the glory of the Beloved.

The Vicomte de Montmorency[2] was publicly received as a sodalist last Sunday with the Marquis of Dampierre[3] and Sir Mirambec. The ceremony was very edifying. I did not think that ought to present the petition of Father Laumont as I shall have the honor of drawing his attention to it in writing, but I hope to make up for it generously.

You may look all over the big localities where groups could be formed large enough to make them regular and able to conduct the Sodality exercises publicly. Be sure to use great prudence. Try always to have an understanding with the Reverend Pastors. Always consult Father Laumont. Write to tell me everything that happens. Above all, do not rush anything. With the copies the Mme Belloc will send you, you or Father Laumont will be able to reach an agreement with the Reverend Pastors.

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[1] Bishop, Jean Jacoupy (1761-1848), born at Saint-Martin de Ribérac, in the Diocese of Périgueux, was a fellow-countryman and friend of Father Chaminade. He governed the Diocese of Agen for nearly forty years (1802-1840), then retired to Bordeaux, where he died.

[2] Mathieu, Viscount, then Count of Laval, and finally Duke of Montmorency (1766-1826), on of the last representatives of the family from which came also the first bishop of Canada and of most of the present United States, the Ven. Francois Laval (1708), their common ancestor being Guy II Montmorency-Laval-Loué (1484). The Montmorency family, which continues on the distaff side in the house of Luxemburg, gave six constables (i.e., first officers of the French crown), twelve marshals, several admirals to France, and a number of bishops and cardinals to the Church. Though a boy of fifteen at the time, Mathieu crossed the sea with his father as a member of Lafayette's expeditionary force to fight for the independence of the American colonies. After Yorktown, he returned to France full of democratic ideas and was elected a deputy of the States-General of 1789. The bloody massacre, however of the King's Swiss Guard, August 10, 1792, which marked the downfall of Louis XVI, determined him to emigrate to Switzerland. He returned to France in 1795, after the end of the Reign of Terror. Upon the restoration of the monarchy, he rallied to its support and became aide-de-champ of the Duke of Angoulême (See Letter 50, n. 2) in 1814. The following year he was made a peer of France and entitled thereby to a hereditary seat in the Upper Chamber of the French Legislative Assembly established in 1814. The summit of his political career was reached when he became Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Cabinet (1821-1822). The French Academy opened its door to him in 1825, and the next year he was entrusted with the tutorship of the royal grandson, the six-year-old Duke of Bordeaux. It was as a member of the retinue of the Duchess of Angoulême that he visited the city of Bordeaux in 1815.

[3] The Marquis of Dampierre, a young man greatly devoted to the Sodality activities, whom we shall meet again as Prefect of the Sodality of Agen.

For the time being, I am not saying anything to you about the vows, but be calm and help those do the dame whom you are by a twofold title to have as companions and Sisters. I am keeping you in mind.

With respectful attachment, I am your Good Father in our Lord Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz)

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At the very moment that Father Chaminade was writing these lines, Napoleon, escaped from Elba, was marching on Paris. "The Hundred Days"(March-June, 1815) between his phenomenal return and definitive defeat at Waterloo put a halt to everything, activities as well as correspondence. In fact, Father Chaminade was arrested and confined at first in the Fort du Ha, the prison of Bordeaux, built along the lines of the Paris Bastille. Later he was ordered to go to Châteauroux. The first letter which follows this upheaval dates from the month of September. In it we see Father Chaminade more eager than ever to spread the Sodality and busy, besides, with organizing the future religious Community.

55. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, September 7, 1815

My very dear Child,

At last I am getting around to you. I can say in all truth that despite my long silence I have never had you and our dear devout family upland so much in mind. Over and above our whole backlog of business, regular and special, a number of valuable opportunities for developing and extending our work turned up. I thought it my duty to profit by them. *The harvest is great.*

During his stay in Bordeaux, the Viscount of Montmorency was on of the most regular and edifying of our sodalists. We bestowed upon him the ran and the modest insignia of an honorary prefect of the Sodality.

We had two copies of the new Manual of the Servant of Mary bound for our august princes [1]. M. de Montmorency did the presenting. He is the one who is entrusted with

[1] The Duke and Duchess of Angoulême

suggesting to them, little by little, at the opportune moment, the interest they ought to take in the work of the sodalities. On leaving, “Madame” gave orders through M. de Montmorency that a few odds and ends of the bouquets she had received be give n to me. Our young sodalists are now using them to make four bouquets for the Blessed Sacrament. There is a framed engraving which I will always leave on my mantelpiece.

I had thought that I could entertain the bishop of Agen at the time of his stay in Bordeaux. I was disappointed. I met him with the archbishop just as the clergy were going to pay a visit to the prince and princess. He had the kindness to go out of his way to greet me. He left the next evening. He is still unaware that I had gone to his hotel to pay him a visit; I have not been able to write to him yet. You are the first of the upland folks to whom I am writing.

Do I hear you saying, “Then you intend to neglect us?” Why no, my dear Child. I am putting off several other works of equal importance for the sake of this one. I have in mind to give it priority over all business beyond Bordeaux. Let us take a little look into the matter:

1. With regard to the Junior and Young Men’s Sodality, since in Agen they must not be distinct, I doubt that it can be properly organized if the Marquis of Dampierre, who was appointed its first prefect, is not assisted. It seems to me some retreat exercises ought to be conducted at Agen for the juniors, to stir them up, etc. However, the Bishop must see the need of it.

2. In going to or returning from Agen I would follow whatever route and make whatever stop-overs you might wish, in order to see the greatest possible number of you Children. I should have liked very much to speak personally to the Reverend Pastors in whose parishes the groups or parts of groups appeared publicly, to regularize their meetings etc., but I am afraid these details might do more harm than good. So, have an understanding with Mme Belloc, work out a little plan, bring it to the attention of anyone whom propriety or duty suggests. Do whatever you would have to do if you were going to have it carried out, but still, before you do this, send it on to me that I may make my observations if necessary. I promise to return it to you promptly.

3. What I am saying for the young ladies applies also to the Ladies of the Retreat. In small localities, the young ladies might join the Ladies of the Retreat. Whatever would be open or public could be held in common. These meetings, made up of a groups or part of a group of young ladies, would constitute the Sodality of this or that locality.

The Duke of Agoulême (cf. Letter 74, n. 2) married his cousin, Marie Thérèse, the daughter of Louis XVI, who is called “Madame Royale.” The duke was personally responsible for the cheers with which Bordeaux welcomed the return of French royalty, March 12, 1814, a month before Napoleon’s abdication; while the duchess backed the Southwest’s resistance to Napoleon when he reappeared in 1815. The princely couple had just visited Bordeaux shortly before this letter was written, in order to show their gratitude of the loyalty of “The City of March the Twelfth.”

You are anxious for me to speak to you of your total consecration to the service of Mary and of the obligations flowing from it. My dear Child, before pronouncing on the subject, I should like first to see the places and above all the persons involved. As for your Constitutions, I should not like to ratify it before seeing you and explaining it to you. Presumably we will not put it into effect publicly either, before we have at least laid it before the Pope and the king.

While the Revolution was going on, an excellent man[1] had engaged in the formation of men and women religious, all of them living in the world. He had the principles guiding these institutions printed in Latin. Their regulations have remained in manuscript form. I succeeded in procuring a copy of the printed publication. I am going to read it very thoughtfully. Then I will reread what I have already written for you. I will possibly submit these little manuscripts to the criticism of two or three persons whose wisdom I know.

My dear Child, do not be annoyed at these delays. I should even be uneasy if the ardent desire you have of consecrating yourself to God were overhasty. Still, it will be a good thing to get yourself as well as your close friends, used to the rule of life which you are to follow. This experience may even help us see clearly on various points. I will write to you on this subject as soon as I can.

The Manual of the Servant of Mary has been reprinted in sufficient quantity to permit you to get as many copies as you need. I am thinking of storing them at Mme Belloc's. They sell for 45 sous. I could also send tome to M. Clairac at Tonneins. The reading and rereading of the *Introduction to the State of a Sodalist* is to be recommended. This will be found at the beginning of the second part of the Manual.

I should have many other things to tell you, my dear Child, but I prefer to save them for another time, so that this first letter may not be delayed any longer.

It just occurred to me that, although this letter was written for you alone, it would be good to pass it on to Fathers Laumont and Larribeau, if the latter's health has not broken down under the strain of the work he had planned, and to Mme Belloc, who could herself confidentially acquaint the bishop with it. We can share all our secrets with this pious prelate; he sincerely desires what is good. Our confidences and candor will please him. Besides, he has the grace of state to direct works of this kind. All the reflections that might be made to you or to Mme Belloc should be gathered and sent on to me.

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[1] Probably Father de Clorivière (1735-1820), author of a pamphlet published in 1792 with the title, *Societatis Cordis Jesu Specimen.* Prior to the restoration of the Society of Jesus in France, he had devoted himself to the formation of men and women religious living in the world in associations called *Society of the Heart of Jesus* and *Society of the Heart of Mary*. Father Chaminade may have come in contact with him, either through a mutual friend, Father Lasausse, a Sulpician, or directly on the occasion of Father Clorivière's visit to Bordeaux in 1814.

The necessity of establishing sodalities is beginning to be felt in various dioceses. There are new requests and new offers in several cities. We all shout heartily “Long live the King!” but we should even louder interiorly, “Long live Religion!” Tell all our Children that in me they have a tender father.

I offer you in particular my most complete devotedness.

William Joseph Chaminade

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While Father Chaminade was writing this letter, Bishop Jacoupy of Agen, afraid of seen the new community slip away from his diocese, urged Mme Belloc to find a house at Agen. In the note in which Father Chaminade conforms to the desires of the prelate, the name, **Daughters of Mary***, which he destined for the future religious is used for the first time.*

56. – TO MLLE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, September 11, 1815

My dear Child,

I approve your renting the house of which you spoke. But, since you are soon to enter the state to which God deigns to call you, you must absolutely come to spend some time in Bordeaux, I cannot say how much, but still enough to allow you to be well posted with regard to all religious observances and to acquire the saintly habits yourself. However busy I may be, I will give you all the time needed to fulfill our purpose.

His Excellency, your Bishop, to whom I ask kindly to offer the assurance of my respectful devotedness, will realize the necessity of this trip. As soon as you can undertake it, let me know by mail, so that I can look for a suitable lodging for you.

May you and your dear companions not cease to pray that the Holy Spirit may enlighten us and that we may not deviate in the least from the designs which he has upon us. Renew the act of consecration to the Blessed Virgin daily, all of you. So you are going to be Daughters of Mary and publicly appear to be such. You may abandon your heart to joy and begin to burst forth into acts of thanksgiving.

The last mail must have brought you one of my letters.

Accept, my dear Child, the assurance of the tender and respectful attachment of your Father in Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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In the following letter, the form of new Institute becomes more precise. Father Chaminade also gives up the idea of having the of undress come to Bordeaux, even though the lease for the desired premises in Agen could not as yet be procured.

57. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, October 3, 1815

My dear Child,

I do not think there was any contradiction in my last letters. If, in the last one, I permitted you to settle the rent of the house that seemed to you suitable for your first community, it was not to have you enter it immediately, but rather, not to let slip by an opportunity which we could not hope to find at will. The loss of the rent is not to be considered serious in such a case. It was to hasten the formation of your community that I invited you to come and spend a little time in Bordeaux. You must have realized the need for it. My intention was to have you stay here with some Sisters, see the other establishments of the same kind and consult the of undresses, both to get experience yourself and to profit by that of others.

You would like to have a general notion of what your little Order ought to be. Quite right! To get a correct idea of it, you must consider: in the first place, what you ought to have in common with the religious of all the Orders, for you are to be religious in the full sense of the world; in the second place, what you are to have in particular that will distinguish you from all the Orders.

You will really be religious, since you will make the vows that are called vows of religion, and you will have to practice the virtues which inspired you to make them and which ought to be their mainstay. *Mary*, the august Mother of Jesus, must be your model, as she is your patroness. From this follow the most essential exercises and practices of the religious life.

As to what in particular is to distinguish you from the other Orders, it is zeal for the salvation of souls. The principles of religion and of virtue must be made known, Christians must be multiplied. You will definitely not have to teach children nor visit and care, for the sick or conduct a boarding establishment. Leave such works, however excellent they may be, to other groups older than you – but, what are we to do then? – you will have to instruct in religion and

train in the practice of virtue young ladies of every state and condition in life; to make of them true sodalists; to hold meetings, either general or by selections or groups, etc.; to have the young ladies make little spiritual retreats; to guide them in the choice of a state of life, etc. Your community will be composed of entirely[1] of *missionary* religious. It is in the light of these prospects that we are to recognize the candidates that are suitable for this state, etc.

You can see, my dear Child, from this brief sketch, that the Sodality will suffer no harm from your religious profession. Quite the contrary!

So, consider now already what kind of preparation you are to bring to so holy a state, which is to give you a share in the apostolic spirit.

May you and all the true Daughters of Mary receive in abundance the blessings of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I had sent a dozen Manuals to Mme Gignoux at Aiguillon. M. Clairac took thirteen dozen to Tonneins. Please give me Mme Belloc's address at Agen. I will send her some. Tell Mme Belloc confidentially that she has a big place in my heart; that I have a burning desire for her to go to heaven only accompanied by a great number of souls saved by her. I will answer the items in your letter. I am going to make a short personal retreat: I will not forget you. Soon after retreats and retreat exercises will follow for young men, which will last till the 10th or 12th of November. Meanwhile, I will see whether I can make definite arrangements to leave for Agen, etc.

P.S.S. Write to me what you and the others think of the little sketch that I am giving you about the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Trenquelléon Château via
Port Ste-Marie)

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We insert here a note addressed to Archbishop d'Aviau, proof, among many others, of the ever watchful solicitude of Father Chaminade for rendering service to those in need.

58. – TO ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU, OF BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Arch. SM)

Tuesday morning, November 14, 1815

Your Excellency:

[1] Here Father Chaminade effaced the following words: of the religious sodalists or, if you prefer…

I take the liberty of recommending to you Mme Gignoux, the bearer of this note. She is truly recommendable because of her worthiness as a good Christian and a good mother of a numerous family, as also because of her loyalty to the royal family. She intends to go to Paris to solicit a position or assistance. Everybody tells her to request of you a short letter to Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Angoulême. She decided to do this with my help. I willingly yielded, as I have the advantage of a long acquaintance with her. In no case will she ever give the lie to anything you may say in her favor, nor will she ever compromise you in anything.

I am with the deepest respect, Your Excellency's very humble and obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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In the month of December, the foundation of the Daughters of Mary seems close at hand.

59. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, December 6, 1815

My dear Child,

Your charity and the conviction that you and your good Sister have of my entire devotedness must have excused my long silence.

I told you in my last letter that the retreats for the young men would keep me unusually busy until around the middle of November. Before I had even finished, I was asked to give another retreat in the major seminary. I considered it my duty to accept. It was there that I caught a severe cold, from which, I may say, I have not the time to recover. We have already reached the solemnities of the Octave of our heavenly Mother's Conception – they keep me even busier than a retreat; next come all the feasts of the Christmas season.

I believe you are too good, my dear Child, to ask such indiscreet questions as: "Why do you take on more work than you can do? Why do you make promises to us that you are unable to fulfill?" I am not at all exaggerating when I say that for more than three months I did not spend a day without thinking of my dear family up country. But, the course of Providence, made known by that of circumstances, did not seem to permit me to do much more for you than to send a few letters.

The delay of my Lord, the Duke of Angoulême's passing through Agen is another reason for the postponement of the trip I wish to make there myself. It seemed to me hardly proper to go there or to be present under those circumstances. After all, he will pass that way: our feasts will

be going on at the same time. Through certain arrangements that I am making little by little, I shall be able to absent myself from Bordeaux with less inconvenience.

Your constitutions are completed.[1] There remain only the various special regulations and I intend merely to outline them. I will give them a final touch after I have seen you and after you have all been finally settled. Before recopying these constitutions myself, I have just had a copy of them made to pass on to a few well-advised and intelligent persons for their criticism. After I have their opinions I will say Mass over them and then recopy them. I will do the same with regard to the general regulations.

I am seriously thinking of leaving for your place during the month of January. The passing through of my Lord, the Duke of Angoulême, may have attracted M. de Dampierre. People though so, and already more than a month ago I was asked for a letter of recommendation for him. In this little letter I am letting him know of my plan. If you happen to see him, you or Mme Belloc might get him to stay or to return at the time which we will determine in detail. His Excellency, the Bishop, might perhaps be more successful in getting him to do this. At any rate, I am determined to leave at the stated time. I see clearly that I shall have to make more than one trip.

As for the free teaching of the children, you can promise it. I was misinformed about the population of Agen and about the help of this nature that the city could give.

His Excellency, the Bishop, will perhaps come see the prince, or he will follow him. I will inquire about this, and if he comes to Bordeaux I will arrange to have at least one meeting with him. Please tender him the assurance of my respectful devotedness and entire obedience.

I am in Jesus and Mary entirely at your service and that of your dear family.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Trenquelléon Château via
Port Ste. Marie)

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[1] The reference here is to a first edition of what is now called *The Great Institute*. See *Spirit*, No. 813.

60. – MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch F.M.I.)

My dear Child,

Our letters must have crossed en route. Surely, you must have received my last one a few days after sending yours of December 4th.

Your telling me all about your new conquests pleases me greatly, and I hope that the Lord, in Mary's name, will bless our humble labors. Do not be afraid to tell me all the precautions that you think I should take in the interest of our mission. I say *our mission*, as we are long since marching under the same standards, and you are more over almost in a position to enter into engagements so precious before the Lord, and to receive so special a character, etc.

In haste I am writing these few words to you simply for your consolation. We are about to close the Octave of the Immaculate Conception. I will add that here and elsewhere I draw more satisfaction from the young men and from the men in general, that from the persons of the other sex, except where you are concerned.

Continue to prepare yourself, and prepare well all your dear missionaries; *the time is drawing near*.

May the Lord pour out upon you and your daughters His most abundant blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Trenquelléon Château via
Port Ste-Marie)

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Some delays are caused at Agen, where the information is judged insufficient and where, besides, suitable lodging has not yet been secured.

61. –MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, January 11, 1816

My dear Child,

In my general mailing,[1] during these first few days of the new year, I remembered Fathers Larribeau and de Laumont with the liveliest interest. My young secretary, who as yet knows imperfectly how closely I am linked with these priests, has likewise but imperfectly expressed my sentiments in their regard. In sending them their letters with seal and address please have the kindness to supply the deficiency. I prefer to make good in this way, because it gives me the opportunity to write to you myself as to the child of my heart.

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[1] To understand a number of expressions in this letter, it is necessary to keep in mind the fact that postal service was net yet organized in those days as it is with postage stamps, gummed or "self-sealing" envelopes for first-class mail, etc. Letters could be sent by mail coach (Cf. Letter 47, 52, 56) to towns and villages along its route. The cities had their own local services, but there was no rural delivery before 1828. Before the introduction of the postage stamp, in 1858, the cost of postal delivery, which was rather high, was borne by the addressee. It was based upon the distance and the number of sheets dispatched. There were no ready-made envelopes. Each one improvised his own or left one side of the letter blank for the address and folded the sheet accordingly, as is done with air-letter forms today. Sealing wax was the only means of securing privacy for the message.

Father Chaminade often used the postal service, but its costliness (See Letter 84) induced him frequently to use opportunities for a kind of delivery that would be less of a burden to his correspondents. His letter of February 6, 1819, to Mother de Trenquelléon, for example, opens with these words: "My dear Child, though I am quite busy, I am taking up my pen in order to profit by a convenient departure for Agen and to save you a few sous in postage." Letters were sometimes sent by boatmen to places along the waterways (Cf. Letters 34, 46), at other times by some trustworthy person who might be traveling to the place for which the letter was destined (Cf. Letters 39, 39a, 44, 57). If several could be sent in one package to one of these, who would then see to the distribution of whatever was not destined for himself personally. This explains why Father Chaminade's early letters to Mlle de Trenquelléon were addressed to Mme Belloc (Cf. Letters 32, 33, 34, 37). Later correspondence was addressed to the Château of Trenquelléon via Port-Ste-Marie (Cf. Letters 40, 45, 52, 53, 57, 59, 60).

As there is a question here of general New Year Greetings, most of the envelopes, there being nothing of a particularly private nature in them and sealing with wax being too time consuming a process to be employed in the case of such mail. Moreover, the envelope might have borne merely the name of the addressee (Cf. Letters 41, 44, 54), if the person's address was known and he was not to be honored with a special mark of distinction, such as that of a wax seal and a full address.

Father Chaminade's secretary had evidently judged that Fathers Caribbean (Cf. Letters 34, 55) and Lamont (Cf. Letters 51, 52, 55) were not in this category, perhaps not even knowing that they were priests, as their title in French, "MM"(Mesers.) would not reveal their clerical status. Father Chaminade, therefore, in order to find an excuse for writing personally to Mlle Adèle, requests her to supply the missing address and seal in order to add the marks of distinction deserved by these two priests.

I am still waiting for an answer to the last letter I wrote to you. Do not get in touch with Father Laumont, or vice versa, to make your remarks about each of the sodalists who intends to enter the religious state.

Although my occupations have not decreased, I have arranged my affairs in such a way as not to delay those upland.

My the Lord pour out upon you and all of our numerous family abundant blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

This package of letter was ready to leave when your letter arrived.

I had no intention of making a mystery of your constitutions and still less to have you assume obligations the scope of which were unknown to you.

Now really, my dear Child, do you not know what is essential in you new Order? First, you know that it is a religious state, in which you take the ordinary vows of religion and in which you become in a very special way the spouse of Jesus Christ. Secondly, you know that if real sodalists must become missionaries, then with all the more reason must religious be such. Thirdly, you now that the august Virgin Mary is your patroness and that you are her Daughters.

A constant effort to advance in the practice of the Christian and religious virtues and to win souls for God, these are the two principles whose consequences must form the basis of your modest constitutions and of all the regulations based on them.

Your Order will have no sort of strictness in the practice of penance, but a large amount of it in that of the religious virtues and in the care to be taken that the works of zeal are not harmful to the interior spirit.

I am much inclined to give you at first only provisional regulations. We will make them final only when experience has guaranteed beyond a doubt that we have reached our goal. This is also the view of the founder of the Order of the Associates.[1] I should have done the same for your constitutions, had I had stay with or near you. But as things are, it is proper for them to be decided upon and authorized.

I notice that you are confusing the constitutions with the regulations. There are several Institutions in which no distinction is made. As regards for the Order of Institute of the Daughters of Mary, the constitution is merely an explanation of the object, the nature and the means of this Institute—in a word of it's *organization*.

From this brief survey, my dear Child, you will conclude that there was no undue haste in my plan to establish you at the time of my first trip. Supposing, as I have done, that your choice

[1] Father Vlechmans (1795-1831), a Vincentian before the Revolution, founded in 1799 the Congregation of the Associates of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (*Congrégation de la Réunion a Sacré-Coeur de Jésus*).

is definitively made. I am convinced that your spiritual Fathers will have nothing against it, if they weigh well all the circumstances. It was also to prevent all anxiety that I had asked for little letters from each one and secret notes, etc.

I thank you, nevertheless, for your remarks, for I feel that they are rather the result of fear of failure than lack of confidence.

The first reading of the report you make of all our applicants please me in general well enough. I will reflect upon it and then tell me what you think. I may, in the meantime, get further information either through their individual letters or through notes.

I am closing, for the mail is about to go. May the grace of God be with you.

You must copy for yourself the procedure of the meetings which I am sending to Father Larribeau. To reduce postage, I am not using any envelope. Fold their letters in a respectable way.

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The difficulties seem to be disappearing and Father Chaminade's journey is again on the agenda.

62. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. –Arch F.M.I.)

Bordeaux, January 23,[1] 1816

My dear Child,

At her request, I am sending you my answer to Mlle Poitevin,[2] so that you may have it passed on to her without her parents noticing it.

Today is the anniversary of the death of Mlle Lacombe. I have just said Mass for the repose of her soul. Her memory is blessed by all our sodalists.

I am quite satisfied with the brief sketch you give me of the persons, both young and old, who desire to make up our little community. I hope that all will turn out well. You will understand that, if elderly persons are received, it will only be at the start; to do so later on would not be proper. From now on, have all say the *Veni Creator* and the *Ave Maris Stella* every day, so that the Spirit of God may deign to enlighten me and give me the wisdom and counsel needed to arrange all things according to His desires.

[1] See Letter 69, n. 3, as this autograph letter was not dated.
[2] One of the future religious, Mother Aloysius Gonzaga.

On the way back to Agen or on my way back, I should like to stop pretty well where this might be useful for our work. Which route should I take going or coming? I will not bring any hired help along, but I am thinking of taking a sodalist who may assist me in a number of ways. Would it be good to take the stage as far as Marmande? I don't think it will be necessary to make any stop before that. At Marmande could you possibly have two horses provided for me, if there is enough time to go wherever we shall agree on going?

I shall not delay my leaving beyond the time required to make all the necessary preparations by correspondence.

I am very sincerely your Father in Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. To quiet certain apprehensions whose existence your letter supposes, I will, before sealing my letter, add what had been my general point of view.

We are going to agree on everything without delay, but yet without undue haste.

Above all, I should have liked to know and to prepare the subjects.

You are going to Agen, then, to prepare your house the way I hope to point out to you. You will live there with five or six or even fewer of those who are the most determined and who are free with respect to their parents. For some days you will follow a little provisional timetable, while continuing to arrange everything. The rest will all come to Agen living in town or in the Community. I arrive, we have the number of exercises necessary for etc. Before leaving, the Community, more or less numerous, is established etc. etc.

Above all, my dear Child, don't worry, don't trouble yourself about things. Let us hope that the Lord will bring to completion a work which is being undertaken solely for His glory and that of His divine Mother.

The devil could easily raise up for us difficulties which we do not even foresee.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Trenquelléon Château via
Port Ste-Marie)

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Mme Belloc, thinking it possible at the time to disengage herself from her family ties[1], was one of the aspirants to the religious life. The following excerpt from a letter of Father Chaminade was sent on February 16, 1816, by Mlle de Trenquelléon to Mlle de Lachapelle.

63. – TO MME BELLOC, AGEN

[1] See Letter 32, n.4.

(Copie – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, February ? 1816

My dear Daughter,

You are going to leave the world, to die to the world while remaining, nevertheless, on earth to work at your own sanctification, for the glory of our good Master and that of our tender Mother, and that too, during the Easter season. You have Lent as a period of preparation for it. Do you not find in it a great resemblance to the mysteries which took place at this time? It was then that Jesus Christ died, then that He arose from the dead. After the Resurrection, He spent forty days perfecting the great work of His divine mission.

Buoy up and encourage your Children with the hope of soon seeing their wishes fulfilled. Communicate with them frequently, either orally or by writing. At one time you will fire them with the desire to consecrate virginal hearts and bodies to the divine Spouse. At another, you will depict to them the excellence of the state they are embracing; they will be associated with the work of Redemption, participating in the apostolic spirit, and burning with the zeal of the missionaries. At still another time, you may speak to them of the advantages of life in a religious community, of the happiness of living in retirement. At all times, get them to esteem the incomparable grace of leaving Babylon and of renouncing the vanities of the world, etc., etc.

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In the following letter Father Chaminade speaks to Mlle de Trenquelléon about the house which M. Jean Baptist Diché Sr., deputy of the royal procurator in the district court of Agen, had finally leased in her name, February 2, 1816. The deed as well as the warrant of attorney are still extant.

64. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, February 19, 1816

My dear Child,

Do not worry about anything. Let us only take care not to hinder the work of God by our imprudence. Furthermore, let us always remain in peace by entering always into the plans of Providence. We ought to expect a great number of contradictions, but, etc.

It would have seemed more prudent to me, if those with whom you drew up the lease for the house had themselves made the arrangements with the former tenants at the same time they were leasing to you. In the future, my dear Child, do not conclude any important affair without

first consulting me, and then going into all the appropriate details to inform me of it accurately. In that way I shall be in a better position to advise you. You cannot possibly have enough experience to judge soundly all the cases that will arise until you Institute has begun to function regularly and definitively. As to the house, I was pleased to learn that it is very spacious, that there was a large block of buildings that you did not lease, because of the repairs they required. You would have done well to explain to me in greater detail from the first what this building was and to send me an imperfect plan of it, or at least a fairly exact idea of its size. In this way you have obviated several arrangements that I was in a position to make, in order to provide you with the means of doing there the good works that are the main object of your institution. Without seeing to do so, take great care to prevent the disposal of the remaining buildings which you have not leased.

I haven't the least intention of sending you a superioress from here, but I do intend sending you Mlle de Lamourous shortly before my departure, to guide you through all the preliminaries to your organization as a community. This lady is highly experienced, readily tactful to a nicety and very exact. She seems to be the very person to make all the preparations, so that at my arrival I may devote myself exclusively to instilling in you the spirit of your state, etc. Our main trouble lies in the fact that this lady is almost chronically in poor health.

While you are waiting for Father Larribeau's letter to be found, you may give him a copy of the procedure of the meetings.[1] I take it for granted you have made one for yourself. Otherwise I will send him another one. I am not surprised at the resistance of the Reverend Pastor of Tonneins. Send me a brief description of the condition of the group in this town, at least the number of its members with the name and character of their head officer; I will see then what is to be done.

The reflections of your friend would have some consistency if your Institute had the same object and form as one of the old Orders. However, it will not be very easy for you to disabuse her, unless you have carefully considered and tried the one you are going to constitute. Be patient, for her fears about your original society[2] are also very ill-founded. Membership in the one involves absolutely no commitment concerning the other. It may merely, by obtaining for them additional lights and graces to know their state of life better, offer an occasion for aspiring to membership in the latter. The same holds for the Sodality. The *religious* sodalists will soon be distinguished from the *secular* sodalists.

May the grace and peace of the Lord be always upon you and upon all your Children!

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Trenquelléon Château via
Port Ste-Marie)

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[1] See Letter 61, last paragraph.
[2] See the introduction to Letter No. 31

While preparing the various elements of the new community and making all the arrangements for its approaching installation, Father Chaminade took pains, on the occasion of his journey, to hasten the establishment of the Sodality at Agen. It is to this preoccupation that the first sentence of the following letter refers.

65. - TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
THE CHÂTEAU OF TRENQUELLÉON

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, March 15, 1816

The Marquis of Dampierre sent me word that he would be at Agen this coming April. I had him informed by mail that I also hoped to be there and that, as the time drew near, I would write to him more in detail what we would have to do for the success of our enterprise.

I intend to write to the bishop of Agen only after you have received a complete copy of your constitutions and regulations. I will probably send you the letter to take to him.

The furniture, as you say, is to be very simple, very modest, as seems proper for virgins who have left all and who have accepted voluntary poverty. Eventually we shall try to have it uniform. Meanwhile, should there be some notable difference, as, for example, a more elegant bed among the effects of one of higher birth according to worldly standards, it would be well to assign it temporarily to one of less distinguished birth according to the same worldly standards. But all this should be done tactfully and without the least affectation. If anyone had among her furnishings a bed or any other article little compatible with religious poverty, it should, if possible, be replaced and the article in question reserved for retreatants. The community must not dispose of anything belonging to a religious until after her perpetual profession.

It is fitting to give this first convent the name of The *Conception* of Mary. We will reserve that of *Saint Joseph* for the second convent to be established.

The young ladies who take part in this first ofundation[1] will have a great advantage over those who present themselves later on. The description you give me of the eighteen-year-old applicant is quite interesting.

I have received a letter from Father Larribeau. Please, assure him of my respectful regard. I do not as yet have the honor of writing to him, since I must put aside all correspondence that is not urgent, with a view to hastening the completion of our work. I suppose you pass our little

[1] The word used in the original is “formation”, but Father Chaminade seems to refer here rather to the formation of the Institute than to the spiritual formation of its individual members, as in the second last paragraph of the preceding letter, where the original text, *celui que vous allez former*, translated, *the one you are going to constitute*, clearly refers to the projected Institute. Cf. also the concluding words of the third paragraph of Letter No. 70, which read in the original, *avant que le monastère ne soit entièrement former*.

correspondence on to him and Father Laumont. Such is my desire. There are several other Sodalities being organized in other dioceses. These also take up my time, but you realize that I am helping without any ill-will.

The health of Mlle de Lamourous seems somewhat improved. At Villeneuve d'Agen we may have some facilities for organizing a Young Men's Sodality which could be associated with that of Agen. I will investigate the situation by mail before I leave and then let you know what we might expect.

I am ever faithfully your Good Father in our Lord Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade

(*Cover address:* Mme Belloc[2], nee Diché
Agen)

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The following is a note addressed to M. David, in which there is question of the preparation for the feast of Our Lady of Martyrs, celebrated on May 13th by the Married Men's Association.

[2] The address, according to French custom, adds the word, "widow."

66. – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW

(Aut. – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, Monday, May 6, 1816

My dear Son,

Here it is already Monday, time to begin what we have agreed upon: activity with zeal and prudence. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament all day; High Mass at eight o'clock; Vespers, sermon and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at three o'clock. The sermon will be preached by Father Ducasse, titular Canon of Bayonne, a Doctor of the Sorbonne.

Perhaps we might at the same time discuss the funeral of Dr. Métiver[1] which will take place on the Thursday after the feast, the 17th of this month.

Me totum toto pectore crede tuum.[2]

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 39a.)

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66a. – WARRANT FROM DEED OF SALE

Warrant of Attorney to M. Perès

Bordeaux

I, the undersigned William Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon, resident of Bordeaux, rue Lalande, hereby empower M. Perès, attorney, to bid for me at the auctionary session of the district court of Bordeaux and to acquire for my account and benefit the house located in Bordeaux, No.1 re Lalande, forming the fifth lot of the properties belonging to the estate of the Lafaye heirs, of which the final adjudication is to be made at the said session of the 13th inst. I authorize him to bid for the said house up to the sum of 3,500 to 3,600 francs over and above the auctioneering fees, and in the event of a favorable adjudication to make the declaration of the fact required by law. I promise, furthermore, to make the adjudication my own and personal affair, and guarantee him complete indemnity in this matter.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

Done at Bordeaux, May 6, 1816

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[1] Dr. Métivier, a physician, had been a member of the Married Men's Association since 1807.
[2] Believe me wholly and whole-heartedly yours.

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Mlle de Lamourous had arrived in Agen, May 25, 1816, at the same time as the aspirants to the religious life, whereas Father Chaminade announced his coming for June 5th, Pentecost Wednesday.

The 25th of May is religiously celebrated each year by the Daughters of Mary, as the foundation date of their Institute.

But Bishop Jacoupy hesitated to approve the Rules submitted by Father Chaminade, and asked for the opinion of the Archbishop d'Aviau.

67. – TO ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU,
OF BORDEAUX

(Aut. –Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, Friday, May 31, 1816

Your Excellency,

I am taking the liberty of sending you a sort of analysis of the first two parts of the *Institute of the Daughters of Mary*. In order to meet the wishes of the Bishop of Agen, I should be obliged to you if you expressed your impressions of it, and whether you approve of them in substance. I say in substance, because I am rather dissatisfied with this first draft. I intend to rewrite the whole work at a more suitable time. Moreover, the copies that I am having very hastily made are full of mistakes, and at times I do not even have the leisure to reread them, as for example, the one that I have the honor of sending to you. Preparation for the Feast of Pentecost has me preoccupied, and I glorify God for it. I intend to leave for Agen next Wednesday. I am with the most profound respect, you Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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The hesitation of Bishop Jacoupy hinged upon the advisability in post-Revolutionary France of religious vows binding for life. Desiring a Congregation available in the dioceses for all sorts of exterior works, he feared that according to the general rule then followed, perpetual vows involved enclosure.

Determined to safeguard above all else her vocation of "missionary", Mlle de Trenquelléon was ready to yield to the prelate's reasoning and resigned herself to make only annual or at least only temporary vows, but Father Chaminade was unwilling to accept this proposal.

68. – TO MLLE DE TRENQUELLÉON
AGEN

(Copie- Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, June 1, 1816

My dear Child,

I am interrupting for a few minutes the numerous preparations for the great Feast of Pentecost.

I bless the Lord for the great zeal with which He inspires you to consecrate yourself in a special manner to His service. You are impatient to be united to Jesus Christ as His spouse. Your heart is upright and that is essential. Jesus will not fail to understand this, but your mind is not yet free from error.

You speak to me about annual vows in place of perpetual vows. Oh, my dear Child, what is marriage in the order of nature? Does it not call for an indissoluble union? Still it is only a symbol of that special union with the divine Spouse into which those enter who consecrate themselves to Jesus by the religious profession.

It never occurred to me that you and your dear companions desired to be but half religious. In fact, the dispositions which the Holy Spirit ahs placed in your hearts are quite different. With God's holy grace I will soon explain to you all these beautiful things. Yesterday I procured a passport with a young man whom I am taking along – he too wishes to be a religious, but not by halves.[1] Pardon me for repeating an expression which may cause you pain. I have just copied for you a passage from an address by Father Fleury on the monastic state. In it you will see that our predecessors had quite different ideas about the vows, etc. His Excellency the Bishop and Father Superior[2] especially will approve of it. As for yourselves, it is the love of Jesus Christ which must show you what the learned seek to know by considering causes and effects, etc.[3]

Enclosure is a consequence of the perpetual nature of the vows, but do not weary your heads about the matter. Let your hearts act. All will turn out for the best and Jesus Christ, Who wishes to possess you completely, will not permit His ministers to be mistaken.

Regarding the classes, there are a few remarks to be made: your limited experience did not allow you to make them. Continue to be patient. I must leave you now to go to the altar, where I will not forget you nor our Good Mother[1]. Tell her that the Miséricorde is doing very well and that the person she expressly recommended to me is doing likewise.

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[1] Doubtless one of the first members of the Society of Mary, probably M. Bidon.
[2] Father Mouran, former Vincentian, spiritual director, and later, superiors, of the seminary at Agen (1766-1844), had just been appointed superior of the newly-formed community.
[3] i.e. by deductive reasoning.
[1] Mlle de Lamourous

May all the blessings of the Lord be poured out upon this new convent.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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The following is the passage of Father Fleury which Father Chaminade transcribed at the end of his letter:

The most general cause of laxity among religious is the fickleness of the human mind and the scarcity of firm and faithful men who persevere long in the same resolution. This is the reason for the vows, so wisely introduced to settle our natural restlessness, vows which constitute the essence of the religious profession.

Now, in order that these vows might not be rash, with the same wisdom severe trials were ordered. Far from attracting seculars to the religious life, as was thought not only permissible but even meritorious in these latter times, the ancients used all possible means to deter those whose vocations was not solid. Saint Benedict commands it expressly. It is not really necessary that there be religious in the Church, but if there are, they must tend to perfection. They may not be mediocre Christians.

The Cathusian, Blessed Guigues, was right in saying: "If it is true that the way that leads to the life is narrow, and that few find it, the religious institute which admits the fewest members is the best and most sublime, while the one that admits the largest number is the least worthy of esteem."

A lax monk…a man whose life is a constant contradiction. He has promised to life in seclusion and silence, and he seeks company and conversation. He has promised etc.

FLEURY, *Discours sur la Vie religuese au XIVe siécle*, at which time (viz. in the 14th century), he says, this institution was in the state of its greatest decadence. This essay is in the 8th on Church history, Volume 14 of the Nîmes edition. The passage quoted is on page XVIV (and XLV), no. 12 of the Essay.

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At this same time Father Chaminade was seeking the support of Archbishop d'Aviau.

69. – TO ARCHBISHOP d'AVIAU, OF BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Arch SM)

Bordeaux, Monday morning, June 3, 1816

Your Excellency:

From my correspondence I have reason to suspect that the Bishop of Agen has preconceived opinions in favor of annual vows and opposed to perpetual vows.

Merely annual vows could not suit the Institute of the *Daughters of Mary*. They desire to make a religious profession and their Institute subjects them to trial sufficiently long and continuous to arrive at moral certitude regarding their vocation.

I have just had transcribed for you the chapter of the third part of their constitutions which refers to the vows. The sequence of trials and the rigorous examination of their vocation are the object of other chapters which I will have also copied. Should your Excellency not be so convinced as I am that the perpetual character of the vows is, as it were, of the very essence of the religious profession and that for women enclosure is the necessary consequence, I would be obliged if you informed me of it before letting me know in writing what you think of the Institute itself. I would then take the liberty to place before you the considerations I have made on this subject.

Your opinion will dispel all difficulty at Agen; His Excellency, the Bishop, has already made this clear.

The very small number of candidates who are to take the habit will make perpetual vows at the same time. For years already they are prepared for it in many ways. I cannot imagine that there could be a real foundation otherwise. They have a number of postulants already. These have been undergoing preparation for some time now; but they will be further tested. Article 87[1] of the chapter which I have the honor of submitting to you, refers back to chapter 3 of the same Part. This reference has no other object than to point out the exception to be made for the of undresses.

Your Excellency, I have the honor of being with the most profound respect your very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* As on Letter 46)

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The answer as appears from the following transcription of the rough draft, was not encouraging. It was written by Archbishop d'Aviau himself on the reverse of the letter.

June 3, 1816

[1] This is the number in the MS., but number 287 is written in pencil in parenthesis. The MS. Number is that of an earlier edition that has not survived.

Father, I will very willingly and very exactly demonstrate to His Excellency of Agen what he may expect of you for his diocese. I will do this by acknowledging the advantages that your Sodalities and your persevering labors have been procuring for my own these many years, but I will not undertake to determine the opinion of this respectable prelate with regard to the perpetual character of religious vows under present circumstances. Just as there are reasons for them—and you will know how to make the most of them—there are also disadvantages that have more than one embarrassed me at the height of the revolutionary crises. Are we to consider ourselves sheltered from similar storms, as long as we are without and authentic and stable agreement between the two Governments?[1] If it pleases the Lord finally to grant us this tranquility, this assurance so greatly desired, would that not be the proper time to inquire in what way a new religious Order would be useful to the Church? You probably know, Father, what two ecumenical Councils, the Fourth Lateran Council and the Second Council of Lyons decreed on this point, namely: *Let no one in the future found a new religious Order: but let him who desires to enter religion, join one of the Orders already approved*.[2] Nevertheless, I do not deny that several beautiful Institutions are of a later date. What I wish to say to you is, that this matter calls for mature counsel and authority. However, were the decision finally taken, I should not be in the least reluctant, when it came to making the rules and regulations more precise, of explaining and sanctioning them. In all this, I should certainly consider myself excusable in view of researches, the successive trials the groupings, so to say of a Saint Ignatius, a Saint Francis de Sales, a Saint Vincent de Paul, and other great personages. At least I might be permitted to leave the responsibility to such as not octogenarians. Therefore, I will not return the notebooks given me for my information. Do not take this ill, Father, but be pleased still to accept the sentiments that make me very sincerely you very humble and devoted etc.

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Faced with this reserved attitude of the Archbishop d'Aviau, Father Chaminade had to postpone any kind of final decision. He contented himself meanwhile with installing the new community in its own quarters without having its members take the religious habit or pronounce vows. On June the fifth[3] he left for Agen and stayed there till the twenty-fourth.[1] After his return to Bordeaux he completed the letter the instructions he had given his Daughters, especially with concern to their works.

70. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, July 20, 1816

My dear Child,

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[1] That of the Church and that of the State. The Concordat of 1817 was being negotiated at the time.
[2] The original has this quotation in Latin as follows: *Ne quis de caetero novam religionem inveniat sed quisumque voluerit ad religionem converti, unam de probates assumat.*
[3] See introductory note to Letter 67 and the Letter itself.
[1] This latter date appears in the following note in Mother Adèle's account book ("Cahier vert" – Arch F.M.I.): "I owe Father Chaminade 200 francs for his traveling expenses to Agen, June 24, 1816." The entry is crossed out to indicate, no doubt, that the money has been paid.

I am going to write to you whenever I can be left at leisure.

Mlle de Lamourous has had the letter that Sister Stanislas wrote to her conveyed to me—you yourself had also written about her. This letter pleased me greatly. Take particular care in the formation of this young Sister. Above all, I want her to lay down a very deep foundation of humility.

You are provisionally authorized to admit into the inner enclosure any person who, under present circumstances, could not be refused without serious inconvenience. Have no scruple about the permissions you may have given. Rest assured as soon as you have realized their necessity or great suitability. I imagine that such cases will arise more than once before the monastery[2] is completely established.[3]

I should like to have a doctor describe the condition of your interesting patient, and all the remedies that have been prescribed for her to date. I will consult here and possibly also in Paris. I have procured the prescription for the remedy which has done some good to the young man of whom I spoke, but I will take advice before sending it. As for his brother, I cannot do anything, because I have not received any information presented to his superiors, but what are the contents of this request? Who are these superiors?

I note with pleasure the separation of the married ladies from the young ladies. On the first Friday of the month, however, you may let them together, as also on some other occasions, but rather rarely. These Sodalities will do good in town, especially after we have given them the expansions they can and must have.

Mlle Lhuillier,[4] who must have written to you, will be able to help you a great deal. She is aflame with zeal, speaks with great ease, is even blamed for being too kind. It will be quite difficult to disengage her, but she is acting with great firmness and determination. Moreover, you must not hope for anything from her home. Her mother, who has established a fashionable boarding-house for young ladies of a certain social standing and has no need of hiring a professional hose as long as her daughter is with her, will be making a great enough sacrifice.

This letter was started at least a week ago. The expectation of a conveyance, always ready to leave and never leaving, made me lose a great deal of time in sending things up country.

Mme de Lagrace of Auch[1] writes to me for permission to send Mlle Aloft immediately to Agen to enter as a religious. She has two thousand francs in cash. It is the first time that I have heard of her. She does not tell me her age, her character, etc. merely that she has a great distaste for the world and that she is in danger, living with her parents, who have no religion. Prudently

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[2] *le monastère*
[3] Cf. Code of Canaon Law, C. 488 and Supplement of the Catholic Encyclopedia—Canon Law (N.Y.: The Encyclopedia Press, 1918), p. 67C.
[4] A postulant from Bordeaux who later became Mother Emmanuel.
[1] This lady headed the Married Ladies Sodality in Auch.

gather all the information you can about her. I will do the same for my part. Mme de Lagrace seems to be quite an excellent Christian, but she is an enthusiast.

In the same mail, I received an answer to the letter I had written to Father Desterac through Mlle de Lachappelle[2]. Neither he nor as he says, the clergy of Condom consider it at all advisable for me to go there to make any kind of start. In fact, any such attempt would be, according to him, even harmful, because the people have been too demoralized by the Revolution. Any activity, therefore, among the persons of the other sex would be dangerous. I find it difficult to follow such reasoning, but I must, nevertheless, trust to the prudence of the clergy of that city. Perhaps Father Desterac spoke only to the priests of his church. You are somewhat acquainted with Condom. Without compromising the good Father in any way, look around to see what could be done. Father Castex,[3] for example, might be able to write to me in his own name as well as in that of several young men or married men, etc.

His Excellency has replied to me and informed me of his visit to you. He seems satisfied. It is to be presumed that he will not delay in giving you a definitive reply. I shall have the honor of writing to him in a few days and of sending him a little note that may help him to reach a final decision.

Should you meet with difficulties in putting your constitutions into practice and in observing your regulations, and should there be question of matters unforeseen, etc., take note of everything and inform me of it, so that, if necessary, I can arrange things.

Since your novitiate has yet so few members, give your conferences only as much time as suits the instruction and formation of your novices.

Please tell Father Mouran[1] that it would be better, at least for the present to hold on to the very simple organization that exists among the married ladies and young women: and not to make them resemble the Men's Sodality in that respect. I will acquaint you with the plan that is generally to be followed in sodalities of persons of your sex; or rather, I will explain why it seems that I have not given any to you as compared with the Men's Sodality. Urge him to give his whole attention somehow to the Men's Sodality, and let him know that you will do everything necessary for that of the women, etc. The same holds for the preparatory group.

I am almost always talking to you about the others, my dear Child, and but little about yourself. And yet, it is that which interests me most. How I desire to see you reach a high degree of perfection. Penetrate yourself, more and more, with the spirit of your Institute, whether by studying it, by explaining it to others, by meditating upon it or by having others do so. I really intend going to see you rather soon and having with you the number of interviews necessary for you to know perfectly the course you have to take and have others take. Meanwhile pray,

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[2] Mlle Charlotte de Lchapelle of Condom had long already belonged to Mlle de Trenquelléon's Association of Piety. She had been among the first enrolled as future members of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary; but, for several years she had to suffer the opposition of her family before she could realize her pious ambition. It was only in 1821 that she was able to enter religion under the name of Sister of the Incarnation. Cf. Letter 35, n. 3.

[3] Chaplain of the hospital.

[1] Superior of the Daughters of Mary as well as Director of the Sodality of Agen.

meditate, advance in the contempt and renouncement of self. It will, nevertheless, be a pleasure for me to see you often allowing your heart the happiness of loving God and of making Him known and loved.

I need not call your attention[2] that the Holy Name of Mary should naturally be found everywhere; that, whether you pray alone or in common, whether you exhort, instruct or hold Sodality meetings, whether etc., nothing should please you or your dear Daughters, unless the Holy Name of Mary is found in it.

I am leaving off with regret, my dear Child, and am asking you to tell all our dear Daughters that they have a father who truly desires their happiness, that hey are very often the object of his solicitude and that he calls down upon you and upon all of them the blessings of Heaven.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I am astonished that M. Diché did not leave for Paris immediately after receiving the news of his dismissal. With good testimonials from Agen, with recommendations for Paris, he would have halted the nomination of his successor. For my part, I should have given him at least half a dozen letters.

(*Cover address:* Madam Adèle de Batz, Superioress[3]
of the Daughters of Mary
The New Establishment
Agen)

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71. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

(Aut. – Arch FMI)

Bordeaux, August 11, 1816

My dear Child,

I have just received your letter and am taking advantage of a departing carrier[1] to write you a few lines.

All that you tell me about our little community interests and pleases me. Go right ahead. The work of God will develop completely. Patience.

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[2] The French edition has *dire* instead of the *avertir* of the original.
[3] This is the firsst letter in which Mlle de Trenquelléon is addressed as *Madam Superioress* by Father Chaminade.
[1] Cf. Letter 61, n. 1.

Membership in the Sodality is required in order to share the spiritual benefits granted to us. The Postulants who have received the blessing recite the Little Office of the Sodalists. Continue for Sister Martha…[2]

Should there be question of giving catechism instruction to that fourteen-year-old, have it done. Whoever is assigned to it, will readily find the means to correct her evil dispositions, but should do nothing more for the time being.

You did the right thing with regard to Sister Saint Vincent.[3] You may follow the same line of conduct in all similar cases. I believe both of you must be quite pleased with the regulations regarding the parlor. I felt much the same myself when, speaking of Sister Holy Spirit, you called it[4] a "deep solitude." Progress regarding Vespers is wholly satisfactory. I will make the article about the Hours-hours Devotion clearer.

Do not admit servants into the Sodality,[5] at least not yet, until we have definitely agreed on all that concerns persons of this class. Accept only young ladies of quality and girls employed in the manual arts, whose financial circumstances justify the hope that they will never take a job as housemaids.

Mlle Lhuillier has tastefully recopied for you the *Constitutions*[1] *of the Daughters of Mary*. I was going to send them to you but I decided to follow the advice of a friend who is highly educated and strongly attached to the Order of the Daughters of Mary.[2] He thinks that I should reread them myself with the mind of an unmerciful censor, that afterwards we should critically discuss all the articles etc., and that a copy should then be sent to His Excellency, the Bishop, for etc.

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[2] This sentence was left incomplete by Father Chaminade. He was in the habit of substituting conventional dots for the words he deemed it unnecessary to express. See the Introduction to the revised edition.

[3] Mlle Cornier de Labastide, who was to succeed Mother de Trenquelléon as Mother General of the Institute.

[4] The French edition here has "l'avez appelée" instead of the "l'avez appellé"(sic) of the original, which calls for a pronoun, *it*, instead of *her* demanded by the French edition together with the consequent astonishing conclusion that Father Chaminade was quote pleased that Sister Holy Spirit (and not the parlor) was a "deep solitude."

[5] No doubt, because they would not be free to attend many of the meetings and to engage in the various apostolic activities of the Sodality.

[1] The original reads *Institut de Marie*. The term, *Institut*, however, is ambiguous. It has a twofold meaning, as explained in the following note on the title of Appendix A of Volume 1 of *The Spirit of Our Foundation:*

"The term *Institute* in the classical language means the *Constitutions* of a religious Order of the *Order* itself."

"Father Chaminade uses the word in both meanings."

"Thus the first Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary was often called by Father Chaminade the *Institute of Mary* and the *Institute of the Daughters of Mary* or simply *Institute*; and the first Rule of the Society is called the *Institute of Mary*." Cf. Letters 59, n. 1 and 73, n.1.

On the other hand, before 1825 the Society of Mary was often called by Father Chaminade the *Institute of Mary*. After that date he used the term to designate the two foundations together, which were then know and the *Society of Mary* and the *Institute of the Daughters of Mary*. *Cf. Spirit*, p. 611, n. 1.

[2] The person in question appears to be M. (later Brother) David Monier. See the long biographical note, p. 71.

Mlle Lhuillier is acting with great discretion, delicacy and determination. She asked me this morning what she should do with her piano. I thought she should bring it to the community. I will tell you why in due time. She has no other musical instrument. She is considered very capable in both vocal and instrumental music. She is better on the harp, so she told me, than on the piano, but she has none of her own. She has learned Italian and knows several other subjects which will make her useful to you, French grammar, and above all, spelling. But what makes her still more valuable is the humble opinion she has about it and her love for God and the Blessed Virgin, etc.

I must close here. Totally yours, one and all, in Jesus and Mary.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. The bearer, M. Duprat, a member of the Married Men's Sodality, will give you two dozen Manuals and will take care of all your communications on his return. Enclosed is the answer of Mlle Lhullier and a number of rules for the ladies in charge of material things, which you do not have.

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The next letter was occasioned by an incident involving the Men's Sodality of Agen, an account of which can be found in the Life of Father Chaminade.

In the course of his stay at Agen for the purpose of founding the Daughters of Mary, Father Chaminade had established there a Sodality for men which immediately met with complete success. That was too much for the enemies of the Faith. "The devil, jealous of all that is good," writes Mother de Trenquelléon, "has just raised a storm against the Men's Sodality, which was doing an immense amount of good. Many were seen hurrying off to confession, dangerous places were being deserted etc., when one of the presidents committed the fatal imprudence of making an unguarded speech with the result that the civil authorities thought it necessary to suppress the group."

Father Mouran, the director of the Sodality, immediately dispatched the following account of the incident to Father Chaminade:

I was about to give you details concerning the Sodality when on the 15th of this month, Father Gardelles, our superior, received a letter from the mayor's office with orders "that this society from this very day put an end to every kind of meeting that the church be closed as in the past at night fall." That same evening Father Gardelles and I were at town hall to give the necessary explanations. Yesterday His Excellency, our Bishop, was at the office of the prefect with his vicars-general, and today I myself had a long conversation with this official and with the mayor. I learned that we are held to be an unauthorized association. They are afraid of serious trouble. Nobody wants to risk his own job etc. We have done all we could to save this excellent organization, but without the least success. It is too bad that the prefect of the Sodality, the Marquis of Dampierre, had to stay in the country with his dying mother. Tomorrow I will let him

know what is happening. The Good Lord's work had not as yet met with any opposition, but I took it for granted that it would do so. Still, I did not expect that the most straightforward explanation of our intentions and proceedings would be unable to dispel the storms that might have been raised against it. It is now more than ever, Father, that we need your advice to guide our actions. His Excellency is deeply affected, but it seems he would prefer to have us write to Paris ourselves. Should we do it? You are the father, the founder of this worthy association. We are already greatly indebted to you. Add to all the good we owe to you that also of tracing the course we are to follow. The Ladies' Sodality is doing marvelously. There is no talk about it yet. I am even inclined to believe that it will not be discussed. But will hell be less hostile to it than to us?

To this letter Father Chaminade had M. David Monier write the following reply.

72. – TO FATHER MOURAN, AGEN

(Rough Draft- Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, August 24, 1816

Reverend Father:

Your letter and M. Lacoste's[1], both dated August 17th, reached me only on the evening of the 22nd. I cannot imagine what could have been the cause of such a long delay. M. Lacoste's promised me details by a later mail which should have reached me already had there not been a similar delay. Will it come today? I hope so, but I cannot afford to wait for it, if I want my answer to your first letter to leave by today's mail. God grant that it may not be delayed.

My regrets regarding this delay arise together from the fact that I was unable to reassure promptly upon your recent experience. A second source of chagrin in this matter is my complete failure to see what decision you might have taken after the fruitless explanations regarding the honesty of your intentions[1] and of your dealings with the mayor.

Speaking from the point of view of religion I need not remind you that we must be resigned to the will of God and offer Him, in a spirit of sacrifice, all our tribulations. Our divine Savior has sufficiently warned us that we should have to suffer many persecutions in His Name, and we must believe that the prophecy will be fulfilled throughout the ages. But He will not permit the gates of hell to prevail against His holy religion. Let us remain faithful, whatever the trials to which we may be exposed.

Here are two things that you should ask of the affiliates[2] to the Sodality: first, an entire resignation to the adversities which God permits not without reason, and which we must endure with great patience; then, an unshaken fidelity in the midst of trials, by which we show that our

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[1] Councilor of the prefecture of Agen, an official whose duties corresponded roughly to those of a member of the governor's cabinet in the United States. He was one of the most zealous members of the Sodality.
[1] The French edition has "votre intention," whereas the original has "vos intentions."
[2] The members of the Sodality of Agen, which was affiliated to that of Bordeaux.

hope is in the promises of our divine Savior, Jesus Christ, and that all our strength lies in the hand of God.

May none of our Children forget that it is in the spirit of religion that we ought to perform the works of religion.

When the Apostle Saint Paul was persecuted and sent to prison, by no means failed to resign himself from the first. But afterwards, not wishing the weaker brethren to be scandalized on his account, he determined to set forth briefly that he was being persecuted for a good cause. This is the second duty that you have to perform. For my part, I have not only the intention but also the obligation to make the truth known, since I have chosen you for this work and drafted it's plan.

The next mail will bring you the carefully prepared list of addresses that you are to sign and a sketch of the whole line of conduct you are to follow. Yesterday was the only day left to me for this work by the vexing delay of your letters, and it was too short to complete it.

In the meantime I do not want you to allow credence to be given to the supposition that yours may be looked upon as an unauthorized association, that it was rightly suppressed as such, or that no other mischief could come of it than that of a mistake on the part of the official who ordered you to give up each and every kind of meeting.

The law requires *government approval* for the organization of an association with religious objectives. The wise and religious-minded government under which we are living would certainly consider it a calumny were we to say that it does not approve of an association in which everything breathes the love of God and the most inviolable attachment to the royal family of Saint Louis. It is not difficult to see that such an association can have no other enemies than those of God and of the King.

But, not to leave the least shadow of an excuse for the charge of being an unauthorized society, it is sufficient to say that I myself accompanied by the head officer of the association to the prefect's, in order to meet the requirements of the law, and that neither the prefect nor the other persons who were present can fail to bear witness to the very kind *approval* we received from him.

The meeting place was not the private, inner chapel, but the building which is a parish annex.[1] No other activity was carried on except under the control of the Minister of Religion.

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[1] In France, where it was difficult to create new parishes before the Law of December 9, 1906, established the separation of Church and State, parishes that had grown too large were often relieved by the erection of subsidiary chapels or parish annexes. The annexes were distinguished from the subsidiary chapels or parish mainly by the fact that they ministered to a smaller group. Both the one and the other could have resident priests with the status merely of assistants to the pastor who reside in the locality where the parish church stood. In this they differ from the mission chapels in the United States, which have no resident priest and are usually not visited by a priest except on weekends or Sundays for confessions, Mass and religious instruction. The important point made here by Father Chaminade is that these meetings were not secret , as they were not held in the seclusion of a private chapel, but in a place of public worship, which was open to all, though it belonged to the seminary.

Whether it was a matter of catechism, instruction, lectures, talks or public discussions, the police were hardly to interfere unless by way of protection. They were at fault in acting otherwise. Now, all this is to be said with the charity which is our life, excusing the mayor and taking upon ourselves, if need be, the blame for not having explained to him our purposes as well as we could have. Still, it is true that I was in a position to call on him quite often, and that before leaving I recommended visiting him, that he might be thoroughly convinced of the object of the Association and of the circumstances that he as magistrate could then ask to have explained to him.

The rest I am leaving for the next mail. I have only enough time to recall the necessity of resignation and the sentiments with which[2]

A leaf of a notebook accompanies this letter. It is written by the same hand and gives the juridical details concerning pious associations.

Penal Code.[3] Art. 291. No association of more than twenty persons whose purpose is to meet daily or on certain specified days, to occupy themselves with religious, literary and other objects may be organized except with the approval of the government and subject to the conditions which wit will please the public authority to impose upon said society.

Art. 292. Every association of the above-described nature which has been organized without authorization or which, after having obtained authorization, has infringed upon the conditions imposed upon it, shall be dissolved.

The heads, directors and administrators of the association shall, moreover, be punished with a find of from 16 to 200 francs.

Art. 293. Heavier penalties shall be imposed, if there has been provocation to crimes and misdemeanors, without prejudice to the prosecution of the culprit.[1]

Art. 294. Every individual who, without the permission of the municipal authorities, will have granted or consented to the use of his house or of his apartment, in whole or in part, as a place of assembly of the members of an association, even authorized, or for religious services, shall be punished with a fine of from 16 to 200 francs.

Penal Code of February 12-22, 1810. The infraction of these laws is a misdemeanor, the fine being a correctional penalty when it exceeds 15 francs. Arts. 1, 9, 11 and 466 of the said code.

Law of November 9, 1815

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[2] The rough draft ends abruptly here and is unsigned.

[3] This code, published in 1810, is the last of *The Five Codes*, commonly called *Code Napoléon*, which is still in force and has greatly influenced the laws of Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxemburg, the French, and the Italian-speaking Swiss cantons, Greece, Rumania, Italy, Spain, Spanish America, Haiti, the Province of Quebec, Canada, and the State of Louisiana.

[1] This article is merely summarized, not quoted in its entirety.

Art. 7. The following are declared seditious acts . . . the manufacture, wearing, distribution of cockades of whatever kind, and of all other kinds of rallying signs forbidden or even unauthorized by the King. Sirey[2] 1816. Part 2, pp. 10-11.

The Saint-Omer[2] Declaration of May 2, 1814:

"Freedom of religion is guaranteed."

The Constitutional Charter of Paris, 1814.

Art. 5. Each one professes his religion with equal liberty and obtains for it the same protection.

[2] Probably Jean Baptiste Sirey, French Jurist (1762-1845) and author of important works on jurisprudence.

Art. 6. Nevertheless, the Catholic, apostolic and Roman religion is the religion of the State.[1]

Art. 68. The civil code[2] and presently existing laws which are note contrary to the present charter remain in vigor until they are legally amended.

Organic Articles of the 26 Messidor, Year 9.[3]

Art. 6. Recourse shall be had to the Council of State in all cases of abuse on the part of superiors and other ecclesiastical persons. The cases of abuse are . . . violation of the laws and regulations of the Republic…all initiatives or all proceedings which, in the practice of religion, may…arbitrarily trouble the conscience (of the citizens)…degenerate to their detriment into oppression, injury or public scandal.

Art. 7. Recourse shall equally be had to the Council of State, if any attempt is made upon the public exercise of religion, as well as upon the liberty which the laws and regulations guarantee to its ministers.

Art. 8. Recourse is within the competence of all interested persons. In default of any particular complaint, it will be exercised by the prefects, as part of their office.

Public officials, ecclesiastics or persons desiring to avail themselves of this right to recourse shall address a detailed and signed report to the State Councilor, etc. and upon his report the case will be studied and definitively concluded in due administrative form or returned, according to the requirements of the case, to the competent authorities.

Sirey at 2. Part 2, pp. 26-27.

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Father Chaminade's efforts, though seconded by the bishop and the prefect, failed because of the inertia of the Ministry, and the Men's Sodality was only to resume its activities only in 1820.

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[1] In his *Histoire de France contemporaine* (Paris, Hachette, 1911, v. 4, p. 21) Ernest Lavisse, a member of the Académie Française, declares that the intention of the king was doubtless to give to the religion of the majority a privilege of honor and the right of precedence and more titles to claim royal protection and the favors of the public authorities, but that it was not accorded the privilege of greater liberty than the other religions.

[2] The *Civil Code*, promulgated in 1804, is the first of *The Five Codes*.

[3] July 14, 1801. The *Organic Articles* were 121 in number. They constituted a law regulating public worship. Catholic worship was the object of 77 of them, the other 44 concerned Protestantism. They were published together with the Concordat, April 8, 1802, and were considered inseparable from it by the various French governments that succeeded each other down to 1905, which the Articles were abrogated together with the Concordat.

Pope Pious VII protested as early as May 24, 1802, that they had been promulgated unknown to him and were unacceptable in that form. They really gave the State power to exercises considerable control over the Church. In practice, however, they remained largely a dead letter.

The following letters are aimed at firmly establishing the Daughters of Mary.

From that of September 6th we see that Father Chaminade had reached a clear-cut and definitive idea regarding enclosure. He retains it and makes it the object of a special vow admitting of dispensation whenever very serious circumstances might require it.

73. - TO MOTHER DE TRENQULLÉON, AGEN

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, September 6, 1816

My dear Child,

Your letters console me. I see and I thank God for it, that you all acquiring the spirit of your Institute and that all of you want to be true Daughters of Mary. You desire a definitive consecration in order to be able to devote yourselves to the works that your zeal moves you to undertake. I am not exaggerating when I saw that this is exactly what I desire more than anything else in the world. In the midst of my interminable occupations I am almost continually thinking of the little convent. To hasten still the work I am doing for you[1] I canceled a retreat that I was going to give, I interrupted my correspondence etc. Next week I am going to write to the Bishop of Agen and send him your constitutions; I am going to apply for their approval etc. Patience meanwhile!

You will find in the 48 articles, which sum up the whole constitutions, the solution to many difficulties.

There is no harm in the community's willingness to instruct the women you speak of. But it must be done in an orderly way. Do not open the door to dissipation. Let the instructions be well prepared, simple and within the grasp of all concerned, full of unction, moving their hearts while enlightening their minds. You may also replace Mlle de Rissan[2] without assuming any title[3] or any obligation to continue. As for the schools, there will presumably be question of them in my correspondence with the Bishop.

For want of a conveyance I am having someone bring Mlle Lhuillier's letter to you. She is still in good health. As soon as her mother gives her consent I will send her by coach to Agen.

See to it very carefully, my dear Child, that all advance in interior recollection and in the spirit of prayer. I greet them all and give them together with you my most cordial fatherly blessing.

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[1] The preparation of the abridged edition of the constitutions, called *The Little Institute*.
[2] Mlle Amelia de Rissan, one of the oldest friends and associates of Mlle de Trenquelléon, would very much have liked to enter the newly founded Institute. Unable to do so for reasons of health she wished at least to be associated with the Institute. Accordingly she became one of the first members of its secular Third Order branch.
[3] Such as *president* or officer of any kind.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. The more I think of the stand we have taken with regard to enclosure, the more I am satisfied with it. If you were to imitate the Carmelites and include the obligation of enclosure with the three principal vows of religion, you would not easily, perhaps not at all, attain your proposed objective. We must always keep in view the ends of the Institute and the times during which we are coming into existence. We will always respect the Carmelites and all the older Orders. We will help them all we can, but we will have no regret that we do not resemble them in every respect.

(*Cover address:* Adèle de Batz, Superioress
of the Daughters of Mary, at her Convent
Agen)

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On September 30th Father Chaminade touches upon the two important questions concerning young postulants and lay sisters, who are known in the Institute as companions.

74. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

(Copie – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, September 30, 1816

My dear Child,

Quite a few days have passed since I wrote to you last. I yielded to the entreaties of our young sodalists and gave them an eight-day retreat with two lengthy religious exercises each day. These were public. I was rather pleased with the results. Last Monday about two-hundred young ladies or married women fervently renewed their baptismal vows. The ceremony was quite long but edifying.

The retreat did not make me lose sight of the interests of our dear convent; above all, concerning Mlle L[1] and a girl from Nantes who would like to follow her good mistress and also be a spouse of Christ. As soon as the mother of this interesting child of eight discovered what was going on she boarded a coach, and after reaching Bordeaux spoke out strongly in favor of Mme L and against the young lady.[2] The storm has subsided. Today she is all for the young lady and is of great service to us in influencing her mother. She agrees, moreover, to have her own daughter brought up as a religious etc., but, for this consentment of her husband is needed. She is writing to him by the next mail.

[1] Lhuillier. See Letters 70, 71 and 73.
[2] Mlle Lhuillier and her idea of going to convent.

You may perhaps laugh at the idea of raising children as religious. Recall what I believe I told you on one occasion, that the Orders, whether of men or of women, were never more flourishing than when they trained their subjects from their earliest years. We will enter into all the appropriate details regarding this matter in due time.

Remain in peace, await with patience and submission the development of the designs of God. Instruct the children of an age to make their First Communion. Work and keep yourselves always occupied in the presence of God. Penetrate yourselves more and more with the spirit of your Institute.

Regarding companion-Sisters, let us not be overhasty, my dear Child, in admitting them, above all when they have passed the prescribed age. We shall certainly find among the young working girls some that will be suitable for us.

I am firmly convinced that the companion-Sisters should observe the enclosure like the other religious and that for business affairs there should be those who were formerly called "turn-box attendants.[1]"

However, let us all resolve to admit into the Institute, in whatever capacity, only such objects as really have its spirit and who are well fitted for the tasks to be assigned to them. If you lack subjects, ask God for them after the example of Saint Stephen, Abbot of Citeaux.

Meanwhile, if there is too much work in the house for the companion-Sisters, see that they are helped; an in this, occasionally give the example yourself. Do not fear that you will compromise yourself. St. Bonaventure was washing the dishes when the ambassadors of the Pope brought him the Cardinal's hat.

I agree with you that no companion-Sister, not even the Sister at the turn-box, once you have such a religious, should go to the creek or have the washing done.[2] Upon my first visit to Agen I will have a wash-house built for you, as we did at the Miséricorde. In the meantime, continue to do as you have been doing up to the present.

In conclusion, I wish you all kinds of blessings.

Joseph[3] Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Tell Sister L. to disregard her temptations. Why should she attach so much importance to them, now that she knows them to be mere suggestions of the evil spirit? She belongs to Jesus. She belongs to Mary. There is nothing to fear. Tell her never to bother about those temptations; not even to think it worthwhile to examine them, to consider them!

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[1] The French word is *tourières*, i.e., Sisters who were on duty at the *tour*, *turn*, or *turn-box*, a revolving box set in a wall so that objects could be passed through and received by persons who do not see each other. Such *tours* were also used in foundling hospitals formerly to receive abandoned infants.
[2] The meaning seems to be "to go to the creek to do the washing herself or have it done by laywomen."
[3] This is not an autograph signature.

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About this same time there was question momentarily of leaving The Refuge*, a former establishment of the Good Shepherd nuns, and of moving the young community to the convent of* The Sisters of St. Joseph*, also known as* Orphans of Saint Joseph. *These were on the verge of extinction for lack of subjects. But they had the advantage of authorization. This is the question discussed in the following letter.*

75. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

(Copie – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, October 26, 1816

My dear Child,

I am too greatly attached to the little convent you are now occupying. I do not have the least taste for changes. Nevertheless, if the city cannot come to any agreement with you for either its sale or permanent lease, why let slip the chance to secure another convent, which I suppose is larger, more convenient and better situated? Look into with Father M[1] and Mme B.[2] First of all, make sure that this convent is exactly what you need; find out the final price and the conditions of the sale. Otherwise make no commitment, unless it be conditional. Then ask Father M to guide you in the procedure required to have the project explained to the mayor and the city council. They will doubtless answer that they can make no transfer without the authorization of the government. However, it will not be difficult for them to obtain this, if they really want to. When the city finally comes to definite terms with you, do not forget that a city is always a minor and can, therefore, always reclaim its rights. Keep me always perfectly posted.

Make appointments to the various offices, but only on a temporary basis. Change then from time to time. In this way you will get to know better the abilities of each one of your Daughters and how to form their wills. I will not delay making their definitive appointments. First, however, I will send you a model which the higher superiors may use to keep their little records. I do not think they are doing it as yet. Nevertheless, it will prove very useful to you in promoting wise administration and in many ways, as you will soon come to realize.

I just recall that I have not yet answered you regarding the disadvantage of having all the personal linen in common use. There will no such disadvantage, or if there it, it will be of small consequence and will have to be endured. There will be no trouble, if the linen destined for the infirmary has its own mark and is used only for the sick; and if you divide all the other linen into two or three groups, more or less according to the size of each religious, with the number of the group marked on each item.

Most devotedly yours,

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[1] Mouran. See Letter 68, n.2; Letter 70, n. 9; the introductory note and Letter 72.
[2] Belloc. See Letter 32, n. 4 and *passim*, esp. Letter 63.

Joseph Chaminade[1]

Soon Father Chaminade had the happiness of having the first one of his Bordeaux sodalists leave for Agen to swell the ranks of the Daughters of Mary. It was Mlle Lhuillier, who figures in the preceding letters. She was to take the name of Sister Emmanuel. In this same letter he reverts to the important question concerning the kind of young postulants to be accepted[2] and the works to be undertaken.

76. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON
AGEN

(Copie – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, November 10, 1816

My dear Child,

Herewith I present to you the first subject from the Bordeaux Sodality decided upon entering the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. See that she becomes a perfect religious. You must keep her well occupied and train her in the practice of the virtues without prejudice to her occupations. You will get her to do whatever you wish by suggesting all those motives that stir the heart to love of God, devotion to Mary and the salvation of souls.

It seems to me that our little S and our two pious Germans write rather poorly. You might have them learn to write, as they are young enough to succeed. Let Sister Emmanuel teach them writing and spelling. Tell them that their Good Father hopes to see their modest talents used for the glory of Jesus and Mary.

Have courage, my dear Child. Work steadily at the *mission* you have received, yet without prejudice to the interior life which you are lead and in which you are to make steady progress. A superioress who would be guided wholly by human wisdom, in an Institute such as the one you have embraced, would hardly get very far. It is the Spirit of God that should habitually enlighten and enliven you. Without too intense an application of mind, your meditation ought to be all but continual. From time to time when you feel yourself interiorly invited to meditation, devote yourself to it and persevere in it, provided your principal duties do not suffer in consequence. What happiness for a superioress to be able to go to God and speak to Him, to consult Him, to receive His orders, like a Saint Teresa! There is no Institute whose superioress has so many responsibilities, and who, as the need arises, can yet give so much time to prayer, since she can always be substituted, should she desire it, at least once she has properly qualified subjects.

I have noted with pleasure your plan for the Young Ladies' Sodality. Make *little missionaries* of them. That is the end in view, but do not tell them about it. You can also skillfully prepare religious who in time will become real missionaries. It would be a good think

[1] No autograph letter bears such a signature.
[2] See Letter 74.

to have another religious as your assistant for the Young Ladies' Sodality, in order to train her for this particular good work. If Mme B[1] gets along with the ladies, it would not be a bad idea to train someone else too. You must certainly realize what an important good work the sodalities are; above all, if they can be organized as I desire it and as it is possible to do it. I shall often return to this point.

We have several young ladies here who are inclined to enter the religious life, due either to the retreat or to the example of Sister Emmanuel. You might allow or even tell her to write to them. Mlle C[2] might act as a go-between.[3] This young lady, my dear Child, is very virtuous. If the separation from her daughter were not the death of her eighty-year-old mother, she would shortly be a religious. All she lacks is the religious habit. I have just enough time to sign this letter,

Your Good Father

P.S. If there are in town any young ladies of quality, whom you could not recruit for the Sodality, try to reach them by offering to help them continue their education as day-students. By offering them the elements of grammar, of French and Italian, of music, of geography etc., you might attract them more easily than through devotions. I hope that Sister Emmanuel will not confuse the end with the means, and that she will succeed in making them at least good Christians. What I am telling you is not meant to be put into practice at once. Take your time and get your bearings. Always act prudently. In the ordinary course of prudence it is better to have others ask you for things than to offer them.

Should you have help given to the day-students, your young religious who might still need a good deal of instruction must not attend. Never tolerate such association.[4]

Very probably it will not be very long before truly Christian parents of quality will offer their little daughters to God to become religious and to be reared as such, should He be pleased to call them and they on their part correspond to their calling. These should be the only boarders to be accepted, and even these only in case they give evident signs of a vocation and have a real aptitude for the education suitable for them. The ordinary boarding fee for them is to be set at 400 francs; their wardrobe is to be charged to their parents. They should be given a simple black uniform, something like the one you have now.[1] These junior Daughters of Mary will be cloistered. If they conform to the ideal of the Institute, they will remain as boarders until the age of sixteen. If at that time their vocation is judged to be genuine they will take the habit of novices; otherwise they are to return to their parents. I urge you to cultivate among all our dear Children a taste and even a desire for this kind of life as religious boarders, for it is a reliable

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[1] Belloc.
[2] Chagne. See Letters 47,51 and 53.
[3] That is, as the correspondent for the group with Sister Emmanuel. She had been appointed to succeed Mlle Lacombe (See Letter 47) who had originally been designated by Father Chaminade as the Bordeaux Sodality's correspondent with Mlle de Trenquelléon (See Letter 32).
[4] The purpose of this emphatic prohibition issued by Father Chaminade was to shield the young Sisters who may not have been reared in *society* from the embarrassment to which they would be exposed in the company of young *gentlewomen (demoiselles)*. The reputation of the Institute might also have suffered.
[1] The future religious were not yet wearing a special costume.

way of rendering the Institute in time very flourishing. What pitiful education is given to girls of quality these days, above all in the area of religion and piety!

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A second sodalist of Bordeaux, Mlle Isabelle Moncet, was leaving for Agen. She was to receive the name of Sister Anne.

As Bishop Jacoupy still hesitated to declare himself in favor of the foundation, Father Chaminade permitted his Daughters to satisfy one of his demands and start a small school.

77.- TO MOTHER DE TRENQULLÉON
AGEN

(Aut. – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, November 18, 1816

My dear Child,

Mlle Isabelle's things have been gone since the 14th of this month. I am sending you a copy of the waybill, in case they arrive before her: 30 francs in all, with the consignment delivered to the convent. Mlle Isabelle will leave by the first conveyance available, or other means failing, by stage-coach. She will inform you herself concerning her financial condition. I am having her take all suitable precautions so that neither you nor she may have any trouble on that account. I hope you will have a good subject in her. The only question will be what occupation to give her.

I have just received Father Mouran's answer. I note with pleasure your patience and resignation. All the delays and demurs of your good bishop will not halt, I hope, the execution of the purposes of Providence. Were the Institute destined to do but very meager good, you would meet with far fewer obstacles. The devil, the special enemy of Mary, is the same for all her children. Still, do not fear.

It seems that there is question of having you present a petition to the government for permission to purchase the house you occupy. His Excellency, the Bishop, says that the minister will forward this petition to him, etc. This whole prospect is hardly to my taste. I fear they may have you make some false move or other from whose consequences it will be very difficult to escape. There is not the least question of soliciting the government at this time for an authorization either for the Institute or for the community of Agen. I have agreed with the prefect of Agen that it would be through him that we would present this petition to the government, once the community has given sufficient proof of its usefulness and he himself, as well as the city, can vouch for the fact, etc. The city would like to sell you the house, and it must have the authorization for it. Very well, let the city request the permission to dispose of this house on conditions to which both parties will agree. What to do base its petition on the necessity of

lodging a community that bids to be useful to it etc. This petition will certainly not be transmitted to His Excellency the Bishop.

Since His Excellency is so uncertain about giving you the approbation needed to the natural perpetuation of our establishment, start a school, but quietly step by step. Accept only a half a dozen children at first. In proportion to their progress and the proficiency of the teacher, admit others, one at a time, by twos or threes. Do not be hasty. See that good care is taken of the children at that this work is done without display of any kind. Make no commitments, either with the parents or with the public.

You may pass this letter on to Father Mouran. In doing so, please give him my very best regards. His letter has greatly edified me. I feel deeply grateful and obliged to him for all the attention he is giving to the sodalities and particularly to our dear little convent, which is so close to my heart. I will answer him in similar terms. I must close now. The day before yesterday in the evening I began a retreat for the men.

Tell all of our dear Daughters that, even though I do not write to them individually, I have all of them in mind while writing to you, and that I do not forget them at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Accept herewith for yourself and for them the blessings of your Good Father.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(Cover Address: Adèle de Batz, Superioress
of the Daughters of Mary, at her Convent
Agen)

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78. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, November 29, 1816

My dear Child,

I have just received your letter and good Sister Anne is about to leave. They are getting her lunch ready. Her best[1] meal each day is her morning coffee with milk. This is true of almost all of our Bordeaux girls. Though she has begun to break this habit, you will do well to order her to take some several times a week, until her health no longer suffers from this privation.

Make steady progress in self-mastery, my dear Child. In fact, be all to all a real Mother. May all find in you enlightenment and consolation. Even though some should come to you weak-willed and wavering, always receive them with kindness. By motives of faith you will get them to forgo an all too natural consolation which might retard them on the road to perfection. But they should be quite sure of always finding you ready to receive them. The very idea will buoy them up in the midst of their temptations etc. (I ratify) all that you have indicated to me regarding the arrangement of your timetable.

May the blessings of the Lord be abundantly showered upon the Mother and her Daughters.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Madam Adèle de Batz,
Superioress of the Daughters,
Agen)

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78a. - TO M PERÈS, ATTORNEY, BORDEAUX

(Aut. – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, December 9, 1816

Dear Sir:

[1] That is, her favorite meal, because coffee was a luxury in those days. As long as it was looked upon as such it could not be permitted in a religious community, where a soup or a piece of bread and some fruit was usually taken instead.

On Saturday evening I received the enclosed summons. If I am under any obligation toward the Lafaye family, please inform me of it. Kindly appear for me also, as directed, before the mayor. Please, Sir, accept herewith a fresh token of my utmost regard.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* M Perés, Attorney of
the District Court
Bordeaux.)

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79. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON
AGEN

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, December 10, 1816

My dear Child,

By this same mail I am writing to your good and Most Reverend Bishop, to ask his advice and his authorization for my little mission at Auch[1] and my two trips to Agen, because I intend to stop off there en route to or from Auch. In conformity with this reply I will settle you definitively. We are progressing slowly, as if by rowing, but what can we do? The wind is against us. Let us adore the dispositions of Providence, even in the chastisements which it seems still to reserve for our unhappy and criminal country.[2]

You might be able to invite the young lady from Condom and possibly also Mlle de Lachappelle to come to Agen during my stop-over there. What is detaining Mlle de Rissan? Several subjects have presented themselves here, but they do not meet all my expectations. I prefer to proceed more slowly and to approach our objective without any additional obstacles. Besides, I do not regret our being able to have a few meetings together before any further expansion. Nevertheless, go right ahead with our older members, since they certainly have the spirit of the Institute.

I did not reply to you regarding the work to be assigned to Sister Anne. It was to leave you more at liberty to vary her work in view of acquainting yourself well with her humble talents and her character. She is what they call a good child. She responds well to good treatment. Win her heart, and you will enable her to make all kinds of sacrifices for God, for the salvation of her neighbor, for her own advancement in virtue.

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[1] The See of Auch had been suppressed by the Concordat of 1801 and its territory joined to that of Agen. It was not re-established until the conclusion of the Concordat of 1817.

[2] This is an allusion to the intense misery that afflicted all of France at the end of 1816, because of an almost complete crop failure and an unbearable burden of taxes, as also to the anxiety, on the political scene, arising from the accession to power of the newly-elected House of Representatives.

As the good Mother of all your Daughters without discrimination be constantly alert before God to all their needs. In temporal matter grant them all that the Rule allows. Even foresee their needs, and do not wait until they are pointed out to you. Although all ought to act, come what may, according to the spirit of mortification and you, on your part, should instill this spirit in those who lack it, you are not directly to prescribe any mortifications other than those of the Rule. You must wait until they request them and an you have reason t believe that the Spirit of God prompts them to do so. Still, even then it may be wise to test them by some refusals.

I will write to Mme Belloc at once. Please assure all your Daughters that they have a Good Father who prays a great deal for them and who is often greatly concerned about whatever may help them tend toward the goal of their vocation. My dear Child, this Good Father is very specially altogether yours.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I have heard Sister Anne repeatedly praised for her skill in nursing the sick.

(*Cover address:* Mlle Adèle de Batz
Superioress of the Daughters
Agen)

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The following note concerning the celebration of Christmas in the little community is inserted here.

**80. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON,
AGEN**

(Copie – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, before December 25, 1816

Say the entire Office of the Blessed Virgin on the Feast of Christmas: Matins and Lauds during the night, the Little Hours may be chanted and will replace the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

Should there be too many other things to do, you may merely chant Compline also.

See whether on the principal feasts of the Blessed Virgin you cannot find time to say the whole Office of the Blessed Virgin without singing Lauds and Vespers. I have often had a mind to propose this for Sundays, but I would not wish to cause your Sunday works of zeal to suffer.

Toward the end of the month Father Chaminade received good news. Bishop Jacoupy had permitted the Daughters of Mary to don the religious habit.

81. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

(Aut. – Arch. FMI)

Bordeaux, December 30, 1816

My dear Child,

I consent to your continually wearing the habit of your holy Institute and I feel great satisfaction at the thought that all of you are clothed with it. Hereafter only a horrible persecution could compel you to leave it, or also…[1] But let us not be too foresighted. Let us keep to the course marked out for us by Providence. All the delays, all the difficulties that you experience will be to your advantage.

Apply your self to the formation of new subjects according as they enter. Although you have your general rules, the particular rules and even such as yet might be added would not suffice for you, if experience, observation, the knowledge of characters, the very spirit of the Institute and its proposed end failed to teach you how to exercise your authority. This maturity of conduct, if we may call it such, is not a matter of a few days.

Once we have decided to found other communities, and I hope God grants us the grace to do so, you and a number of others must be like living copies of the Rule. Since the ends of this Institute are all of the supernatural order, I would not want you to possess a purely natural wisdom, but that wisdom which comes from above. You must, therefore, ceaselessly beseech the Father of lights for it, and you will obtain it by great fidelity to the movements of grace and great purity of heart.

Do not have Mlle Desgrange take the habit of the novitiate at once, just the black costume. She has written to her father in Paris for a small sum to pay for her trip and to cover the light outlay called for by the new costume. This young lady has courage and character. She is quite understanding. I hope that you will make a good religious of her. But avoid undue haste. In general, grace must not be anticipated, but seconded in each subject, just as we must do in our own case.

A few days ago you spoke to me about white mantles for the solemn ceremonies. That would be entirely to my taste, but I should say *white* or *ash-gray*. For traveling the mantle should not be white. We will return to this topic later.

It would be a good idea to introduce the custom of having each one write me a little New Year's letter, not to compliment me after the fashion of seculars, but to declare her devotedness and to open her heart like a loving child. This would be doing by writing what could otherwise be done in person at the time of the regular visits. You have a note of this.

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[1] Father Chaminade had originally added here, then crossed out, the words *perhaps some*.

I have the impression there are still many things to tell you. They will all come in due time. Express to the whole community in my name whatever you feel my heart would say to them, if I had the time. I have not forgotten that I owe replies to Mme Belloc and Mlle Poitevin,[1] to Sister Emmanuel and to Sister Anne. Please greet them for me.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, through the meditation of Mary, our Patroness, deign during this new year to shower His most abundant blessings upon you and all your dear Daughters.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

(*Cover address:* Madam Adèle de Batz,
Superioress of the Daughters,
Agen)

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Hardly had Father Chaminade dispatched the preceding letter when letters arrived together from Mother de Trenquelléon and from Father Mouran informing him that Bishop Jacoupy was offering to the Daughters of Mary the convent of the Orphans of Saint Joseph of which there had already been question some months before (See Letter 100). The transfer was to be made on condition that they continued the work of this moribund Congregation.

The following note in M. David's hand illustrates the first impressions produced upon Father Chaminade by this news, and depicts the prudence he manifested in matters of business.

[1] See Letter 62, n. 2.

82. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON AND TO FATHER MOURAN, AGEN

(Copie[1] – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, December 31, 1816

I believe there is no harm in accepting the house offered on condition that we install the Institute in it. Neither is there any great objection to paying a moderate pension to the sole surviving good Sister in the old Convent. It may be a good and useful work to admit to the Institute of Mary the Orphans' remaining young postulant.

All of this may be good and intended by God. But in each of these matters certain rules of prudence are to be observed. As far as this hasty answer permits my classifying them, and excepting other eventual observations of the sort which might escape the initial survey, they are:

1. Regarding the acceptance of the house offered, I am inclined to think that it belonged to the establishment known as *The Orphans*. I have no way of knowing whether this establishment was legally authorized or merely tolerated.

If the establishment called The Orphans was not authorized, only the pleasure of interested parties is required to replace it by another. Accordingly, in case the Orphans really have no (legal) existence, the consent of the surviving Sister and of the persons having some right to the buildings would suffice to arrange everything. But some sort of document would still be necessary.

If the establishment is legal, as I have reason to suppose it is, the grant could not be legally made, except by royal authority. Evidently His Excellency, the Bishop, can institute proceedings in this matter and, we may say, enjoys the established right of disposal in favor of a similar establishment. But the protection and offers of His Excellency do not constitute a final grant and would not confer a legal title.

Furthermore, as long as the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is not approved by the civil authority, that is by the king, is it incapable of acquiring anything corporately.

What I intend to imply by these observations is not that we ought to refuse the esteemed and gracious offers of His Excellency. It seems to me simply to be suitable: 1st, not to think of leaving the present house until the transfer of the other has been regularly made. This, as I have said, calls for a knowledge of the rights which the Orphans had with regard to it, the declaration of their dissolution or extinction and the authorization of the new corporation of the Institute which constitutes this same body.

For the time being, Mother Superior would accept the cession which His Excellency, the Bishop, would be kind enough to make, with the consent of the prefect, upon the

[1] by David Monier.

recommendation of the mayor. This could be done with the proviso, expressed by all parties concerned, that it be relinquished at the instance of the Lordships, the Ministers, and that his Majesty be petitioned for the authorization of this Institute, the declaration of the extinction of that of the Orphans of Agen and the granting of the buildings and properties to the one replacing it. The motives of public utility will be stated in the provisional document without the insertion of any eulogy of the new Institute.

2. The agreement with the good Sister who is withdrawing will also be temporary and determined by a consensus of opinion concerning the amount of her pension. Mother Superior would agree to it, just as she would accept the transfer of the premises, subject to the approval of the superiors and of the authority of the king over the establishment.

3. The young postulant who is requesting admission should have the qualities required by the Rule, notably articles 25, 26, and those following. She is really disqualified due to her voluntary entrance into another Institute (Art. 27 of the *Institute of Mary*). But she may be relieved of this disability by the General Chapter of the convent, according to Art. 28.[1] Thus, she may qualify for admission. I have no doubt that she actually does so, judging by the report I have on this head in a letter received today. However, in spite of this presumption there should be no question here of human considerations, of mere utilitarian views and of natural propriety. It is in accord with the prudence of God and the fervent spirit of the Institute that her admission as a novice should be deliberated. The other promotions to be granted her may eventually be determined in the same spirit.

4. I have not yet expressed myself regarding the admission of orphans into the convent, a proposition made in the letter. Since no type of good work is forbidden, every variety being recommended in the Institute, charity toward orphans would not be foreign to it. But this work must be neither exclusive nor more partially stressed than others. This would, moreover, be something to arrange in conformity with Art. 20, paragraph 4, of the Rule, which deals with retreats for day-pupils and with late First Communions. It would be essential to see to it that this admission of orphans does not become a cause for pretext for the disaffection of the different classes of the Society. We must not be too hasty with this admission, in order not to reverse the purpose of the Institute by utter specialization.

5. Almost as much is to be said concerning the project of a boarding-school for the education of certain classes. We must not become involved in a thing of that kind without due reflection and without aligning its realization with the general objectives of the Order.

6. The idea of starting two establishments of the same kind in the city of Agen would bring on the most serious embarrassment because of: 1) the considerable difficulty of finding enough personnel to place at the head of each single grade without putting yourself into the position of having them duplicated; 2) the constant tendency on the part of the civil authorities to fuse the two convents; 3) the fact that the fusion, become a necessity sooner of later, would not easily brought about, due to the natural difference of spirit in both houses and the inevitably baneful effect of the disturbance resulting from the relocation of one of them and its subordination to the other.

[1] The French edition has “228”, which does not correspond with the number in the copy in the archives.

In submitting my observations to His Excellency, the Bishop, I am very far from being able to add his wisdom and his pastoral charity. His Excellency will kindly excuse whatever defects these observations may contain, and make the necessary corrections. Uniting myself with his good will toward the Institute I beg of God to animate him with His holy grace.

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While waiting for the question of the Orphans to be cleared up, Father Chaminade went on giving his daughters the wisest counsels for their guidance.

83. – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON
AGEN

(Copie – Arch. SM)

Bordeaux, January 14, 1817

My very dear Child,

I am writing you this letter apart from our regular correspondence, as it is for you alone and concerns the administration of the convent.

In compliance with my previous request, five of our saintly Sisters informed me about the interior state of their souls, and those holding office told me of their satisfaction of difficulties with their respective duties. I have answered each one individually. I am sending you the letter addressed to them, as I have reason to believe will share the contents of hers with you, although I have asked this only of the Mother supervisor of zeal.[1]

Her letter may be gradually applied more or less to a great number of cases, for it is better to adopt a principle of frequent application, than to come back for advice concerning each incident.

Each Sister in her place of appointment may experience the same misgivings about her ability, the same longing to be replaced by someone more capable. All must be encouraged to persevere in submission to the will of God, determined to do their best and praying that the proposed good may be accomplished. The evil which doubtless would still more oppose the ends proposed in the Institute, would be frequent changing of those in office and the diversity of administration which it might produce would doubtless an evil still more opposed to the objectives of the Institute. You, my dear Child, who ought to be alert to everything, assure yourself of an upright intention as of the first requisite for every responsible position. Support the Mother supervisor of zeal in her good purpose of wisely developing the spirit of prayer, of learning more and more to discern spirits, of reconciling mildness with firmness in all her

[1] Mother Teresa Yannasch, future superioress of the convent at Tonneins, where she died after a holy life, November 3, 1823.

actions. May everything be conducted according to these principles without any thought of change, except when absolutely necessary.

The doubts of our Mother supervisor of zeal regarding her vocation have ended exactly as was to be expected. Should they return, you must remind her of her former trials and have her entertain sentiments of deep humility. These trials recall our human frailty and lead us to find our strength solely in confidence in God. As regards the reproaches of conscience concerning time lost or badly employed during mental prayer and the examination of conscience, exercises in regard to which the mind is so often mistaken, we must immediately repent of the past and put the present and future in order. We must not waste time debating the frequency of our failings. Concerning mental prayer and the examination of conscience, we must have recourse to the Rules and develop habits based on there, without being bent upon a search for the other ones. The Institute, the whole Institute –in it we have enough to occupy us. The rules are the essence of the Institute.[1]

See to it, my dearest Child, that this is the spirit of all our Daughters in Jesus and Mary. A well-informed Mother supervisor of zeal is a powerful means of getting the entire body of the community to throb with life.

Our dearest Sister N.[2] has obtained great graces and I don't doubt that they will serve to sanctify her. But be careful not to let her fall a prey to discouragement and dejection in the ever-possible even of her being deprived of the delights she is now experiencing. Have her exercise a more habitual confidence concerning her state of soul. At the slightest decline of her spiritual delights, let her know that God, after lavishing His gifts, questions His creature to ascertain whether she values God Himself or affection. Let her know likewise that God is to be loved in aridity and in afflictions, when He seems to abandon us, as well as when we can sense and savor His love. I do not doubt but that this Sister, if properly guided will become a great saint some day. Her submission to and her confidence in her superiors, despite her own views, have greatly benefited her. She should regard the trial which God permitted her to make of them,[3] as her rule of conduct for the future.

Dear Sister N. has also had her troubles and her temptations. But who does not have them in this world? God permits it to be so. We must ask Him for the grace to emerge from these trials more worthy of Him. Speaking of this Sister, I believe she is deceiving herself concerning the cause of her combats. It is not pride that rules her, although as a child of Adam she inevitably has her share of it. What is certain about her is that she has not lacked either prayers or the grace to struggle against it. Her return to tears of repentance sweetened by love leads me to believe that the tempter preoccupies her with herself, to prevent her progress in the love of God. I have written to her at length, because her condition deserves unstinted attention. But, for you, my dear Child, as the guides of our Sisters, the following brief expression of my thought suffices: Sister N. is less tormented by the demon of pride than by the one who wants to turn her away from her present responsibilities and other similar ones. To this you must compose *forgetfulness of self,* for this will end the struggle and at the same time instill the love of God as to fill her heart.

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[1] See Letter 71, n.6.
[2] The names are missing in the copy which is our source.
[3] i.e., of her submission to and confidence in her superiors.

Our young Sisters, N. and N. also, who wrote to me, will receive from your hand my two answers enclosed herewith. These young subjects doubtless did not imagine that they were expected to speak to me of their studies and particularly of the preparatory virtues and of the maxim concerning them, all of which are the beginning of the Rule.[1]I am not finding any fault with them, because they were unable to suspect such demands of propriety. You should not speak of it to the mistress of novices either, as she might feel bad that she had not thought of it herself. But, my dear Child, in future see to it that each one of your Daughters is able to report to me on the condition of her education and (of her) spiritual exercises, on the improvement of these or of their proposed virtues. In this way your letters from time to time will convey to me the spirit of the convent and enable me to revive, if need be, the spirit of the Institute.

You may have those of our Sisters who did not write to me do so at once. As for those who do not know how or who cannot write, nothing prevents their directress of any of the other Mothers who enjoy their confidence from sending me a note in their name individually and separately. I would receive it as a person receives news about children who do not know how to write.

May our divine Master through the meditation of our august Patroness deign to pour out upon you, my dear Child, and on the entire Community His most abundant blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

84 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, January 20, 1817

My dear child,

Last Wednesday I gave Lapoque, a carrier of Agen, a package of seven letters addressed to you. One of them is for you. You will understand that it is, so to say, independent of our ordinary correspondence concerning the interests of our dear convent.

[1] The reference is to the original Rule, composed in 1815 for the Daughters of Mary by Father Chaminade's secretary, David Monier,(cf. pp. 54-56). Article 48 of this Rule begins "The novices must learn in succession two kinds of virtue, the virtues of preparation and the virtues of consummation." Article 51 lists four of the former, called in obedience and bearing with mortifications. By "mortifications" here are meant the trials of everyday life, especially those arising from our dealings with our fellowmen (Cf. *Spirit*, nos. 415-424). Article 52 points out the duty of the Mother supervisor of zeal to help the novices understand all the advantages of these principles by short maxims, of which the following are examples: She who cannot keep silence, cannot control her soul (Article 53). Thos who do not know what recollection is to have no idea of God's power in the human heart"(Article 54). Articles 55 and 56 suggest similar maxims to facilitate the practice of obedience and that of bearing up with the trials of life (Cf. *Ecrits de Direction*, Vol. I, Fribourg, 1956, pp. 2-4).

In addition to the practice of an annual letter written to me by each member of the community individually, for which each one receives a reply proportioned to her needs, I think it would be useful in the beginning for the principal administrators to write to me from time to time how they are discharging their various duties and what difficulties they may be encountering. The rules they have at hand and the replies to be received would quickly complete their formation. You see that I am not seeking to shirk any of my responsibilities. We might be able, with a little care in the case of letters that are not urgent, to avoid mail charges by looking for an unofficial carrier.[1] The other day the mailman calculated with one of my household hands that I had spent more than 200 francs this year on postage, and this too at a time when my harvest[2] was next to nothing.

It is only on the Feast of the Purification that Mlle M. is to make her final decision. I am more and more satisfied with her. She acts with prudence rarely found in one her age. She is talented, besides. I hope she will make a good subject.

I thought that your Forty Hours Devotion was taking place during Shrovetide.[3] It is altogether conformable to the mind of the Church and of the Rule to make of these three days a period of abstinence, with the fast on Monday and Tuesday somewhat mitigated. I say "mitigated" because you may be obliged to designate these days for various gatherings of the very young, and a number of them may have to speak a good deal.[4]

Your last letter gave me occasion to write rather forcefully to Father M.[5] Be calm, all of you. Have no other desire than the fulfillment of the will of God. I am not at all chagrined at the retard you have suffered respecting the Orphelines. The spirit of the Institution will benefit by this delay, if, as I hope, you know how to make the most of it.

I am astonished that Sister St. Vincent needs an assistant, considering the fewness of her pupils. It might be advantageous under the circumstances to break in Sister Aloysius. I am waiting to hear from her before writing to her. Maintain the young-lady sodalists who intend to become religious in their good dispositions. It may be suitable to form a kind of Third Order, but the time is not yet ripe for it. I hope not to lose sight of it.

I am your father and theirs in Jesus and Mary.

Joseph Chaminade[1]

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[1] Cf. Letter 61, n. 1.
[2] Viz. of grapes. Cf. Letter 37.
[3] The three days preceding Ash Wednesday, characterized in various places by carnival licentiousness.
[4] The idea seems to be that the very young, *la tendre jeunesse*, may have to be assembled on the carnival days to keep them out of harm's way, and that some of the Sisters might have to exert themselves considerably to keep them entertained.
[5] Without doubt, Father Mouran, who was urging the acceptance of Bishop Jacoupy's offers.
[1] See Letter 75, n.3.

Under this same date, January 20, 1817, Father Chaminade wrote to the Bishop of Agen on the subject of the Orphelines.

Bishop Jacoupy, confirming the fears of the Founder, had asked him in his letter of January 6th "to transform the Daughters of Mary *into* Orphelines *or* Daughters of St. Joseph." *But he had not been long in detecting the difficulties he risked running into, and had of his own accord abandoned the idea. It was only then that Father Chaminade replied to him.*

In this letter he shields himself from the reproach that might be leveled at him for founding a new Order instead of reestablishing one of the many swept away by the revolutionary storm.

85 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY OF AGEN

Bordeaux, January 20, 1817

Your Excellency:

I would have answered your letter of the 6th of this month without delay had I not found in it the express invitation to think it over. In fact, the matter seemed to allow for reflection, so I merely acted according to your kind invitation. I am informed today that Your Excellency in its wisdom has reached a decision and that the question of the house offered to the Institute of Mary is settled. We must believe that God has willed it so, and that he will be glorified thereby.

At first sight it had appeared to me that it might be a great and perhaps dangerous temptation for the saintly Daughters of Mary to propose to them the renunciation of a tried vocation and of their Institute in view of the advantages they might find in spacious premises, whatever advantage this might offer from the human point of view. I meditated this mission before the cross, since God willed that Your Excellency should not place me under orders, but should leave me free to decide for myself. Try as I would, the answer in my conscience always appeared to be negative. Meanwhile, however, the Holy Spirit inspired Your Excellency to decide differently.

Now that I find myself relieved of doubt, thanks to the disposition of Providence, it appears easier to express the thoughts which heretofore seemed inexplicable even to myself. Your pastoral solicitude for your city of Agen must have led you to desire to preserve the religious Establishment of the Orphelines, and I recognized the tenderness of the shepherd in his eagerness to provide for it. On the other hand, in transferring your hopes for the maintenance of this house to the worthy Daughters of Mary, Your Excellency gave them a very evident token of the price you attached to their enlightened piety and to their zeal which is so pure. However, the moment (it was decided) that the work for the orphan girls could be done only by the Institute named St. Joseph, (to be able) to transform the

Daughters of Mary for the proposed work either their vocations must have been delusions up to that point or there would be no distinction between religious vocations.

While I was considering the situation of the Daughters of Mary in this unexpected change, a very serious and unavoidable side effect struck me more than anything else. It was the necessity of erasing the traces of the affections contracted from their foundation and of giving them entirely new ones for the Institute of St. Joseph, a total stranger to them. The impressions to be produced would always have had the very great disadvantage of not being the first ones.

Now, I willingly suppose that the merit of this Institute in itself is greater than that of the Daughters of Mary. In fact, it may be said that the Institute of St. Joseph had a prolonged period of peak performance and that the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is but beginning to prove itself. In such a case, which is to be preferred?

This is a question that would have been permissible before the love of the latter Institute had burst forth; but it cannot be put to the saintly Daughters, whose heart has already declared itself. The human heart strengthened by faith is like a bronze plate which is to be engraved. Before beginning you may debate the design, but once the chisel has bitten deep into the plate, it cannot take on any other designs or it will always do so poorly.

If I were asked today why a new Institute has been preferred to so many others which had been tried and tested, I should answer that the history of the Church attests that this has always happened after the storms which have at various times overthrown the Institutes. I should answer also that all those most holy confessors and pontiffs who were impelled by the needs of the faithful either to accept already existing Rules or to write new ones agreed independently of each other in giving new Rules. Finally, even those Rules themselves which in some Institutions were issued under an old name are nonetheless new in their essential aspects.

The reason for this procedure is not a mind for novelty in a religion which proscribes novelties, but rather the new relationship which the enlightenment and the times to be sanctified have with the Institutions suited to offer this sanctification. A new Institution is adapted to the times, the places, and the circumstances. It has no need of what depended upon the outdated customs of the old Institutes, but it does need all that takes into consideration the customs of the day and that was not found in the old Institutes. The Spirit of God does not suffer the least change in all of this, but shows that its influence is universal, knowing how to reach all men despite the diversity of minds and manners in different periods of history.

The dying out of the Ladies of St. Joseph, a current proof in point for Agen, is one example in a thousand of the difficulty of reviving the old Institutes, and beyond a doubt the Daughters of Mary, if they had become Orphelines, otherwise than by a holy inspiration of God, would be on the same road to extinction. Ordinarily God does not restore dead men to

life under our very eyes. In the same way, extinct corporations do not naturally return to life, and if one among them really came to relive, that is to be reanimated with its original zeal, it would set the world to wondering, since it would mark a sort of miracle. God forbid that the Daughters of Mary should have abandoned their intention of embracing the counsels of perfection to which they have bound themselves, and that too for the sake of quarters better suited to certain conveniences. Their establishments will develop when it pleases God to have it so, and in the place that his Providence will appoint. Let them prove and steel themselves in the virtues set before them; God will make use of them when he has tried them in conformity with his plans.

I will nonetheless go on requesting for the devout Daughters of Mary a long continuation of Your Excellency's blessings.

Please, Your Excellency, accept the assurance of my submission to your orders and of the profound respect with which I am your . . .

* * * *

So Father Chaminade continues, as in the past, to train the little community in the practice of the virtues proper to its mission and to instruct it upon the various points concerning its constitution.

The following are the rules which he laid down for the admission and examination of the postulants and for the practice of the apostolate among the young sodalists. The style of these rules again bespeaks the pen of M. David. The last lines alone are in Father Chaminade's hand.

86 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON

Bordeaux, February 26, 1817

Probation—The Mother Superior must first of all hold to regulations, however rigorous they may seem to be. Afterward she is to consider whether her special rules do not authorize her to grant some modifications. Even should it seem that she is not expressly so authorized, in an unforeseen case or in extraordinary circumstances she has a general discretionary power, to be used for the benefit of the convent and the spiritual welfare of her Daughters.

Whether the superioress grants the foreseen modifications for which she is authorized by her official rules of conduct or whether she makes use of her discretionary power, she is to do so only after due deliberation. This deliberation indispensably involves seeking the counsel of God at the foot of the Cross with becoming humility, resignation, and determination. This done, the decision is to be entered in the Mother Superior's record, and submitted shortly to the director, their spiritual Father.

The admission of a subject to the novitiate before the full probation depends upon the rules just explained. It is very difficult to judge in such a case from a great distance. The considerations that have determined the length of the period of probation are of great importance to the Institute. Constancy and a real vocation must be assured on the part of the candidates and their health must be strong enough to meet the requirements of the Rule. One of the points regarding health is that the candidates be not subject to nervous attacks, to hysterics, to melancholy, diseases which often grow worse. Families often conceal them and the afflicted themselves know little about them; they have had some fainting fits, they have felt bad, etc. The time of probation and its apparent severity will keep the convent from making harmful mistakes and the candidates themselves from believing to be a vocation what at times is nothing more than a masking of their infirmities from the rest of the world.

Retreat of 3 or 5 days—The curtailing of the retreats is likewise linked with the above-stated principle, that is to say with the regulations, their exceptions and the directives given to the Mother Superior in the Instruction addressed to her in particular. Her discretionary power also exerts some influence under the above-mentioned conditions. But the reliable testing of the trainees deserves prime consideration, any inconvenience being preferable to the misfortune of introducing into the budding Institute insufficiently tried recruits who, making profession while already lax in their observance of the Rules, may never know any other kind of life and of conduct.

Otherwise there is no objection to the novices' making the same retreat as the postulant. The confessor of the former ought to know their spiritual needs.

Parlor—However interesting Sister N.'s[1] work may be, we cannot hope to safeguard this convent in particular, except to the extent that we hold to the principles governing the Institute itself. On this subject you may reread the first part of Chapter 3 of the *Larger Rule*, from Article 29 to Article 37, and add to it section 3, paragraph 1 of the general regulation treating of the parlor, from article 172 to article 187.

It does not seem proper to alter these rules on account of a few private considerations which some day pupils may be interested in making, even though they turned to the advantage of religion. Mother Superior will find it within her discretionary power, to grant, in very rare cases and for a very short time, exceptions from strict supervision.

Moreover, Mother Supervisor of Instruction[1] may make it a rule in parlor visits to explain the principles in general, as she does in the sodalities, and to refer to their directors those who are of a difficult and anxious disposition.

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[1] Judging from the following letter, it seems there is question here of special guidance requested of Mother Teresa by the sodalists, and that Father Chaminade had misgivings about the matter, no so much on account of this religious herself as of the community in general.

[1] Mother Emmanuel.

Most dangerous of all, as Mother Superior figured, would be to dispense with the services of the Sister listener.[2] The Rule does not favor any dispensation of this kind.

Do not be afraid, my dear child, that you will vex me with your letters, however frequent they may be. Rest assured that I always receive them with the same pleasure and the same interest.

I had a private session with my secretary yesterday to answer various seemingly serious questions which you addressed to me several days ago. I was unable to finish, so I am sending you as much as I have completed.

I greet all our dear Daughters with fatherly affection.

Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.[3]

In letters to individuals the Founder insists upon these parlor regulations, essential in his eyes for preventing the introduction of serious abuses into the budding community.

The following letter is in the hand and also the style of M. David.

87 – TO MOTHER TERESA, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 6, 1817

My dear Daughter,

I am answering your letter of March 1st which I received with those of your Mother Superior and of Sister Emmanuel.

You must have thought that the manner in which you prepared the children for their First Communion and instructed the young ladies who would have to examine this first religious act by themselves is in accord with the ends of the Institute. But I see from all your letters that there has crept into this work of charity the practice of granting private interviews for the purpose of facilitating the examination of conscience and of giving rules of conduct.

This procedure, though it may be useful, if prudently used, to the young ladies who request it of you, is foreign to the works of charity admitted by the Institute. It is contrary to that wise reserve which must be practiced, so that the holiness of the convent may be maintained intact. It would be more in place among the duties of the ladies of the Sodality,

[2] A Sister appointed to be present during visits received by another Sister in the parlor.
[3] See Letter 75, n. 3.

who should be wisely initiated into this detail work. God will raise up such as are equal to the task, and even if it pleased him not to do so for the present, that would not be a sufficient reason for exposing a number of Christ's spouses to danger by this contact.

Mother Superior's discretionary power extends for the time being to permitting the fulfillment of present engagements and even to authorizing, for serious reasons, similar interviews with new arrivals. But she must judge of the reasons and of the need for them, she must supervise their consequences or have them supervised, listen to reports on them, etc. I have now written about them at sufficient length. The manner of disengaging yourself from present commitments without prejudice to the edification which was their aim will be explained to you later.

Meetings with a small group fall within the objectives of the Institute. It is this type that merits attention. A word apart and at the end of the meetings is not to be refused. A more specialized instruction to a small number may still be granted. But familiar conversations and confidences from which the public and the Sister listener are excluded cannot be sanctioned by any rules for religious.

The inclination that grace might be encouraging in some of the young ladies brought back to God, and which might be drawing them to the religious life, will not be snuffed out by the mere fact that they have a confidante who is not a religious. Besides, it is less a question of attracting a great number than of admitting only solid vocations. You will find the explanation for this in your regulations.

It would be a pleasure for me to see the time no longer devoted to dangerous and too detailed dealings with outsiders being used to form and perfect the inmates of the convent, to teaching them thoroughly, according to their condition and capacity, the statutes and regulations (of the Institute).

It is God's will that we be brought to a halt from time to time on our way to heaven, in order to make surer of our subsequent progress and of leaving no legacy of evil behind.

My dear Daughter, seek your consolations in God alone, since he alone should be the object of your love and of your hopes. I beg of him to bestow upon you an abundance of his holy blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * * *

88 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 6, 1817[1]

My dear Child,

In answering your letter of the 28th of this month[2] I believe I have taken care of what remained to be said about the preceding ones.

You asked me for the means of training yourself to obey, and Providence is coming to your aid on the occasion[3] of the private and confidential interviews with outsiders. My dear Child, the consolation which you and your dear Daughters, Emmanuel and Teresa, found in this kind of occupation caused you to become attached to it, and now it is necessary for you to withdraw from it first, and for your above-mentioned Daughters to do so afterward. It must all be done with prudence, while safeguarding the ways of salvation upon which some outsiders have entered, and without in any way damaging the edification that works of this kind have procured.

Measures must even be taken to enable the work to be continued by the most religious ladies of the Sodality. I must give you some details on all of this with a view to your motives and your conduct.

I am going to enter upon them.[4]

* * * *

The following letter is interesting as setting forth the spirit which characterized Father Chaminade's sodalities in contrast with that of an older sodality founded before the Revolution.

[1] The date is doubtful.
[2] Father Chaminade no doubt wanted to write *of the last month*.
[3] The meaning is, no doubt: Providence is coming to your aid by furnishing you an opportunity to obey whenever there is question of private and confidential interviews with outsiders.
[4] The rest of the letter is missing.

89 – TO MOTHER de TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 19, 1817

My dear Child,

I have just sung the High Mass, in which I offered you and all your dear Daughters to the Lord through the mediation of our common Father, St. Joseph.

I have received the trunk containing the very pretty ornaments for the altar. You must have gotten their measurements, for they fit perfectly. I deeply appreciate all the marks of attention given me by the members of your dear content—I was going to say, of the convent of my heart. By the way, for quite a while already, I believe, I never give Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament without begging our Lord to lavish his blessings upon all of you.

I must reply to Mlle de Lachapelle[1] that her group cannot be united with what is known as the Sodality of, or the sodality instituted by, St. Angela. I doubt very much that the reestablishment of these young ladies' sodalities, such as they were in the middle of the 16th century, will succeed. Be that as it may, the sodalities of St. Ursula have nothing but the name in common with those of the Blessed Virgin.

In the Rule of St. Ursula the assemblies of various kinds, whose purpose is to present aspirants, pass upon them, and provide for sundry needs, are called sodalities. *General assemblies* are obligatory only twice a year; *executive meetings*, every two months; *those of the Mother Superior* and of her Assistants to dispatch current business are set for every two weeks; sectional meetings[2] are bimonthly. The purpose of all this was to provide *governesses, mistresses, admonitors*, etc., who almost individually watched over the morals of the associates. It was a police system.

The Marian sodalities, in place of a secret police system, set up an active and direction communication of the Christian virtues, mutual instruction, cooperation in the various activities and their intelligent apportioning. The other one was a sodality of leaders who wanted to govern and guide. This one today is the sodality of those who are guided. One was a schooling in the virtues, so to say, while the other is their rapid communication by the contagion, if we may use the expression, of example.

I am replying to our new Sister St. Joseph, so that she too may have her little letter. You or she might send back a copy, which I could add to the part of the regulations that it explains.

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[1] At Condom, where Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle lived (see Letter 70), the Ursulines had an establishment; hence the reason for this consultation.

[2] The danger of confusion is more apparent in the French, where the word *congregation* means both a sodality and an ordinary meeting.

I am in heart and in affection your Good Father in our Lord Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I made two parcels of my latest batch of letters to our dear convent, one for you and the other for Father Mouran. I did not notify you in advance, but I take it all must have reached you.

I realize that I have not given you an answer on the vital subject of the repairs. However, you will surely not take any important action until after Easter. I will return to this latter later on. The mail is ready to leave.

* * * *

The following note deals with Father Chaminade's effort to recover the patrimony which furnished him with the necessary canonical title for his ordination.[1] *Four*[2] *of the six Chaminade children had inherited a share in the title to this house. Francis had inherited the business also, but he went bankrupt and the house was sold to pay his creditors.*

89a – TO M. VÉCHAMBRE, ATTORNEY-AT-LAW, PÉRIGUEUX

April 14, 1817

I have learned from my brother who is here that his house has been sold; so I believe that the amount of my own and my sister's mortgage may soon be recovered. Will the thirty-day legal notice of the auction bring us the advantage of a settlement out of court among the creditors according to art. 749 of the code of procedure, which is really well-intentioned, but which, as I know, is not always favorable? If no agreement is reached, will the court recognize the creditors' claims in the order of priority? If so, please be very punctual in producing the titles. I re-empower you to do, either out of court or legally, whatever you judge to be appropriate to my interests. I should appreciate your informing me from time to time how things are getting along. Rest assured of my sincere gratitude and of the sentiments of respect with which I am most sincerely. . . .

* * * *

[1] See *Apostle*, 1910, 6:60-61.

[2] There were thirteen children in all, but only six reached maturity. Of these only four received an inheritance; because the oldest, John, had already died when the parents divided their estate, and Blaise was unable to inherit because he had before the Revolution taken solemn vows as a Franciscan Recollect. Since Louis had died intestate in 1808, his share of the estate was divided among Francis, Lucrèce, and William. As Francis kept the house, the others received a mortgage on it as their share instead of cash.

The following letter deals with the purchase at auction of the house located at 1 Rue de Lalande, adjoining No. 2, which contains the room in which Father Chaminade died. The house was eventually resold, leaving Nos. 2 and 3 alone to constitute the property of the Madeleine at present.[3] The imprudence referred to would be that of exposing himself to the obligation of paying the sum of 1,800 francs a second time, due to the fact that all the mortgagees would not have been satisfied.

89b – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, Thursday morning, April 27, 1817

My dear Friend,

Very promptly at four o'clock this afternoon, as expressly agreed, the creditors of the house of Lafaye are to meet at the home of M. Despiet.[1] All the papers are to be made out. I will be there with funds to sign whatever is in order. One of the creditors claims that I could not as yet, without being imprudent, turn over some eighteen hundred more francs. I have read no document. In other words I have, so to say, never yet busied myself with this affair. Your presence or that of M. Perès will be indispensable. It would be better still for both of you to be there. The session will not be long. Please have the necessary information passed on to M. Perès. Your very truly,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

* * * *

The following note refers to the same purchase. Father Chaminade forwards the balance due while calling attention to a possible expense which he had made in the course of the negotiations and for which he might be entitled to a reimbursement, according to the letter received from M. Perès.

89c – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW, BORDEAUX

April 19, 1817

My dear Friend,

I am much more than overburdened. I am sending you the wherewith to pay the balance of the account. You will notice that I am entitled to a refund for one of the items listed in the account of the payments I have made. M. Perès spoke to me of one amounting

[3] For a ground plan of Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Rue de Lalande see *Apostle*, 1914, 10: opp. 177.
[1] The spelling in the official documents.

to some 60 francs. The letter, which must be among the papers and with the account of the expenditures, mentions it.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

In the following letter Father Chaminade had to settle a delicate case, that of a Sister of whom a chance confessor required an obedience incompatible with the rights of her superior.

90 – TO MOTHER de TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 19, 1817

My dear Child,

You were really in an embarrassing position concerning Sister Anne. God willed to have you preserve your customary prudence. You had hardly any means better calculated to help you than to take time for reflection and for consultation.

I imagine that Father Pass(enaud),[1] after mature reflection, would have withdrawn his request of his own accord. In any case, you must answer him with the regard and respect that are his due, even if he happens to be mistaken and to persist in his error. "When a religious is living in a house under the Rule and obedience, the promises to follow the advice and counsels of any other than the superiors are plainly a breach of order, a preparation for and frequently an imminent danger of a convent schism, which often has far-reaching consequences. Furthermore, a person acts in this way only in the face of some great and certain danger to his salvation, such as that of heresy, of separation from the Church, etc."

Recourse to examples occasionally found in the history of the Church of the baneful results of such conduct is useless. It is equally useless to look for the possible effects of such a standard. A sailor aboard ship who would take it upon himself to follow the signals of another vessel would be thrown overboard because of the danger and trouble he would unquestionably be causing.

To say that the person requesting this promise is otherwise prudent accomplishes nothing. This very request is lacking in real prudence, for it amounts to an intention of placing a person between two promises and possibly between two opposing commands.

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[1] John Peter Gabriel Passenaud, according to Jules Andrieu, *Bibliographie Génerale de l'Agennais* (Paris-Agen: Picard-Michael et Médan, 1887), born in Toulouse, 1770. He preached the Lenten Series in the cathedral of Agen in 1817. See Letter 97a, n. 1.

Let us try, my dear Child, to draw a practical lesson from the contretemps with which you were afflicted in this instance. The lesson to be drawn is that we must not always yield to our desire to put the wisdom and charity of a great preacher to a test in the confessional. This may even be a temptation in which thoughtlessness and a certain pride concur at times with hoped-for delight in hearing things well said. Confidence in the one who knows us better, constancy in the practices by which he gradually trains us, setting aside all personal preferences and what seems to be such, these are the surest means of salvation.

Another lesson for the heads, the directors of monastic institutions, is that ordinary and extraordinary confessors should be chosen from among the priests who best understand monastic life and its rules; and among these, such are to be preferred as know the Institute and spirit of the respective Congregations.

The rules that I have just recalled are to be found here and there among your regulations. I do not know whether the study of them is being pursued, but I am quite eager to convince myself that it is. It would be, for example, if in case of doubt you mentioned which text of the constitutions or of the rules is the cause of the perplexity or which offers the solution of the difficulty.

I recommend particularly, my dear Child, that you console our Sister Anne in the embarrassment which has overtaken her. We can but praise her conduct in the midst of it. This embarrassment must have disturbed her. God has permitted it that it may turn to her sanctification. Let us remain faithful to him and he will bless all our days. That is what I ask of him for all our Sisters, and in particular for you, my dear child in Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I received a letter from Father Mouran dated the 11th of this month. I shall answer it in time, if it is at all possible. Work here has neither respite nor end. When you pay my respect to him, please tell him that his hopes are very flattering and that I should gladly see them realized.

In my letter I spoke about throwing a man overboard and now, on second thought, I am afraid that someone may wrongly find in it an occasion for scandal, a thing to be avoided. Here, then, is the explanation of the allegory—of course, not for you, my Child, since doubtless you know it, but for whoever does not. The convent is our boat, the sea is the secular world, the strange ship is the plan which Father Pass(enaud) is making or can make for himself on the ways of perfection. We must not doubt that across this dangerous sea this worthy minister is tending like ourselves toward eternal salvation, but his ship is necessarily following a route different from that of the ships which have the same objective, and it is not proper for the passenger of another ship to induce him to follow any

route other than that of the ship in which he is traveling. This is enough, I believe. I will answer your other questions at another time.

* * * *

In consequence of a recent more accurate determination of its date as the latter part of April, 1818, Letter 91 of the French edition will be found in its chronological place after Letter 97a.

In July 1817, Father Chaminade was able to go among his Daughters and to have the happiness of definitively establishing their Institute by receiving their religious vows with the consent of the bishop.

After his stay at Agen the Founder cannot help expressing his satisfaction with "the little convent."

92 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 9, 1817

My dear Child,

I am taking up my pen less in order to answer your last letter than to let you know that I am not forgetting you.

I am very greatly pleased with everything about the little convent. Even the two penitents who had caused me some anxiety are the object of my fatherly solicitude, as are all the others. Their submission tells me that we are going to have in them two real Children of Mary, but I would not be doing them any good by prematurely removing the dressing from the wounds of their souls. They were both serious cases, especially Sister St. Joseph. Incidentally, how is her physical ailment? She is of an age capable of recovering from any illness, if she has good will. We must take advantage of it for her welfare.

I was so satisfied that I began work on the *Consummation Virtues*. If you will all set to work with renewed fervor, you will make progress even against wind and high water and reach your goal.

One means of advancing in the virtue of silence and of recollection is to maintain ourselves humbly in the presence of God, and to ask him interiorly to rid the powers of our soul of all sentiments foreign to his glory and to the love which we have vowed to him.

My work is still on the increase. With the grace of the good Master who sends it, I hope to get through with all of it. Pray for your Father, that he may assure his own

salvation while working at that of others. May Heaven's most abundant blessings ever descend upon you and on all of our dear Daughters.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. Sister St. Joseph would have done well to write a little letter to her mother, who is justified in complaining about her silence.

I will note for you without delay the order I have put in the file of the professions.

* * * *

The following letter is addressed to M. Lapeyre, a sodalist. Its purpose is to negotiate the transfer to Father Chaminade of the titles to three chapels he intended to use for the meetings of the Sodality in Auch, which he hoped to found during a visit to that city. The de Batz Esq. referred to in the letter is Caspar François de Batz, a cousin of Mother de Trenquelléon's father. The chapels, however, were never acquired by Father Chaminade.

92a – TO M. LAPEYRE, JUDGE OF THE DISTRICT COURT AT AUCH

Bordeaux, August 16, 1817

My counsel, to whom I had passed the papers concerning the chapel and the annuity, was not able to give me an answer as soon as I would have wished it. His reply, just received, comes up to my expectations in part, at least. This is his opinion.

There is no objection to having the transfer of the chapel or of the three chapels made exactly as it was by M. Lodoyer to M. de Batz, and by the latter to Mlle Socadaux, namely by a deed under private seal. My counsel decided to draw up the deed in due form. It remains only to copy it in duplicate on stamped paper. This you will kindly do when you have agreed to its terms. As regards the date, my counsel thinks it should be that on which the agreement was made during my stay in Auch. This is, I believe the . . . The copies on stamped paper duly signed will be forwarded to me and I will return one signed by me to be kept by Mlle Socadaux.

The donation of the annuity[1] can offer greater difficulty, because donations[2] must be made in the presence of a notary, and they must be accepted expressly in person or by means of a notarized procuration.[3]

Could not the object of the annuity remain as it is until our next meeting? The affair of the annuity to be transferred will not prevent the chapels, which are independent of it, from reaching their destination. The Sodality will be established, and if God gives us the opportunity or the time the annuity will reach its set destination later. Meanwhile we would continue to do as we have been doing. It would be used manually[4] according to the intention of Mlle Socadaux.

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[1] See Letter 0d, note 3, on annuities in France at that time.
[2] Viz. of titles.
[3] In an autograph marginal note Father Chaminade replaces the two following paragraphs by these words: "I have substituted for what follows the advice to make a bequest to me in the form given overleaf, the date to be that of its actual transmission."
The form found on the reverse side of the letter is: "Adding to my will . . . (the date)" or "Addition to my will" "I give and bequeath to Father . . . the perpetual cash-endowed annuity to which I am entitled from M. Bourgade . . . and I revoke any disposition I may have made to the contrary."
[4] I.e., by receiving the yearly allowance directly from the hand of the person in whose name the annuity is drawn up.

Possibly a means other than donation will be found. I wish it were. I do not know why I am averse to this kind of conveyance, but since this does not hinder the essential object, we must take our time.

* * * *

Overburdened with work, Father Chaminade left the letters from the little convent long unanswered. To his ordinary occupations had been added serious concern with a new foundation, namely that of the Society of Mary. He took the first step in this direction on October 2, 1817.

It was only somewhat later that he was able to resume his correspondence with Agen and to dictate to M. David the following very long letter.

93 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, October 15, 1817

My dear Child,

I am devoting this letter to the various needs of the little convent about which you or your dear Sisters have been asking advice since August 28th. I will add some advice regarding your personal direction, if time permits. In my reply to the little convent I am including your requests under date of September 25 and the letter of Sister St. Vincent that I had asked for. However, I shall deal with Sister St. Joseph only incidentally, leaving her needs, which are so great, to special correspondence.

1. The eleven-year-old girl of good extraction who is, with the approval of her mother, offered for your acceptance a year from now might well, as you have thought, serve as the nucleus of the group of little postulants that have been belaboring your mind and heart. But you were right in observing that this would mean more work for our Sisters and that recollection might suffer as a result. Still, these need not be reasons for abandoning the enterprise. But it would be better to start with a small number of subjects and not with just one, for the simple reason that with several there would be mutual support and encouragement, whereas one lone child would increase the work of our Sisters and would not succeed so well. Should you find an occasion to group together four subjects, do so. Then the little rules governing their exercises, recreations and studies would be useful and easily drawn with but few changes from the regulations of the novices and those of the schools. It would almost suffice merely to refer to them.

I do not think we should neglect already very pressing needs in order to provide in some way for those of the little postulants, although we shall have to come to these eventually. The Institute would be incomplete, if this work were not developed some day.

2. The fourteen-year-old daughter of the mason who wants to enter the convent as a companion-Sister[1] cannot do it as such, since one of your letters informs me that you have enough companion-Sisters and are unable to receive others. To accept this one as destined for the rank of the Mothers would perhaps be opposed to the rules of humility to which her heart must conform. The danger to her salvation is great, very great indeed, should her vocation fail to prove itself; greater still should she remain faithful in all respects except that of humility, which is the basis of the religious state. Once the little postulants begin to be trained, could we not have this candidate join them even as a companion? It would be well to give this matter mature consideration. For the present the admission of this child to have her live together with the older ones has its evident disadvantages. Her piety must be maintained. God will not try her beyond the limits of her strength. Let us lend ourselves to the work of God with suitable prudence.

3. A Sister turn-box attendant is another object of zeal to be accepted.[2] What you have learned about her disposition concerning works of charity doubtless recommends her, but she is a servant-girl at present. How could she be received? I think that such a subject could be received only in a capacity similar to that which she has in the world; that is, she would come like an outsider to take charge of the turn and would not form part of the monastery. She should not be preferred to any other errand-girl, except by reason of her piety and her known virtue. She herself is not to prefer the turn to any other employment, except as an opportunity to work still better in the way of salvation. Besides, you must examine whether it would not be preferable to admit a companion-Sister, since the power to appoint them to outside occupations is provided by the Rule. If I am not mistaken, your idea was to grant asylum to another pious soul and, not being able to do so inside the community for lack of need or suitability, you wanted to place her where she could stay. Perhaps it is better to wait for an increase in the number of subjects, in virtue and in the means for the attainment of the goals determined upon; after that, outside and accessory Sisters will come soon enough.

4. The girls who came to Sister St. Francis were given bread by her in their distress and exhorted to do good and avoid evil have thereby had an opportunity to know who the God is who feeds men and accepts them as his children. They must have said that it is the God that Sister St. Francis is praising.

So the work was good in itself. I had the opportunity to say so in some letters of direction. But it is not one that fits in well with the spirit of the Institute.

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[1] See Letter 74.

[2] See Letter 74, n. 3. This original reads *un autre sujet de zèle*. Brother Thomas translated this, "another zealous subject," which would normally be expressed by *sujet zélé*. In view of the observation made toward the end of the paragraph: "If I am not mistaken, your idea was to grant asylum, etc." This proposed subject for the religious life seems to have been considered an object of their zeal.

If we devote ourselves to winning back wayward girls, so-called polite society, which has its sense of decency, will shun us. The small number of degraded women alone will be left to us. Remember, my dear Child, what I have already told you. The Institute has practically none of the things it would need to accommodate public penitents, repentant women, etc. There is no reason to oppose such girls' attendance at public instructions, if this does not conflict with established policy. May God touch and enlighten them! But you, who are a teaching association, should avoid taking care of such girls. Would you admit such girls to a school for young ladies? What fathers and what mothers would send their children to it? You are such a school. You will ruin it, if you invite to it such as are shunned by respectable people.

A spectacular work, my dear hild, is not so valuable as works unobtrusively performed. In the Institute, there is no question of reforming one or several public sinners, but of attracting and reforming the world which is going almost completely astray.

The first time that I had to speak of wayward girls who had approached the convent, I said that God had permitted it and that he would justify it. But I add with reason that, if it happens again, respectable women will no longer come near the convent and young ladies of good parentage will blush to be seen there.

Famine and the scarcity of bread are the motives that excused this act of charity, but we must remember that there are no virtues which, for lack of prudence, could not have dangerous effects.

5. As regards Sister Holy Spirit, who has become a cross sent to the convent by the Lord, I have no doubt about all the charity of the Sisters toward her in their prayers as well as in their support of her affliction. But you must avoid letting her become an occasion to the public for slander and the curious investigation of what is happening in the monastery. You must appoint another Sister listener[1] to keep the incapacitated person from the door, but do it in such a way that the change of employment does not make her condition worse. Do not fail to make use of Father Mouran's help.

6. The meetings of the young sodalists, whose stay in the country has adversely affected them, must be activated with zeal, prudence, and perseverance. Sister Emmanuel, who is now doing this work through obedience, will one day do it through zeal. She is afraid that it is a waste of time. She would prefer for her own sake to keep herself more apart from the world than this work permits, etc.

Instructions that are without results for the world *are not lost*. God is glorified by them. We are but the transient witnesses of the doctrine taught by Jesus Christ. We have been urged to preach in season and out of season. It has been foreseen that the world will not always listen to us. We must nevertheless bear witness to the truth, as long as time and

[1] See Letter 86, n. 3.

ability are given us to do so. God will see to the fruits in his own good time. May he not permit our negligence to be held against us! Time would be lost, if we failed to give instruction. It will not be lost by the mere fact of its being badly received or ignored by the audience.

Regarding greater separation from the world, it is not so much the body as the mind that is to be separated, although the Institute has provided for both. We must crucify ourselves in the eyes of the world, in order to edify the world and particularly in order by this crucifixion to become more closely united to Jesus Christ. The fear of being too long in contact with the world is good, as long as it leads us to ask for more powerful graces and tends to show us our own weakness. It must not in any way make us neglect the holy education that we have undertaken to give to the world.

You will, my dear child, uphold this education of the young sodalists and their meetings by your counsel and your wise authority.

7. The reported visit of your aunts offers nothing which may not be in harmony with the spirit of the Institute.

But you note quite well that even the appearance of favoritism would seem to be an abuse and might lead to jealousies, and that, besides, you must hold fast to the Rule. When you add that no jealousy might arise, I will agree with that also. I think it quite likely, considering our Sisters' state of piety. But I would not guarantee that requests for similar favors in the future would not give rise to this very jealousy in case of a refusal. The seed of jealousy would be sown and who know when and how it would become active and show itself.

Your position calls for greater discretion. God has willed to put it to the test. He will not abandon you. He has led you to tell me your natural desires, your fears with regard to following them, and to promise that, whatever my decision, it will be acted upon. I do not think that you should receive your aunts in any other place than in the quarters of the day students.

8. Two of our people spoke to me of a long letter of Sister Blessed Sacrament which has come by a chance carrier.[1] I have not received it.[2]

9. You ask me to take an interest in a number of placements, one of which concerns a relative of Mme Ballot.[3] This is possible only if you send the persons themselves, and even then we are not always successful. The person who wanted to enter the hospital

[1] See Letter 61, n. 1.
[2] The following words were added later: "Just received. I will read and answer it."
[3] Probably Mme Belloc is meant.

service arrived during my absence. She did not go about it properly by herself. I gave her some advice for another attempt, but that will be more difficult.

10. With regard to Mme Ballot's relative, my dear Child, you are debating whether or not to receive her into the convent. She is virtuous, somewhat talented, but without means, and you are inquiring about a rule for you to follow. Do not overburden the convent. Do not retrench promised provisions for the needs of others. This is the first rule. As for a subject of great virtue, whose vocation is exceptional, we must not take human prudence too much into account. If God inspires us for higher motives to receive her, obedience to this powerful impulse is the second rule.

11. Although I have spoken of Sister Emmanuel and of the work entrusted to her among the young sodalists, the report on the principal Offices in your letter of September 17th affords me another opportunity to say a word about it. This dear Sister's duty to undo the consequences of this pupil's imprudent affairs exposes her to contact with manifestations of worldly vanity which are sometimes dangerous and always disgusting. As you say, she is really in need of God's grace. But, on the other hand, how much evil she roots out, how many servants of the Lord she prepares, what families she wins and preserves from affliction! My dear Child, you should always be attentive to these apostolic efforts, so as to aid whatever good and see to it that these contacts do not lessen the love of God in the heart of this Daughter who has been appointed to listen to these vanities. Provide her, whenever necessary, with days of retreat and rest, short enough to allow her activities to be resumed, yet long enough to enable her to fortify herself in the love of God. This is all left to your discretion. Solicitous supervision alone is obligatory. Furthermore, this function will not always have delicate and dangerous cases to handle. Beginnings are always difficult.

12. The requests for sodalities in various localities are coming to me not only from your part of the country, but from elsewhere as well. I have drawn up instructions that may be of general application. Meanwhile, we must not let up establishing, encouraging.

13. You ask me for Manuals and for accounts. I will make use of the first opportunity to send you the former, and of the first moment available to make out the latter. I will also remember to send you the German grammar.

14. I have orders to satisfy Father Gardelles. I hope that this has been done by now and that he will receive my thanks for his kindness without prejudice to what God will be pleased to grant him for his cooperation in a good work. His draft has been paid. I am herewith passing it on to you. Please exchange it for my IOU, which he is to sign.[1]

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[1] The explanation seems to be this. Father Gardelles was the superior of the seminary at Agen (Cf. Introductory note to Letter 72), where Father Chaminade had lodged during the two weeks he spent in that city on the occasion of the visit he paid to the newly established convent of the Daughters of Mary the preceding July (Cf. Introductory note to Letter 92). The orders to satisfy Father Gardelles were given to recompense him for lodging Father Chaminade. The draft was sent to Father Chaminade by Father

15. I should perhaps have let you realize how pained I was at the thought that my silence, enforced as you may well imagine, caused you to be concerned about the condition of my health. God has been pleased to grant me additional time to work in his vineyard. He will deign to grant me also the necessary strength.

16. For your further guidance in the various matters I have just touched upon, get in touch as usual with good Father Mouran, so that he may advise you on whatever I may not have sufficiently explained, and look after anything that the haste of a correspondence, of which I do not keep duplicate copies, may have left faulty or not to the point.

17. For the direction of Sister St. Joseph I had hoped she would, as requested, return a copy of the letters I had previously addressed to her for her particular rule of life. This omission obliges me, as far as she is concerned, to start all over again, as I had feared, without knowing where she stands, what help she may have received, in what way she may or may not have benefited. I know only that the rules of silence had been pointed out to her before they were made known to anyone else and that she does not seem to have so much as a recollection of them, at least if I am to believe the report she made to me regarding her condition and the agitation with which she was afflicted.

18. To prevent a similar recurrence with regard to our other Sisters, it would be well to start a notebook in which all the letters of direction would be copied, indicating their date and the address of each Sister involved. If one copy of this notebook were later sent to me, it could very often happen that I could reply to new requests made to me by a simple reference to the notebook. For this purpose the two copies would have to correspond page by page. With a little care this would not be impossible. Begin with the oldest letters and add the rest in their respective order.

19. I should like to pass on to your personal direction, but the number and variety of subjects that this[1] includes, and the particular need you may have of keeping your Rule closer to you and, so to say, at hand requires me to do so apart.

May God grant to our dear Sisters and to you, my dear Child, in particular, all the blessing which you asked for me while my letters were so rare and so short.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

Gardelles in lieu of direct repayment of a loan he had made to the Daughters of Mary. After repayment had been made in Bordeaux, the receipted draft was being returned to Father Gardelles through Mother de Trenquelléon. At the same time, Father Chaminade sent her his IOU and asked her to have Father Gardelles receipt it in exchange for the former's receipted draft.

[1] The reference seems to be not to Mother de Trenquelléon's direction, but to the present letter and its 19 topics.

P. S. Several letters enclosed herewith will let you know my thoughts on various subjects, particularly about Sister Stanislas. The letters cannot leave with this mail.

I have just received your letter of the 13th.[2] I will answer it shortly.

* * * *

[2] Added later.

There are also interesting instructions in the following letter which was likewise written by M. David.

94 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 7, 1817

My dear Child,

Your letter of the first of this month contains only four principal questions. To most of them you desire prompt answers. Your wish will be met. I am postponing the overdue letters to a later date. That is the best I can do.

1. Mme Belloc may grant the wishes of the ladies of Puimirol. She will proceed according to the forms with which she is acquainted[1] and will send me the customary report.

2. The garden and the laundry are subject to strict enclosure. This does not prevent service personnel from being permitted to enter. These two points need not bother you. It is the abuse of admissions that constitutes your only problem. In this regard, as in many others, we must be neither too severe nor too lenient. There are some small abuses that a permanent system of control placed at the door would not be able to stop, while the omission of a timely glance might end by throwing the convent open to the public. First of all, you must make sure that the persons slipping in are not on indiscreet errands. This is the most important point of all. The second would be, not to permit the number of this kind of entrances to exceed those of the hired women employed to meet definite needs, but to keep it as much as possible below the number of the employees. Moreover, if at times a girl makes a little trip, as you put it, to make it easier for an employee, you must presume that it is rather to help her than for any sinister motive. She is making herself useful in this way and, even if some curiosity is involved, you must close your eyes to it. But take care that these same curious ones, if they are really such, see only divine virtue. A habit is more dangerous. The one formed by the servant of Mme Belloc is an evident abuse. She can call for her mistress and wait for her at the door. I think I answered these same questions, nearly so at least, on a previous occasion.

3. I don't think it necessary to change the ordinary confessor. There is little objection to the fact that little confessions are made to the extraordinary confessor, when he is alone, on account of worries before Communion, but there would be great risk of changing the whole aspect of a budding Institute through a new ordinary confessor. Guidance previously given would have to be renewed for all to go well, cases would have to be recalled, some instructions issued would be hard to retrace to their original starting point. The greatest of

[1] There seems to be question of establishing a sodality or of affiliating an already existing one with the Bordeaux Sodality.

all favors that your bishop can grant us, is to let us strengthen still further the foundations to be accepted. I will look upon it as a trial. The later it comes, the less severe it will be. The talents and the great piety of the new confessor do not diminish the danger of a new orientation of an Institute. I would write about it to His Excellency, if I did not believe that what I am telling you is sufficient. I am sparing the time of this respectable prelate, and I think that I should do so.

4. I still have to reply to your[1] more complicated question, the one regarding the admission of the little postulant.

This particular good work, as we have stated on other occasions, is within the intentions of the Institute, but to do it in a spirit other than that of the Institute would be a very serious mistake.

Her mother asks you for admission to the interior of the community in case her daughter is ill; and you, my dear Child, are asking whether the young postulant could pass to the outer parlor and be spoken to without observing the parlor regulations. Here you have three breaches made in the most delicate and essential rules of the Institute.

If the little girl and her mother ask to open breaches of this kind, they are asking for something that is against the Rule. Doubtless, they do not realize what they are requesting here. They are following the promptings of natural affection, without thinking of the perfection that frees us from them, at least as far as what is earthly in them. And if they do not have the spirit of God, it would be useless to enter upon explanations that they would misunderstand.

The postulants, the younger as well as the older ones, are to ask for the Rule. The Sisters and the Mothers are to observe it. Together they are to walk along the same path, in such a way that the false steps of some may not occasion wrongful desires and temptations for the others.

It is enough that the Rule has permitted the superioress to order passing beyond the cloister when circumstances call for it. Contemporary conditions and certain considerations have required it. But this power may not be made the object of an agreement with the father, mother or other persons of the world, an agreement whose execution would then be obligatory.

It is quite possible that the weakness of age and of religious motives will incline the superiors to permit, in certain cases, one or two of the things asked for, or even perhaps all three. But is impossible to agree on granting the permission in question, and equally impossible to deprive ourselves beforehand of the power of not doing it.[2]

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[1] The French text has *une*, instead of *votre* of the original.
[2] I. e., of refusing to grant such a permission.

This explanation is disagreeable to the world, but we do not wish to commit ourselves to pleasing the world. One of our rules is not to attract subjects by the sight of the comforts of convent life, but to allow the Spirit of God to appear.

A mother may refuse us her daughter because she would like to impose her own little rule on the convent, only to lose this same daughter because of her inability to subject to the law passions insufficiently guarded against and a world that will laugh at her. It is up to the mothers to make a choice, and we cannot flatter ourselves with the hope of finding them all possessed of perfectly good sentiments.

It may be distressing to see a well-disposed subject upon whom God has evident designs fail to realize them, but it would be still more distressing should the apparent cultivation of wisdom be the cause of breaking rules which, with the help of prayer and God's grace, we judged apt to bring about the salvation of a great number.

I am not saying anything to you, my dear child, about the inconvenience of a single young postulant would have involved. Bearing this added burden in order to do the proposed good would have been the proper thing to do.

The regulation to be adhered to *always and everywhere* as you request would meet with more difficulties, because the regulation, even though particular, is something that must harmonize with all the rest. You ought, then, in such a case to have held to provisional rules, as I wrote to you on another occasion.

One of the first articles of the Rule for the young postulants will be *that enclosure and the precaution of the parlor* are to be observed without any other exception than that of the general rule, namely, the order of the superioress or other authority, which is to be received in case of need and never to be looked for or requested.

This so-called inconvenience is one of the favors of the Institute that is to be requested like the others, otherwise no one is to claim to be a postulant.[1] If seculars do not understand this language, well and good; but you my dear Child, and our Sisters who have read the third purpose of the Institute, you will judge as I do, that an agreement opposed to it damages the Rule and that a request to be made for such an agreement simply does not exist in the heart of anyone asking for admission to the Institute.

This child will be visited in the parlor like the others. If she goes out without being told to do so by the superioress, it will be in order not to come back.

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[1] The French has, *se dire en postulation*, which means literally *to say that one is in the condition of a requester*. *Postulant* means literally *a requestor*, specifically, one who requests admission to religious life.

Strangers visit the convent only with the permission of the bishop and for reasons deemed legitimate by His Excellency.

I have hardly enough space left to wish you the blessing of the Lord.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. The establishment of a convent is being proposed for Auch. I am asking that it be affiliated with yours. A few others are needed first. I don't know what real part Mlle de Rissan[1] may have in it. God will bring his works to maturity in his own good time.

If the child stays with you, we shall have to decide upon what relations with her mother will be necessary in the interests of religion. If she doesn't stay, you ought to make it possible and easy for her to have some connections with the convent. The good Lord will decide the rest.

* * * *

After the sale of the house which followed the bankruptcy of Father Chaminade's brother Francis (cf. Letter 116)*, the latter had asked Father Chaminade and his sister to let him have the cash which they had received in payment of their share in the ownership. This both of them refused to do. The reasons for Father Chaminade's refusal are enumerated in the following letter.*

94a – TO M. DAVID MONIER,
COUNSELOR AT LAW, BORDEAUX

Friday morning, December 12, 1817

My dear friend,

M. Lavigerie's letter settles us regarding the answer to be given to my brother. I received it at about the same time as your note. I am sending it to you with this letter. The final determining cause for not giving him these little sums, either entirely or in part, is his misconduct. Without having seen his marriage contract we can without rashness suspect its form, etc., etc. But there are many other reasons to allege: 1) the needs of my sister, which are always increasing, and my resources, which are decreasing day by day; 2) before he[2] made any request, we had declared to the purchaser of his house that we had disposed of these sums, he[3] asked to keep them and pay the interest on them; 3) my sister cannot and does not wish to give them; she tells him so herself, and he seems to recall the facts; 4)

[1] See Letter 73, n.2.
[2] Francis.
[3] The purchaser. He wanted Father Chaminade to accept a mortgage instead of cash payment.

in the rules and according to the laws, my clerical title should have a tangible basis. The refusal must be excused and softened, but nevertheless allowed to show the very real regret caused by his misconduct.

I sympathize with your indisposition. I did not know about it. I shall come to see you as soon as I can get away.

Couldn't you entrust M. Dotezac with these sums to bring them by the Limoges stagecoach?

With kindest regards,

William Joseph Chaminade

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94b – TO M. VECHAMBRE
ATTORNEY AT LAW, PÉRIGUEUX

N. B. This letter written in Bordeaux, December 1817, is missing. Cf. Letter 116.

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94c – TO FRANCIS CHAMINADE, PÉRIGUEUX

January 4, 1818

There is nothing suspicious in my letters. Still less is there anything indiscreet in my conduct with regard to the few things you allowed me to hear, or which I knew concerning your affairs. You have a mind embittered by your situation. This is the evil introduced by yourself and yourself alone into the explanations given me. This is mainly what prevents you from looking upon what I have said, done and wanted to do as good.

It also seems to me that the same passion which has so strongly contributed to your misfortune is dominating your mind just as it did formerly, because I cannot put any other interpretation on the letters in which you tell me you have four children from your present marriage, if I compare them with the legal papers you signed for the public registry office according to the law and the instructions of the magistrates. These papers declare only one child. It doesn't occur to me at all that there was any intention to suppress the status of the others.

If your mind were calm and unbiased, you wouldn't be seeing anything suspicious in my letters, but rather in this discrepancy between the public records and your own letters.

I have nothing to say about the five thousand francs you declared as the property of your new wife, of which three thousand were in furniture and the rest in old stock, of which she was the sole owner. You were free to do as you pleased.

However, if I find that justice allows the transfer of my own possessions to you and to yours, this same justice requires me to consider whether their destination will be reached when the amounts once received are, for want of others, in the hands of your wife,

and later on in those of her own children. With all my heart, I should wish that what is suspicious would come only from me, and that your reproach would have some foundation.

I could tell you a good deal about the scandal that my conduct, if it were thoughtless and inconsiderate, would increase and renew, but you are intelligent enough to understand it if you rid yourself of the consequences of a passion, which we must lament together, you as a penitent and I as a loved one closely united to you.

There is something still more necessary to produce in you the frame of mind which I should like to find in you, namely, the destruction of the empty, self-inflicted illusion that outsiders have been able to diminish my good disposition toward you. You blame the writing I use instead of my own[1] painful and humiliating questions which you say were asked and other similar things.

You suppose my love and prudence to be very weak; the former, because it changes so easily; the latter, for handing you over to the so-called spitefulness of the world. If I really had done that I should accuse myself of it and make every effort to undo it. But I do believe that despite the ideas that are troubling you, you believe in the truth of this assertion. I am going to explain myself, so as to satisfy you, if possible.

I am making use of another hand whenever I write somewhat at length, because I cannot use my own. You witnessed this, so to say, during my [sic] stay in Bordeaux and you were the first in a thousand who found it bad.

I would have used a writer of your choice even for this letter if you had suggested one to me, as I take it you can present only reputable ones.

Although I cannot force you to trust those that I choose, I can at least ask you to believe that I have given attention to the matter, and that my attention may carry some weight as opposed to vague and baseless prejudices.

Even if I had made a bad choice, the terms in which I have written do not reveal anything either good or bad about the state of your affairs and your secret has not, as your complaint pretends, been passed on to those from whom you wish to keep it.

A while ago I spoke of the disturbed state of your mind, and right here we have a powerful example of it, since you complain that the "ifs" and the "buts" leave even you who have the key to our correspondence with the impression of something suspicious, and you think that what you claim not to understand was understood by the unknown writer and amounts to an indiscretion.

[1] I.e., having his letters written by a secretary.

Your letters have remained a deep secret like that of M. and . . . Sr., who had written to me to the same effect and in almost the same terms as those of your first letter. This fact, added to that of your mutual interest, prompted me to say that I should have wished that your own letter had not been anticipated by that of an intermediary, as I considered him inspired by you.[1]

Well, I answered this gentleman, giving him due credit for his good intentions and telling him that for many reasons I was disposed to deal with you alone. Then your first letter arrived.

Anyone else, or you yourself at another time, would say that my discretion was extreme. Your reproaching me with doing the very opposite seems to me due to your bent to blame. I am telling you this with the same sentiments that led to me to inform myself about your needs before anyone wrote to me about them.

You seemed to have taken this investigation as another indiscretion, and wrongly so; for there is no indiscretion in asking for documents that are submitted to all comers in a public record office, where no one may be refused the right to examine them in detail.

Instead of being an indiscretion, it would perhaps have been advantageous to publish your marriage record. But it would be for you to do that and not for me to interfere.

This publication would put an end to the idea of some people: that you have declared 40,000 francs as your wife's property; that you are turning them to account secretly with the help of agents who lend at high interest rates, and that your evident contentment has no other cause; that some day you will reestablish your wife with these same funds. All these things increase the number of your enemies and must eventually lead to your complete ruin.

Leaving aside these errors always perpetrated by public opinion, if we could return to the source of all justice and to a lively sense of religion, it seems to me that we should avoid many worries in this world, while assuring ourselves of inestimable resources in the next.

So, my brother, persuade yourself not to procure for children that the law disavows the same advantages as those enjoy who are recognized by it. This proposal is really the result of a passion that has flattered us, but it is not something demanded by our duty. The

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[1] This is a particularly difficult paragraph in a letter composed by M. David, who, as Father Lalanne put it, "has a written style as poor as his spoken style is good." The idea seems to be that Father Chaminade would have preferred that this brother's bosom friend had not taken it upon himself to write what he was to learn from his brother directly afterward, possibly because it doubled the danger of having such compromising material go astray in transit and fall into other hands, or because he wished to emphasize his being against the use of any intermediary, unless, as in his case, it was indispensably necessary to do so.

laws that safeguard morals must be respected in their effects when we have had the misfortune of not sufficiently observing their preventive prescriptions. Persistence in this respect is regarded only as the result of an unfortunate passion. Let us go to the good Lord with simplicity, let us recognize that we were guilty in forgetting his holy law, and let us not perpetuate our errors by transferring to disavowed children the advantages that are due only to such as are legitimate.

Only the sincerity and power of religion can change your heart in this case. Should this happen, you will see how differently you will speak and what new thoughts will rid you of the disorder which keeps you from seeing the intentions of others.

Dear brother, as far as I am concerned, it seems contrary to my duties to have any of my possessions passed on to your children not vouched for in your legal documents. It seems to me equally impossible to entrust them to the discretion of your wife, who is being well spoken of, but who lacks the legal right to exclude from anything she would receive the children I believe to be foreign to you since they are hers.

Honest people will agree with the law in having you make the distinction. I need it myself to help you financially. Give me the means to do it and the reasonable assurance that it will not be otherwise. That will be described as doing what delicacy and honor demand. A sense of religious duty and a true conversion would add to it an incalculable value.

I have spoken to you with an open heart, as I have, in fact, never ceased doing. I think that you would do the same, if you made short work of the passion that has brought you to your present pass, and, furthermore, that in loving those who are in duty yours, you would not wish to change the law in their regard.

These are the best wishes that I can offer you at the beginning of this year. I add to them also the wish to receive your answer to my desires with an open mind and complete candor.

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95 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, January 30, 1818

My dear Child,

I am sending a letter by this same mail to Mme Lascégryve refusing her as politely as possible the permission she has just requested of me. Without doubt she will pass my letter on to you.

The difficulties that your present quarters offer may still make you close your eyes to the abnormalities which somewhat infringe upon the rule of enclosure in the reception of Communion and the work of the sacristan. But see to it that no one abuses this toleration.

It is quite essential for the novices and the young religious to study and qualify themselves for the purposes of the Institute according to their particular talents and aptitudes. But it is also quite essential for them to be occupied with manual labor, even if it be only to perfect themselves together with the rest of the community in the practice of interior silence and recollection. You were able to notice that your Institute devotes little time to mental prayer; and yet, how necessary this would be for it, were there not in manual labor a more advantageous compensation! As you know, there are many other reasons why the Daughters of Mary must take to manual labor, but the one I have just pointed out to you is the one which always impresses me the most.

I am very sorry, dear Child, about the kind of indecision in which Sister Trinity finds herself. Since reading the part of your letter in which you tell me that she will not take the habit on the Feast of the Purification, I have very often thought of this passage in the Gospel: "He who does not hate his father, mother, brother, and sister is not worthy of me,"[1] and this other one: "Let the dead bury their dead!" Has she really understood that the first step in religious life is complete renunciation of the world?

May everything in the future serve to encourage Sister St. Joseph, without losing sight of the observations we have made. Do not be disturbed about your answer to Father Gardelle.[2] There was some weakness in not frankly and submissively manifesting what had been for the moment considered more suitable.

The package of your letters has been turned over to a skipper who is very reliable. I am having someone write to him by this mail. Be kind enough to tell me when the letters have reached you. I was given complete assurance that they will not be lost.

Although it is very late and I am in a great hurry, I wanted to answer you myself.[3] This affords me a little satisfaction, just like praying the Lord to shower upon you and upon all our Children his most abundant blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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In the letter of February 11, 1818, Father Chaminade hurriedly answers various questions and treats together spiritual and temporal matters, the admission of postulants

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[1] A combination of St. Matthew 10:37: "He who loves father, etc. more than me is not worthy of me" and St. Luke 14:26: "If a man comes to me and does not hate his father, etc., he cannot be my disciple."
[2] See Letter 93, n. 7.
[3] See Letter 94c for Father Chaminade's difficulty at this time in writing letters.

and the sending of cod and rice through his maid. In the last paragraph he refers to certain good news that he has for his Daughters. In his letter of March 11th, however, he mentions that this good news is to be conveyed to them orally. It is the first faint indication of the "Little Society" in the process of formation.

96 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, February 11, 1818

My dear Child,

Recently I sent you 25 pounds of codfish, partly dried and partly fresh. I will charge it to your account. I have not received anything yet from our ladies in Bordeaux, with the exception of the 100 francs from Sister Holy Faith and 150 francs form Sister St. Joseph, sometime after my return from Agen. Now that I have been assured of his good will, I will write at once to M. Desgranges. I did not know before his return to the novitiate, what to write to his father. I received the letter of Sister St. Joseph at the same time as yours. Tell her that I am glad about the way tings have turned out, that I will not lose sight of her, etc.

I have received Mlle de Rissan's answer. I will write to her shortly.

You did well in not permitting that music practice with the young boarding school mistress in the assembly hall. I am sorry that our Sisters did not take your remarks or refusals in the proper spirit. Good reflections could be made apropos of this little incident concerning the edification which the young lady could have drawn from the humility of the religious as well as from the wise severity of the Rule, etc., but I am pressed for time.

Since the young lady who has applied for admission is not to come until after Easter and is to start as a postulant, I shall be able to help you with her examination. So I will add nothing further for the moment.

I heartily approve the expedience you have adopted to remedy the nuisance of the young ladies' flocking to the parlor.

Sisters Aloysius and St. Vincent are replacing manual labor by the occupations which you describe to me in detail, but be sure they are trying to go through with them in a spirit of great recollection. Sister Holy Spirit does not violate the enclosure when she goes into the yard as portress to get the people to leave. I am hoping that we shall eventually find a way to remedy this trouble.

At the Thursday meetings, if some lady wishes to embrace the Sister, she may allow it the first time, but after that let her *politely* and *pleasantly* ask these ladies to permit her to refuse these satisfactions and rewards for her little service, etc.

You understand, my dear Child, that I am writing to you in great haste. I am, so to say, besieged by people and business from early morning until late at night. May the Lord be glorified because of it. The news I have for you is continuing to be good. There are few days on which I am not doing something for your support and your betterment. However, it is really essential that you all work steadily to become saints. Let us advance by giant

steps. Pray for your good Father who unceasingly asks the blessings of heaven for his children.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am now about to go to the altar.

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In the following letter Father Chaminade repeats that he has news to give concerning the progress of the work in which the Daughters of Mary have a part and of which they are, in a way, the foundation.

From them on, in fact, he considered the Institute of Mary as forming a unit which he hoped, with the aid of Mary, to set against the growing efforts of impiety. The little nucleus of the Society of Mary was quietly preparing itself for its coming mission, and the good news which the Founder was announcing had much to do, no doubt, with the hopes which the fervor of his first disciples permitted him to entertain.

97 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 11, 1818

My dear Child,

My silence is not due to illness. I have really had a very stubborn cold, but I have not for that reason discontinued my work. Either because it has increased or because I am less efficient or because my assistants or secretaries are overworked, I am always behind in many matters.

Then too, for the past several months, I have been busy with the work in which you have a part. I have news to give you about it orally. Let us take courage. Impiety is making great efforts, but God will be our protector and our help. Our divine Mother will cover us and cherish us in the bosom of her tenderness.

The essential thing is that all of you put to the best advantage the gifts of God and that all of you advance in virtue, each one in proportion to the strength she receives from grace.

It is to be hoped that Sister Trinity will open her eyes. God grant that it may not be too late. Let us pray for her. You may still let her enter the enclosure, provided that she does not speak any more of the world outside than if she actually did not go out.

As for the Tonneins establishment, you cannot take charge of it for the time being. Be thankful for the preference being given you, but let the Orphelines[1] go there.

I am waiting for an answer from Mlle de Rissan. I cannot make arrangements or, rather give a final word to M. Fenance, until I have received her answer. You may let the good Sister of Charity enter the enclosure.

I will be interested in reading the diary of Mme Belloc's trip, although I have long since given up reading the papers. I have a report made only of what it is absolutely necessary for me to know.

You did well in giving Father Laumont[2] the satisfaction of going up to some of the sick. You may do the same whenever there are any sick that he desires to see.

If Sister St. Joseph takes care to cultivate well the interior sentiments of faith, hope, charity and humility, she will win new victories every day and will end by being a good religious. However, if she neglects the interior she will only fall and rise again, cause herself and others much trouble.

My dear Child, always take good care of your sick.

I am leaving off now. I will write again at the earliest possible moment. Do not worry about anything. Keep your soul in peace. Walk in the presence of God. You must not want to do more good than God either wills or permits. Let us put our trust in the protection of our divine Mother and her glorious Spouse, whom we rightly call our Father.[3] The novena to St. Joseph starts today.

May the Lord shower you, my dear Child, with his blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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[1] I.e., *Let the Sisters of St. Joseph* (also known as *The Orphans of St. Joseph*, cf. Letter 75, Introd., also Letter 108) take charge of that establishment.
[2] See Letter 51, Intro.
[3] The allusion is to the invocation, "St. Joseph, *our Father*, pray for us," at the conclusion of the prayers of the Rule at this time.

The following letter, discovered by Father Joseph Verrier with other pertinent documents, helps to correct the conjectural date of Letter 91 of the French edition.

97a – TO THE MAYOR OF AGEN

Agen, April 23, 1818

M. Mayor:

Is it possible to make use of the permission which His Excellency the Prefect granted, to organize religious meetings for men as a means to preserve the fruits of the mission with more moderation and precautions than the Missionary Fathers have done? No announcement was made before it was submitted to you in the way in which it was thought you wished it. No act of imprudence was committed.

You are desirous of what is good, M. Mayor, and of all that can prudently lead to it. The whole city believed this. The kind of good which was proposed to you is one that will restore good morals and the religious spirit. You know the moderator who is to be at the head of it. I know that you esteem his wisdom, his uprightness and his talents. Why then are you alarmed at the slightest move? Nothing essential to it will be done without your participation. In the city which you are governing you have certain persons who are enemies of whatever is good. There is no doubt about it. They will be given no reasonable opportunity to grumble, no firm basis to complain. We know the lay of the land today, we have surveyed it.

You know besides, M. Mayor, that the projected meetings will take place in a free and independent church—the police may have their officers there at will—never at hours at which secular assemblies are neither permitted nor tolerated in public places.

It all comes down to this then, M. Mayor, that Father Mouran, who is deserving of the Church's and of the Government's confidence, may be moderator of meetings of a religious nature for men at suitable hours in a free church and give such instructions as he judges necessary, or have them given while still retaining responsibility for them.

This is by no means anything new, M. Mayor, or an institution of a kind unknown. You know history too well to be ignorant of its antiquity. Besides, we are continually informed either through the papers or otherwise, that similar institutions are ordinarily one of the fruits of the missions which are conducted everywhere.

The meetings of which I have the honor to speak to you are not at all the disbanded sodality, although some may think so and perhaps tell you it is.

I hope, M. Mayor, that you will confidently allow the work begun with your protection to go on.

I am with deep respect, M. Mayor, your very humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

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The French edition includes the following letter as No. 91, assigning to it the conjectural date of July 1817 because mention is made in it of Father Passement [sic], this priest having preached the mission at Agen in 1817. *It has been placed here on the basis of more recent studies and investigations by Father Joseph Verrier which have yielded April 1818 as a more exact date.*[1] *This letter was, no doubt, written shortly after the preceding missive to the mayor on April 23, to which he replied on the 25th with a* Non possumus. *The prefect had probably by word of mouth advised direct recourse to the mayor.*

91 – TO M. MUSNIER DE LA CONVERSERIE
PREFECT OF LOT-ET-GARONNE

Agen, April 25 or later, 1818

M. Prefect:

Using all the precautions which the prudence of the mayor had suggested, on Sunday evening, Father Passenaud announced some religious meetings for the men as a means of preserving the fruits of the mission. I was present at the announcement. There could have been nothing more prudent. M. Chaudordy, with whom I happened to be, seemed satisfied with the eloquence as well as with the prudence of the missionary.

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[1] A first reason to question 1817 as the correct date is the fact that the original is in the handwriting of Fr. Jean Baptiste Collineau, one of the pioneer Marianists, whereas the Society of Mary had not yet been established in July, 1817. Secondly, the footnote in the French edition, on which the conjectural year was based, is inexact; Fr. Passenaud (see Letter 90, n. 1) or Passeneau (see the document below) did not preach the *mission* at Agen in 1817, but in 1818, and that too in the Parish of St. Hilary, whose pastor is referred to in the letter. What Fr. Passenaud preached at Agen in 1817 was the *Lenten Series* at the cathedral. This appears clearly from the following document: "The mission which ordinarily takes place every seven years in the Church of St. Hilary, founded by Madams Desportes and Lascombes, was given this year and began on Sunday, April 5, 1818. The priests in charge were Fr. Passeneau, who preached the Lenten Series last year in the cathedral, Fr. de Saint-Pierre, who preached it this year, and Fr. Fossat of Moissac. The mission began after Vespers with a procession at which the three missionaries, the pastor of St. Hilary accompanied by several priests and twenty seminarians, and the members of the Board of Trustees assisted. The mayor had been invited to this ceremony and came with his assistants and the police commissioner, all in uniform and preceded by the banner of the commune." (Noel-Joseph Proche, Annales de la ville d'Agen (1789-1823), Ad Magen, published, p. 292).

In a letter of Sister Marie to Mlle de la Chapelle, dated May 7, 1818, it is stated that on the Saturday before Ascension Day, i.e., April 25, three priests were admitted as sodalists with Father Passeman [sic] at their head and that afterward he ascended the pulpit and paid Father Chaminade a charming compliment.

Since then there was question of this again on Monday with less detail, but along the same lines. It was only pointed out that after the exercises of the mission there would be a seminarian at the rectory of St. Hilary's who would take the names of those who wished to take part in these meetings.

This enrollment, made very unpretentiously on the loose sheet of paper, has given offense to some people. I do not know in what way they spoke about it to the mayor, but this respectable magistrate has withdrawn all permissions.

It is nevertheless true, M. Prefect, that no act of imprudence or disregard has really been committed. It is also true that not even the name of the Sodality has been pronounced. The most genuine precautions were taken to make sure that these religious meetings would not seem to reestablish the disbanded Sodality, and, as a matter of fact, the former one did not reappear.

I cannot doubt, M. Prefect, that there are in Agen men opposed to whatever is good, more especially to the kinds of institutions that refine morals and instill religion. Your wisdom will judge whether it is proper to listen to these misgivings and to abandon every project, every effort to form these institutions, of whatever kind they happen to be.

Your answer, M. Prefect, will determine me. If you prefer a verbal answer to a written one, I will call upon you at any hour you are kind enough to appoint for me.

I am with deep respect, M. Prefect, your very humble and very obedient servant,

William Joseph Chaminade, Hon. Can.

P.S. I will remark, furthermore, M. Prefect, that these meetings would take place only in the church, as they are purely religious in character. In fact, these meetings have always been held without asking the permission of the civil administrations.

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The following letters contain further interesting indications, either about the interior organization and works of the Daughters of Mary or about the Little Society being organized in Bordeaux.

98 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, June 10, 1818

My dear Child,

I have received the beautiful veil for the Blessed Sacrament. I greatly appreciate your attention and that of our mistress of novices. I did not know that our good Sister of the Sacred Heart had such talent for embroidery.

My sister begs you to accept her thanks for the two balls of yarn you had the kindness to send her. She recommends herself very much to your prayers and to those of your entire Community. She is almost constantly in pain.

I will not forget to have a copy of the work of her *confrère for zeal*[1] made for Mother Supervisor of Zeal. I am very glad that for the past several days he is himself beginning to put into practice his little methods. This young man has made very great progress in virtue, especially during the past two years.

I hope we have made a good acquisition in Sister Catherine. Her daily program is to be drawn up according to that of the companion-Sisters and of the portress. I will make this adaptation for you and may add some points regarding her conduct in town. She should never do errands other than those authorized; never eat or drink outside of the house, however much she may be invited; never pay any visit just for herself while attending to her errands. Regulate it meanwhile according to these ideas.

The Rule for the retreatants is in no hurry. In the meantime, go on. Real attention will have to be given to it, once the house is ready to receive a certain number of retreatants, and also once public retreats are conducted. These are works of great importance. It will all work out with time and patience. But I am continually coming back to the first principle: let the community get along well, let the subjects be well trained, let them mature and sanctify themselves. With saints we shall succeed in everything, but with ordinary or imperfect religious we shall do almost nothing.

I will continue my letter for the next mail. May the peace of the Lord be with you all.

William Joseph Chaminade

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98a – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW,
BORDEAUX

Monday, June 15, 1818

Would M. David Monier please stop by after three o'clock this afternoon, so that I may acquaint him with all my talks with M. Moreau concerning the accounts he has with him, to settle them, if possible?

[1] Father Lalanne, Supervisor of Zeal in the budding Society of Mary in Séguri Court. See *Spirit*, No. 861.

William Joseph Chaminade

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98b – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW,
BORDEAUX

Tuesday, June 16, 1818

All your accounts have been accepted and signed by M. Moreau exactly as they were settled last evening. He must have informed you of it at dinner.

In the evening continue the explanation of the Little Office.

Yesterday I did not pass on to you any word for M. Lavardens. This evening read the first two or three pages of the memorandum I am sending you.

The past has been set in order with M. Moreau. We must now busy ourselves with the future. Six o'clock has just struck. I am going to the Miséricorde to return at the latest immediately after seven o'clock.

Friendly greetings and peace in the Lord.

William Joseph Chaminade

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99 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, June 19, 1818

Sister St. Joseph is doing well in body and soul. I am looking forward to the time when she will be completely—and radically, if possible—cured, so that she may undergo enough trials to cure her of her former whims and to train her at the same time for the Institute, if her vocation holds up.

When I received your last letter I had just written to Mme de Lagrace and to Father Fenasse[1] about the Sodality of Auch. I had an idea that it was not doing well and was indicating a remedy, etc.

[1] Vicar General of Auch, a devoted friend of Fr. Chaminade.

As regards evening adoration, you can see by the regulations that a meditation properly so called was not intended, but only an exercise of devotion and recollection in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Consequently, it is not contrary to the spirit of this exercise to make aloud a little meditation which would benefit the outsiders present. Let them go on with it; we shall see in time what the results are.

I had already had in mind that the directress of the Third Order to be established would make a meditation aloud at least several evenings a week. Perhaps, if there are no abuses, it might be better for the members of the Third Order to make this exercise with the entire community, rather than make two exercises of it. You will not be surprised at my "perhaps" if you recall that I told you that this Rule had not been drawn up. There is no such thing as "perhaps" in a finished Rule, precisely because I would not give it if I were not convinced of the good it would produce. A long examination is sometimes required to reach this conviction.

The lay religious of the Society of Mary differ in this respect from the Daughters of Mary, that they make a half-hour of meditation properly so called, nearly at the same time.

I was going to end this long letter, my dear Child, when I received the two packages of letters from the convent, one by personal and the other by mail delivery.

Sister St. Joseph has given me various letters these past days for several Mothers, but I am waiting for a favorable occasion to forward them without cost. Nevertheless, I will add to this one her little letter for Sister Holy Spirit. I will try without delay to procure consolations and help of various kinds for the brother of our Sister Stanislas. Tell her, please, to keep the promises she made to me, or rather to the Lord in my person. That is all that I will say for this time.

The interior enclosures in the communities are not always locked, but it must be possible to do so. If there are any more liable to be entered by strangers, they are kept locked and master keys are given to all the religious, at least to those who are most likely to need them.

As to the wooden curtain of which there is question, it is enough for the door to be usually latched, and if on certain occasions you judge it proper, you will lock it.

It is not good for our dear Daughters to begin to murmur, to blame, etc., when some inconvenience happens to annoy them. They should be content with a humble explanation of the trouble to their superioress and then wait patiently. Neither Sister St. Vincent nor anyone else gave me the idea of this curtain. Though not absolutely necessary, it was still very suitable. I recall having spoken of it to Mlle de Lamourous at the time of my first trip. Since the chapel is downstairs, it is much more to the purpose. But that is enough on this subject.

Despite the poverty of the community, see to it that the food is always wholesome and sufficient in quantity for young people who work and who have much speaking or singing to do. It is good for you to feel poverty, which ought to be very dear to you, but not at the expense of health. I refer to the observations I made to you at the time of my last visit. Furthermore, have confidence in the Providence of our Father in heaven.

Please tell Sister Blessed Sacrament for me that I do not want to hear any more about her scruples. Let her serve the Lord with confidence and simplicity. Her confessions should be short and simple.

I will answer Sister St. Vincent a little later.

May all our dear Daughters take courage. May they all be perfectly united with one another and with their Good Mother. The Institute is in a position to develop itself in all its parts. The devil, Mary's enemy, must be enraged, he must be trying everything to disturb, disquiet, and disunite the Daughters of Mary, who are, as it were, the foundation on which we are building.[1] I wish them and you, my dear Daughter, the peace of the Lord.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. A great miracle has just occurred in the novitiate of the Jesuits in Paris through the intercession of St. Aloysius Gonzaga. I am afraid I cannot send you an account of it before the departure of the mail. The saint's feast falls on the 21st of this month.

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99a – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW,
BORDEAUX

Wednesday evening, July 22, 1818

My dear Friend,

I am sending you all the receipts, the insurance policy, the accounts and assignments concerning M. Arthaud. I shall owe him a quarterly payment on the first of this coming August. In counting the receipts, it seemed that one was missing. Still, I am quite certain of having always paid exactly and, if it is missing in the proper file, it will probably be found mixed up with some other papers. Besides, the receipts always indicate the last period for which the rent has been paid.

[1] I.e. the first definitely established part of the Institute of Mary.

Do not forget the lady tenants of La Rode District.[2] I mean the ladies who have an apartment in the house and not the gardener, who is in the lodge. They must be gotten to vacate with as little expense as possible. Friendly greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[2] What is meant is, *La Rode District Street*, now *Seguey Street.*

99b – TO M. DAVID MONIER, COUNSELOR-AT-LAW,
BORDEAUX

July 24, 1818

My dear friend,

I have found the receipt of M. Arthaud which, judging by the number of documents, had seemed to me to be missing from its place in the file. I am sending it to you at once. Kindly have it properly filed and accept my wish for a good day, this July 24th.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Mlle Davasse notified the lady tenants to vacate already three months ago. They admit it, but they say it is meaningless, because she did not do it juridically.

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The following is a little letter of personal guidance.

100 – TO MOTHER TERESA, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 3, 1818

Well, my dear daughter, hope with unshakable confidence for everything from God, our good and tender Father. Expect nothing good from yourself. The more you know yourself, the less confidence you will have in your own strength. If the divine light became bright enough in your soul to enable you to penetrate the twofold abyss of your nothingness and of your miseries, your confidence in God would be your sole support. How strong you would then be! God communicates his strength to us in proportion to the interior and heartfelt conviction of our own weakness. This conviction, my dear Daughter, is a great grace. Mistrust of ourselves, which is not counterbalanced by confidence in God, but which produces despondence and discouragement, is not the fruit of true humility. It could be at most a miserable miscarriage of it.

With regard to your Communions, follow with simplicity the advice and the orders of your confessor. Since you still have a long way to go before arriving at the perfection of your state, your confessor is able to see in your daily Communion the necessary means of advancing toward your goal. You know what the angel said to the prophet Elias on his way to the mountain of Horeb. Peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

William Joseph Chaminade

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VII
THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

(1818-1820)

Here are the first letters bearing directly upon the Society of Mary:

On May 1, 1817, Father Lalanne had offered himself to Father Chaminade to share his life, and Father Chaminade had revealed to him the mission of Saragossa. On the following October 2, the five first ones, MM Lalanne, Collineau, August Perrière, Daguzan, and Clouzet reunited at St. Laurent, decided upon the foundation of the Society, soon to be followed by MM Cantau, Bidon, and Laugeay. On November 25, community life had been inaugurated in a very small house on the del'Impasse Ségur (today called Rue de Commandant Arnould). On December 11, the first private vows were professed in the sacristy of the Madeleine. And now there was a need to find living quarters to house the nascent undertaking.

M. Changeur, a rich merchant of Bordeaux and member of the congregation of the Fathers of Families, offered his help. Father Chaminade included him in first inquiry, which brought them to the Hôtel Lognac.

101 – TO M. CHANGEUR

Bordeaux, August 4, 1818

Sir and dear Son in Jesus Christ:

It is M. August Brougnon (Perrière) who went to visit the Hôtel Lognac. From the report he brought back, this dwelling would seem to be suitable for our work.

Determine for yourself, my dear Son, if this seems to be the house destined by Providence for the Society of Mary. Hasten to lodge the Children of Mary, who are also your children, and who, as it were infallibly, will be our crown in heaven.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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While the acquisition of the Lognac was being negotiated—a project which was not to reach a happy end—Father Chaminade directed M. David to drawn up a first sketch of the Constitutions. He was also preparing the retreat for the solemn foundation of the Society of Mary, which would be crowned by the religious profession of its first members.

Archbishop d'Aviau had been kept informed about everything. Some days before the opening of the retreat, on Thursday, August 27, the Founder submitted to him a portion of M. David's work.

102 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, August 27, 1818

Your Excellency:

I have just finished the first copy of "The Institute of Mary," which is to be discussed during our meeting of next week.

I hasten to send it to you and shall receive with much gratitude the observations which you will be kind enough to make. Your Excellency, I desire only what you want and in the manner agreeable to you. I have confidence that God, in his mercy, will accomplish the design with which he has inspired me, in spite of all my imperfections.

To abuse neither your time, Your Excellency, nor your patience, I thought it best to avoid, in the copy I have the honor of submitting to you, the numerous details about government contained in the fourth part. On this subject, there is nothing different from what occurs in other Societies, except what necessarily pertains to the specific plan of the Institute.

Next Saturday, I shall have the honor of introducing to you the Gentlemen of Agen, unless they arrive late, and in that case, it would be on Sunday morning. I heartily wish that this entire little flock have the privilege of receiving your blessing before they separate, but without display of any kind.

I am with profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The Gentlemen of Agen just referred to are Fathers Mouran and Laumont, whom Bishop Jacoupy had permitted to take part in the retreat, though without giving them to Father Chaminade. It is of them that the Founder still spoke at the end of a note addressed to Archbishop d'Aviau on the last day of the retreat.

103 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, September 5, 1818

Today we are bringing our private retreat to a close. Sixteen persons made it.[1] If the good spirit that animates our retreatants lasts, they all can be considered founders of the Institute of Mary. All seem entirely devoted to its support for life, although all are not bound by vows. We would have much desired your blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade experienced great consolation on this day and, on the next day, at another retreat preached by him and the priests of Agen at the Madeleine, he could write to M. Changeur (September 15, 1818): "Our two consecutive retreats have given me more satisfaction than work."

To Bishop Jacoupy, in a letter confided to the priests of Agen, he gave more details. We are reproducing this letter in a form which is possibly M. David's but whose thought assuredly belongs to the Founder.

104 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY
BISHOP OF AGEN

Bordeaux, September 21, 1818

Your Lordship:

Your very kind letter of August 22 has had an effect, since God has been good enough to grant the wishes expressed there. The bountiful harvest which your piety was asking of him in favor of his servants has come because of your prayers. The excellent priests, Fathers Mouran and Laumont, whom you were kind enough to send, have

[1] The 16 retreatants were, with Father Chaminade, Father Lalanne, Bros. August Brougnon-Perrière, Daguzan, Cantau, Bidon (who then took perpetual vows), Collineau, Clouzet (who took vows for three years), David Monier (who offered himself for life), Moreau and Laumont, priests of Agen, who gave conferences and were affiliated to the Society; Langeay, Armenaud, Neuvielle, Bousquet, young sodalists who became religious of the Society, and, it seems, LaPause, the "temporal father" of the Society.

powerfully cooperated. These worthy priests will tell you, far better than I am able to, everything that happened.

The first retreat, the one intended for those destined for the Institute, was filled, in solitude, with a fervor men can hardly imagine. As a result, we have seen the most solid direction, from many points of view—a new constancy in work is but one example—the glory of God has not been neglected for a minute. These young men breathe only the Spirit of holy things. Real workmen will be found among them. These are those he is pleased to advance to the front line. They in turn are surrounded by others who long for the same happiness. In the entire multitude there will be a few missed steps. But the fire having been continued, it will not lessen the total effect.

Concerning the second retreat, for ladies and young girls, a large and lively group. The local accommodations were far too limited. The piety of Mme Belloc[1] and her familiar talks with the ladies willing to listen to her seemed to point out a way of life that was easy and full of happiness. The priests had to minister only among hearts already freed from themselves. . . .

Several thought that the Holy Communion of the last day may have been given to as many as 800 of the faithful, in the several Masses which followed. The Oratory was never empty on that particular day, from five in the morning till 9:30 in the evening, the ladies giving place to the men and vice versa, without the least confusion. The new admissions to the Sodality were numerous, and the total number was not to be counted unless in God's own book.

I am not concealing the joy I feel about all this. I am referring all the credit and merit, as I should, to that group of truly holy ladies whom God has preserved for our century and, in particular, to the spirit he has given to priests so capable of vivifying the Church. Among these last is to be numbered our venerable Archbishop of Bordeaux, who sponsors the two works I have just spoken of and who has blessed with his own hand and given the kiss of peace to the Institute resulting from the first retreat.

May I hope, Your Lordship, that you will also deign to bless them in my two cooperators, Fathers Mouran and Laumont, who will represent them in your presence. Because, Your Lordship, it is not only a Bordeaux institution, it is a religious institution for all Christian countries which is being formed under your auspices.

Hoping to give you in greater detail an account of my various acts and to submit them to your pastoral direction, from which they proceed in the first place, I beg of you to be kind enough to recommend them to God in your prayers. It is also from God that I ask

[1] She had come to Bordeaux to refresh herself with the spirit of the Mother-Sodality, and she contributed, as will be seen, to the success of this retreat.

that he determine your particular place in these works, which he has been pleased to inaugurate in our day.

Please accept, Your Lordship, the personal sentiments of my respectful devotedness. Deign to unite me to yourself in the charity of Jesus Christ, our common Savior, and grant me your blessing.

It is in this desire that I am in great humility, etc.

Bishop Jacoupy's answer, which has been preserved for us, shows us the esteem the Bishop of Agen had for Father Chaminade and his works.

December 28, 1818

Agen

I have read and reread, my very dear and venerated friend, the letter you addressed to me with the return of Fathers Mouran and Laumont, and the more I meditate upon its contents, the more I recognize the work of God. And so, continue to work without respite, in order to arrive at the ends we propose to ourselves. I need ecclesiastics, as you form them, to staff my seminaries and put them on a solid footing. We shall succeed, I hope, provided you train them for the sole education of the young clerics and not go to preach and confess here and there, as do our "gentlemen" priests. *Pluribus intentus*, etc. I am marvelously aware of this. Be assured that those you give us will do well and that funds will come in abundance, provided we occupy ourselves solely with this great work.

Pardon, my dear friend, my prolonged silence, and be well assured that I have thought of you almost every day and that all my thoughts are for you, everywhere and always. My one happiness is to see your labors prosper, helped by the prayers of good souls, by your own and of all those working with you. I hope that very soon we shall render thanks to God, by common consent, for having given us such consolation as we might desire for his glory and the salvation of our brethren.

Be pleased to accept my friend, the expression of the sincere wishes I am offering you at this New Year, for your particular happiness and the success of your labors. I renew the assurance of my esteem for you and remain for life yours.

Jean, Bishop of Agen

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Here several letters are to be placed that relate to works in the prisons and with the little Auvergnats, boot-blacks, and chimney-sweeps of whom the Life of Father Chaminade speaks.

The prison work grew up in the Congregation of the Fathers of Families.

About the work of the little Auvergnats, it may be said that it was one of the first objects of zeal of the Little Society, because, started in September, 1818, it immediately had Father Collineau, one of the first religious, as its head.

These letters are M. David's composition.

105 – TO THE COUNT DE TOURNON
PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE

Bordeaux, August, 1818

M. Prefect:

Access to the prisons, it seems to me, demands two particular characteristics: reasonable ease for visitors and the security of the janitor who must remain responsible for the security guard.

Tickets would entirely suit the purpose, the stub remaining in the janitor's office. This measure would prevent the inconveniences connected with a sign that is not literal; and among the literal proofs, the stub is the best.

I judge that this service would require six visitors, each of whom would require a ticket. Not that the six visitors would be on the job at the same time. There would usually be only two, but each would have to keep his own sign.

The six tickets, then, cut into a single sheet, all six alike, would differ only in their numbers.

I have the honor, M. Prefect, to hand this project to you, which can be varied in any other way according to your good pleasure.

Please be kind enough, M. Prefect, in accepting the model or altering it, to let me know of your plans for the execution of this work, in which, thanks to your great kindness, I have had a share.

Once more, please accept the token of my profound respect.

William Joseph Chaminade

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106 – TO THE COUNT DE TOURNON
PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE

Bordeaux, September 20, 1818

M. Prefect:

I have delayed telling you about the work among the Auvergnats, as I was waiting to have definite information from Paris about Father Fénelon's[1] work and about that of the Savoyards, which seemed to me similar to our own.

Three motives urge me today to try the enterprise without further delay:

1. The conviction I have that in Paris they have no written plan of work.

2. The approach of winter, which is the time when the Auvergnats come to seek refuge in Bordeaux.

3. The rather precise information that I got from a traveler, who himself had been employed in the instruction of the little chimney-sweeps of the capitol.

I would only desire that the list for supervision kept in the Mayor's office were given to me in writing, as you had the goodness of promising me. This is a convenience that may save us difficult steps and long researches.

I await only your response, M. Prefect, to share with you my thoughts for proper meeting places by quarters. There we can pour out the instruction of a truly religious charity.

The prison work met with but minor difficulties at the Fort du Hâ.[2] This is not the case for the Dépôt de la Mairie. There the admission cards are still in the hands of the assistant Mayor, who is in charge of this part of the work. His absolute silence leads us to think that he sees inconveniences in the use of the cards, although you have considered them most adequate.

The greatest inconvenience in prisons, if I may be permitted to say so, is that they renounce introducing morality, encouraging repentance, favoring the return to good, and bringing to the inmates the charm and power of religion.

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[1] The Abbe J. B. de Salignac de Fénelon, (1714-93), grandnephew of the great Archbishop of Cambrai, after having been Chaplain to Queen Marie Leczinska, wife of Louis XV, devoted the last years of his life in Paris to the care of the little Savoyards. Father Chaminade, then a student at the Collège of Lisieux, knew him there and was honored by his friendship. Father Fénelon, in spite of the efforts of his charges, was arrested under the Reign of Terror and died on the scaffold.
[2] One of the prisons of Bordeaux.

What about those in solitary confinement, those held for reasons of state, and sometimes, these more or less provisional measures that an imperious need calls for, which neither the public nor even the law may notice? What man with a little education does not excuse these mistakes? What man, religiously disposed, would want to find fault with them or harm them in any way? And still, these secret places are possible where the help of religion would be the most useful or where religion ought to occupy itself most continuously.

But, let human prudence close off these sections, if it has to be. That is no reason why the rest of the prisons should be deprived of good attention.

I like to believe that I am fighting only chimeras and that the delay of M. Labrous in having the cards returned is caused by his numerous occupations or by the state of his health.

If the measure is equal for the prisons, the work undertaken will be strengthened and will develop much better.

Please speed up this happy result, M. Prefect, and accept my profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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107 – TO THE COUNT OF TOURNON
PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE

Bordeaux, October 29, 1818

M. Prefect:

A few moments later the letter which you had the kindness to address to me was going to cross the one I had the honor of writing you. I had the time to stop the latter.

In that letter I talked about the rigorous silence which the Mayor's office kept about your two works. Surely, you should have received an answer.

Concerning the prisons, I told you about the evil the delay of the Mayor's office caused. His office has not given permission to introduce in the Department the consolations of religion, the blessings of charity, and the principles of morality.

Concerning the Auvergnats or vagabond children, I had the honor to show you, that, because of the silence of the Mayor and because of the time of year, I attempted

progressive meetings of these children, and these have had better success. There were forty at the last meeting. I had reason to believe that the following Sunday there would be sixty. I took the liberty of telling you how much your presence in their midst, a solemn meeting, might produce. But I would look forward to something of this kind only when there would be at least a hundred present.

The first meetings were held at the Square St. Julien,[1] on the premises of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. St. Michel Parish accommodates us for the confessions of these children. They go to St. Eulalie for Mass. Up to now everything has been done in order and with a good heart. I shall have the honor of acquainting you verbally with new methods I am developing in proportion as I succeed. These seem to be very simple. Here's hoping that actual experience will prove them right.

No doubt you have noticed, M. Prefect, how much the list sent by the Mayor's office is defective and indeed practically useless. My own is already far more complete and will certainly be of greater assistance to us.

In telling you about some of my success, M. Prefect, I attribute all of it to you, as I should. I beg of you to be kind enough to say a good word in favor of the work of the prisons at the Mayor's office.

Please accept the assurance of my deep respect.

William Joseph Chaminade

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While busying himself with the interests of the little convent of Agen, Father Chaminade does not fail to keep in touch with the progress of the foundation in Bordeaux.

He tells it about negotiations that will result in moving to a large house on rue des Menuts, near the boarding school that M. Estebenet, sodalist of the Madeleine, was managing and which he was soon to leave.

108 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON
AGEN

Bordeaux, November 4, 1818

I keep you in expectation of my letters, my dear child, in the midst of all your pains and worries. Each day I was on the verge of inviting you to thank the Lord, as well as St. Joseph, for all the favors accorded to your Brothers. Everything is, as it were, finished and

[1] Since, Place d'Aquitaine, then Place de la Victoire.

still nothing is done. There is the matter of a large house and of its dependencies. The contracts have been made with the proprietors, the deeds are ready, the funds for the acquisition are practically all on hand, and still unlooked-for incidentals always crop up to retard and endanger things. I must admit, nevertheless, to the glory of St. Joseph, that there is no piece of misfortune that does not result in some good. Prayers continue every day, and for some time there has been an extraordinary fast each Wednesday.

Next Sunday morning begins a retreat for the men. Recommend its success to God and to the Blessed Virgin.

I shall now reply rapidly to all the questions you ask in your recent letters.

May God be blessed at the departure of Sister Marguerite! On looking over all that happened, including her too hasty admission, you will gain experience. Sister Marguerite could have become a good subject. She showed several indications of a real vocation to the religious state. But she should have been tested a long time, outside of the community and before her admission, etc.

Don't let your poverty worry you. Providence will take things in hand. What would really cause sorrow and affliction would be the presence of sentiments which divide hearts that should be united and that ought really to be but one heart. Preach to your children, preach to them without ceasing this intimate union which ought to reign among them, that should never be, I do not say broken, but even altered, no matter what the price. May each one be disposed to make, at every instant, the sacrifice of all her ideas, of all her personal views, just as she has made the sacrifice of all her goods and of all her hopes in the world, etc.

However poor you may be, see to it that the Econome never fails to provide what is necessary, whether in food or in clothing. See to it that the food is always wholesome . . . Although I often make these remarks, either to you or to the Econome, let everyone know, nevertheless, that it is out of place for anyone in particular, even interiorly, to disapprove, to remark that there is a deficiency, too much or too little. Each one is to take what is given her, while rendering thanks to God, always believing that she does not deserve it, etc. . . . What a pity, if one ever saw the Daughters of Mary occupying themselves solely about what they have to eat or to put on . . . !

It seems that, at Nérac, the Third Order is to be inaugurated right away. But some believe the Sodality would suffer from this. The Sodality is being confused with a Third Order, as the latter is being confused with the Family of Mary. Father Pouget[1] has the character of the country in sufficient degree, he is prompt and ardent. . . .

[1] Father Cyprien Pouget (1759-1843) was perhaps associated with Father Chaminade at Bordeaux, from the time when, together they frequented the Collège of Guyenne. He was chosen by him in 1801 as sub-administrator of the diocese of Bazas. He was then pastor of Nérac. Later, he was called by Bishop

You may share, by union and participation, the prayers and good works of the Ladies of the Cross, but not by affiliation properly so-called.

See to it that the principal lady officers, just as the others, read their respective Regulations each week, all at one time or in part each day, until they know and understand them well. Then have them read summarily, but each one by herself. Each one can make a brief sketch of these Regulations for herself.

I am obliged to stop here. I shall resume the subject at the earliest possible moment. May the Lord deign to grant you, my dear daughter, all the blessings that your Father in Jesus Christ wishes for you.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Since January, 1819, Father Chaminade had reason to be sufficiently satisfied with each of his foundations to risk presenting them for the blessing of the Holy See.

He had then to solicit favors for the Sodality. Profiting by this occasion, he sent to Rome three petitions, the first for the Sodality, the second for the Society of Mary, and the third for the Daughters of Mary.

We are reproducing these documents, which are of special interest for the history of the Sodality and of our religious families.

109 – TO OUR HOLY FATHER THE POPE, PIUS VII
ROME

Bordeaux, January 18, 1819

WILLIAM JOSEPH CHAMINADE, PRIEST, MISSIONARY APOSTOLIC BY DECREE OF MARCH 28, 1801; DIRECTOR OF THE SODALITY, ORGANIZED UNDER THAT TITLE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE VIRGIN IN THE CHURCH OF THE MADELEINE OF BORDEAUX, AND OF OTHER SODALITIES AFFILIATED TO THE FIRST.

TO HIS HOLINESS, OUR HOLY FATHER POPE PIUS VII

Most Holy Father:

Dubourg, also a former student of the Collège of Guyenne, to the post of Vicar General of Montauban, where he died.

The Sodalities of which the undersigned is the Director, under the authority of the Ordinaries, have been enjoying for some time indulgences and privileges with which the Sovereign Pontiffs, your predecessors, have enriched them. However, the evils of the day and events only too deplorable have caused them to lose the authentic titles to the same. This is why they desire that Your Holiness be kind enough to confirm and renew them and deign to add what present circumstances seem to require for the stability and maintenance of the religious institutions of the same kind.

Pope Sixtus V, in the year 1586, by Apostolic Decree, authorized the General of the Rev. Jesuit Fathers, at that time regularly constituted, to erect in France sodalities of different characteristics and for different conditions of life, after the model of the one which met in the central house in Rome.

It was stated there that the Rule of these sodalities would be the same as the Roman College's, with adaptations to conditions of place and personnel, but that all in all the Sodalities would be modeled after the one in Rome, as subjects of the same leader or the daughters of a common mother.

It is doubtless toward the same time of the year 1586 or slightly after that the Sodality was established in this city of Bordeaux, among diverse classes, according to different conditions and social standing, as it was then said.

In the year 1737, there are many proofs of its existence, and its Regulations were renewed with mention of the Decree of Pope Sixtus V in 1586. It continued to exist, under the same direction until the suppression of the Jesuit Order.

The Rev. Capuchin Fathers of the same city of Bordeaux took over this work at this time. The meetings were held in their church, and they were authorized thereto by your predecessors, the Sovereign Pontiffs.

The work was not yet totally annihilated at the time of the attack directed against the monastic institutions during the French Revolution. The devoted members of this association had the constancy to maintain it intact.

The undersigned, exercising his apostolic mission in Bordeaux, joined what he has of zeal to that of the members of this association, who were surviving, in spite of such great disasters.

Finally, in March, 1803,[1] the Legate of Your Holiness, then in Paris, granted, in virtue of his powers, to the members of the Association and to those who would join them, the same favors, privileges, and indulgences attached to the said Sodality, in the same manner

[1] This date is incorrect. The authentic document bears the date of June 2, 1803.

and the same form that they had been granted by Pope Pius VI, your immediate predecessor.

The Bull of Pope Pius VI and the list of the privileges and indulgences annexed to it were then found to exist and to be authentic in their form.

The undersigned Missionary Apostolic had extracts made of it, which he compared with the originals, and these extracts were printed in the little prayer book of the Sodality.

The troubled times which followed caused these originals to be lost and only the extracts remain.[1]

During these same evil times, several sodalists had either been attracted or thrown into various distant places, although some managed to get back to their native land.

The majority formed new branches of the Sodality by bringing together in each place the most fervent Christians.

All longed for the moment when the Holy See, while confirming the principal dispositions that had been taken by Pope Sixtus in 1586, would put the Sodalities in common affiliation and in the participation of the same favors, making or keeping them as daughters of the Sodality of Rome and subject to its principal head.

While awaiting what it will please Your Holiness to grant for other places, the undersigned, Missionary Apostolic, places before you, Most Holy Father, his humble requests, so that it may please you to look with kindness on the sections of the flock, which, in spite of his unworthiness, he has to watch over and help.

He dares to hope, Most Holy Father, that it will please you:

1. To grant to the aforesaid Sodality of the Immaculate Conception, established in the Church of the Madeleine of Bordeaux, the same favors, privileges, and indulgences granted to the sodalities of which it is a continuation, by any one of your predecessors, the Holy Roman Pontiffs, and notably by Popes Sixtus V and Pius VI, which were renewed and confirmed in the month of March, 1803, by your Legate in France; to order that the favors, privileges, and indulgences above mentioned will be recorded in a list of which the undersigned herewith submits a model. May it please you, Most Holy Father, to have added to the intervening Decree, with or without modification, as Your Holiness may deem advisable, that the newly granted favors, distinguished by the asterisk, are not to be prejudicial to the former ones but rather an addition to them.

[1] At the time of the searches of 1809, it seems the Bull and the list were thrown into the gutter with various other documents concerning the Sodality. Friendly hands drew them out, all stained, and consigned them to a sealed envelope for the Ladies of the Miséricorde, where, a century later, 1909, they were refound. Actually, they are preserved in the Archives of the Society.

2. To say and declare that the same favors, privileges, and indulgences will be of benefit, collectively and individually, to all the members of the diverse Sodalities affiliated to the one of Bordeaux, or which will be affiliated, and notably to the Sodalities that have spread from Bordeaux to the dioceses of Agen and Auch.

3. To authorize the Directors who will be specially given to distinct Sodalities with the approval of the Ordinaries to apply the indulgences in cases where this application is needed, as in the case with the Principal Director residing in Bordeaux.

4. To declare and permit that the indulgences to be acquired and gained by the sodalists or by the faithful, in their lifetime or at the moment of death, may be applicable by way of suffrage and profitable to the faithful departed, according to the intention of the person gaining the indulgence.

The supplicant, prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, humbly waits upon you, Most Holy Father, to grant him, as well as his children, the sodalists of every age and sex, a part of these treasures whose abundance you have in your hands. He furthermore asks for the same sodalists and himself, Most Holy Father, your Apostolic Blessing.

Then from the hand of the Archbishop of Bordeaux the following recommendation,

Knowing how useful for the maintenance of religion and for the increase of piety these associations are, especially under the wise direction of the Missionary Apostolic who solicits the favors here mentioned, I take the liberty of joining my humble supplications with his at the feet of Your Holiness.

Charles—Fr. Archbishop of Bordeaux

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110 – TO OUR HOLY FATHER THE POPE, PIUS VII
ROME

Bordeaux, January 18, 1819

Most Holy Father:

The suppliant, while soliciting in a previous letter indulgences for the Sodalities he directs, limited himself to the indication of their affiliation and former privileges.

He said nothing and should have said nothing about the new works that have developed from the above-mentioned Sodalities or that will develop from them in the near future. But he presents for your Apostolic Blessing at least two groups that have taken rise

in the bosom of these Sodalities, one in the city of Agen, and the other in the city of Bordeaux.

The first is a group of virgins who, under the authority of a prelate who leaves no good work undone, consecrated themselves to the propagation of the faith when they made their religious vows. They have taken the name Daughters of Mary.

The Bordeaux group is made up of men who, in the same spirit as the Daughters of Mary, have followed, with the same vows, the same course with the variation called for by the difference of sex.

The venerable prelate of the archiepiscopal See of Bordeaux has not disapproved of this trial, which the undersigned also wishes to place before the consideration of Your Holiness.

The more particular spirit of these groups is to provide a special leader for zeal, another for instruction, and still another for work, while obliging the Superior of the Society to have all the members act together along these three lines without interruption.

God has been pleased, by his grace, to grant that these first efforts produce fruits of edification and consolation.

The suppliant has thought that your charity toward the faithful and, in particular, your concern for the Church in France, would be moved by this report and Your Holiness would not refuse to allot, from the treasures placed in your hands, a small portion to those who later on can well be its ornament and support.

The suppliant, prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, humbly asks you, Most Holy Father, to be pleased to favor this holy assembly.

For these motives and others, may it please you from the abundance of your favors, to grant to the men's group of Bordeaux, under the title of Children of Mary, the following plenary indulgences:

1. On the day of the taking of vows, for each of the subjects admitted.
2. On the day of the renewal of the same vows, once each year.
3. During the three days of the Forty Hours Devotion, which will take place in the church designated by their Superior, until such time as they have one of their own, the same indulgence for the faithful who will take part in the instruction and exercises during the three days.
4. At the hour of death, for those of the members of the Institute of Mary, who die clothed in their habit or bearing signs of their membership and in the love of their vows.

Deign, Most Holy Father, to add to these favors, and for the Children of Mary, and for the unworthy suppliant, your Apostolic Blessing.

The archbishop of Bordeaux had added his recommendation to this request, in these few kind words:

In union with the suppliant, I take the liberty of humbly soliciting at the feet of Your Holiness the same favors.

Charles-Fr. Archbishop of Bordeaux

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111 – TO HIS HOLINESS POPE PIUS VII, ROME

Bordeaux, January 18, 1819

Most Holy Father:

The suppliant has described for you in a previous petition the conditions of the Sodalities which the Holy Spirit has willed to bring together in these modern times. He has left to God the glory of his work undertaken for support of fervor. This is why he did not speak of the works undertaken by the various groups.

But he cannot help saying a word about one particular group which developed from the general Sodalities and which specially formed in the city of Agen.

It has been especially favored, sustained, encouraged by the intense charity of a prelate who is zealous about all his duties and leaves no good undone for all those under his influence.

It is then under the authority and direction of this holy bishop that thirty virgins, formed originally in the heart of the Sodalities, have devoted themselves to the monastic life, while adding to the three ordinary vows of consecrating themselves to the propagation of the faith.

They have taken the name of Daughters of Mary.

Even the world has felt itself moved with respect for the totality of virtues which this monastic foundation inspires at its very birth.

A Mother in charge of zeal, a Mother of instruction, a Mother of work form the division of labor for this enterprise, which is kept together by a Good Mother whom Heaven seems to have formed and reserved for giving life to this institute.

Whatever in the old monastic Rules that was holiest has been taken up as far as possible. All the merit of the Director has perhaps been following the impulse given by grace to these hearts destined for the edification of the world.

This too brief presentation of the condition of things is at least very exact. Your paternal heart, Most Holy Father, will derive some consolation from it, and your charity, stirred to action, will want to give of the treasures of the Church to whoever is charged with increasing this work later on.

* * * *

A request for favors, similar to the one in the preceding letter, follows.

In this document one notices the praise given by Father Chaminade to the fervor of the first Daughters of Mary and to the holiness of their Foundress.

Three requests were confided to Father Ripolles, pastor of Talence, near Bordeaux, to be carried to Rome. It is this priest that is referred to in the following note.

The first did not work out as hoped, but the Sodality of Bordeaux was affiliated, by an act dated July 4, 1819, to the Sodality Prima Primaria*, which had been reestablished in all its rights, with the restoration of the Society of Jesus. The two others were crowned with success, and the Pope responded with two Briefs, dated May 25, 1819, granting all the favors asked for. It is in the memory of this that on May 25, the Society celebrates the feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians.*

* * * *

112 – TO M. DAVID MONIER,
BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January, 1819

I am sending you, my dear friend, the Vendéen. I hope it will please you. . . . No. 8 stands out. I would have liked to have told you about it sooner.

Our traveler to Rome is to leave only after a few days. If our requests are ready, tomorrow evening I can have them examined by the archbishop. It is the bad weather that is delaying him. I am saying good night.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Is your mind sufficiently clear and free to work at the Consummation Virtues? If you think you can work better tomorrow here at my house, you can count on my door being open to you early in the morning but closed to all others.

* * * *

Unable to do everything himself, Father Chaminade confides several tasks to M. David. The latter was asked to write out, under the Founder's inspiration, the work on the Consummation Virtues that had been long planned.

Concerning Father Chaminade himself, he is kept busy maintaining his works and providing for their extension. We find him, for example, in the following letter sustaining a religious vocation and initiating the establishment of new sodalities.

113 – TO A MLLE DE LACHAPELLE,
CONDOM

Bordeaux, January 20, 1819

I received with joy your last letter, my dear daughter. Sometimes I have been amazed to receive so few letters from you. At least, you should console yourself by writing often to your Sisters in Agen, who love you so much and who pray so often for you. The more they taste the pleasure of serving the Lord in the quiet of solitude, the more they pity you to be still sailing the stormy sea of this world.

I write you now in haste, profiting by the occasion offered me by a young man who is going to live in Condom. I have received him as a sodalist in Auch. He took part in quite a number of the exercises of the Bordeaux Sodality and thus came to understand it well. Had I known he was to leave Bordeaux so soon, I would have instructed him still more, and I would have put him in a position to converse more with the Gentlemen of Condom. He will be able to be of some service to you anyway, for he is zealous. The collège would be able to serve as an example to youth. . . .

I consider you, my dear daughter, as an exile, sighing until you can break all the ties which still bind you to earth and fly to the place where God calls you. Sister of the Angels is still obliged to wait until Easter, from what our good Superioress has been telling me.

I hope I can go to Agen after Easter. I would like to find you at our little convent there. May the Lord shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Allow Father Castex[1] to find here some marks of my respectful consideration. I would very much like to see him on my first journey to the Haut-pays.

* * * *

But then comes a serious difficulty: the peaceful possession of the Madeleine by Father Chaminade and the Sodality is about to be contested.

As a result of incidents which will be referred to in a later letter (116), ill-disposed neighbors had complained to the authorities.

To end the dispute, Father Chaminade thought of asking the government to recognize the Madeleine as an auxiliary public oratory.

[1] Chaplain of the hospital at Condom, a zealous priest, who was directing the Sodality of this city.

The investigation that this request brought about did not fail to cause him anxiety because it necessitated help from the revenues of the Church of St. Eulalie.

Embarrassed, he first thought of abandoning his first request and of availing himself, for authorization to the Madeleine, of the work of the little Auvergnats, which was on the point of being approved by the government.

The following notes treat of this. From them can be seen both the credit Father Chaminade enjoyed with the various authorities and the interest which he took in poor, abandoned children.

114 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, February 5, 1819

Your Excellency,

I have just made arrangements to save you the trouble of answering the Minister on the subject of the Madeleine. I would be obliged to you not to bring up this affair for deliberation, but to let it drop, at least temporarily. I shall have the honor of informing you about anything of interest that may happen. On the other hand, I ask you to advise me directly about anything that might concern you, should I not know of it. There is every reason to expect that these proceedings, which would be considered imprudent if they were unsuccessful, will have a happy ending. May the name of the Lord, for whose glory all is being done, be forever blessed!

I am with profound respect, Your Excellency, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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115 – TO THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF
THE COURT—BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, (not dated)

M. President:

While asking authorization of the government for the work with the young abandoned children, I requested that His Excellency the Archbishop, the First President, and the Prefect be invited to the meetings of the bureau as guests of honor.

I went to your house, M. Premier, last Thursday, to pay my respects and acquaint you with this work that the grandnephew of the illustrious archbishop of Cambrai revealed to all of France. I also wanted to invite you for the first of the association's meetings which will take place if the day is suitable to you on Wednesday evening at 7 o'clock sharp on rue Lalande, No. 2. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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116 – TO THE COUNT OF TOURNON
PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE

Bordeaux, February 10, 1819

M. Prefect:

A very small cause has just produced amazing results. For six years I have been quietly exercising the functions of my ministry in the chapel of the Madeleine, when all of a sudden the bell, which was in ringing condition all this time, cracked. I was in a position to have it replaced, when some persons of rue Lalande asked to transport both the bell and the belfry to the rue des Carmes.[1] In spite of the expense that I could not stand, I would have done it immediately were there not serious inconveniences.

The oratory of the Madeleine was held successively by various priests before the time of the Concordat.[2] Following the reorganization of the Church of France in 1802 and the law of Germinal in the year X, the exercise of religion in the chapel had to be regulated by the twofold authority of the Church and the State. All the formalities required by the law were fulfilled by His Excellency the Archbishop, in conjunction with M. Charles de la Croix, then Prefect of the Gironde. The only thing still lacking was the seal of the sovereign authority, the lack of which I noticed only when these bell troubles began.

I am in a position, M. Prefect, to solicit this authorization from the King. I beg of you to delay your answer to the petitioners of Rue Lalande without, however, letting the reason be known. I would also be obliged to you to provide me with a copy of the papers concerning this affair which can still be found in the Prefect's office. I am having a new

[1] Today, rue Canihac is behind the apse of the chapel. The transfer of the bell and belfry took place only later.
[2] Father Monsec, pastor of the parish of St. Eulalie, then in the power of the constitutional clergy, and his assistant, Father Roullier, assisted by Father Jaure, former beneficiary of St. Eulalie and Father Cauderès, former pastor of Canéjan. The chapel of the Madeleine was then the seat of the parish of St. Eulalie. After the Concordat, it became the seat of the parish of St. Eloi, whose church was undergoing repairs from top to bottom. In 1804, it was ceded to Fr. Chaminade for the meetings of the Sodality.

search made in the secretariat of the archdiocese. Thus, I shall be ready to give you all possible information the very moment you need it.

I am with a very deep respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. While awaiting authorization for the work of the young abandoned children, I am more concerned about perfecting than developing it.

I happen to think at this time, M. Prefect, that if some new contradiction about the Madeleine should arise, we can easily keep the work of these poor children with the other advantages which the opening of this chapel to the public provides. The authorization of the government which would associate it with this work, would at the same time help the stability for the work and the quiet use of the chapel itself. Anyhow, I don't think the authorization I requested for the chapel will meet with any difficulty. In case of success or failure, I shall report everything to you with all confidence.

I am adding on to this letter to acknowledge reception of the one you have just written me, to accompany the copy of the letter of His Excellency and the Minister of the Interior concerning the work of the young abandoned children. I am going to work on the Statutes, profiting by the observations which you were kind enough to make. The more I think of these children, the more my heart is interested in their lot.

* * * *

While awaiting the settlement of this thorny matter, which was settled on September 29, 1819, by the official recognition of the Madeleine as an auxiliary oratory, Father Chaminade continued to direct his various works and—for example, in the letter that follows—answered the questions of Mother de Trenquelléon. The first part of the letter concerns a young religious who was dying of consumption. She was to die holily the Tuesday after Easter.

117 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON,
AGEN

Bordeaux, February 6, 1819

I am taking up my pen, my dear child, although I am very busy, to take advantage of a conveyance going to Agen and to save you a few pennies.

If you believe that Sister Elisabeth truly has a divine vocation to your Holy Institute, she must be kept and granted the satisfaction of dying in the community where the Spirit of God has called her. What, then, should be done? We have the time for reflection to foresee everything. I may possibly be there by that time.

Nevertheless, one thought I cannot help making would be this: how did it happen that, having had so much time to examine this young lady, you did not notice she was consumptive? From what has been said to me, it seems that her illness does not come from any accidents. With careful attention, it should have been noticed, or at least sufficiently suspected, so as to postpone her admission. It may be that this general mistake has been a special effect of Divine Providence.

I received Sister Stanislas' letter. May God be praised for having made her enter into the way of order and peace! I shall write her and the others and look forward to hearing from them all. I do not forget them.

I very often think of the entire community and of each one of our Daughters in particular; but mainly of you, my dear daughter, whom the good God wishes to make a saint. However, you have to make yourself docile to the action of grace, which must abound in you and which seeks so many ways of purifying and sanctifying you. An Institute taking rise amidst an overflow of iniquity and meant to present itself before a world corrupted and perverted, should it not have a saint as leader? Well, courage, my dear child. Respond to the views of God, be faithful to grace, to your particular grace! Remember that a Superior is to be all to all so as to gain all to Jesus Christ. In a way, she must no longer have a particular personality but, according to the occasion, to adopt now this one, now that. She must bend to all characters.

Give Sister Emanuel the necessary dispensation that she may spend Lent in good health and take good care also of the others. Should you have any doubt you cannot readily solve, it is preferable to be on the side of indulgence and to make compensation by acts of virtue.

I must stop now. I haven't even the time to reread what I have written if I want this letter to leave by the present mail. May the Lord shower more and more his blessings upon you and upon your dear Daughters.

William Joseph Chaminade

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118 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 29, 1819

I was on the point of writing you, my dear child, when the carrier gave me your last letter. Do not be afraid to bore me with your frequent letters, even if they have no other purpose than to console or quiet you. The times are evil, and they are likely to become worse.

I had presented the Holy Father with three requests, one for the Daughters of Mary, one for what we here call *The Little Society*, and one for the Sodalities. I received notice that the Sovereign Pontiff had granted them all; but that since the approbation must be in the form of a Bull, it will take a while. If nothing goes wrong, I might even receive it before leaving for Agen.

Here we have need of great patience and constancy. Thanks be to God, we are, as it were, visibly surrounded by a kind of protection from on high. All is being purified, all is being consolidated in our works, even in the midst of contradictions and reverses. Let us keep on praying.

The custom of communities, even of cloistered communities, was to open their chapels on Holy Thursday so that the public might come to visit the Blessed Sacrament, etc. . . . collections were taken up by the boarders, in the communities that had boarding schools. You may follow this general practice, taking precaution not to disturb recollection but rather favoring it, whether by the interruption of all exterior functions for instructions of any kind or forbidding the parlor even to yourself, except in case of pressing need or by supplementary exercises of piety, etc. The collections may be taken up by the young sodalists, who should be very decently dressed. The doors may be looked after by some respectable ladies who are well able to control matters. They can be relieved in shifts. In the chapel decorations there should be nothing catering to a mere vain curiosity, etc. Regarding the collections, come to an understanding with Father Mouran about what to use them for. He could himself say a word about them to His Lordship the Bishop. The needs of the Institution and the chapel repairs are very real, but they must be presented with prudence if you make that decision. Formerly, there were some churches where the men or women collectors said nothing. Admittance to the church is to stop at nightfall, and the doors are to be closed. Perhaps it might even be suitable to put the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, to be re-exposed early on Good Friday. The sodalists may be invited to carry candles, vases of flowers, candlesticks. Let each object bear the name of the person who offers it, so that everything may be returned without confusion. Since the chapel is small and the entrances somewhat inconvenient, the community must sing nothing nor do anything unusual that might attract too great a crowd.

Sustain, encourage, instruct those young working girls you spoke of. The Spirit of the Lord will help us find how to satisfy the desire he inspires them with.

I wish you, my dear child, and all our dear Daughters the abundance of heavenly blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Here I am making good my having omitted to acknowledge reception of the box of prunes and to thank you for it. I am making constant use of it.

* * * *

To give a better idea of the new multiplicity of Father Chaminade's occupations at this period of his life, we shall cite the principal passages of a letter addressed by him to the pastor of Libourne and to the diocesan Missionary, who was then preaching a retreat in this city. Solicited to come in person to preside at the establishment of a Sodality, Father Chaminade was forced to put off his journey until the following month and, in the meantime, to give his instructions in writing. These instructions are preceded by the following lines, in the hand of M. Monier.

119 – TO FATHER ROUQUET, PASTOR OF LIBOURNE, AND FATHER MAURAL, DIOCESAN MISSIONARY

Bordeaux, April 9, 1819

Rev. Fathers:

Since I cannot write you separately because of the labors of the moment,[1] you will permit me to make this a joint letter. That way I can avoid saying the same things twice. Besides, whether I express my sentiments of respect jointly or separately, you will be convinced that they are sincere and the result of the most profound esteem.

I come now to the charitable gesture that moved both of you, Reverend Fathers, to wish to associate me with your present work. I feel the importance of rendering permanent, if at all possible, the fruits of your mission, and I would consider myself happy to be able to help in some way. As soon as I received your two letters, I went to the archbishop's residence to receive the counsels or orders he might be pleased to give me. The need of new converts is not to be doubted, but it is no easy matter to procure them. Your letters were read with attention, but nothing conclusive has as yet been decided upon. It has been said, by way of recapitulation, that two or three days reflection would be necessary and that I should make a summary of the entire matter, to be given to His Lordship. This is why this letter will not be mailed before having been submitted to him.

The hope you had that I would go to Libourne on the second or third day after Easter, or that we would obtain the transfer of Father Goudelin, was not and cannot be realized. The events of Holy Week, the numerous paschal confessions, the works undertaken here drive us too demandingly. You will easily understand that we are not permitted to risk the salvation of several by giving up their spiritual direction, once it has begun and almost completed. Father Goudelin, in particular, preached the Lenten sermons at the Church of the Holy Cross in this city. I do not know when he finished them. His great zeal made him undertake a retreat at the same time. He has his duties as chaplain of the deaf and dumb

[1] The letter is dated on Good Friday.

and the service of instruction. The confessions of the men take up all his free moments, if he has any. The archbishop cannot dispense with this ecclesiastic.[2]

My time, if I must speak of it, is not less occupied than his. You will then want to believe that, in spite of the best will, it is absolutely impossible to give either Father Goudelin or me a new appointment in the next two weeks and after the feasts.

We have to insist upon asking for grace and uniquely for grace from on high. May the good God himself see the dispositions of the hearts you have touched, may he strengthen them and sustain them by his grace!

I have proposed to the archbishop to send you a helper later on in the person of a worthy priest whom I thought sufficiently free with his time and means. He lacks neither piety nor zeal. But the least busy here are excessively so, and my wishes in this last regard could not yet be realized.

In the reflections that have come to me since, it seemed to me that the Sodalities you are so right in wanting to establish would not have greater success with my presence or Father Goudelin's since that grace has called you to prepare for them.

We will want to organize them definitively one day and to confirm them in a constant and solid direction. However, to make this organization fruitful, we must first test the zeal and learn a little of its strength. Until then, everything is preliminary.

Here is how I would proceed. One or two of your exercises, toward the end of the mission, may serve to announce to the faithful the necessity or the very great need of their remaining united, so as to keep themselves on the right path. They will find in union the power which Jesus Christ has promised to those who would be gathered in his name.

We must forget nothing that can make people realize the importance of such a union. We must take it for granted that God will inspire several with these designs and the zeal to carry them out. That is what happens almost all the time. It is well that these measures be proposed by the same lips that have touched the hearts. You can then suggest that they keep themselves united for all exercises of piety, prayers, religious instruction. . . .

I shall gladly devote my first free moments to so essential a work, and I shall cooperate in its definitive organization, according to the needs of persons and places.

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[2] Father Goudelin, former prefect of the Sodality (1818) received Holy Orders, joined the diocesan Missionaries of Bordeaux, became chaplain of the Deaf-Mute Institution. Then, in 1822, on the advice of Father Chaminade, to whom he was closely devoted, he accepted to succeed the celebrated Father Sicard as head of the Royal Institute of Deaf-Mutes of Paris. In 1824 he came back to Bordeaux to take up the direction of the diocesan Missionaries, and in 1832, he entered the Society of Jesus, in which he died in 1863.

Your zeal and your experience will make up for what I cannot foresee here. I pray God that he preserve this new flock in its fervor, so that by its constancy the glory of religion may be procured.

I thank both of you very specially, Gentlemen, for having thought of my having a share in this excellent undertaking. The good God will lovingly overlook my insufficiency. You are planting, you wish that Apollo should do the watering, and God will give the increase. The blessing of our venerable prelate inspires me with the fondest hope in this.

From the bottom of my heart, I join you and I am your humble confrère in Jesus Christ.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

In the midst of all sorts of embarrassments, the Founder was preoccupied mainly with the progress of his Little Society.

Now established close to M. Estebenet on rue des Menuts, it had not yet obtained from the Rector of the Academy the right to open an educational institution, but it had good reason to think it would not have to wait much longer. And Father Chaminade asked himself how the new boarding school would relate to M. Estebenet, since the latter continued to function on rue les Menuts, contrary to what the Little Society had expected when it acquired the property. (See Letter No. 198)

The following note shows Father Chaminade feeling out M. Estebenet on this point.

120 – TO M. ESTEBENET, HEAD OF
A BOARDING SCHOOL IN BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, April 20, 1819

Yesterday, I waited for you all evening, my dear friend, to continue our conversation of the day before.

I do not understand what advantage you or the Little Society would find in opening schools on rue Leyteyre.[1] On the contrary, I see rather big outlays for an establishment which has only a very slight connection with either of our two institutions.

[1] Another part of the rue des Menuts.

The big difficulty of finding in town a large place with a spacious garden, as you understand the term, might well lead you to a closer examination of the one being offered to you near the Church of St. Seurin.

Furthermore, I don't see that you have any pressing need to change your residence. If your eagerness had as motive leaving the Little Society better means of developing itself, the difficulty could be remedied for a long time by the construction of a workshop at the end of the lots or, still better, at the end of your garden.

I shall try to see you this evening after supper. I would be obliged if you see to the necessary papers with the observations you have made.

I greet you cordially.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

A month later Father Chaminade had some good news to give Agen.

121 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON,
AGEN

Bordeaux, May 25, 1819

My dear child,

I cannot yet tell you definitely the time of my trip to Agen. The important matters which require my presence are progressing well enough. Several are soon to reach their conclusion.

The Head of the Little Society[1] has just received his authorization from the University, after eight months.

The work of the young Auvergnats has just been approved by the Government. It is by the abandoned children and the chimneysweeps that God wants to sustain us. I shall explain this little mystery to you, if, by this time, you have not heard about it.[2]

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[1] M. August Brougnon-Perrière, 1792-1874, born in Bordeaux, professor at the Collège of Figeac, then in Bordeaux at the institution of M. Estebenet, entered the Sodality of Madeleine early and was one of the first members of the Society. He was the first Director, first at the Impasse Ségur, then at the St. Marie Boarding School. In 1826 he added the post of the third assistant. He left the Society in 1832, relieved of his vows by Archbishop de Cheverus, by the always remained friendly with Father Chaminade and with his former confrères.
[2] There is question of the authorization of the Madeleine, which was not yet solved.

There is a great likelihood—another mystery—that it is you yourself who are delaying my departure a little, and here is how. One of the finest dwellings, perhaps really the finest, is for sale. I am thinking of making it a convent of the Daughters of Mary. I have hopes but little more. It has twice the space of the Agen convent and it is in the center of the city. I recommend this matter, as all others, to your prayers, and I mean the prayers of the community. You have a direct or an indirect interest in all these matters.

I am hoping, my dear child, that my letter will find you all back to your normal condition of health.

Ask Father Mouran if there might be some young proselyte[1] able to teach a small Latin class. We would be in need of such a one if we want to look after everything.

May the peace of the Lord be with you and all your dear daughters!

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Here follows, from among several others also written by M. David, a letter of affiliation to the Sodality.

We know how great was Father Chaminade's zeal for the multiplication of Sodalities: more than fifty during his lifetime were affiliated to the Sodality of the Madeleine in this way.

122 – TO FATHER HUARD, PASTOR OF
NOTRE DAME DE LA COUTURE,
LE MANS

Bordeaux, June 25, 1819

Your Reverence:

The letter that you paid me the honor of writing on the nineteenth of the past month reached me in its own good time.

Mme de Vauguyon, who was kind enough to deliver it at the time of her stopover in Bordeaux, was notified that I could not answer it as soon as I would have liked. But this respectable lady was also able to describe for you all the joy that your design and hers gave me concerning the proposed union between your sodalities and ours.

[1] That is to say, postulant, who may have tried religious life while working in the boarding school on rue des Menuts.

It seemed to me, from the interview I had with this lady, and also by the contents of your letter, that the Society confided to your care in the city of Le Mans, has not emanated from the Roman Sodality nor from its daughters, who had the same privileges and could share theirs with those who desired affiliation.

The Sodalities I am speaking of go back to the Sixteenth Century. The sovereign pontiffs had their motives for uniting the faithful in each city or town into sodalities and putting these in reciprocal communication with the Mother-Sodality, which is close to the Holy See.

The piety which has led your ladies to come together intimately has had its first recompense, because I consider it an evident effect of grace that you and the good lady of Vauguyon were moved to ask to share the privileges of an Association you had never heard of.

As for me and the Sodality I direct here, I look upon it as a great favor from heaven that members were sent who had been manifestly influenced by grace. It was in this manner that Saul was sent to Ananias. Only one point might be lacking in the comparison, namely, that we have not become saints, while Saul and Ananias did.

It is with these views and in obedience to God that I grant you affiliation to the fullest extent I can.

My powers being, in each location, subordinate to the Ordinary, my affiliation should have been accorded only after the authorization of His Lordship, your Bishop. I desire that His Lordship pardon me if I have forestalled his orders and that he ratify what the circumstances seem to require. If the bishop of Le Mans did not ratify it, I would consider the affiliation null and void. Nothing is of any value except in the order of the mission instituted by Jesus Christ.

While humbly awaiting what it will please His Lordship to order, I take this occasion to recommend the Sodality of Bordeaux and its director to your most fervent prayers. I am addressing mine to heaven for you, Reverend Father, as well as for the flock entrusted to your care, and I am in Jesus Christ and Mary,

Very truly yours,

William Joseph Chaminade

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During the summer, Father Chaminade informs the Count of Tournon about the progress of the work among the little Auvergnats.

123 – TO THE COUNT OF TOURNON
PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE

Bordeaux, July 7, 1819

M. Prefect:

I owe you an account of the work among the young Auvergnats, which you proposed to us some time ago and which you have accorded a very special protection.

The most advanced of these children, to the number of twelve, were soon found sufficiently instructed to be admitted to their First Communion. The ceremony took place on the 24th of last month, the feast of St. John, and to the edification of the faithful present. These lads contracted a holier alliance than before, with good morals and the virtues of their peculiar condition. It seemed fitting, according to the first prospectus of the Institution, to clothe these children suitably for this feast and according to the modest traditions of their state. Their example has not been without fruit. Several of their companions who had remained apart came closer. The actual number of the children under our instruction and under our general care is about eighty. It can easily be doubled.

But it would be useful to meet the expenses of this work, to give greater life to the provisions authorized by the laws. This is what urges me, M. Prefect, to ask you two favors in the interest of these adopted children.

First, that you would be kind enough to sign the official proceedings in the official Register, where the names of the benefactors are to be inscribed according to Article 6 of the Book of Regulations.

Second, that you deign to permit that the favor of your authorization so kindly given, be inscribed on the Register, which is going to be opened after the formality of the said signature.

Your administrators, M. Prefect, like to see you direct the good work by your instructions and control them by your example. Religion, which makes it a duty for me to bless those who govern us, is here joined to our natural satisfaction in blessing the administrators who are the cause of our prosperity.

Please accept the renewal of the profound respect with which I pray you to believe me, etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

The following letter, written by Father Chaminade during his trip to the Haut-pays, is precious evidence of the very special devotion he had to Our Lady of Verdelais.

It is through her intercession that he, as a tender child, had been cured miraculously of a wound in his leg that had been considered incurable. With the hope of giving back to the sanctuary its former splendor, devastated by the Revolution, he cherished the thought of confiding its care to the members of his Little Society. On several occasions we find in his correspondence traces of his zeal for the restoration of Our Lady of Verdelais, and, if it was not to be that his sons should be installed at Verdelais, he had the consolation of seeing another Society of Mary in charge of restoring this place of pilgrimage.

There is question in this letter of a visit to Verdelais, undertaken at the order of the archbishop, in view of studying the possibilities of a restoration of the church and convent.

124 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Agen, July 24, 1819

Your Excellency:

My departure took place on the twentieth as I had told Your Excellency. I arrived on the same day at Our Lady of Verdelais. There I followed the intentions of Father Barrès[1] and your last instructions, while making an early visit to the church and to the old convent. The day was too short to allow me to examine everything in great detail, but I got a sufficiently clear idea of everything to form a definite opinion.

I think that the church and that part of the convent that has not been broken up can still be put into shape, although neither can be without considerable expense.

The body of the church is solid. It seems to have been built to last for centuries. It is not quite the same with the cloister sections. These have suffered much and are so far gone that they will fall to pieces completely unless repairs are undertaken soon. I do not intend to speak to the various needs of the workmen to be involved.

I think it is important to note two things in particular: the veneration of the faithful for this church and the greater or lesser possibility of obtaining provisions for the service it is rendering.

The veneration of the people for the Most Holy Virgin's miraculous image has not diminished, if I am to believe the reports most worthy of credence. All attest that pilgrimages come there from great distances, that they are continual and would become

[1] Vicar General of Archbishop d'Aviau.

much more frequent if the faithful who undertake them were assured of always finding there a minister of the altar and the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Several of those who come are obliged, to satisfy their devotion, to wait an entire day and sometimes longer. The important thing would be to assure the service by establishing religious men near the church who would receive the pilgrims and who would make sure to provide a holy priest. I have reason to believe that a section of the Little Society would soon be able to supply these needs.

The first thing to do would be to make sure of suitable accommodations. It is not impossible, I am told, to acquire the old convent and its dependencies, although the property belongs to a widow and her children. Their properties are burdened with debts. The cultivation and care of their debts in Verdelais are so burdensome that they seem to have abandoned them altogether. The necessary and careful maintenance of these places, and especially of those destined to afford shelter to the pilgrims, cannot be assured except as a work of God and by his servants. These must be found. I shall have the honor of discussing this with you, Your Excellency, after my return.

His Lordship the Bishop of Agen received me with his customary kindness. He asked me with eagerness for news about Your Excellency, and he listened with a very marked interest to the little I could tell him. He was also pleased to hear about the strengthening and progress of the Little Society.

I am about to take a trip as far as Auch, and I shall not delay placing myself more closely under your direction and await your commands. It is a real comfort on this trip and in the labors of my ministry to be able to offer you the homage of the respect and deep veneration, with which I am Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Deign to permit, Your Excellency, that Father Barrès find here the tokens of my respectful remembrance.

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Autumn of 1819 had come, and the situation of the Little Society in regard to M. Estebenet was still awaiting a solution. This situation was all the more untenable because the two boarding schools had the same yard for the recreation of the pupils.

Since the talks on the subject yielded no result, Mlle de Lamourous was given the task of finding a settlement to the difficulties. The following letters help us follow the progress.

125 – TO MLLE DE LAMOUROUS, BORDEAUX

St. Laurent, October 14, 1819[1]

Happy feast day, my dear child.[2] You will not be forgotten tomorrow at my Mass.

Your mind must have been very preoccupied that you did not see that M. Estebenet does not propose any way of conciliating matters. Rather, he suggests conditions even worse than the state of uneasiness and suffering he is presently causing us.

How could we obtain rental for a year, since last year he refused to grant it?

The Little Society will prefer to suffer injustice and to await the order of Providence for deliverance, if you cannot find any other way out of the difficulty.

M. Estebenet's conduct leads one to believe that for the last five or six months, he has in one way or another only been trying to avoid the issue. Aren't the propositions he last made to you just one more proof of the fact?, etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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126 – TO MLLE DE LAMOUROUS, BORDEAUX

St. Laurent, October 15, 1819

It is with deep sincerity, my dear child, that the Little Society has accepted His Excellency the Archbishop as arbiter and judge in its dispute with M. Estebenet. But since M. Estebenet, in bringing this matter before His Excellency's court, does not explain himself clearly, it would be advisable that His Excellency require of him a clear written statement or promise that he will abide by his decision or that of his Council. Everything that had happened seems to indicate that this measure is necessary.

I ask you, my dear child, to proceed carefully with this matter. I ask that you inform the members of the Council and obtain their decision as promptly as possible, after you have obtained from M. Estebenet his word of honor in a clear and written statement.

You don't seem to believe, my dear child, that M. Estebenet did an injustice in forcibly obtaining the upper hand as regards the site under dispute, if he was renting it. But, have you not noticed that Achab did not make himself forever odious for having wanted to obtain for nothing the vineyard of Naboth? Holy Scripture says twice in succession that he wanted to give him a better vineyard in exchange or its equivalent in

[1] Father Chaminade was at St. Laurent for the annual retreat of the Little Society.
[2] The next day was the feast of St. Thérèse, patron of Mlle de Lamourous.

money. This piece of ground is for us the heritage of Jesus Christ and should be used in conformity with his views. The Little Society can well suffer injustice patiently, and even should suffer it, but it should never approve it.

M. Estebenet was at the retreat exercises before dinner but did not stay for dinner.

The retreat is progressing nicely.

You may show my letter to His Excellency or to anyone who would find it useful. May the peace of the Lord be always with you all, and may his holy will be done!

William Joseph Chaminade

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127 – TO MLLE DE LAMOUROUS, BORDEAUX

St. Laurent, October 19, 1819

I am sending you, my dear child, your notes, drawn up in the form of a transfer a father might make of his property to his children. I have left, as you will see, the board and lodging at 100 pistoles[1] for the reason that: 1. M. Estebenet had accepted this rate, as your notes indicate, as you described things to me, and as I accepted them. All of this occurred before you received M. Estebenet's letter asking for 1,500 francs; 2. M. Estebenet is acting and wants to appear to act, as is proper, as a father toward his children. Without doubt a father must be prudent in his commands but also generous and not too much of a calculator regarding his own interests. It is surprising that he does not show that tenderness which puts the welfare of his children before his own advantage.

I had the agreement recopied by M. Brougnon Perrière because there are a few erasures in the original, but mainly for the sake of an intelligent understanding of the arrangements we made for him and without him. It is he who is to sign the official copy.

Your notes say nothing of M. Estebenet's little garden, but he knows, and I've said it to him myself, that we include it in the cession of the Establishment, even though we are not talking directly about it.

When M. Estebenet has signed, have the goodness, my dear child, to notify the archbishop and Father Barrès. If you also notify me, I shall inform the entire Little Society about it, so that all may go to embrace him at the first retreat exercise he is present for.

[1] 1,000 francs. There was question of board and lodging for life. The payment of this twenty years later was the occasion of difficulties between Father Chaminade and his assistants.

I would also be very much obliged to you if you would offer His Excellency the homage of my respect, if you would tell him that I have received from the Prefect my royal Order which confirms the recognition of the Church of the Madeleine as an auxiliary place of worship or as a public oratory.[2]

Receive for yourself, my dear child, the assurance of the sentiments of respectful tenderness of your good old Father.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

[2] The Order dated September 29, 1819, Father Chaminade had given up making use of the work of the Auvergnats to have the Madeleine authorized, and he had followed up the first negotiation which resulted, as is now seen, in a happy conclusion.

128 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

St. Laurent, October 23, 1819

Your Excellency,

It was only yesterday evening that I received the agreement with M. Estebenet, given by him in a postscript.

On the seventeenth of the present month, all the provisions of the agreement between M. Estebenet and the Little Society were written, checked, dated, and signed by Mlle de Lamourous in M. Estebenet's presence. On the same day, Mlle de Lamourous notified me of the fact. I agreed to everything without exception or reserve. M. Estebenet wrote Mlle de Lamourous, only after serious reflection, that he believed the board and lodging could not be less than 1,500 francs in the case of a separation.

M. Estebenet, in his postscripts to the writing of the terms of agreement, asks 2,000 francs.

For three weeks, M. Estebenet has continually changed his demands. What he says one day, he contradicts or modifies the next. Soon we shall have no idea of where we stand.

To avoid these changes, Mlle de Lamourous has checked, in his presence and with him, the principal points of their agreements. Now, it is only a matter of putting them in writing.

I desire, Your Excellency, that we hold to the last notes of October 17, checked, signed, and made known to the various parties concerned. Let the agreement be drawn up as M. Estebenet prefers, but nevertheless within the meaning of the notes. If Father Barrès wants to take the trouble of doing the editing himself, to have us come together and sign the document, I would be very much pleased.

I am, etc. . . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Finally, agreement was reached with M. Estebenet by a contract signed October 29, 1819, and, thenceforth, the Little Society advanced without any further hindrance.

The time for the preparation to Holy Orders of one of the religious, M. Collineau,[1] had arrived. Father Chaminade would have wished to keep this young man near him and to train him himself in the virtues and knowledge peculiar to the ecclesiastical state, according to the special needs of the work he had destined for him. But such was not the idea of the Superior of the Grand Seminary, Father Carbon, who was opposed to any and every exception. Because of this, we have a note of M. David's with the following letter which we reproduce, less for the interest of the matter itself than for its various details.

129 – TO FATHER BARRÈS
VICAR GENERAL OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 18, 1819

Your Reverence:

I was getting ready to come see you when the Secretary of the Institute of Mary brought me the report that I have the honor of sending you. I was not expecting it. This morning, moved by grace, he thought it his duty to suspend all other work. He wrote me. He arrived almost at the moment of my departure for the archbishop's palace. I listened to the reading of what he had written. I noticed that he included about the same observations that I thought of making to you by word of mouth, but with an order and a method that I could never have been able to put into a free conversation. I immediately had it copied and set about my ordinary occupations.

The report might have been strengthened by other very powerful considerations. Other works might also have been spoken about with greater interest, for example, the little Auvergnats, in which Father Collineau has much influence (although he is not its head). But the report says enough about it: the difficulty here is the opposition of the Superior of the Grand Seminary.

A talented young man, 25 years of age, presented himself this morning, desiring to quit the world . . . etc. The men's retreat seems to have developed in him the idea of a religious vocation.

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[1] J. B. Collineau, 1796-1852, born in Bordeaux, early entered the Sodality of the Madeleine, of which he was prefect in 1818. As one of the first members of the Society, he was sent to Villeneuve-sur-Lot in 1822, as director of the collège of this small town. Having returned to Bordeaux in 1827, he collaborated in the St. Marie Boarding School, giving himself to preaching and fulfilling, alongside Father Chaminade, the functions of First Assistant. He left the Society in 1832, relieved of his vows by Bishop de Cheverus, who named him honorary Canon, then pastor of St. Louis Church of Bordeaux. He always remained devoted to the person of the Founder, to whom he administered the last Sacraments. He died in Beyrouth, while on a voyage to the Holy Land.

Our young director of the Sodality is well.[1] There is a question of finally determining what feasts or devotions will take place in the annex, where the meetings are being held.

Before proposing a list of these to His Excellency the Archbishop, I shall write about it to the pastor of Libourne.

I am happy in the thought that your solicitude about Verdelais remains unabated.

I am with profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Father Chaminade was not successful, but his young cleric was obliged to face only a minimum presence at the Seminary; that is to say, at least some months before he received Holy Orders.

Nevertheless, the first educational work of the Little Society, the boarding house on rue des Menuts, was in full swing.

For fear that the religious might allow themselves to be absorbed in exterior occupations, the Founder, who neither could nor wanted to give them at this time complete Constitutions, determined at least to settle precisely the religious exercises to which they were to devote themselves. This first regulation has been happily preserved for us. We are reproducing it according to the original copy preserved in the Archives of the Society of Mary.

THE RULE OF THE RELIGIOUS OF MARY

1. Each exercise of piety and each class will be preceded by the *Come Holy Ghost* and a *Hail Mary*. Each period of study or manual labor will be preceded by the little prayer: *My God, I love you with my whole heart*, etc.

2. At the end of each exercise, whether spiritual, intellectual, or manual, the *Sub tuum* and the *Fiat Laudetur*.

3. At each hour during the day and when awakening during the night, *May the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be glorified*, etc., is to be said.

[1] Father Charriez, assistant pastor in Libourne.

4. Every day, at three o'clock in the afternoon, the little ejaculatory prayer will be said, standing, at whatever place we happen to be, kneeling only on Fridays.

5. The exercises in the chapel will begin three minutes after the sound of the bell. The prayer leader makes the sign of the Cross and the prayer begins. He will also give notice of the hour of closing. Five minutes before the end of the meditation, he will say: *Let us conclude*, etc.

6. Outside the time of recreation, there will be no speaking, unless necessity requires it and then it must be briefly and in a low tone of voice. The same rule of silence is to be observed on the streets.

7. The great silence, which is prescribed from the time of night prayer until after the next day's morning prayer, must be strictly observed. Speaking is to be only with God.

8. The religious will always recall that, in all their actions, they must observe silence, modesty, exactitude, humility, politeness, mildness, kind attention, renunciation of their own will, prompt and blind obedience, a great charity toward their neighbor, above all toward their fellow brothers.

9. They must equally seek to do their actions with the sole view of pleasing God and not to gratify their passions or their self-love, to please men, or to satisfy their own will.

10. No occupation or employment to which one has not been assigned may be taken up unless permission has been asked for and obtained.

11. Great care will be taken to put each object back in its proper place after it has been used. In the study, for example, books, copybooks, pens, etc., will not be left on the tables. In the dormitory, clothing will not be left on the beds, chairs, etc.

12. No object whatsoever, even a book, papers, etc., will be disposed of except when permission has been sought.

13. The recreation after dinner will never begin except after the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

14. Spitting will not be done in any room of the house.

15. The time reserved for walks will serve to have interviews with the Head of Zeal in what concerns his spiritual direction. These interviews, most of the time, will bear upon the meditations, the examens, the virtue one is working at, the vice being combated and the reception of the Sacraments, as likewise upon anything that might tend to be an obstacle to one's spiritual advancement or harmful to the peace of one's soul.

16. Twice a week, there will be a half-hour's conference and once an hour of explanation of the diocesan catechism.

17. After the evening class, the teachers will go to the chapel to adore the Blessed Sacrament and say the *Salve Regina*, in common, as much as possible. They then will go to the study room.

18. On Saturday, at the end of the evening class, twenty minutes will be given to the reading of the Gospel of the next day and to reflection upon the same.

19. At the recreations of the children, there will always be a supervisor, two if necessary.

20. Great care will be taken by each teacher to profit by all the occasions that present themselves to inspire his pupils with the love of the Blessed Virgin, to have them know of the advantage of consecrating themselves to her service, of devoting themselves to her worship, inspiring them with a great confidence and a great devotion to this tender Mother, being careful never to act alone in whatever he undertakes, but only by implicit trust in this powerful protectress.

21. Each one goes to confession on Fridays, right after the evening class.

22. All failings against the present regulations will be accused at the Chapter of Faults.

23. Every Wednesday, the Chapter of Faults will be held after the night prayer. On every first Wednesday of the month, chapter takes the place of the coulpes.

24. Once each month, an entire day of retreat will be made in common. For this, a free day will be chosen, as much as possible on the occasion of a feast of the Blessed Virgin.

It would be good that each one read, from time to time, his little retreat book and also, that he have a little passbook in which to keep a record of his daily faults.

* * * *

A. M. D. G. & M.

The Founder had to direct his sons, not only in the acquisition of the religious virtues, but also in the exercise of their various functions, and to this effect we shall see him act as mediator with the Econome of the boarding house on rue des Menuts, Brother Louis Rothéa.

Brother Louis Rothéa is one of the most congenial figures of those early days. He was the instrument chosen by Providence to bring the Society to Alsace and through Alsace to Franche-Comté, America, and Austria.

The Sodality was the bait God made use of to draw him to the religious life. Having joined the Sodality in 1817, he immediately placed himself under the direction of Father Chaminade and was admitted to the novitiate of the Society on August 15, 1819. In 1820, he made perpetual vows and gave himself to the Founder without reserve.

The following year, since Father Ignatius Mertian, Founder of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine of Alsace, had asked Father Chaminade for a religious to initiate his novices into the religious life, Brother Louis Rothéa was assigned this delicate mission. He spent an entire year in Ribeauvillé, wearing the costume of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine and known under the name of Brother Ignatius.

While carefully acquitting himself of his task, the fervent religious was working, from that time, for the preparation for the entry of his own Society into Alsace. He was not alone in pleading this cause with Father Chaminade. His two brothers joined him, Father Charles, pastor of Saint-Marie-aux-Mines, whom he had just won for the Society (1821) and Xavier, who was to join the Society as an affiliated member. "Alsace," he wrote, "altogether devoted to the Blessed Virgin, was a predestined land for an Order consecrated to Mary. It would become the nursery of the Institute." Subsequent history would amply verify the truth of these words. In fact, from the year 1822, the first postulants from Alsace, won to the Society by Brother Rothéa, walked the distance of 250 leagues which separated them from Bordeaux and presented themselves to Father Chaminade for admission by him into the novitiate of St. Laurent. It was the start of a stream of vocations that nothing could stop and which still, after a century, continues to support in great measure the family of Mary.

In the same way, Father Chaminade could not delay any longer in responding to the call of Alsace, which came by the voice of Father Maimbourg, pastor of Colmar. In 1824, Brother Louis Rothéa left Bordeaux with the blessing of his reverend Father, to open a school in Colmar. This school, the first of the Society in Alsace, was also to be the most prosperous. When, fifty years later, in 1874, the religious had to leave Alsace, it had more than 1,000 pupils, divided into nearly twenty classes.

From this time on, Brother Rothéa worked with a new ardor under the direction of Father Chaminade, at the development of his dear religious family in Alsace. In 1826, with Father Ignace Mertian, he negotiated the fusion of the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine with the Society of Mary and the donation to the latter of the important House of St. Hippolyte. His care then opened the schools of Ammerschwir (1826), Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines,

Ribeauvillé (1827), Ebersmunster (1833) in the old abbey bought with funds from his family, Soultz (1835), Kaiserberg (1836), and Wattwiller (1839).

In 1841, worn out by age and austerities, he retired to Ebersmunster, where he piously ended his earthly career on May 2, 1844. Father Chaminade mourned him as a well-beloved son. He wrote to Father Meyer: "He was well aware of how much I was attached to him, and I have always thought that our truly religious attachment was reciprocal."

Brother Louis Rothéa rests in the cemetery of Ebersmunster, not far from his brother Xavier and from their venerable father, Louis Rothéa, both of whom also ended their lives in the old abbey which they had procured for the Society.

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Although well gifted with aptitudes and special understanding in economics, Brother Louis Rothéa had much to learn from his contact with the long experience of Father Chaminade. He had all the more need of wise counsels because the Little Society lacked funds and had to be administered with the greatest prudence. Having rendered an account of his management to Father Chaminade and having asked him for some counsels, on January 7, 1820, he received the following answer, written by the hand of the Founder. Notice the prudence and experience of the former econome of the Collège of Mussidan.

We are including Brother Rothéa's letter to permit the reader to get a better idea of the importance of Father Chaminade's answer.

Letter of Brother Rothéa

Rev. Director,

1. Conformably to the desire you have expressed to me, I am occupying myself with a financial project for the year 1820. However, to do this work according to rule, I would have need of the following information and explanations.

2. When should the Little Society pay back the 1,811 fr. 15, which it borrowed from you? When would it be convenient to return the 1,250 francs which M. Monier advanced?

3. On the tenth of last December, the Little Society paid 850 francs to complete the sum total of two bills subscribed in favor of M. Larrieu. Is this sum redeemable or must it be applied to its respective account?

4. It would be suitable to take in the year's supply of grease. This is the best time for it. Two hundred fifty pounds would be needed, and these could cost 180 to 200 francs. I am putting this sum on the list of general expenses for the current month of January.

5. The property of Mellac—M. Auguste's personal property which he donated to the Society—would really need 3 to 4,000 vine props. Is it proper to buy them? For the time being, I am also putting this sum on the same list.

6. Nearly all the constructions, repairs, and other changes that were indispensable for the new Establishment are completed. Nevertheless, seven more desks are needed in the study room of the pupils, which would bring the total to 252 francs. Would it not be suitable to delay this expense, which would have to be met immediately, until the month of April?

7. It has been agreed with the butcher and the two bakers who serve the house to pay them every two months. Could we not now inform them that we would pay their bills only from one trimester to another? In the same way, we can settle the accounts of the grocers, MM Louit, Cantenat & Co. every six months. As regards workers in general, it is hardly possible to determine the dates for payment. Some want immediate payment, while others are willing to grant credit for six months to a year.

8. The payments to be asked from the parents of the boarders do not go beyond 1,000 francs for the present month. Of this sum, 650 francs have just been received, and these, for the moment, are the only available coins in the treasury.

9. Is it suitable to send exactly at the beginning of each semester the pupil's accounts to the parents to demand payment of the sums owed? It seems to me it is in the interest of the Society, especially at the beginning, to send them only at the end of each semester.

10. Unpaid debts, according to the statement, herewith included, amount to 8,864 fr. 08. At least two-thirds of these should be paid in the course of the present month.

11-12. To put order in our finances, I propose borrowing 6,000 francs without delay, to make provision for the payment of bills in the coming months of September, October, and November, when the greatest number of postulants pay.

13. It is customary, in all large establishments, to take a general inventory. We propose to do it as soon as time will permit. It would be necessary, for the regularity of our accounts, that I know the exact value of Mellac's property, of the Chartrons house, and of rue des Menuts with its yard.

Here you have, beloved Director, the observations that I thought it my duty to submit to you. I am with respect, your very devoted child.

Bordeaux, January 5, 1820. Rothéa

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130 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 7, 1820

You must have already noticed, my dear child, how well founded my fears were, how right I was in wanting strictness of finance and economy. I shall make a few reflections on the new statement that you had someone give me, ending with a few rules that must be strictly observed.

1. The financial project is made up of what we are to receive and of what we have to spend, period by period, long or short, according to the will of the one who makes up the account, but always in such a way that the receipts precede the expenses.

Here is the project that I am asking for.

On the bill of the boarding house, you have the dates when the payments of the pupils will be due.

You have a list of the expenses involved in the accounts of the times which have preceded you, or you may be able to foresee these.

State what you will have to spend and how you will provide for it, by your receipts and not by your borrowings. These last come to the rescue of ruined finances and are not part of well-kept finances.

2. The sum of 1,811 fr. 15, borrowed on one side and that of 1,250 francs on another, have been momentary resources which it was necessary to consider as sacred. The requests on this matter and the delays allowed kill the possibility of further loans.

3. The sum of 850 francs for MM Larrieu, if they received it, is no longer redeemable, and if they don't receive it, it is redeemable but only on condition of its being applied to the first need.

Note. You say: 805 francs to complete, etc. But you were asked 875 francs to complete, and the inaccuracy, although slight, must be noticed.

4. There must be no storing of goods when money is lacking, in such a way that the answer to this article depends upon the account to be given about the finances.

5. The same with regard to Mellac who, furthermore, needs to be seen and should have a special account. The property is beautiful, but after what I have seen and heard about it, it is sorely in need of repairs. On the first good day that I am free, I shall go see it again. Perhaps I shall take along someone better versed in farming than I, and then I shall have something definite to tell you. In the meantime, count it as 0.

6. This great number of repairs on rue des Menuts was ill-considered and indiscreet. There were no deliberations about them. Their cost was not considered in advance. The resources on hand were not known. Neither was it known whether there was enough to cover the said repairs. Nothing must be done if you have no money.

7. In the well-regulated establishments, in the matter of pay the law is laid down for supply men and workmen, but with you it is they who lay down the law. If you were up to date, you would have to pay them and take on others, but with a better understanding.

8. At the beginning of the months, you say you have no more than fifty francs to wait for, since that is what remains of your thousand francs. That's what I call leaving the Establishment in a desperate situation.

9. When anyone is sent among the pupils to gather tuition when there is no need for it, it doesn't matter whether it is done at the beginning or at the end of the semester. When there is need for it and the matter is felt that way, that is always bad. It is this state of affairs that calls for deliberation as to its suitability or the contrary. The thing in itself is totally indifferent.

10. The ease with which debts are contracted is a radical vice in any administration. It means acting with no consideration for the results, and one is soon lost.

11. To consider borrowing 6,000 francs to pay a bill of 8,164 in a month, when there is nothing coming in, is not good financing. Add to what will be lacking new unwise expenses and, at the end of the month, the same condition will remain, plus a debt of 6,000 francs.

12. Is the loan payable in September, October, and November, nine, ten, and eleven months hence possible? If it is, does the condition of the receipts warrant it? Does it offer security? Of what is the greatest number of boarders who then pay composed? What does it produce?

13. A general inventory of the furniture must have already been made. The new objects brought in must have been already inscribed, no matter what value is given them.

As to the property of Mellac, the house of the Chartrons, and the one on rue des Menuts, they are declared for the sake of remembrance and are without value.

Results: All your requests do not meet my desires to have an exact account of the receipts and the corresponding dates, as well as of the heaviest expenses, to be made subordinate to the income.

Temporary Ruling for the Econome

Art. 1 – No one will make an expense but the Econome.

Art. 2 – He will not be permitted to order anything unless he has authorization.

Art. 3 – He will be duly authorized thereto only by the decision of the Council.

Art. 4 – The quote of expenses that can be permitted for each month will be determined in detail by the Council. A copy of what has been decided upon by the Council will be given to the Econome, who will not go beyond the quota fixed by the Council, in the case where the Superior happens to be without the latter.

Art. 6 – A more extensive ruling will be made for the portions of the expense that might require it, but, in the meantime, every expense is to be subject to the above ruling.

William Joseph Chaminade

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At the same time that he was sending the above ruling to Brother Rothéa, Father Chaminade informed M. David about it and indicated to him the measure he had taken to secure its observance.

131 – TO M. DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 7, 1820

How is your health these days, my dear friend? In spite of my ever-increasing load of occupations, I am answering a long letter from Brother Rothéa about his administration or control of the finances. I am adding a short and temporary ruling for the Econome. For the time being, I am not saying more.

I am writing to Brother Auguste so that he will order the transcription of this ruling in the Council Register, unless he or some other member of the Council, including the Secretary, had some important observation to make beforehand. In this way, you will see everything. I desire that this ruling have the force of law.

I wish you better health and especially fervor in the service of our good Master.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Having given M. David the task of writing out the rules for the Econome of the Little Society, Father Chaminade instructed him in this matter.

132 – TO M. DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 19, 1820

Take notice, my dear friend, of the order that it is suitable to give to the Rules for the Econome of the Little Society and of the written answer that must be given Brother Rothéa.

The office of Econome is that of a head: 1. He is a general head, and all the members of the Society must be subject to him when there is question of matters coming under his jurisdiction. 2. All the Brothers employed in the service of the community must be subject to him and always ready to carry out his orders. There is no evidence that even the idea of this exists in the community.

In the matter of the economy, not only in his management of things, but as a moral and religious virtue, several have a very poor idea of it, perhaps even none at all, whence several disorders, as much in the matter of expense as in religious conduct.

A rule of conduct for the Econome in the Institute should include some items for his personal direction in the very spirit of the Institute. In this he would find, at the same time, motives for encouragement.

I shall try to come see you this evening. May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

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The ruling planned for the Econome of the Society was not drawn up, anyway.

By way of compensation, a special Ruling for the Econome of the boarding school of rue des Menuts, worked out by M. David, was entrusted to Brother Rothéa on February 16, 1820 and sanctioned by the Founder.

Other detailed regulations were being prepared, always upon the indications and under the supervision of Father Chaminade, as is shown by the following note addressed to the Director of the boarding school.

133 – TO BROTHER AUGUSTE PERRIÈRE, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, February 16, 1820

I am sending you, my dear child, the Rules for the Prefect of Discipline, the nomination of the above-mentioned Prefect and of the subordinate officers with my little order for the carrying out of the same.

You will easily understand that several other little rules are to go along with this main one, but there are others still more pressing.

You will recognize the handwriting of our good secretary. I had charged him with this editing of the Rule, in accord with the views of administration that I have already told you about. He understood well what I was asking so that, after mature examination, I determined that he should carry it out.

The approbation and the present regulations are only temporary. Perhaps trying them out will give us useful observations and in time serve to improve upon them. You will not find there policies concerning the moral conduct of the pupils. In fact, it seems to me more suitable to leave this to the prefect of studies.

As a reward for his good work, I have charged M. David with drafting the rules for the prefect of studies. I knew Father Lalanne had left some notes on this subject. If I am not mistaken, tell him, if you will, to let M. David know about them. M. David can himself tell me about them, if they deviate too much from my original plan and if our work has further need of being touched up.

I intend to give M. David a mission in a very few days. Tell Brother Rothéa to make the best of this short delay to hold sufficient interviews to acquaint himself thoroughly with the duties of the prefect of discipline.

Ad majorem Dei gloriam, Virginisque Deiparae!

William Joseph Chaminade

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M. David's mission which the preceding note alludes to, was a trip to Agen, in view of the transfer of the community of the Daughters of Mary of the House of Refuge to the convent of the Augustines, recently acquired by the Institute.

The following letter refers to this. It is instructive concerning the direction of the religious communities, and the P.S. indicates the Little Society's progress.

134 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, February 18, 1820

My dear child,

You must have experienced a terrible shock at the departure of Sister of Assumption.[1] All the more so because of the circumstances that accompanied it: the eight days delay she so touchingly asked for and the great tender-heartedness of the Mistress of Novices!

This young person must not be forgotten. It seems there was a kind of complication of maladies with her—temptation, exaltation, imagination—but it would be well to study which one of these was dominant. Her greatest trouble, it seems to me, was being dominated by her imagination. This kind of imagination gives rise to inexpressible spells of fervor or to frightful temptations. I am afraid that our good Sister of the Sacred Heart—the Mistress of Novices—did not know her well enough, for she might have prepared her for the temptations that were almost certain to arise.

The tender-heartedness of Sister of the Sacred Heart is good in a Mistress of Novices, but she must be careful that it does not become excessive. After having pleaded the cause of her novice with a lively interest, she should have humbly bowed her head and interiorly adored the dispositions of Divine Providence when she heard a decision pronounced that went contrary to the wish of her heart. I have reason to think she has not really repented having too freely followed her sensibility and especially having let it burst forth. Although I do not and should not approve the explosion of her sensibility, I grant that the occasion was very thorny and that her good heart made her see a kind of harshness in the Mothers who refused to grant the eight days of grace. This fault, I hope, will do her good. She is well able to draw profit from it.

I neither blame nor approve the severity of the two Mothers. I am not sufficiently informed to know whether they based their decision upon very natural and human reasons or only upon principles of faith and in its light. In communities it is a great evil when the heads make more of the judgments of natural and too human prudence than of the decisions of supernatural and entirely divine prudence. Let us never forget this beautiful saying: *The just man lives by faith*.

I pity Sister of the Blessed Sacrament. I shall include her in the Forty Days or Penance of the Ninivites.[2] You do the same. Recommend her also to Father Mouran and to his sister. Let me have news about her from time to time. The good God will let us know the cure for her trouble. At my first journey to Agen, we shall redouble our efforts.

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[1] Refers to a novice who, showing signs of mental troubles, had to be sent away.
[2] An allusion, it seems, to a pious practice for the Lent about to begin. See the P.S.

Our good secretary is well again, and although encumbered with writings of all kinds, I am going to have him leave. On the notes I shall give him, I shall decide with you the repairs that will have to be made for the transfer of the community. Since we shall make only the most urgent repairs, I hope the transfer will be possible shortly after Easter and that I can be there at that time.

Courage, my dear child. It seems that I am forgetting you in speaking to you about others and not about yourself. If I seem to forget you in what I write, I do not forget you before God and the Most Blessed Virgin. In all that refers to instructions to be given, hold on to what I have already written you on the subject, and if there is some difficulty, take it to Father Mouran.

With effusion of heart, I wish you the peace of the Lord.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. You must have received two dozen manuals. Brother David will be provided with an obedience for Sister St. Vincent, to go to see the Augustines, if there is some need for it.

The Little Society and the boarding school on rue des Menuts preoccupy me. There are about eighty mouths to feed. All goes well. We have been doing much work since the last retreat. Rev. Collineau is now subdeacon. In case the Forty Days has not been reprinted at Agen, I am sending you a sample copy.

* * * *

In the following document is one of the rare letters of Father Chaminade to his family which have been preserved.

Among the thirteen children of Blaise Chaminade and Catherine Béthon, seven died in infancy. Of the six who survived, four gave themselves to the service of God: Jean Baptiste, the Jesuits (1745-90); Blaise, the Franciscan (1747-1822); Louis, the Director of the Seminaries of Mussidan and Bordeaux (1758-1808); and William Joseph. Lucrèce (1759-1826), married to M. Laulanie, died childless. Only François had posterity.

François Chaminade (1755-1844), older brother of the Founder, and inhabitant of Bordeaux, had, of his two marriages, with Marie-Soulignac of Saint-Rome and Cécile de Lancel, eight children. There was Jean Baptiste, Rose, who married François Lavergne; Sophie, who married François Lala; Jules; Victor; Céline, Blaise; Marie, who successively married Faure and Rastouil.

François Lala (1777-1846), husband of Sophie Chaminade, to whom the following letter is addressed, was established in Sarlat (Dordogne). He had an only son, Firmin Lala (1804-83), who was a pupil in the boarding school on rue des Menuts and from whom

descended a numerous progeny (see the Apôtre de Marie*, June and October 1929). It is thanks to the kindness of the Lala family, currently living in Bordeaux, that we owe most of the letters of Father Chaminade to his relatives.*

Jules Chaminade (1809-?) was postulant at St. Laurent in 1822, made his profession in 1824, fulfilled the functions of secretary to the Founder from 1826 until 1829, left the Society after 1830, and died on the Island of Martinique.

Victor Chaminade (1814-77), postulant in 1824, returned to Périgueux and established himself in Bordeaux at the time of the last years of the Founder's life.

135 – TO M. FRANÇOIS LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, March 7, 1820

My dear nephew, I have received all your messages and your last letter even today. This will serve as an answer to all of them.

I decided to see the Premier[1] and give him your letter while asking him to delay the affair referred to in it. Since you requested me to take notice of it myself, I entrusted your package to my counselor and private secretary that he might tell me, in few words, what I had to do and say. I am including his answer here. If you were a stranger to me or if I did not wish that you get experience, I would have said nothing that would cause you pain. The Premier has received your package today.

You would like to see me pastor of Sarlat.[2] I thank you for your good intention as well as for the kind offers you make me. When you come to Bordeaux and observe my situation first hand, you will realize how impossible it would be for me to accept a pastorate, and all the more so in another diocese.

Firmin has been accepted into the House of Education, rue des Menuts, No. 47, under the conditions that I had asked for and that I had proposed to you. It would be useless for me to propose having similar favors granted to others besides Firmin. We do for a nephew who is loved and who makes himself worthy of being loved what we would not do for others. The high rate of this tuition must make you realize that everything is well taken care of and that there are only the children of rich families there. I am enclosing in this letter a part of the prospectus.

I have taken information about the price of the hoop-wood. [3] A master cooper told me that it was quite expensive at this time and that the present was a favorable time for the

[1] The president of the Court of Appeals.
[2] Subprefecture of the Department of the Dordogne, where a part of the Chaminade family lived.
[3] Chestnut tree branches, split in two, from which coopers make hoops. The Sarlat region is rich in chestnut trees.

sale of this commodity. He thought that you could get forty to fifty francs per thousand. He promised me to go to the Exchange and to inquire more exactly about the market price. I shall also insert his answer in this letter, if it comes in time for this mail.

I am thanking you in advance for the bag of chestnuts that you had the kindness to send me. My sister joins me in embracing you, as well as Sophie and Firmin.

William Joseph Chaminade

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VII
FIRST DEVELOPMENTS OF THE TWO SOCIETIES

(April 1820 – November 1822)

At the beginning of 1820, Father Chaminade judged the moment had come for the Daughters of Mary to think of a new foundation in Tonneins, located between Bordeaux and Agen. He was yielding to the earnest request of a rich man of the locality, M. Faure Lacaussade, director of the tobacco factory, and promised him a convent for this small, half-Protestant town, poorly supplied with the means needed for any religious progress.

The acquisition of the building was delicate—it was important not to spread the news of the purchase prematurely for fear of serious opposition. Brother David, having gone to Agen about Easter time to dispose of the convent of the Augustinians, had to stop in Tonneins on his way and come to an understanding with M. Lacaussade. This is the purpose of the following letter, which is but one example of a whole series that passed between Father Chaminade and this benefactor of the Daughters of Mary.

136 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, April 3, 1820

Sir:

Courage! Our work may meet with opposition, but it will succeed, and its success will be greater and more sure to the degree that we have had opportunities to manifest our confidence in God.

It is good that the acquisition is in the name of Mlle de Trenquelléon and of Mlle Yannasch. Brother David, on his return, if he is not already in Tonneins, will be able to bring you the authorization in due form.

This young lady, Mlle Yannasch, the co-purchaser, is the one that I would want to name as superior to your new establishment, at least at the beginning. Her name in religion is Thérèse. She is a person of great merit whom the good God seems to be reserving for great things. Furthermore, her physical beauty, enhanced by a rare modesty, much education, and prudence, emphasizes her qualities of mind and heart and makes her very capable of running things. That, at least, is what I hope. Until the present, I have kept her employed in trifling matters and, in a way, as a subordinate. She is 25 years old. Until she is needed in Tonneins, I have designated her for a very delicate undertaking. She will shortly leave for Villefranche.[1] Mother Thérèse is not the one to be sent to Tonneins when the acquisition is being made. That calls for an altogether different type of person, more of the kind for tackling difficult things.[2]

I am not writing Brother David partly because of lack of time, but more because there is no need for it. Would you have the kindness to show him this letter? Our good mother superior of Agen will communicate to him the few words I shall write her if he is still in that city.

Please accept the assurance of my sincere and respectful attachment.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Brother David Monier, Father Chaminade's secretary, joined invaluable qualities of zeal and skills in handling affairs with faults that would try the patience of the Founder many times in the future. The following letters give us an idea of the difficulties and problems caused by the former lawyer's character and habits.

137 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, April 17, 1820

I thought Brother David was in Tonneins from the first or second day after Easter.[1] I am concerned because I have not heard anything and because he has not yet arrived in Bordeaux.

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[1] A reference to the merger of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Villefranche with the Daughters of Mary, a union desired by their foundress, the Saint Émilie de Rodat. "Father Chaminade," wrote Mother de Trenquelléon to Venerable Mother Émilie, "tells me that toward Easter or thereafter one of us could visit you and then one of you could come to Agen" . . . (March 1). To which Saint Émilie answered on April 1: "Now that the beautiful season is at hand, we are expecting you every day. . . ." But on April 5 Mother de Trenquelléon wrote that Bishop Jacoupy objected to the trip. It is known that Providence had other designs and that each of the two congregations was to follow its own way.
[2] Doubtless the Stewardess General, Mother Saint Vincent.

[1] Easter fell that year on April 2.

Finally on Saturday evening, I learned from his letter of the 13th that he will be in Agen for the entire week.

Brother David is surprised, in his turn, at not having received any letter from you. However, he did not write to delegate to you the necessary authority to settle the acquisition for fear that I might have done so from here.

I ask you to come to an understanding with Brother David. I approve in advance everything that the two of you will agree on. Do not hesitate to take the initiative, if you judge it necessary. It seems dangerous to me that you have mentioned the names of the religious before the settlement of the contract. Mme V., realizing the designs on her house, might well be unwilling to sell to us. A somewhat similar case came to my notice some time ago. You have at least 24 hours to designate the names of those you are buying the house for—then the contract is closed and the seller may no longer do anything about it.

Doubtless, you surely know a lot more than I in matters of this kind. Brother David is perfectly at home in handling these things, and I am glad to say so.

If you seem sure of this acquisition, we will never forget—and neither will the religious sisters—that you have lent your name to the transaction only to prevent the project from falling through. But we have all contracted the obligation of seeing to it that your name is not compromised in any way.

I hope to learn by the next mail and on Brother David's return of the happy conclusion of this affair.

If I had heard about all these delays in the last mail or in the present one, Brother David would have received a request to go to Clairac, which is barely two and a half miles from Tonneins, to look over the old abbey. The new owner seemed disposed to give it to the Institute for, etc.[1] I shall come back to this another time, and shall ask your advice then. For the time being, let us focus our attention on Tonneins, since we have already done so much.

I ask you to send this letter on to Brother David and to believe me, etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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138 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

[1] Some years later, M. Grepière de Moncroc did, in fact, call the Society of Mary to Clairac (1837), where it conducted a collège and a boarding school until 1903.

Bordeaux, May 6, 1820

I have a letter from M. Lacaussade, my dear friend, in which he very forcefully expresses his amazement at not seeing you and especially at not receiving a single word from you. He was expecting you on the 29th, as you had informed me through the mother superior of Agen. You set the date of your departure from Agen three times. Consequently, I wrote to Tonneins three times, not wanting to write you in Agen, because I thought my letters would not reach you there. You have a number of clients here who are finding it very hard not to murmur. Several seem in great need of your presence, especially M. Moreau and M. Laroque.

As for me, I neither know what to say nor what to think. If matters of great consequence are detaining you, why not tell me about them? Why have you let me go on speaking, ever since Easter, as though you were always just about to arrive?

Be kind enough to let me know your plans that will not change, and rest assured of the real devotedness of your friend.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

In Agen, Mother de Trenquelléon's health has begun to cause worry, and Father Chaminade intervenes to moderate by obedience the zeal of his collaborator. For the time being, he forbids her all work.

139 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 29, 1820

The temporary suspension of your occupations, my dear child, will do more good to your soul than to your body. This is a special disposition of Providence which you must profit from. You are not very accustomed to the habit of the interior exercise of the love of God, of mental prayer, of spiritual reading, etc. Well, now you have a precious opportunity to train yourself little by little in these matters, taking care, however, not to tire yourself. Feed your heart continually but prudently.

If Father Mouran or Father Laumont can get you a work entitled *Of the Knowledge and Love of the Son of God, Our Savior*, by Father Saint Jure of the Society of Jesus, you will find great spiritual profit there. You will also find short and varied exercises in the love of kindness, of benevolence, of desire, of preference and contrition. You will find a rich mine

for your conferences. I presume this work will be found in the library of one of the two seminaries or in the bishop's library.

As for the choir recitations, you may assign them to anyone you wish, whoever comes first, reserving for yourself the recitation of the last prayer.

When your health has been fully restored, let me know through one of the Mothers. I prefer to be informed by one of them rather than by yourself.

Tell Sister of the Sacred Heart, I beg of you, to inform me about Sister of the Assumption, from the time of her leaving the convent until the present, regarding her religious conduct and her health.

The boarding school here directed by the Institute of Mary—or the Little Society, as it is called—employs a young lady who seems destined for you. Since I have known her only a very short time, I thought I should try her out here before recommending her to you. She is not wealthy, but she has always had enough talent and energy to earn money for herself and others, first as assistant teacher of a little boarding school and then for five years as the one teacher in a little village of Périgord. She has given it all up in order to enter the religious state. It is now indifferent to her whether she is a Companion Sister or what she calls a "Lady of the Choir." I shall come back to her on another occasion. Her life is very edifying.

Courage, my dear child. Let us take care that while we are working at the sanctification of others we do not forget our own!

Receive now, with all our Daughters, my paternal blessing. I give it to you with a great outpouring of tenderness.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

The following note shows the constant solicitude of Father Chaminade for the work of the little Auvergnats.

He is alluding to notes prepared by Father Collineau, in view of sustaining and developing this charitable work. Here are the principal passages.

Work of the Young Auvergnats. What does this work call for at the present time?

1. Bringing together all the registers of the names, dwellings, etc., from the time that the catechism instructions were started.

2. Making a statement containing an account of all that has been received and spent.

3. Calling the Council without delay. Stating simply: 1) That 18 children have made their First Communion. Some of these have gone back to their home towns with sentiments of piety, and some of them are still persevering. Five have stopped coming to catechism instructions, no doubt due to not corresponding with grace, but also due to not having found support for their good will in frequent confessions. 2) That the whole winter at least 80 children were counted at the instructions. Sometimes, there were as many as 100. 3) That until the month of May, the number was at least 45 or 50. 4) That lack of funds and lack of confessors have been an obstacle to the greater progress and consolidation of the work as well as to a more rapid advance in piety. At the present time nine of these children—three have made their First Communion and six are preparing for it—have been deprived of their confessor, who was named pastor far from Bordeaux. This kind of obstacle cannot be overcome without first finding funds to continue despite all difficulties and to provide a more solid development over the winter.

Finally, I ask for a general assembly of those who have shown interest in the work by contributing gifts. I want them to know the Council has met and to understand the matters treated in Council. I also want to stimulate their interest in seeing the work prosper.

* * * *

140 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 5, 1820

You have forgotten, my dear friend, Father Collineau's notes which were on my desk. Take a look. I am going to see the Council members. I shall call them together when I have everything, or just about everything, ready.

Tonight, don't forget to bring the lists of the Fathers of Families. It seems important that we quickly make a copy of the rules for the Fathers of Families in the way we have determined. After that, we shall have some good persons to make copies. Think of three leaders.

Paternal and friendly greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Mlle Charlotte de Lachapelle has come up several times in the preceding letters. Father Chaminade continually encouraged this chosen soul in her aspirations to the life of perfection. In 1820, following changes in the young woman's family, he thought it his duty to counsel her to no longer delay her retirement from the world.

141 – TO MLLE CHARLOTTE DE LACHAPELLE, CONDOM

Bordeaux, June 15, 1820

I am very pleased, my dear daughter, that the ties which still bind you to the world will soon be broken. Your brother is to be married. You will be disengaged from every promise. You will be free, free to fly to your beloved solitude, free to run in the paths of God, free finally to consecrate all you have received from the generous hand of Providence to the glory of Jesus and Mary. From the time you were a sodalist, you could doubtless have considered yourself a Daughter of Mary. Today you are actually going to receive this noble quality by the state of life you are embracing. Even the world will know you only as a Daughter of Mary.

My dear daughter, you are going to enter the convent at a time when you become very necessary to the Institute of Mary. The transfer of the Daughters of Mary to the former

Convent of the Augustinians and the new foundation of the fine Convent of Tonneins need subjects, and, so to say, subjects already trained. Take then, my dear daughter, a firm and determined stand. The devil will not have any trouble finding new motives for postponing your final retirement from the world. All reasoning must stop once the great Master calls. What have the parents of Sister of the Angels gained? They have endlessly postponed her entrance into the convent, and she is dying among them with bitter regrets.

May the Lord, my dear daughter, grant you courage and strength!

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

A young novice of the convent of Agen is hesitant about her vocation and asks herself whether she may not be called to the Carmelite Order. She consults Father Chaminade. One notes with interest his response.

142 – TO SISTER CÉLESTINE, AGEN

Bordeaux, July 11, 1820

You have done well, my dear daughter, to open your heart concerning your vocation. You might have perhaps saved yourself a lot of worry had you done it sooner.

You tell me that, before entering the convent of the Daughters of Mary, you felt the desire of being numbered among the Daughters of Saint Thérèse. The holiness of that state of life somewhat frightened you, and so you then thought yourself more fitted for the former life. Your desires for the Carmelite life still spring up more or less strongly, so that the choice between the two causes you turmoil.

But, my dear daughter, have you really examined the desire you have for the Carmelite life? Have you compared the two states to see what they have in common and what is peculiar to each? Is it what is peculiar to the one and distinguishes it from all other religious orders that you want? It seems that the only thing you have particularly noted in the Carmelites is the holiness of their state, but do you really have a correct idea of that holiness?

The Institute of Mary and the Reform of Saint Thérèse both seek to bring their subjects to the highest perfection, but by different means. The Institute of Mary shows us, or rather points out, the path we must follow to go to God and to unite ourselves to him. The Reform of Saint Thérèse makes known, more particularly, the way by which God comes to his creature and communicates himself to her. In each you see the same end, the same perfection, the same holiness, but the manner of tending to it is very different.

In the Institute of Mary, illusion is hard to come by and is soon noticed, while in the Reform of Saint Thérèse, the devil can more easily take the form of an angel of light.

In the Institute of Mary, the fervent leaders with the Rule in hand, can easily lead its members to perfection. In the other, it is an almost irreparable evil not to find among the leaders souls that have already attained high perfection and that have experienced divine communications.

In the Institute of Mary, the light of direction in spiritual ways is communicated to the disciples more by leaders and superiors than directly by God in prayer. The contrary is the case in the Carmelite life, and it is because of this that I said illusion might more easily slip in.

In the Institute of Mary there are no long prayers, neither vocal nor mental, but much work, sanctified by recollection and a religious silence. In the Reform, there are long offices and long meditations, solitude, etc. Each is integral according to the design for sanctification offered by the Holy Spirit.

In the Institute of Mary, to the idea of personal sanctification is joined effective work toward the sanctification of the neighbor, while in the Reform of Saint Thérèse, one is useful to religion by the prayers recited for the conversion of sinners and the perseverance of the just.

In the Institute of Mary, life is apostolic, while in the Order of Carmel, it is solitary.

In both there is a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin, an entire devotedness to her worship. There is a difference on this point only because the Institute seeks to propagate this devotion and to publish as much as it can the grandeurs of Mary.

I did not intend here, my dear daughter, to make a perfect comparison between the two Orders. I only wanted to place you in a position to settle with intelligence, and to read in your heart, the question of your vocation. It is possible that you do not fully understand certain points of this letter, but these can be explained to you in the convent.

You might perhaps wish that I not let you make your own choice, but that I make it for you. Well, here is my first thought on reading your letter: What signs are here of a vocation to the Carmelite Order? What tastes, what attraction do you manifest for mental prayer and for a solitary life? What operations of the Spirit of God have suggested such a vocation? To speak frankly, my dear daughter, I have seen nothing of this kind in the little notes that some of your leaders occasionally give me. I thought on the contrary several times that the good God had granted you a great grace in making you enter a convent of the Daughters of Mary, where you could correct certain defects which would certainly have caused your loss in the world, and I admired his designs of goodness in associating you

with the apostolic works of the Daughters of Mary, even while leaving to you the occupations in which you are best capable.

I desire that this letter may put an end to all your uncertainty. If you remain in the convent, you may keep this letter. If on the contrary, you are to leave, you would have to give it to the Good Mother.

It is quite possible that the desires you now experience of entering Carmel do not come from God. They may rather be mere suggestions to prevent you from embracing the state for which those interested in you noticed, or thought to notice, signs of vocation, suggestions to enter the other, for which no signs of a divine calling were evident, with the result that perseverance will be out of the question.

May the Lord shower upon you the lights of his Holy Spirit and the unction of his grace!

William Joseph Chaminade

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The preceding letter was accompanied by a note addressed to Mlle de Trenquelléon.

143 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, July 12, 1820

My dear child, I still continue to feel something of the shock my health experienced some time ago, but nevertheless, I have reason to believe that there will not be any more harmful results.

On Brother David's return, I shall take care to settle the date of my trip to Agen. This ought to take place as soon as possible. The prospect of renewing the novitiate is very good. Do not determine upon the renewal of your vows until the time of your transfer and of my trip is settled.

May the Lord grant you strength and courage!

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

The new works which were being multiplied in no way lessened the solicitude of the Founder for the old ones. The Miséricorde continued to be the object of his attentive

cares—he had just given there, in this year of 1820, a series of instructions to prepare its directresses to take religious vows.

In this same year, Mlle Rondeau, foundress of Miséricorde at Laval, established according to the plan of the one in Bordeaux, obtained from Mlle de Lamourous, the services of one of the directresses, in view of introducing in her undertaking the spirit of the one in Bordeaux.

Mlle Laure de Labordère (1789-1867), niece of Mlle de Lamourous, who was to succeed her as superior, was appointed for this task.

At her departure, Father Chaminade traced out for her detailed rules for her interior and exterior conduct, rules well chosen to reassure this generous but timid soul, which he sent to her after her arrival in Laval.

144 – TO LAURE DE LABORDÈRE, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, 1820

Always preserve the peace of your soul. Always go to God with an entire simplicity. Despise and reject everything that might trouble you.

In all your uncertainties over your interior conduct, make up your mind promptly to do what you would counsel another to do.

In all your uncertainties over the running of the exterior affairs of the house, follow the ordinary counsels of Mlle Rondeau if affairs are pressing. If affairs are not pressing and if their settlement allows time for writing to Bordeaux, to the Good Mother or to your Good Father, do not seek counsels form any other source. If you should be unable to decide whether affairs are pressing or the contrary, then take whatever counsel you can get on the spot.

In all cases, be careful to write the Good Mother about whatever is happening, whether about yourself personally or about other community members, or about others who have relations of some importance with the establishment.

Remember that you are not an orphan and that you are not an emancipated child, but, etc.

Take particular care of Marinette.[1] Watch particularly over her spiritual advancement, that she penetrate herself more and more with the spirit of the state she has embraced.

[1] Daughter of the Miséricorde who accompanied Mlle Laure de Labordère to Laval.

You are leaving only by obedience and you will act, I hope, only by the spirit of obedience, even in giving orders. You will gather the abundant and delicious fruits of obedience. I promise them to you, in the name of the Lord, whose place I take toward you, even though I am not worthy.

William Joseph Chaminade

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144a – TO MLLE LAURE DE LABORDÈRE, LAVAL

Bordeaux, September 14, 1820

Your new confessor, my dear child, gave you an answer that was wise in itself. But he does not know you. The rules I gave you are applicable, for the most part, only to you. In giving them to you, I had or should have had, only you in mind. If you were to continue to address yourself to the same confessor, I would be happy to write him, and I am bold enough to believe we would soon be in complete agreement.

Concerning yourself, I owe you no explanation, for any explanation would be harmful to you. A general proof that these rules are good for you is the good results they are producing.

I said a few words to Father Baret, who came to see me before his departure for Laval, and he seemed to understand the way in which you are to be guided.

Serve God, my dear child, with all confidence in his great mercy and in the simplicity of your heart. Carefully set aside—even forget, if possible—anything that might trouble the peace of your soul and harm the total abandonment you owe his mercy.

Furthermore, observe all your rules! Do not fear to observe them to the letter. If you are to fail, I would prefer to see you fail by excess in observing them than by the defect of wanting to limit their application.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

As he had given Mother de Trenquelléon reason to hope in his note of July 12, Father Chaminade went to Agen toward the end of August to direct the annual retreat and to preside at the transfer of the community to the Convent of the Augustinians. He had the joy

of leading the first colony of his Daughters to Tonneins and of settling them in the house M. Lacaussade had prepared for them.

This same trip was for Father Chaminade the occasion of an important decision: acceding to the entreaties of the Sodality that had just been organized in Agen, he promised to send some of his Bordeaux religious to the city to help the Sodality and to open free schools.

Back at Bordeaux, after having given renewed strength to his sons through the exercises of the retreat, he told them of the new mission destined for several of them.

At the close of the retreat, he invited Archbishop d'Aviau to bless his children.

145 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Saint Laurent, October 23, 1820

Your Excellency:

The Little Society of rue des Menuts has the very great favor, which Your Excellency will remember, of receiving your blessing at each close of the annual retreat. The work of spiritual renewal will finish tomorrow morning, but no one will come out of it before going to your feet to obtain the desired blessing. Will Your Excellency please honor us by indicating the hour for presenting this little flock to you?

Please accept, Your Excellency, this new token of my religious attachment and my respect for you, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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In the margin of this letter, Archbishop d'Aviau wrote: "I shall go." The following morning he really came to Saint Laurent, celebrated Mass, and blessed the community.

Here belongs a little note relating to the purchase of house No. 2 (today No. 4) rue Lalande, the very one where Father Chaminade lived and died. The deed of sale, consented to by M. Lassime for the price of 12,000 francs, is dated May 5, 1819 (see the Apôtre de Marie Vol. X, 398.)

The recommendation which follows treats of the vocation of the young religious of the boarding house on rue des Menuts.

146 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Saint Laurent, October 25, 1820

I am sending you, my dear friend, 2,000 francs for M. Lassime as follows: 25 louis of 47 fr. 20; 14 louis of 47 fr. 20; 6 louis of 23 fr. 55; 4 and 5 franc pieces. Do what is necessary for M. Lassime and Mme Eyquem.

Tell Brother Auguste, I beg of you, to make it a point of seeing that all our young people are reasonably occupied. Boredom and idleness must be feared.

Long live Jesus! Long live Mary!

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Brother David, charged to prepare the way for the move to Agen, went there ahead of the community. Soon after, Father Chaminade could tell him of the departure of the religious who were to open the Society's first primary school. (About the school of Agen, see The Spirit of Our Foundation III, No. 244, 350, *and the following.)*

147 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 19, 1820

Because of lack of time, my dear son, I shall answer your letter briefly, omitting expressions of mere sentiment, reflections, etc.

I have just received the solemn vows of Brother Laugeay.[1] And I am keeping the document, signed by all those present at the ceremony.

I am adding Brother Mémain to the names of Brothers Laugeay and Armenaud. All three will leave tomorrow, Monday. They will sleep at Verdelais. The day after tomorrow is the feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin. It is possible that they will reach Agen Wednesday evening.

I hope it will not be difficult for you to persuade His Lordship the Bishop, whose indisposition I deeply regret, that M. Dardy is here only a borrowed name,[2] but one transparent enough to reveal the real face. Moreover, the good reasons of His Lordship the Bishop, which I was unable to make out, will rather bring about his neutral attitude toward us, and it will not be difficult. Anyhow, a beginning must be made.

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[1] Named director of the new community.

[2] For the opening of a school at Agen. M. Dardy was a sodalist who kept a little boarding house next to the Refuge, which the Daughters of Mary had left and where the new community was to be installed.

Courage, my dear son. I must now close. I have been interrupted nine or ten times in writing this little letter. The best to you! May the peace of the Lord be with you in all you do!

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Brother Laugeay is to obey you.

* * * *

Two little notes of direction for Mlle Laure de Labordère will be read with profit by timorous souls.

148 – TO MLLE LAURE DE LABORDÈRE, LAVAL

Bordeaux, December 8, 1820

My dear daughter, everything seems to conspire to prevent me from writing you. I shall tell you in a few words—yes, words written in haste—but reflected upon and meditated upon for a long time. No confession, neither general nor extraordinary. Follow the rules I have given you. Serve the Lord in liberty, in the peace and joy of your soul.

William Joseph Chaminade

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149 – TO MLLE LAURE DE LABORDÈRE, LAVAL

Bordeaux, end of 1820

I bless the Lord, my dear daughter, for having granted you peace of soul. Have you not remarked that you experience trouble and alarming fears only when you do not observe your rules with simplicity and when you do not go to God with an entire confidence? So be careful! Simplicity and confidence, oh, the two beautiful sentiments!

I learned with pleasure that you are devoting yourself a little more to mental prayer, following the advice of your confessor. Continue! This exercise will be very beneficial to you. I would have advised it a long time ago, had you not been so troubled.

It is with much tenderness that I am giving you my fatherly blessing.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

At the end of the year 1820, a question arose concerning Brother Lalanne's ordination. The latter had entered the Seminary of Bordeaux a few months earlier, as had been required

previously in the case of Father Collineau. It is again the superior of the Grand Seminary who demands the full application of the rules governing clerics of the diocese. Father Chaminade writes to the archbishop about the matter.

150 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 11, 1820

Your Excellency:

In the midst of numerous obligations, I am coming to open my heart to you. I was quiet enough regarding Brother Lalanne, for I thought the same would happen in his case as had happened to Father Collineau and that, in the course of the school year, he would be raised to the priesthood, as you had the kindness to promise me. Just the other evening, I learned that he would not be called to the subdiaconate at the time of the next ordinations.

Could it be that this young religious has made himself unworthy before or since his entrance into the seminary? If this were so, I would be much obliged if you would let me know. Nothing of the kind has come to my attention, although I am a close observer of whatever happens in the interior of the community.

What seems to dispel this fear is the knowledge that the superior of the seminary told Father Collineau that Your Lordship might supplement the regular ordination by a little extraordinary ordination during Lent.

Give me, I beg of Your Lordship, the consolation of knowing what you have decided in this matter. I shall make use of the information you will have the kindness to give me only in the way that will be agreeable to you. If there is nothing to be said against the young religious, what inconvenience would there be in his promotion to the subdiaconate at Christmas? All the seminarians are expecting it. Everyone will be puzzled if he is deprived of a favor that was expected by all.

With the most profound respect. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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Brother Lalanne had in no way lost favor. On the contrary, his conduct at the seminary had been edifying. But the seminary rules won out anyway, and he received the subdiaconate only on April 7, 1821, at the ordination ceremonies that took place on the Saturday before Passion Sunday.

It is in place here, at the mention of Father Lalanne, to give a brief sketch of the life of this first religious of the Society, whose figure so often appears throughout the course of his correspondence.

Born in Bordeaux in 1795, Father Lalanne, after brilliant studies at the Lycée of this same city, first followed a medical career. But, little by little, under the influence of Father Chaminade, who had directed him since he was 12, his soul turned completely toward God. On May 1, 1817, he offered himself to his Director to labor with him at apostolic works. It is at that time that Father Chaminade confided to him the mission he had received at the feet of Our Lady of the Pillar and enlisted him in looking for collaborators. On October 12, 1817, the first members of the Society came together and began what might be called their novitiate. On September 5, 1818, Father Lalanne, with several of his confrères, took perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and stability and that of teaching the faith and Christian morals.

Father Lalanne was successively professor in the boarding school of Sainte Marie in Bordeaux, superior of the Seminary of the Madeleine (1825), principal of the University Collège of Gray (1826), director of the schools at Saint Remy (1830), Bordeaux (1832), and Layrac (1835). Having imprudently thrown himself into debt, he obtained permission in 1845 to separate himself temporarily from the Society, while keeping his religious vows until he was free from his financial embarrassments. He then went to Paris, where the archbishop confided to him the direction of the ecclesiastical section of the École des Carmes, known today as the Institute Catholique. It is through him, at this time, that the Society of Mary was introduced into Paris in 1852 at the Institution Sainte Marie on rue Bonaparte, then later in 1855 at Stanislas Collège.

The direction of Stanislas Collège was the great work of his life. He devoted 15 years to it (1855-71). He then used the strength of his vigorous old age, first to launch Stanislas Institute in Cannes (1871) and then to visit as Inspector the houses of secondary education of the Society of Mary (1876). It was in the course of one of his visits that, at Besançon, he suffered a stroke while reciting his breviary. He died a few days later in sentiments of the most filial abandonment to the most holy will of God in the arms of Good Father Simler and Father de Lagarde. His mortal remains rest in the cemetery of the Society in Courtefontaine, at the foot of the Cross.

Father Lalanne was gifted with a brilliant intelligence, an enterprising mind, and a courageous will. These precious gifts permitted him to render the greatest service to the Society during the entire course of his long life. However, on several occasions the ardor of his imagination drew him into vexing adventures. What always saved him was his profound spirit of faith, which he had learned from the Founder, his filial confidence in the most holy Virgin, which made him keep on his breast, until his death, his act of consecration; and finally, his attachment to the Society of which he had been the first member and which he always tenderly loved. “I have been born of her,” he wrote. “My existence in the spiritual and religious life is linked with hers. To separate myself from her, that would be death” (1837). From this disposition, after his lapses, comes the most

touching humility, as, when he wrote Father Chaminade his admirable letters of repentance, or when, at the General Chapter of 1876, he got down on his knees, an old man of eighty, to publicly ask pardon of his Brothers for the bad example he had given.

Father Chaminade particularly cherished him as the firstborn, and, in spite of passing misunderstandings, Father Lalanne returned this esteem with an affection as faithful as it was deep. In his office and in the place of honor, he placed the beautiful portrait of the Founder, which is today in the room of the Superior General. When, in his old age, he turned the conversation to Father Chaminade, it was always with an emotion that moved even to the point of tears. Educator emeritus, it is to him that the Society owes, in great measure, its traditions in matters of education. It is to him also, under the Founder's direction, that it owes the first draft of its Formulary of Prayers and of its Constitutions.

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Two months after the opening of the school at Agen, Father Chaminade was already obliged to send aid. We are reproducing the obedience which he gave to this effect to Brother Gaussens. This is the first which has come down to us.

151 – TO BROTHER GAUSSENS, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, February 5, 1821

OBEDIENCE

Our son, Brother Gaussens, will go to Agen as soon as possible, by boat or on foot, and will place himself immediately under the obedience and at the disposition of Brother Laugeay, head of the institution of the free primary schools of this city, according to the information given him. This will be without prejudice to the obedience which he owes to our son, Brother David Monier, during the time that the latter is in Agen replacing us. Brother Gaussens will ask from the Économe of the Little Society whatever is necessary for his journey and, on arriving, will put whatever remains into the hands of his new superior.

Given on the day and in the year herein mentioned, under our seal and signature and countersigned by our secretary.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Three of the founders of the school at Agen—Brothers Laugeay, Armenaud, and Gaussens—have left a particularly edifying remembrance in the Society of Mary, and they merit a mention here.

Brother Bernard Laugeay, born in Bordeaux in 1796, had joined the Sodality of the Madeleine in 1817. Having learned of the existence of the Little Society, he asked to join and was received at the house of the Impasse de Ségur on the 15th of August, 1818, on the eve of the opening of the first retreat of the Society at Saint Laurent.

Such was the virtue of this young man that Father Chaminade, his director for some time, did not hesitate to admit him immediately to perpetual vows with the founding members of the Society on September 5, 1818. After two years (1820), Brother Laugeay was sent to Agen to open the Society's first school. His success was so complete that Father Chaminade saw in it an indication of Providence to direct the apostolate of his children to this line of work.

After opening a second school in Villeneuve (1823), Brother Laugeay formed part of the little group who introduced the Society into Alsace at Colmar (1824). Then he was successively charged with the foundation of the schools of Sainte-Marie-aux-Mines (1828), of Brusque (1842), and of Cordes (1844). It is to Brother Laugeay that we owe the first method of teaching of the Society called the Old Method (1824).

Brother Laugeay left in the Society the reputation of an admirable religious, by reason of his goodness and his devotedness, his polite and pleasant manners, his spirit of faith and of penance, his devotion to the Holy Eucharist, and his filial piety toward the Most Blessed Virgin. (About Brother Laugeay, see *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, nos. 409 and 550).

* * * *

Brother Jean Armenaud and his brother Louis Armenaud, who can no more be separated in history than they were in actual life, were born in Saint Loubès, near Bordeaux, in the last years of the 18th century. After a period of youth spent in the performance of good works, they joined the Sodality of Bordeaux. The minutes of the Sodality Council of 1817 show us Brother Bidon presenting "a letter of the brothers Armenaud, probationers, which breathes sentiments of the most fervent piety." Shortly after, they were admitted among the number of sodalists, "on condition" say the minutes, "that one of them comes each Sunday to Bordeaux for the meeting of the Sodality and that they continue to take care of the children they are instructing." The fervent young men were ripe for religious life. Thus in 1818, we see Jean, the older of the two, making the retreat of the foundation of the Society, followed shortly after, in 1820, by his brother Louis.

After a short period of probation in the schools of Agen, the two brothers were sent by Father Chaminade to Villeneuve-sur-Lot, where together they were

to spend their lives. Jean came there first in 1823, followed soon after in 1826 by his younger brother Louis, to whom he immediately gave the directorship and under whose obedience he lived until he died. During nearly half a century, it was an edifying spectacle to see these two religious, brothers by nature as well as by grace, working with equal ardor at the work confided to them. Jean was first to die, on January 19, 1862. Louis survived him until October 30, 1879. The people of Villeneuve felt honored in erecting to the memory of the two brothers and with them to that of all their colleagues a mortuary chapel bearing this inscription: To the Brothers of Mary, three grateful generations.

* * * *

Brother Bernard Gaussens is one of the religious of the foundation period whom the Society must hold in most grateful memory because of the precious services he rendered it during an active career of more than fifty years.

Brother Gaussens was born in 1795 in Branne, near Bordeaux, of a very honorable family. After having completed his classical course of study when barely 16 years of age, he went into the army, took part in the Spanish wars, and reentered his country with the rank of officer. When in 1819 Father Chaminade came to Libourne to organize the Sodality, Brother Gaussens was among the first to be inscribed, and for him as for so many others, the Sodality was the preparatory stage of the religious life. In fact, he joined the members of the Little Society on rue des Menuts in 1820 and made his perpetual vows in 1821.

He took part in the foundation of our first primary school in Agen (1821) and then was assistant to the little group sent to Saint Remy (1823). There, as head of instruction, he gave very much appreciated pedagogical conferences to the teachers of the region assembled for retreat and was put in charge of our first normal school (1824). Brother Gaussens then opened the normal school of Courtefontaine (1829). After new stays in Agen and Saint Remy, he took in hand over 16 years the direction of the important school in Colmar (1840-50). He then came back to the Midi, where after some years as head of the boarding school in Moissac, he was the first inspector of the province (1859). He continued as such until his death on September 15, 1873, octave day of the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. It is to Brother Gaussens that the Society owes several of its first classics—the Syllabaire, the First Readings, and the History of the Church, among others. Father Chaminade gave the finest praise to Brother Gaussens when, in one of his letters, he did not fear to write him: “Loyalty, sincerity, and disinterestedness make up your character.”

All his life, Brother Gaussens kept something of his military background. He had an upright gait, a military bearing, the habit of using was few words. But, under the influence of grace, his character, naturally fiery, had quieted down, and he had become kind, affable, and obliging. Like all our older members, he was always neatly dressed and had distinguished manners, which won him the esteem

of teachers and pupils alike. In addition, his conversation was witty and interesting, gladdening at the same time both heart and mind.

As he knew how to command, he also knew how to obey. “You ask me,” he wrote to the Good Father during his last years, “if my age and my infirmities permit me to go and live in Moissac. This request, my Good Father, afflicts me, because it places me face to face with an option, with a choice which obedience might have spared me. What is it that consoles a religious, if it is not obedience? . . . “For obedience,” he declared, “I would willingly give up my life.” It can well be said that he observed this vow to the letter, for, afflicted with long and painful infirmities, he was admirable in his courage to carry out his duty to the end. “It was only at the very end of his life,” wrote Father Chevaux, “that he consented to leave to others the care of visiting the farthest establishments.” He continued the inspection of the houses located around Bordeaux and there, more than once, was stopped on the way by fatigue and illness.

One day, while he was confined in one of our houses, a priest of the Society gave him a few words of encouragement. The latter happened to pronounce the name of the Most holy Virgin, whom he had so long and so much loved and served. “Oh yes!” he exclaimed forthwith, “I love the Blessed Virgin. It is for her love and for her service that I entered the Society. I owe her everything—my vocation, my perseverance, all my confidence. As long as we love the Blessed Virgin, we fear nothing, we are resigned to everything, we are faithful to our vocation. Oh! if all our young religious really understood what it means to be a child of Mary!” And in thus pouring out his heart, he gave free vent to his tears.

“Today,” concluded Good Father Chevaux, “we cannot doubt that Brother Gaussens is enjoying the reward promised to those who have endeavored to spread the worship of our good Mother: *Qui elucidant me, vitam aeternam habebunt* (Circular, May 26, 1874).

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The following letter shows Father Chaminade anxious about the finances and the health of his Daughters at Agen and Tonneins. M. Lacaussade was something of a doctor. Thus, Father Chaminade shows great confidence in his experience and still more so in his devotedness.

152 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, March 11, 1821

Sir:

Since your last letter, I am holding at the disposal of your son-in-law a bag of 1200 francs. He did not come to my house. I hope to be able to notify him. Your good mother had the kindness to give me his address.

I have just received word from Brother David that he has no longer any hope of securing the resources to pay back the 8000 francs he borrowed for our little convent in Tonneins. One of these resources was the payment for objects sold by Mme Yannasch in Auch. The notary of this little town was recently in Agen, and he said either to the ladies or to Brother David that you have as yet done nothing against the buyer. We have only until April 9 to pay these 8000 francs. I would be very glad if M. Bienassis did not take the 1200 francs, especially if he is not in a hurry for them, for this would be a small part of the payment.

But borrowing in order to pay debts is a sad expedient, which must be resorted to only in serious circumstances. I think we ought to busy ourselves seriously with liquidating the debts of the establishment at Tonneins, as we have just done for the establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Agen. I am aware that these last still owe money to the establishment at Bordeaux, which helped them pay their debts.

Brother David has about finished in Agen. At least it seems he can now absent himself without any inconvenience. Between him and the Good Mother Thérèse, we should try to find a way to prudently reach a complete release from debt.

In Agen, there are several excellent religious who are sick and who are not recovering. There is one who is only 21 years of age. It is believed she is consumptive. Might you perhaps succeed in curing her? I have little confidence in the Agen doctors, but I have much in you. If you get her out of this trouble, I shall have Mother Emmanuel come to Tonneins, for she has ailments that often make us fear for her life. As a reward for all your good services, I shall leave her long enough at Tonneins to furnish all that is necessary for the education of the young ladies and also to give new energy to your Ladies of Tonneins. She is able to do both. The young 21-year old can become a valuable subject. It does not seem she is directed carefully. Her zeal made her reach beyond her limits; she spoke with too much ardor and for too long a time at meetings.

Here we are in the Lenten season. Several times I have wished to write Mother Thérèse on the precautions to be taken so that the fast and abstinence of Lent do not harm the health of the religious. I cannot do so today. I shall be much obliged to you as a matter of conscience to arrange with Mother Thérèse whatever dispensations may be necessary. I am granting everything that you judge to be needed. I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I have heard several times that there is jealousy at Tonneins concerning the free primary schools established in Agen.

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In the preceding postscript, we notice the Founder's intention to extend the benefit of free schools to other cities. The success of the one in Agen was complete.

His thought appears more clearly in the following letter, where there is already question of acquiring a second house in Tonneins for a school run by the Little Society. This project, however, was not realized.

153 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, March 20, 1821

Sir:

I shall honor the debt of 1,200 francs. You may dispose of it in favor of Mme Laparre. I am also getting ready to honor the 8,000 francs borrowed for Tonneins, but we must work seriously to free this establishment.

I have just spoken about it to M. Bienassis. I told him that truthfully this is the first project of the establishment. I had counted him among the subscribers. But I told him that he could be more useful to us by assisting us to offer subscriptions to the most important residences in a region covering three to four leagues. It would be he who could make these houses known to us, etc. He promised me almost everything, but not until after Easter, at the time of his return to the Haut-pays. He is to see you when passing this way, to take counsel with you, etc. I am proposing that he exhort you to give the example of a substantial subscription. I am sure that in the paternal exhortation you give him, you will do everything that your zeal and prudence suggests. He may have, as I told him, a particular interest in the education of his daughters, because, as soon as we have an assurance of freedom from debt, we shall continue the work of repairing and adding to the convent. We must try to draw all possible advantage from it, for the utility, not only of the city, but of the entire country.

Concerning the house for sale at 8,000 francs, Brother David said nothing to me about it, doubtless because of the worry over making the first payment. Anyhow, he might have done better than keeping quiet about it. The Master for whom we are working has inexhaustible treasures. We must not tempt him, but it would not be tempting him to undertake what accords with his views.

We must make sure that this house would be large enough for seven or eight religious, for the schools and for the men's Sodality. Among the religious, there should be at least one priest, whose quarters have to be more comfortable and larger than those of the superior. A priest will be of prime necessity, and he will not lack work, as it is very easy to foresee. However, for the present, I am not promising a priest. It will also be good to see if this house can be enlarged, either by some new acquisition or by construction. I am taking it for granted that this one already has a garden.

We could arrange our subscription lists so as to make the subscription apply to the two establishments. If you believe that this house is really suitable to our purpose, if you really want to be the temporal father of the two establishments, if you seriously want to come to an agreement with us to help free these two foundations, I don't believe I am imprudent in promising to advance the 2,500 francs that you deem necessary to conclude the acquisition of the house. I had in mind proposing some other means, but it will have to be at another time.

I now have to stop, while assuring you of my respectful attachment.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Here is a very beautiful letter, destined to sustain Mlle de Lachapelle in her vocation.

154 – TO MLLE DE LACHAPELLE, CONDOM

Bordeaux, March 23, 1821

I am finally coming, my dear daughter. It is very late for your situation and very late also, I assure you, for my sentiments. Don't imagine that I have ever lost sight of you. I am your father, and you are my daughter. God has permitted this long delay, without doubt, to try you. There is certainly not indifference on my part.

I learn, my dear daughter, with interest and feeling, of your struggles and of the proofs of your constancy. Who can doubt your vocation? How can one not see that the great Master who is calling you to his service has been sustaining you for so many years in these severe trials? What counsels can I, or rather should I, give you apart from those you are likely to get from M. Castex and from all those who posses the fear of God? Let them be such as help you to put all your confidence in the grace of the Lord and in the protection of his august Mother, to whom you so particularly belong. And besides, without ever lacking in the respect you owe your parents, let them help you combat more advantageously and adopt a more fervent and secure attitude. You should tell your parents, from time to time, that in opposing what you look upon as your vocation, they are opposing the designs of God himself and that they may not use against God the very authority over you they have received from him. You should also let your counselors know how much the constraints you impose upon yourself may be harmful to your health, that another in a situation similar to yours (Sister of the Angels) died from similar things.

You might also show them that by a voluntary sacrifice, they would participate in all the good your entry into the community would bring about and in all the merits that you might acquire therein.

It is especially to your aunt that you could make these last representations. If she intended to keep you near her, threatening to deprive you of some inheritance which she might be disposed to leave you, what fine things could you not say to her as an answer! Would she want, by the prospect of some fortune, to prevent you from fulfilling the designs of God on you? Would she want her death to prevent you from accomplishing the good with which God has inspired you? Would she not have to fear, in appearing before the dread tribunal, having disposed of a part of her fortune, to stop the march of divine Providence? etc., etc.

Prudence and courage, my dear daughter! Courageous prudence and prudent courage! Enter more and more into the spirit of the Institute of Mary! Follow its practices as much as you

can. When you enter into the ark of your covenant with the Lord, may you have conducted yourself like the dove which old Noah received in the evening, glorious with the olive branch, sign of peace and of victory or of fidelity!

Encourage M. Castex regarding the Sodality. The difficulties he is experiencing must give him some idea of the good he will do some day in Condom. I think he is encouraging you in his turn and that he is your support and your consolation in the midst of your struggles.

Let me always know, my dear daughter, everything that happens. If you leave the father you have in Condom, the good God has provided for that by giving me very fatherly feelings toward you.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The Sodalities of the Immaculate Conception were always in full swing. On April 28, Father Chaminade made a contract with M. Duguet, a printer in Bordeaux, for ,3000 copies of a new edition of the Manual of the Servant of Mary. *While awaiting his annual visit to Agen, he gives Mother de Trenquelléon his directions regarding her conduct toward certain postulants.*

155 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 6, 1821

I have no doubt at all, my dear child, about the good intentions of all our daughters, and in particular, of the Council members. Neither do I doubt their attachment to the Institute. My knowledge of their dispositions is a constant motive for consolation and hope.

What must be done concerning Sister Elizabeth? My dear child, we must keep this postulant until the visit I fully intend to make at the earliest possible date. Regarding her health, take all the care of a tender mother. I doubt that she will be able to find a countryside where the air is healthier and more abundant. Father Mouran will tell her parents and her tutor whatever he judges proper to obtain permission to stay.

If Sister Stanislas knows how to conduct herself concerning this young girl, she may contribute much in the cure of what may be faulty in an attachment that scandalized. It is to be presumed that what is faulty is not more than her too great liveliness and her excessive familiarity. Father Mouran and you, Novice Mother, will give her the wise counsel she needs at the opportune time. Thus, she may learn the dangers of this attachment and her need to combat it or rather, to direct it toward God and toward all the members of the community.

I believe as you do, my dear child, that the Council requires too much perfection in the subjects who ask for admission or probation. That is not done in the most perfect organizations. The defects of postulants and novices are borne with, as long as they are submissive and show good will, and especially when they make efforts to correct themselves. Nevertheless, I like this

exaggeration a lot better than the contrary defect, for it augurs well in the early days of an institution. Experience will teach us a middle course.

I would be obliged to you if you would tell our young postulant, Mlle de Gers, that if I do not write her, I am not thinking of her less. In fact, I could say without exaggeration that I am thinking of her even more. I would be very sorry not to see her at the time of my first visit. I certainly hope that her health will improve and that the Institute will have a real support in her.

May the peace of the Lord be with you.

William Joseph Chaminade

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While providing for the progress of his foundations, Father Chaminade did not lose sight of his former labors, the Sodality and the institutions that depended upon it.

In May 1821, a storm arose over the work of the little abandoned children.

Directed by Brother Collineau, one of the Little Society's members, it bore appreciable fruits, as can readily be seen from the notes cited above (Letter 140). After Brother Collineau became a priest, the work could only progress, since he no longer needed outside help.

In the spring of 1821, a young lawyer named Dupuch, the future bishop of Algiers, had hardly returned from Paris when he undertook to found in Bordeaux a society of good works similar to the one he had seen in the capital city. He wanted to draw away the children from the direction of Father Chaminade and Father Collineau. He counted on the help of the vicar, Father Barrès, and in consequence, also on the archbishop, who was no longer able to follow personally the progress of events.

Father Chaminade was extremely pained by this, because he foresaw the difficulties that were ahead. We read with interest some of the letters he wrote at this time, in which his expression of regret is mingled with complete deference to the authorities.

The first is addressed to M. Dupuch himself. It is in answer to a letter of his which ended as follows: "I earnestly recommend to your prayers our poor children, and in particular, those of First Communion age. We all recommend ourselves to the same prayers and myself, in particular, more than the others, because the name of Child of Mary, which you have given me yourself, gives me rights that will always be dear to me."

156 – TO M. ADOLPHE DUPUCH,
LAWYER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, May 15, 1821

I have honestly offered to give our Association very interesting work with the little abandoned children. This prompt concession to your very first request is not the result of indifference, but rather of the lively interest I take in your Association, in its membership and in its many precious elements.

Your zeal has taken strides, and you have extended your views. The association of the abandoned children has enlarged itself into a more comprehensive charitable organization, and Father Collineau is no longer considered suitable to direct it. You have asked me if you could choose a new overall director as well as particular directors. I again acceded to your request, provided that your choice fell upon someone I could accept as a sufficient guarantee that the good work would continue unhampered. There was discussion especially of Father Goudelin. You know that I did not hesitate over him and several others we discussed.

Now you propose Father Dasvin as the sole director, since Father Goudelin has refused. I know the worth of this young priest, and I would not be able to say how much I esteem and love him.[1] You add that if I find in him a sufficient guarantee, you will present his name to the archbishop and seek his appointment.

I accept, as trustee of the work, not only Father Dasvin but any other director that His Excellency the Archbishop would name. I have no need of examining the worthiness of the one appointed. The nomination, by His Excellency, of a subject not presented by me will free me from all reproach before God and men. Thus we are in full agreement.

It could happen later on that you will recognize that by taking this work out of the hands of Father Collineau, its founder, you have humiliated him. You had no reason, at least from the material point of view, to cast him aside, and you may perhaps come to repent of what you have done.

If my prognosis comes true, you can be sure of the strength of Father Collineau's soul. Whatever interest he has in this work, he will remain quiet and rejoice to see the same good done by others. He won't even think of any humiliation. If His Excellency should mention this, you can reassure him of this degree of virtue. Besides, both he and I have more good works to look after than we have time for.

I greet you very amicably.

William Joseph Chaminade

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At the same time that Father Chaminade was writing this letter to M. Dupuch, he was sending a copy to Archbishop d'Aviau.

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[1] Father Dasvin de Boismarin (1785-1859) sodalist of the Madeleine, assistant at St. Michel of Bordeaux, devoted his life mostly to the work of the Christian Friends. As a priest he was full of zeal, but as a man of the world he was anything but an administrator, which would explain Father Chaminade's hesitation about confiding to him the direction of the work.

157 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, May 15, 1821

Your Excellency,

I have the honor of sending you M. Dupuch's letter which I found last evening on coming home. I am adding a copy of my answer. Anything that you do, Your Excellency, will be well done. I shall accept it with respect and try to carry it out faithfully.

In relinquishing this work, I need a kind of security. I shall find more than sufficient your wisdom and authority.

I consider as really true what I am saying about Father Collineau's virtue.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The matter had already advanced far more completely than the archbishop had at first supposed. The prelate answered Father Chaminade by letting him in on the reasons that justified choosing Father Dasvin as director of the work with the abandoned children.

Father Chaminade thought it his duty to present to the archbishop the following explanations.

158 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, May 16, 1821

Your Excellency,

You are too good and too honest. You have wished me to understand the grounds for your choice of Father Dasvin as sole director of the work of the abandoned children. These few words from you are sufficient for me: "I have named Father Dasvin director in your place."

After everything that has happened between the Government, the local authorities, and the public concerning this work, I have contracted a sort of obligation, Your Excellency, as a matter of honor and of conscience. I can only surrender this work in good conscience in two ways. The first is to confide it to a director of my choice, who has at hand the right helpers to run it advantageously; the second is to accept blindly and with respectful submission the director you have chosen and named to replace me. In the first case, I can protect the work in the qualities of the subject I have chosen, thus making it evident that I further the work rather than abandon it. In the second, I have this protection in your wisdom and in your authority.

You will please me, Your Excellency, by telling me positively that you have named Father Dasvin director of the Association devoted to the Work of the Abandoned Children. That is the name given by the statutes and by the authorization of the Minister.

To answer directly, Your Excellency, to the observations you had the kindness to make to me, I must say that I have looked upon this cooperation of young people in good works as a precious good. This you can tell by the fact of my listening to a proposal which, in its real interpretation, would be injurious to Father Collineau and to me. The proposal reveals a secret bias against us and destroys a real and solidly established good to do it over, but without any genuine foundation. The proposal was made by three young men, and the one who runs everything is to leave on the 24th of the present month. The latter is truly very pious, talented, and very determined to do good, but of a certain exaltation of mind that gives cause for grave fear.[1] Since he interfered with our work, he has already changed plans three times. If I am not more compromised, I owe it precisely to the fear that I have of the whole business, which has made me act so slowly.

Concerning Father Dasvin, I have always loved him, always esteemed him and sometimes even venerated him. But with all that, I have never thought of proposing him, and if these good young men do, it is certainly for the lack of anyone else. The advantage he may have over Father Collineau because of his age, would seem to me, as I see the thing, only to cast doubt on him.

In fact, there is no inconvenience at all on the side of Father Collineau. I hope his virtue will put him above the kind of humiliation he is meeting with. Things could be otherwise in regard to certain groups, whose esteem and confidence he certainly has. What will they think? What will the prefect think? They have all known for the past three years that I was directing this work through him, etc. What would they think if Father Dasvin were my choice? I have reason to believe that it will be quite another matter if he is the choice of Your Excellency, as authority can have views or opinions that one is not authorized to question.

You are of the opinion, Your Excellency, that there is no inconvenience at all, as far as I am concerned, because I happen to be in this work for the sole purpose of giving advice. Doubtless, this is quite true, although I do not understand it. . . . As a result, counsels would certainly not be refused, but just as certainly they would not be followed. Furthermore, soon they would not even be asked for.

This letter, Your Excellency, would have taken only a few lines if respect for you had not obliged me to follow yours point by point. So that you may read it more easily, I shall have it recopied.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

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[1] M. Dupuch—Father Chaminade judged his sodalist correctly. The ardent zeal of M. Dupuch enabled him to do much good, but not without drawing upon him many a disappointment. It is known that, named to the See of Algiers in 1838, he was induced to resign in 1846. He spent the last years of his life in Bordeaux, where he died in 1856.

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It is evident that the choice of Father Dasvin displeased Father Chaminade and with reason. Archbishop d'Aviau nevertheless named him and so informed Father Chaminade in a joking way: "Now you know, Rev. Canon," he said to him, "that I have named Father Dasvin, Director of the Association of the Work of the Abandoned Children, and, since you said that you would be pleased to have me tell you so positively, I flatter myself, that, by this prompt deference I shall have acquired a new right to your benevolent and wise counsels. I then remain in this confidence, my dear and venerable one, your very humble and devoted servant."

Goaded on by this answer, Father Chaminade had prepared rather long explanations for the prelate, but, on the following day, he reduced them to the short letter which follows.

159 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU, ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, May 21, 1821

Your Excellency:

I learn, with submission, from your letter dated the seventeenth of the present month that you have named Father Dasvin Director of the Association of the Work of the Abandoned Children. It pleases me to note that you said "positively," but not that you had done it. If I had limited myself to the formal statement of giving up this work only into the hands of a director of my choice or to your authority, I would have sufficiently manifested to you the repugnance I felt for this nomination. If you then add that in this you show deference to my wise and benevolent counsels, I imagine that you mean it as a sort of refreshment to your weariness: *Ridendo dicere verum quid vetat?*[1]

In the present situation, an act of authority which renders both the directors and the old association destitute brings only some inconveniences foreign to the work. I have asked Father Dasvin to come to an understanding with you, to ask you for a way of remedying them. As regards the intrinsic ones, I must speak no longer of them, but leave that matter to your wisdom. I am to have one less responsibility before God.

[1] Horace, *Ars poetica*, 105.

I am with the most profound respect, Your Excellency, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I thought, Your Excellency, that prompt and rigorous execution might not be in your way of thinking. If I have judged rightly, I shall let things follow their regular course, so as not to contradict you in anything. I shall neither say nor do anything except according to your orders.

* * * *

In fact, there was more than one inconvenience. The work undertaken by Father Chaminade had received legal existence from the Government by the ministerial authorization granted April 12, 1819. It was supported by the encouragement of local authorities and by the contributions of numerous friends. It had been functioning for three months and asked for nothing else than to continue to grow.

What would become of it under these new conditions? One month had not yet passed when Father Chaminade thought himself obliged to write about it again to M. Dupuch, to the prefect, and to the archbishop.

160 – TO M. DUPUCH, LAWYER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 14, 1821

I am very sorry that you are not holding to the offer I asked Father Dasvin to make to your piety and that of your estimable associates or at least to the part which you told Father Barrès to be kind enough to take.

To break the unity of the work, to create division, is really to ruin it. *Regnum in se divisum*, etc. I am convinced that this is not your intention, but since I witness it and am convinced of it, can I remain quiet? Can I help taking the necessary steps so that this bad effect may not take place? Since you know that I am genuinely pleased at the information of your association, since I am personally attached to you, and you know I am edified by your piety and zeal, since I preferred to suffer rather than to compromise you in anything, would you infer from all this that I am letting the work be divided without doing anything about it?

No, I cannot do so, in the conviction that you will lose it without wanting to. You have already brought it a great deal of harm. I hope that this friendly advice, given in a peaceful spirit, will suffice to induce you to let things continue as you found them.

Father Dasvin must have told you that your Association could be formed with him as sole and independent director and that I would see with pleasure the members of this charitable association busy themselves with the work with the abandoned children but in the manner and form that had already been established. He must have told you too that, if I saw your association could offer me sufficient guarantee that this good work would surely continue, I would give it

over to you entirely. I don't believe I would have great difficulty either with the local authorities nor with the Minister of the Interior, if I were able to speak with confidence.

The budding association must busy itself with the work of the prisons and hospitals. Do you think that it will not be obliged to follow the direction and the usages that these establishments already have? Little associations with the same goals have existed for years. Would you want your association to cause the ruin of others? No, without a doubt. Well, for the time being, why would you not reason in regard to the work of the abandoned children as you reason about the works of the prisons and hospitals?

Let us do all the good works we can, for nothing is more according to the spirit of Christianity, but let us do them with the prudence and moderation that should always accompany them.

Full of esteem and consideration, I have the honor of greeting you.

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161 – TO THE COUNT OF TOURON, PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE

Bordeaux, June 20, 1821

M. Prefect,

Our interesting work with abandoned children which this past year has had great success is, it seems to me, threatened. Here are the facts. Your wisdom will judge them.

Last winter, three pious and virtuous young men were employed in this work by Father Collineau. It spread and edified everybody. One of the three, M. Dupuch, got the idea around Easter time of starting a project in Bordeaux called the Association of Charity, which would occupy itself with the abandoned children, the prisons, and hospitals. It would, he said, be like a similar enterprise in Paris. He came to me with his two colleagues to propose that I give over the entire direction of the work with the young chimney sweeps. To encourage them, I gave them hope that I would come to an understanding with you, M. Prefect, if their association came to function well. I would be especially encouraging if it had a director in whom I could have confidence. A director was chosen who was not among those I had designated. He brings together quite a group in his home. They are taught Catechism, Mass is said, etc. Another group continues to frequent their usual place of meeting. As soon as I heard of this division, I wrote to M. Dupuch the letter I am enclosing. He has just answered me that they are not dividing the work, that, working under different foundations, under another direction and with the approval of the archbishop, it is no longer the same undertaking.

Here you have, M. Prefect, one of the principal causes of the delay in uniting the Bureau. Besides, we are heavily in debt. The tradesmen fear, as they see the work tottering. The persons who would be able to help us with their charitable gifts wonder what to do. What, then, is to be done? The archbishop looks with pleasure upon the formation of this pious association. He

thinks that the work of the young abandoned children is necessary for its development. It would be too painful for me to do anything contrary to his views. However, persuaded that the work of the little chimney sweeps cannot be sustained if the unity of direction is destroyed, I would be led to abandon the entire care of it, although I have its interests really at heart.

I am, M. Prefect, with a profound respect, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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162 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 21, 1821

Your Excellency,

I awaited the moment when I would be obliged to write to or see the prefect personally, to acquaint him with the trouble which is now plaguing the work with the abandoned children.

Provoked by his recent letter to Father Collineau, which Father Barrès knows about, I am sending him the enclosed answer, which I am having copied for you.

I want you to find here the spirit of moderation, which you so well exemplify yourself, and especially the expression of a very deep respect. I shall always be, Your Excellency, your most humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

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In this correspondence, we can note one of the most characteristic traits of Father Chaminade in his manner of handling affairs. It is his extreme loyalty which causes him to make known to his superior what he writes to others. This trait continues throughout his life. It will not be one of the least to be admired in the many trials of his last years.

A last letter put an end to the conflict. Father Chaminade not only handed over to Father Dasvin the direction of the chimney sweeps, but renounced taking any further part in the work.

163 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, July 7, 1821

Your Excellency,

I had the honor of sending you a copy of the letter that some days ago I addressed to the prefect, along with a copy of my last letter to M. Dupuch. I made known to the former the intention I had of giving up all solicitude for the young chimney sweep, because the good of the work required it. My letter to M. Dupuch could only prove to the prefect that I had neglected nothing to sustain the work begun under his auspices.

The prefect answered me. His answer on these two points is such as might be expected from his prudence. Then, without being more anxious about what he may be thinking of the change which is taking place, I shall carry out my idea and beg of Your Excellency to be kind enough to grant me the permission to abandon completely the cares of the work which would, if developed according to my views and those of the prefect, have hopefully regenerated in time both the children and the masters. Today, Your Excellency, I assure you that the good of the work obliges me to the stand I am taking, not less than the impossibility of meeting the expenses, if the situation should continue. . .

Thus, Your Excellency, a word on your part will finally put an end to a discussion that has been too long and too painful. As soon as you have spoken, there will remain for us but to thank the Lord and to beg him to bless a kind of good that we had begun, but that our sins, without doubt, made it impossible for us to develop.

Such are my sentiments, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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What Father Chaminade had foreseen was not long in coming. The work of the young chimney sweeps languished, and at one time, almost completely disappeared. It was happily resumed by M. Dupuch, who became a priest in 1826, then by M. Buchot, only to come back to the Madeleine toward 1860.

What follows in the correspondence returns us to the life of the two religious societies.

The present letter is the last that Father Chaminade wrote to Mlle de Lachapelle before her entry into the convent. Soon after, having gone to the lakes in the Pyrenees, she took this occasion to leave her family. Without going back to Condom, she went directly to Agen.

164 – TO MLLE DE LACHAPELLE, CONDOM

Bordeaux, July 6, 1821

The good God, my dear daughter, in taking your aunt from this world, has lifted the greatest obstacle to your following your vocation. Your parents no longer have even apparent reasons to allege which might prevent you from flying to your beloved convent, where you are finally to take the title of Daughter of Mary and to become the Spouse of Jesus Christ, her adorable Son.

Take, my dear daughter, this courageous and firm attitude which the slave knows how to take when he wants to break his chains. You have been sighing long enough. Discuss with Father Castex how you can put into execution your holy design. Your parents, moreover, had given you their consent under conditions that have been complied with for a long time.

May the Holy Spirit be for you, my dear daughter, a spirit of strength and courage! May the peace of the Lord be at all times with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

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While the Founder's occupations were increasing on all sides, Bishop Jacoupy insisted that he occupy himself with the direction of the Carmelites of Agen. Here is his answer, addressed to Brother David, who remained in Agen for the sake of the free schools, which were undergoing an attack from the liberals of that city.

165 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, July 10, 1821

My Dear Son:

Storms of various kinds follow one another in Agen. Can it be that Agen is a more dangerous spot on the stormy sea of this world than other places and therefore more to be feared? Are there more dangers than elsewhere? *Spiritus procellarum, benedicite Domino*.

Yesterday evening I was at the archbishop's palace. I learned at the door that His Lordship had just put on his cloak and was going to pay a visit to the Carmelites. I did not think I should go in. If His Lordship of Agen persists in wanting to make me a superior for his Carmelites, the simplest and the most convenient thing would be for him to send His Excellency the Archbishop my nomination, with the request that it be passed on to me if he judges it apropos, etc. . . .

There is no doubt that there was a very real good in centralizing these kinds of communities,[1] especially in the same city. If there is a real good, there is also a relative harm, which is also real. My already absorbing occupations are increasing every day. The respectable Carmelites of Agen will need much patience and forbearance: *Pluribus intentus, minor est ad singula sensus*. I must not suspect any jealousy in the Carmel: all its holy solitaries will doubtless see without any difficulty that I must give more time and care to the Daughters of Mary because they are a nascent institute.

You also know, my dear son, that I have the care of another institute, the Miséricorde. This last has a second establishment in Laval, which is becoming considerable. Mlle de Lamourous, who was doing almost everything with the aid of counsels, has been bedridden since All Saints.

I am transforming the little country place of Saint Laurent into a novitiate and a house for men's retreats. I am not saying anything about the Sodalities, which are rapidly multiplying.

If in spite of all these good reasons and several others that you know, His Lordship the Bishop still persists, I am bowing my head and shoulders. I shall accept this new burden, *jugum suave*, by reason of the fervor of these good Carmelites. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] The religious communities of women.

Father Chaminade's attention kept returning to Tonneins, and correspondence with M. Lacaussade did not cease. There was now the question of opening a boarding school for young women of the town and the region.

166 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, July 10, 1821

In spite of my many occupations, I never lose sight of our beloved convent at Tonneins and of the projected boarding school. After mature reflection, here are my thoughts and conclusions:

1. A boarding school for girls in the convent will undoubtedly benefit both the convent and yourself. I mean that it will increase the esteem and consideration of the best homes from a very large section, and you could turn this to the public and religious good.

2. I have reason to hope I can supply this convent with enough good teachers to meet the parents' expectations. We still have almost a year ahead of us.

3. I cannot advance any money for the establishment of this boarding school, and here I am speaking in the name of all the establishments of the Institute of Mary.

4. Thus you must find the necessary advance to go ahead according to the plans you and Brother David agreed upon. I am saying advance, for I shall willingly take on the obligation of reimbursing you for the capital used. You believe that with 7,000 francs, 2,000 in cash we could manage. I also believe it as far as the construction and repairs on the building are concerned. I have abundant proof that you know how to take things into account, but there are other expenses for the running of a boarding school.

5. I shall also willingly agree to a small percentage of interest on the capital. This interest, it seems to me, would be very fair. You would not have to fear that the convent, under the pretext of doing a good work, is seeking to deprive you of the rate of interest agreed upon. You would like to give it everything you've got, and I do not doubt, knowing the dispositions of your heart, that would be a great deal. However, every agreement will always be faithfully kept.

6. If, in the course of events, you find yourself short of money and if I should happen to have some, it would be at your disposal, not only as payment of capital advanced, but by way of a friendly loan.

7. The boarding school, well established and well equipped, will, with what Providence provides, end with the liquidation of the debt of the convent itself: without this we would perhaps be obliged to take measures that would reverse all the plans we envisaged in the establishment.

8. The inconvenience which you foresaw for your family, in an advance of funds for the beginning of the establishment, is now dissolved. It is the establishment itself that takes care of it, and by doing so it only strengthens itself and assures itself it can settle its affairs.

9. Advances are not made all at once, but distributed over time until the enterprise is completed. Only when the books are closed is the total amount of capital fixed. This process is helpful to the donor. . . .

I am stopping now. With a person as intelligent as you, spelling out details and consequences is unnecessary. I am sending a copy of this letter to Brother David by the same carrier.

William Joseph Chaminade

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167 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, July 13, 1821

Sir:

I have no intention of bothering you with the lure of an interest on sums which might be lent for fitting out the projected boarding school. I wanted only to get past any obstacles: 1) if you had been obliged to make a loan; 2) for yourself, if you had advanced the funds, because of certain considerations concerning your family.

I am well convinced that you have only good intentions, or rather intentions which seem good to you, in the decision you are taking. Without judging them, I shall adore the dispositions of divine Providence. The good God, who permits it, may himself have other views. It is up to me to ask him to make them known to me, so that I may carry them out.

I have written few letters in my lifetime in which I have better maintained my soul in God's presence than the last one to you.

I am taking the liberty of including here a small letter for the superioress. It has nothing to do with the convent; it concerns only family matters.

I have the honor of offering you the assurance of my respectful devotedness.

William Joseph Chaminade

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At the end of July, Father Chaminade told Mother de Trenquelléon and M. Lacaussade of his imminent departure for Agen. He went to visit the different communities, to give a retreat to the religious of Agen, to prepare for the opening of a school at Tonneins and to hasten the development of free schools in Lot-et-Garonne.

168 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, July 24, 1821

My dear child,

I have spoken about receiving the renewal of the community's vows only because you wanted me to. Otherwise, I would have left it for the end of the retreat. All the reasons you give me are very good. Have your renewal take place next Sunday, etc.

Besides, 1) we shall have many things to do, and it is good that during my short stay with you the community feels quite free; 2) if my visit can produce a real renewal of fervor, why, towards the end of it, would I not have you all renew your vows so that everyone may be renewed? Since this renewal is not a matter of rule, it would then have a more touching character. The will could only be moved by its fervor and devotedness.

To render our efforts more prompt and more enlightened, you would do well, my dear child, to have the account ready that it is suitable you should give me regarding 1) the personal, 2) the moral, 3) the spiritual, and 4) the temporal welfare.

If Brother David had the time, he could work out a form that you would have only to fill out. This form would always be with you and would serve as guide for another time.

This form is really only the repetition of those which the Mothers of Zeal, of Instruction, and of Work have at their disposal. If it is well drawn up, I shall have a clear view of the good and bad qualities, of the virtues and defects (I dare not say the vices) of all of the persons who are under your jurisdiction. A word must also be said about all the different kinds of persons with whom the convent has fairly frequent relations. This list will also give me an idea of the condition of classes, the workshops of the Sodality, whether of the Ladies, the young girls, or the Sodalities affiliated with the Sodality of Agen.

It would be good, my dear child, that this list be concluded by whatever views you have about amelioration, modification, change, etc.

Be sure to keep whatever personal difficulties most habitually embarrass you out of these notes.

I have only mentioned the temporal, but you easily understand that the report includes many points.

With such an outline, my visit could be useful to you in every respect, and we could gain time for partial or general instructions. Furthermore, with what I shall add after a real examination of each point, it will be of help to me all year in my work of guidance.

I will be much obliged to you if you ask Brother David to have Father Laugeay make me a little outline of the same kind, for the new institution.[1]

If we want to advance properly, my dear child, we have to proceed with order. We must especially avoid advancing blindly or, as it were, simply feeling our way.

I hope to leave next Monday, on the 30th of the current month. It is possible that I shall get to Tonneins by nightfall. I also hope that you will pray for the travelers. On my part, I shall not cease to ask that my visit may draw down upon all sorts of blessings . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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169 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, July 29, 1821

Sir:

I am preparing to visit our small establishments. I expect to leave next Tuesday. Perhaps I may spend the night at Tonneins. My regular visit to our beloved little convent will not take place until my return to Agen. As a result, on my way, I shall stay but a very short time in Tonneins.

As my traveling companion, I shall have only Father Rothéa, but only if his brother, a young priest, does not arrive until tomorrow. We are awaiting his arrival any day now.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Charles Rothéa arrived in Bordeaux only on the 14th of August. He went immediately to Agen, where he joined Father Chaminade and returned with him to Bordeaux.

It is well to insert here a note on this venerable religious who played such a great role in the early developments of the Society.

[1] The community of the religious who directed the primary school.

Father Charles Rothéa was the first priest to enter the Society and one of those who left behind the most blessed recollections. Born in 1791 at Landser in Alsace, he made his first studies among the Benedictines of Mariastein, near Bâle, which developed in him his musical talent, and his theological studies in the seminary of Besançon, where he made Father Caillet's acquaintance. Ordained priest in 1816, in the chapel of the Ursulines in Fribourg, he was almost immediately put in charge of this parish of Saint Marie-aux-Mines in his original diocese. His brother Louis acquainted him with the Society of Mary, and he entered in 1819. Father Charles did not hesitate to follow him and to leave all, to give himself to a Society which made explicit profession of honoring and serving Mary. Father Rothéa later recalled to Father Chaminade the details of his entry into the novitiate. "You told me, my Good Father, that it was necessary to begin the novitiate at Saint Laurent. My brother, Brother Olivier, a novice, and I went there at 9 o'clock in the evening, and we found only a little straw. Extreme poverty! Nevertheless, a joy reigned among us. We sang hymns, we were glad. We were so poor that, when you came to see us, we had no chair to offer you. You sat down beside me on my trunk. You talked to me about your ideas, and I felt consoled by them. There were only four of us, and two years later there were thirty." In 1823, Father Rothéa was sent to Saint Remy as chaplain of the little group, then he became director of the boarding school. There he was a model of humility and mortification, kneeling before his Brothers in the Chapter of Coulpes, to kiss their feet, and spending the winter without fire, despite the rigorous climate, in a room on the north side of the building. So many virtues were blessed by God. Father Rothéa had the joy of gaining for the Society such recruits as Fathers Caillet, Chevaux and Meyer and of initiating them into the religious life. In 1829, when Father Lalanne came to Saint Remy, Father Rothéa was sent as director to Saint Hippolyte in Alsace. It is there that he made himself buyer, along with his brothers Louis and Xavier. The latter was an affiliate of the beautiful house of Ebersmunster, which he had donated to the Society. From that time he resided either at Saint Hippolyte or at Ebersmunster, both neighboring houses, working with zeal at recruitment for the Society in Alsace. Then, for several years, at Réalmont, he was Provincial of the South of France (1853-55). Worn out by age, he retired to Bordeaux, the seat of the General Administration, and moved with it to Paris in 1861. He lived there a few more years, leading a life of great piety, and quietly he died on the 12th of March, 1868. His remains were laid to rest in the vault of the Superiors of Merles.

Father Rothéa had regular features, a ruddy complexion, an angelic countenance, say his contemporaries, especially when he prayed. He had the sensibility of an artist and the simplicity of a child. The heart dominated in him and manifested itself by the most touching expressions, whether in regard to the Society of Mary, which he always tenderly loved, or with regard to the Founder, whom he always upheld in whatever circumstances, and whom, after his death, he venerated as a saint. Furthermore, Father Rothéa lacked neither intelligence nor culture, and his letters of direction, addressed in 1857 to Father Guillaume, are full of the spirit of the Society. Having little aptitude for administration, as he himself admitted, he nonetheless left the impression and the memory of a venerable priest and of a holy religious. Good Father Chevaux did not hesitate to call him one of the pillars of the Society, and according to the word of Father Fidon, it was he along with Father Léon Meyer, who had the spirit of our venerated Founder in the highest degree. However, his most eminent characteristic was an entirely filial devotedness toward the Most Holy Virgin. As regards his devotion to the Blessed Virgin, says a witness, it is not saying too much to call it immense. Every day, after his Mass, he ended his thanksgiving by paying a visit to the altar of Mary. If on a walk, a church was on the way, he went in and intoned a hymn to the Blessed Virgin. When he spoke of her, said Brother Morel, another saint, his features became radiant. Words fail me, said another religious of Saint Remy, to express his outbursts of joy when he sang to the Blessed Virgin while accompanying himself on the organ. When he preached about her, his look brightened up, his features became

inflamed, and his enthusiasm overflowed. It was the love of a child for his tenderly loved mother which passed from his heart into that of those listening to him. In retirement in Paris, he loved a large statue of the Blessed Virgin in a niche at the end of an alley in the park. Without being a work of art, this statue was charming, by the naïve features of the mother and son, which seemed to portray their love for each other. The holy old man often visited it and remained a long time at its feet, reciting his rosary, his eyes firmly fixed on the Virgin. "What do you do there, on those long visits?" a Brother once asked him. "I am visiting our establishments," answered Father Rothéa, recalling a memory of the Bordeaux Sodality. "I think now about one of our houses and then about another, and I ask the Blessed Virgin to bless them, to provide for their needs, to show herself really their Mother, and to have her Son reign in them."

"At this time," relates Brother Benoît Meyer, "he often came to see me at the Institution Sainte Marie of the rue de Monceau and he sometimes seemed sad. He then sat at the piano and together we sang hymns which he had composed and which he had taught me at Saint Remy: *Te amare non cessare* or *Memorare, O piissima*, and he would come back joyful. On his deathbed, he still sang one of his preferred hymns: *I shall see her, this dear Mother*, and it is thus that he died piously in the embrace of the Lord and his most holy mother."

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The impression left by the Founder's visit, according to the letters of Mother de Trenquelléon to the superioress of Tonneins, will be read with interest.

August 4—The Good Father arrived in good health, Wednesday at four o'clock. You know us, and so, you can understand our joy! But alas, he has so much to do that I am afraid all our Sisters will not get to speak to him much to their regret. I beg of you pray that this may not happen. Neither I nor any of the Mothers have as yet been with him. He gave us a fine conference on faith and promised to give us one on mental prayer. We advance the hour for our rosary and supper, and he gives them in the evening. He hasn't a minute to himself . . .

August 6—The Good Father's stay is really rich in graces from the peace he spreads about him, his solid instructions, the good prayers, without forgetting the little mortifications . . . because he is all absorbed, and I clearly see that he will not be able to talk to all of us individually. He is embarrassed by a crowd of girls who want to enter. I think the convent is going to be full. Pray God, dear friend, that I may be able to direct this multitude of souls who are going to come. The Lord has great designs.

August 17—The endless occupations of the Good Father, in spite of his good will, prevent him from leaving today. It is not on account of us for we see him only in passing, but it is for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, which is the only thing desired and sought for this holy man.

He asks me to write you to prepare your community for the renewal of vows Sunday morning and for the reception of Sodalists in the evening. He will arrive in Tonneins only Saturday evening. To gain time, ask him to speak to you at the Masses, as this will take less time than conferences in the evening, and he will be able to give more time to the particular interviews. Ask the Good Father that he speak to you about faith and mental prayer, as these are his two most beautiful conferences.

Following the example of our Good Father, let us be all dedicated to the greatest glory of God. He was telling us that we must never do anything just to satisfy our own pleasure. Well, dear Sister, let us see the Good Father, not from natural satisfaction, but only from the good that will come from it. If he does more good in speaking to others than to us, let us be satisfied with everything. He has recruited several young men for the Brothers—well, should we not be glad?

We received some remarks from this Good Father. He brought us together, we Mothers of the Council; he desired that we hold our Councils more in the spirit of God and of faith. Pray that we may profit by his holy admonitions. He is a real patriarch.

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The Founder left, as a souvenir of his visit, an order, dated August 17, to regulate different points, touching the holding of the Council, food, and obedience. The Little Society was not forgotten during this visit, which meant new progress for it in the Agen region.

170 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Agen, August 8, 1821

Sir:

The good God seems to have spared my weakness during my journey to this city, letting me find only reasons for consolation.

The free primary school does not belie its reputation. I examined it in all respects. I find it susceptible to some improvements, but it has no really weak point, and its foundation is solid. All the various administrations are satisfied.

Several cities of this department are asking for a similar institution. I have the intention of acceding to their desires, but little by little, and in proportion as the necessary teachers are found. However, it will never be to the prejudice of Tonneins. Tonneins will always get the preference. But in the near impossibility of acquiring a locale that is necessary for this establishment, I would be obliged to accept whatever offers the municipal administration might make.

In this state of things, it would be wise to rent neither of the two houses you had the kindness to speak about. Will the mayor of Tonneins perhaps open his eyes in time to have the preference?

I hope that we will go to Tonneins on the sixteenth of the present month to spend the night.

Accept, sir, I beg of you, my respectful and friendly greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

P. S. Brother David offers you a token of his devotion.

* * * *

This offer of free schools Father Chaminade took strongly to heart. Brother David, having informed him that "the General Council of the Department put him in charge of all the primary education in the Department of Lot-et-Garonne," Father Chaminade was delighted and gave his instructions on this subject to his representative. He was of the opinion not to accept any schools right away and then progressively only the schools of the four principal cities of the Department: Tonneins, Nérac, Marmande, and Villeneuve, and to begin with this last one, where the arrangements were most advanced.

171 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 27, 1821

Courage, my dear son! In wishing you courage, I am inviting myself also to take some.

Providence is showing us a charming course. Let us fight for the glory of Jesus and Mary! May the spirit of religion be propagated and sustained at least in our unhappy country. However, we must be on guard for the devil's ruses, so jealous is he when it comes to the glory of our august Patroness.

You have done well in accepting the four principal cities for our institutions successively and not all at the same time.

Marmande will not be ready to receive us for some time. I talked about it to the Sub-Prefect at the time of my stay in this city. Whatever desire he or the Rev. Pastor seemed to have, he did not think he could come to any agreement with you when you stop there on our return from Bordeaux. I hope it will be easy to persuade Nérac to wait, even if it should be ready to receive us, which I have some reason to doubt.

All is ready in Villeneuve, even the furnishings: it is the collège of the area. It seems to me that is where we should make a start, but not before All Saints Day. Your plan for starting everywhere at the same time[1] is ingenious, but it would surely make us fall into the snares of the enemy. For the six postulants, let us follow the course we have agreed upon, accelerating or retarding it according to the greater or less degree of success they have.

Our four young religious[2] need to make the retreat, both for their spiritual and their bodily health. They are awaiting it and desiring it, etc. . . . From now on until All Saints Day, we can prepare subjects who will rival in holiness those of Agen.

According to these considerations, see what you should do and say to sustain whatever good dispositions you find. People with good sense will not be surprised that we are taking charge of these establishments only one at a time.

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[1] With the aid of postulants recruited in Agen. Father Chaminade speaks of six of them whom he will receive into the novitiate of Saint Laurent in August.
[2] Of Agen.

I am sending you a copy of the Statutes of Father Mertian.[1] It seems to me, the schools of the Daughters of Mary have been far too much talked about. I would have preferred that while waiting for them to develop on a large scale, we had formed the teachers and lay supervisors. It would also have been desirable for all of these to have tried out our method of instruction and education with the girls who came first. The good reputation of the method could have grown gradually. I think we must hold to this *usque ad tempus*.

An act of charity and religion has been turned into an act of inconsistency or at least of great imprudence.[2] *Inimicus homo hoc fecit*. Our good religious did not know how to answer the questions put to them. From there, confirmation . . . It would be useless for me to answer. I must limit myself by saying that neither the Institute nor its spirit have been in any way outraged. Whatever may be the case, I shall write a few words to the penitent religious, to delay her entrance into her humble retreat. The people of Agen have very fiery heads.

The best people have much trouble defending themselves against their imagination.

I am stopping now and embracing you tenderly.

William Joseph Chaminade

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172 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 28, 1821

I do hope, my dear child, that my visit has done some good for our beloved convent. But now we must see how to sustain it. The means to this are: 1) A great regularity; 2) Conferences to the community, which you will prepare especially by means of prayer; 3) Assuring yourself that all of your Daughters make mental prayer; 4) Giving me accurate information about all our beloved Daughters, notably, if there is any noticeable change in them, either towards good or the contrary. When you see that it might result in a great advantage for some, you might suggest they write to me.

I have learned that already our simple act of charity and religion toward Mme Champié is being travestied. I am writing to her to postpone her entry into the retreat that had been granted her in the convent. The reason I am giving her is our intention of doing something better for her, inspired by her sentiments of penitence.

May the Lord grant the prudence and strength of soul needed for the proper direction of your community! I ask him to shower his blessings upon you and your beloved Daughters.

William Joseph Chaminade

[1] Founder of a congregation of Brothers in Alsace, which will be referred to later on. See Letter 176.
[2] See the following letter.

* * * *

In the Society's schools everything was happening as the Founder had foreseen. Villeneuve alone immediately got religious, a priest for the collège (Father Collineau), and three Brothers for the communal primary schools.[1]

In the month of September, after having regulated everything in the Haut-Pays, in the name of Father Chaminade, Brother David returned to Bordeaux. Upon his return, the Founder gave a little order to direct the Daughters of Mary in the formalities for the time of entry of the postulants. It does not have any special interest, and so we are reproducing only the letter that accompanied it.

173 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, September 21, 1821

My dear child, I have many things to say to you, but little time to explain myself on each point. I don't know how far I shall go in this letter, but anyhow, I am making a start.

1. For some time you have been receiving the furniture of subjects who intend to enter your Institute. Most of the time no itemized list of the various pieces has been made. Even if there were such lists, since they are only mere notes, they would prove nothing when questions arise as a result of girls leaving. And the trouble becomes more serious when parents, tutors, or heirs get involved. On certain occasions, I have noticed that the houses of the men were forced to give up more than they had received, and even then that did not satisfy all the pretensions of the claimants. It may be that the same thing has happened to you. In any case, it is only too possible that it can happen in the future if matters are not put in good order.

The remedy for all this is to make a double list between yourself, my dear child, and every one of the postulants or others who bring in personal effects. There are some who bring in so little that it may be counted as nothing. But even then, if it may be foreseen that they or their parents might show any interest in the matter, then it would be best to do as I have just said.

You will have to begin your lists with those involving the greatest number of items or those of the greatest value, without regard to their date of entry or to their worth.

The ruling that I am now giving you about this matter dispenses from making such lists those who have made a will, since you know the state of their property. Some have given their furniture to some of our Sisters. Others have arranged only for what their natural heirs might legitimately demand.

Never will it be that anyone, in spite of all precautions, will foresee all possible contingencies. This is what we must realize, and so my object has been, in regard to furniture

[1] The Society kept the direction of the college only until 1827, but it directed parishes, then free schools until 1903.

coming from so many different hands, to avoid, in the greatest number of cases, discussions, scandals, the lack of charity, and sometimes the hates that claims give rise to every time that accounts to be rendered are not clear and precise. Support me in this matter.

2. The admission of outsiders on diverse days at different hours and for different reasons would end by trapping you in a disorder and in a series of inconveniences you could no longer avoid. Thus I thought it necessary to issue an ordinance, and I leave it to you to carry it out.

I know very well that I have approved most of these entries, but this fact takes away neither their inconveniences nor their danger. I see the evil and I am trying to remedy it, without wishing to accuse anyone.

3. The propositions relative to Condom which refer so strongly to the personal affairs of our Sister of the Incarnation need to be developed and matured.

It could be that Providence destines us for the performance of new forms of good works in this particular country. Let us begin or let us continue to make ourselves its instruments when and how God may desire.

4. I would like to answer Mother of the Sacred Heart's letter as much on account of what concerns her as of the other views she proposes to me, but time is so short. She must strengthen herself in the way God has opened for her by his grace. As for the subject matter, it is a subject for prayers and meditations. If God does not come to our help, we work in vain, the prophet has said. The word of God will always be true, in the least things as in the greatest. Let us ask for God's help and let us not cease asking for it.

5. It seems to me important that the stable destined for the cows, and which M. David put up, should be covered all the time. By using it, we can tear down the temporary stable under the infirmary, which renders useless this summer house and its original purpose.

6. I am writing Sister Thérèse of Saint Augustine, and that is about all I can do for this time.

May the God of peace and of mercy grant you his blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The letters which follow bring us back to the Little Society and to the signs of its vitality in Bordeaux.

Its developments called for new resources, and Father Chaminade would have been deeply embarrassed had he not placed all his confidence in Providence. On September 24, we see him having recourse to his faithful and old friend M. Lapause. This wealthy man had already rendered notable services to the budding institute. Since the previous spring, he had been

affiliated and lodged with the community on Rue de Menuts. He put at Father Chaminade's disposal the income from the vines he owned at Saint Loubès, to the north of Bordeaux. Very often, he drew the Founder out of great embarrassment. Here is one of the cases.[1]

[1] Concerning M. Lapause, Temporal Father of the Society, see *Messenger of the Society* III, p. 431.

174 – TO M. LAPAUSE, ST. LAUBÈS

Bordeaux, September 24, 1821

Sir and very dear son,

The pressing need for the little reserves you have kept in the country is finally upon us. I am sending our good brother, M. Bidon, to get them. I hope you will have no anxiety about them. Whatever may belong to the Institute is in surety, but especially when the great and good Master, in whose immediate service they are used, has a hand in the matter.

I am, sir and very dear son, yours very truly in the hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Here is the answer of M. Lapause.

Our Good Father in Jesus Christ, I am sending you, by our very faithful Brother Bidon, the little reserve I have in the country, which amounts to two thousand francs. When one has the good God and your prudence as security, certainly there is no cause for anxiety. There still remains what gold I have in our house in Bordeaux, 1,116 francs, which will serve to clear my liabilities and cultivate my land right after grape harvesting time. May God be blessed for everything and may he be merciful to us. I have the honor of being, with the most profound respect, our Good Father in Jesus Christ, your very humble and very obedient servant.

P.S. As I pray to God every day for you, I hope that you are not forgetting me in your prayers.

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Brother J. B. Bidon (1778-1854) is one of the most congenial characters of the foundation period. Born in Bordeaux of an honest workman's family, he had learned the cooper's trade. In 1801, he joined the Sodality of the Madeleine and remained one of its most zealous members. In fact, he was named honorary prefect. To him especially was entrusted the care of the young mechanics of the Sodality. The wars of Napoleon obliged him to join the army of Italy, where he was taken prisoner by the Austrians, but in campaigns, as in captivity, he sighed after the hour when he would again be in the midst of his beloved Sodality. After returning to Bordeaux, he again put himself under Father Chaminade's direction and was soon admitted to private vows (1815), a prelude to his later religious life. He was, in fact, one of the seven founders of the Society, which he never ceased to edify by his high degree of virtue.

Brother Bidon, "the faithful Bidon" as he was sometimes called, was the confidant of Father Chaminade in temporal matters, and it is in this capacity that he spent the greatest part of his life in Bordeaux. He never left this city except to found and direct the school at Clairac (1837-41), in a region that was Protestant to a great extent, where nevertheless, his virtue from the very start won him the respect and veneration of everyone. The Founder had recourse to him for the most delicate tasks. Thus, in 1840 he was appointed to accompany the group of Daughters of Mary called to the foundation of Olmeto in Corse. On his return from this trip, Brother Bidon was sent to the novitiate of Saint Anne, where he was to spend the remaining years of his life.

He was a profoundly humble religious, mild and even-tempered, of an amiable character, always ready to render service and prompt obedience. When the first apostolic laborers of the Society left for America in 1849, a superior having jokingly asked Brother Bidon, then 70 years of age, whether he felt himself disposed to accompany them, the old man, thinking he was receiving an order, immediately began to get ready for the departure. His life was a continual prayer, and it was commonly said that he never interrupted his colloquy with God. In his last years, bent with age, he could no longer walk except with the aid of a cane, but even then he did not consent to remain inactive. He still had his little tasks to do, errands to look after, notes to take, services to render, etc. The rest of his time was devoted to pious reading, to the saying of the Stations of the Cross, saying the Rosary, or reciting the Breviary, kneeling in his bench before the Blessed Sacrament. “This wise old man of our Institute, perhaps the only one,” wrote Father Lalanne, “that, in the midst of so many shocks, never faltered,” died quietly assisted by Father Simler, then a young priest who has preserved a precious recollection for us. (Circular No. 31)

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The annual retreat of 1821was made at Saint Laurent as in preceding years. The religious of Agen took part in it. They had brought with them six postulants, already referred to.[1]

The retreatants numbered 32 in all. On the evening of the closing day, Father Chaminade, as usual, invited the Archbishop of Bordeaux to bless the Little Society. By the following document, as by all contemporary documents, we shall see that in the beginning the religious of the Society were called “Children of Mary and the Society itself, “Society of the Children of Mary.” It was thus the counterpart of the Daughters of Mary.

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[1] Among these six postulants, the first to come from our schools were Anthony Bartayres (1804-72), who took part in the foundation of Colmar and for nearly fifty years filled the post of main sacristan of the church of Saint Martin, always acquitting himself of his duties with a prudence, a modesty, an admirable activity, and making of the sacristy of Colmar the best in all Alsace. J. B. Constant (1804-26), who was part of the first group sent to St. Remy, where he died shortly after. Pierre Mazières (1805-87) who was director for long years of various schools in the south of France and died at the Madeleine in Bordeaux. Jean Coustou, who from 1835 till 1840 directed the schools at Colmar, where he left the Society. He had published a course in penmanship that was considered quite good.

Father Ignace Mertian (1766-1843), to whom Father Chaminade directed M. Rothéa, was originally from Ribeauvillé, in Alsace. He was professor of mathematics at the Royal Collège of Colmar when the Revolution broke out. He took the constitutional oath of the clergy but retracted almost immediately. Named pastor of Bergheim in 1814, he took in hand (1819) the direction of the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence of Ribeauvillé, a post left vacant by the death of his brother, Father Bruno Mertian (1768-1819), who had been superior since 1817.

The Congregation of the Sisters of Providence, founded in 1783 at Molsheim, transferred in 1808 to Sélestat, had just established itself in Ribeauvillé and then counted about one hundred sisters. The great development it later enjoyed in Alsace is well known.

At this time, Father Ignace Mertian had the idea of founding a congregation of brothers to look after the schools in Alsace. Thanks to the support of the Prince of Croy, a bishop of Strasbourg, who had just been named Grand Almoner, he obtained on December 5 of that year, a royal order authorizing the Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine of the diocese of Strasbourg. But from the start, he felt himself taxed beyond his strength and had recourse to Father Chaminade, whom he had heard about through the Rothéa family. First, he confided to the Founder the formation of his subjects (1821) and later gave over to him the whole project (1826). The Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, united to the Society of Mary, disappeared after some time and was reconstituted in 1843, with the support of Father Louis Mertian, brother of the two Fathers. It is known today under the name Brothers of Matzenheim.

175 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Saint Laurent, October 22, 1821

Your Excellency,

The Children of Mary have just renewed their spiritual life by the holy exercises of retreat. Before getting back to their exterior duties, they ardently desire again to obtain the blessing which your pastoral charity grants them each year. They beg you kindly to designate the moment, the hour when they will be able to assemble at Your Excellency's feet. The retreat will close tomorrow, and then they can come at your bidding.

The number of the associates continued to increase during the past year, but the various works have developed in even greater proportion. Some new sodalities were organized; in old ones the membership has increased. Primary schools in a neighboring Department were put under our direction; three to four hundred children this year were brought up in the spirit of our holy religion, and a still greater number will be ready to receive the same kind of advantage in the years to come. These are things which, from the religious point of view, seem to us to point up the goodness of God toward the enterprise which I have believed to be according to the designs of Providence for our times.

Now the Children of Mary and their director wish to assure the continuation of this work in the same spirit as it had when it began, namely, with the blessing of heaven and that of the archbishop, who is our shepherd on earth.

Deign to accept, Your Excellency, my profound respect and religious veneration.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Your Excellency deigned last year to give to the Children of Mary a very great token of kindness in granting them a visit and the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice at the very location of their retreat. They do not dare ask the same favor, but they would receive it with very great joy.

Archbishop d'Aviau wrote on this letter: "I went on the 23rd."

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Two days after the close of the retreat, Father Chaminade gave the following obedience, the importance of which was considerable, as much because of the work itself which the Society was taking over, as of the influence it would have on the Society in regions far removed from the place of its origin.

176 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 25, 1821

Our dear son in Jesus Christ, Brother Louis Rothéa, with the shortest possible delay, will go to Ribeauvillé, Department of the Upper Rhine, to exercise the functions of Master of Novices under the direction of and in obedience to Father Mertian, Founder of the Brothers of the free Christian Schools in Alsace.

If the concession which we made last April 10 of this dear son to Father Mertian was so painful to our heart, how much more so does it become today, when it is actually taking place. And not only for us, but also for all his confreres. We are considering only the interest of the glory of God and of the most holy Virgin, our august Mother and Patroness, and we desire that he be at the disposal of Father Mertian for eighteen months from the day of the concession, last April 10.

We permit him to make use of the conveniences of stagecoaches or other vehicles. We even desire that he use them, at least as far as Besançon. We leave him perfectly free for the remainder of his long journey to do as his wisdom and love of poverty may suggest. We dispense him from all customs in the matter of diet which would be contrary to those which his Rule prescribes for him, whether during his travels or during his stay in Alsace. But we recommend that, in using this dispensation, he always keep in close touch with the spirit of the Institute of Mary.

We shall be free from our promises only next October 10, 1822. Our dear son will try to obtain from Father Mertian some days of grace, to have the time to come to the annual retreat, which all the members of this religious Society are accustomed to make. Given in Bordeaux in our novitiate at Saint Laurent on October 25, 1821.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following note treats of the acquisition of the library of Father Conne, a former Franciscan, librarian of the houses of his Order at Toulouse and Bordeaux before the Revolution and then professor of morals, on the faculty of theology of Bordeaux (1742-1825). Father Conne was a lover of books. His library was composed of valuable books acquired as a result of the dispersion of the libraries of religious houses at the time of the Revolution, to the number of 12,000 volumes. Father Chaminade understood what an amount of work would be required of his nascent Society in obtaining such an acquisition, and lacking the necessary resources, he hesitated to profit by the occasion.

177 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 27, 1821

I don’t know, my dear son, whether you attribute to timidity my irresolution in buying the library of the venerable Father Conne. To bind ourselves to the extent of 12,000 to 13,000 francs,

with interest to be paid, in our present circumstances, seems to me a bit untimely. As things are at present, I think I would have trouble finding even the 3,000 francs needed as initial cash payment. In the supposition that Father Conne would have accepted the four offers I was making him, the friends of the Institute would have gone into debt, as I had reason to hope, for the good of religion and of the Institute.

Assure this good priest of my sincere regrets.

In examining this matter before God, I had other ideas and one was not to accept the offer except upon the conditions I pointed out to you yesterday. But there is no sense in speaking of them here.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The acquisition of the library was concluded on the following November 5, but the delivery of the books took place only later and after many incidents. Letters 220 and 222 refer to these.

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Father Chaminade continues to interest himself in his nephew, pupil in the boarding school on Rue des Menuts.

178 – TO M. F. LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, November, 1821

You have interpreted me well, my dear nephew. I have remained silent so long because I had nothing good to say to our dear Firmin. It would have cost me too dearly to speak the evil I saw. At last I can give you real consolations.

After the very strong letter you wrote us (Firmin and me) he changed a little so that after a few days, the teacher who was most in despair about him said to me joyfully: “Your nephew is doing well, really well . . .” I did not think of writing you so soon—I wanted to see if this good would really last. I have since looked into it several times, and I see the good is really continuing. I have reason to believe he will succeed and will fulfill his duty, as we hoped he would.

The classical year began with the fourth of the present month. I went to the boarding school last evening to find out about him. I also talked to his confessor. All the teachers are satisfied. The pupils who are back to school say: “Firmin has converted . . .” so much do they see

him changed. What contributed much to his change of heart is his confessor, one of the teachers at the boarding school.

My sister joins me in offering you and your wife the tokens of a tender friendship.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Mlle de Lachapelle was going to receive the holy habit on the feast of the Presentation, November 21, 1821. Father Chaminade wrote to her in these words.

179 – TO SISTER OF THE INCARNATION, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 18, 1821

Although I am pressed for time, my dear daughter, in order to close the men's retreat successfully (retreat of the men's Sodality at the Madeleine) and with many other things to do, I nevertheless do not want you to receive the holy religious habit of the Daughters of Mary without receiving a little letter from me, truly your Father. This is not exactly an answer to your letter. I have the intention of coming to that later. I only want to tell you to take courage, to open your heart. Can there be a vocation more tested and more certain than yours? Have you not the assurance that the divine Spouse, to whom you are to unite yourself irrevocably, will accord you all his friendship and, in consequence, his superabundant graces, so that you can be inviolably faithful to him? But are you feeble in health? Be it so, but your divine Spouse deigns to will it that way. Too much fear of responding to his voice would displease him. I shall explain to you another time and at greater length this point of view which is so reassuring.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Here is another note, written soon after, equally addressed to the convent of Agen, by way of fatherly encouragement.

180 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 4, 1821

I take up my pen, my dear child, to write you and to give you a little sign of life. The press of affairs is still far from diminishing, but things are getting along here quite well anyway.

Tell all our beloved Daughters—and you may well assure them of it—that I bear them all in my heart, that I offer them to the Lord. I have a great desire that they all make great and rapid progress in the virtues of their holy state and especially in the spirit of mental prayer.

I am determined to take all sorts of means to free myself sufficiently so as to spend more time with you this year and not to leave you without making provision that each one progresses, as is to be expected, according to the measure of grace she has received. Although this measure is not equal for all, it is nevertheless very great for each on the Daughters of Mary.

Receive, my dear child, in greatest abundance, the blessings of the Lord. May these, through you and by you, spread to all of our beloved Daughters! . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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The Little Society was going to have its second priest in the person of Father Lalanne. Father Chaminade sent him the following note to the seminary to make arrangement for his first Mass.

181 – TO FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 11, 1821

I very much approve, my dear son, that you say your first Mass at midnight on Christmas Day, at Rue des Menuts, and without any pomp directed towards your person. Let there be no other preparation but that relative to the solemnity of the feast and the mystery commemorated.

If it is customary to leave the seminary on Saturday evening, the day of ordination, if the Rev. Superior has nothing against it, I shall be glad to have you spend Sunday and Monday in retreat at Saint Laurent to prepare yourself for your first Mass. The novices no longer come to the Madeleine on Sundays, but Father Rothéa says Mass for them.[1]

You will be able to say another Mass in the morning on Christmas Day at the Madeleine, at which you will be assisted as at the one at midnight.

You will be able to receive Communion on Sunday and Monday, as your devotion will suggest.

M. Fleury, your supposed brother, will receive the holy priesthood in Paris at the same time as you receive it in Bordeaux. His vocation seems so certain that I am hoping the Archbishop of Paris will grant him his exeat. Pray for him.[2]

Submit the contents of this note to the Rev. Superior. Do only what may be agreeable to him. If he approves, you will inform Brother Auguste and Brother Clouzet regarding whatever may concern each of the two houses.[3]

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[1] Father Charles Rothéa was then a novice at St. Laurent.
[2] This postulant, about whom we have no further information, never entered the Society.
[3] Brother Auguste was director at Rue des Menuts and Brother Clouzet at St. Laurent.

May the Lord, in communicating to you the character of the holy priesthood, deign to give you also its spirit!

William Joseph Chaminade

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182 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, end of December, 1821

A pleasant good-day to my dear son David. I am exhorting him to continue his editing, so as to bring to fruition as much as possible whatever concerns our free primary schools. I can answer my Agen mail only by the carrier on Friday. There is no hurry on the delivery of the library. We can wait for drier weather. Still, we must not lose sight of it. Father Conne's 89th year is marked by new depths of infirmity.

Father Laugeay's letter may be sent to our little community on Rue des Menuts.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Pressed to introduce the Society in Alsace, Father Chaminade intended, before everything, to establish serious houses for formation in Bordeaux. He acquaints Brother Louis Rothéa in Ribeauvillé with his projects.

183 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, RIBEAUVILLÉ

Bordeaux, December 17, 1821

My dear child, it seems to me that 4,000 francs which your father would willingly lay aside in favor of the Institute would be used with greater advantage to free us here or to make some necessary acquisitions.

At this time I am in the act of acquiring the big house next to the Church of the Madeleine.[1] With this house, we have about everything that will be needed for this establishment. I think I have made the plan known to you. So that we can go to Alsace, we have to consolidate here and increase our members. The large house I have just spoken about will be destined especially for the studies of the young religious. Theological conferences will begin in the community on Rue des Menuts so that our young theologians will not have to go to the seminary. Patience!

The novitiate at Saint Laurent is doing well. On Sundays no one ever comes to the Madeleine now, either in the morning or the evening. We have all the church services there. Your brother does not cease blessing God for having led him to the Institute. I am asking him to keep you informed about all the details that might interest you. Even though he is in the novitiate, he can take notice of many things. Furthermore, I have kept nothing hidden from him. Our confidence is reciprocal.

Fulfill, my dear child, your functions well. You must be all the happier in your little mission, since it comes all the more to you from God. It seems, so to say, all divine. Apply yourself without ceasing to grow in the preparation virtues.

In your turn, you may begin to be strong in the consummation virtues, that the old man may be immolated, to the end that you may have the happiness of living sometime the life of the new man. I extend my arms towards you as if to embrace you and press you tenderly to my paternal heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

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To Father Mertian, who was already speaking of the fusion of his two Orders with Father Chaminade's, the latter answered.

[1] Nos. 8 and 10 on Rue Lalande, now demolished, which were successively the ecclesiastical novitiate of the Society until 1861 and the residence for chaplains of the Madeleine. See *Apôtre de Marie* X, p. 391.

184 – TO FATHER MERTIAN, RIBEAUVILLÉ

Bordeaux, December 17, 1821

Rev. Father, the letter that I had the honor of sending to you through Brother Rothéa was but a letter accompanying an obedience. It contained nothing essential, as far as I can remember. In it I gave you an account of some preparations for the obedience that I am giving him with this letter, which might have surprised you. It is evident, Father, that there can be no complete union between the Daughters of Mary and the Sisters of Providence. Just see for yourself, before God, whether, without making any change in constitutions of either, there could be a real alliance and a dependence. The Daughters of Mary, for example, would bring up, form, govern, withdraw, dismiss, etc., the Sisters of Providence, always with the agreement of the Superioress and the Sister Visitor. Everything might perhaps go well while you are still living, for it is you who, in a way, are training them, you who are supervising them, etc. Your zeal, your prudence, your activity are the mainspring which produces such a well-regulated and edifying an activity. But, the way I see the matter, the operation and support of the work of the Sisters of Providence would be just one of the duties of the Daughters of Mary. These are only general views, for I am not at all concerned about the details, the rule of life, and the way of observing it. See for yourself. Make a kind of inquest *de commodo et incommodo*.[1]

At another time I shall talk to you about the Brothers. In the meantime, if I have need of some other information, have the kindness to send it to me yourself or through Brother Rothéa.

Are you still intending to go to Paris next spring? If you do go, it might be possible that I could join you there. Until then, we might prepare whatever in the end we might have to settle. We might also make sure that the Prince of Croy,[1] now the Grand Almoner, would be in Paris at the same time as we. According to the ordinary run of things, we are to work separately, each in his proper field. Providence, which first brought us together, has, without doubt, more extensive views in the matter. Let us try to know and to second them. I an with respectful attachment, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Correspondence with Agen was not being neglected.

[1] The union was not to be, the goals and means of the two institutes being so different.
[1] The Bishop of Strasbourg.

185 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 20, 1821

. . . You are right in fearing to see subjects enter if it will be difficult to dismiss them once it is recognized that they have no vocation, or, which is about the same thing, once it is assured that they are not good material for the Institute. If I had known that Sister Angélique was the same person as the one who had a four-day crisis because her taking the habit was postponed, while I was with you, I would have spoken differently. Last month I would not have favored receiving her as a novice. I wish that, when I am consulted about a subject, clear explanations be given. I had declared some time ago, both to Sister Angélique and to all the Mothers of the Council, that she was not a fit subject for your community. It was only through indulgence that I consented to grant her a little time of trial, to see if the illness would return, thinking that she might not yet be cured. It would not require that much to dismiss a postulant or even a novice. I want firmness in dismissing and quite an amount of facility in granting permission to enter when subjects show good will and otherwise seem to have the required good qualities. One can repeat the tests, even for as long as a year. But this should be done only for some subjects who combine very good qualities with defects they have difficulty correcting. But these are rare. The novice mistress speaks from her too good heart rather than from her judgment.

Sister Suzanne, I imagine, is the real sister of Sister Catherine. Now, why keep such sick ones? Your convent is not a hospital for incurables. In case we have been mistaken or deceived, as in the present case, let us take the measures dictated by charity and prudence before any dismissal. That is all right, but we must also seriously take care to get rid of such subjects.

I should have said to the Good Mother what I am telling you here, but this letter will not be just for you two. You should make use of it only to the extent that she wishes.

May the Lord, my dear Daughter, shower upon you his blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The note which precedes was included in a letter to the superioress.

186 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 20, 1821

I am permitting you, my dear child—but only for this year—to sing Lauds after Matins on Christmas night. May you all have a very abundant share in the innumerable graces of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ! To prepare yourselves for this solemnity, try to enter into the dispositions of the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph who took five days on their way to Bethlehem . . .

I may have let myself go while answering Mother Saint Vincent. If you think I said too much, keep it to yourself. Just answer her about the 4,500 francs.

Father Mouran's observation to the effect that Rosine Malespine would be exposed in the world, ought to be taken into consideration. If the subject is really good, has a vocation, and if the reasons for which she would be exposed in the world do not become harmful to the community, she must be admitted, even if she has nothing.

Do not be afraid of being in want of subjects, and of good subjects, for the Sister companions. Patience! This reminds me to send you a copy of a letter one of our good novices, a young theologian, wrote to his older sister who was to join the Sisters of Charity. A little courage, my dear child, and firmness!

William Joseph Chaminade

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January 10, 1822, is the date of two letters from Brother David's pen. Only the end of the first and the P.S. of the second are by Father Chaminade. They are addressed, one to the novices and the other to the Sister companions of Agen, answering their good wishes and greetings for the New Year.

186A – TO THE SISTER NOVICES OF
THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY, AGEN

Bordeaux, January 10, 1822

My dear Daughters, I bring you all together in my offerings to God, as you have been united in expressing your good wishes to me. My paternal affection bears equally upon each and every one of you. If God deigns to hear me, there will not be any among you who will not one day be in heaven among the virgins who will accompany the divine Mary and who will cast their crowns before the Lamb. Your Institute is the way which is to lead you there. The preparation virtues are, in the Institute, what has formed great saints elsewhere. The virtues of purification are proposed to the predestined; the third order of virtues, the virtues of consummation, are the virtues of Jesus Christ and of Mary.

Let not the grandeur of these views astonish you. They are the views of God, who, by his grace, will give you what is needed to carry them out. Trust in grace. It has brought you where you are, and it will there reveal to you its light and its sweetness, a foretaste of what is being prepared for you in heaven. Live in humility, in obedience, in struggle, glorifying God both interiorly and exteriorly.

I shall come, my dear Daughters, as I have promised, to strengthen you, to help you, according to the strength God will deign to grant his unworthy minister, who burns with zeal for his service and charity for the souls capable of honoring him. Let us adopt this sign of union: “Glory to God in the highest and peace upon the earth to all those who are of good will” . . .

I say this again in my own hand: I ask of God, from the bottom of my heart, that this year and the rest of your days he may shower you with his ineffable blessings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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186B – TO THE SISTER COMPANIONS,
DAUGHTERS OF MARY, AGEN

Bordeaux, January 10, 1822

My dear daughters, I receive with satisfaction your New Year greetings and the ardent wishes you express for my welfare. I offered you all to Jesus Christ and to the divine Mary on the first day of the year. I have asked of them, for you all and for each one in particular, all the graces you need. I asked both for your known and your unknown needs, for all that the mercy of God could grant you. If my prayers are accepted, you will advance more than ever on the path of salvation. Your Mothers and Superioresses will have but to approve you and then remain silent.

So that this may happen, my dear Daughters, doubtless the grace of God is needed, but the help of your good will is also necessary. Take the firm resolution to follow the inspirations of

your Institute and the admonitions of your Superioresses without hesitation, without reserve, for the love of Jesus Christ and because the will of this divine Master is that we be guided by his representatives.

You ask for my prayers for the purpose of obtaining many virtues: a greater humility than in the past, the practice of obedience, a love for labor, respect for your Mothers, union among yourselves, the mutual support of your characters. Why would I refuse you, when you all and each one of you has the same rights upon me that a daughter has upon her father. I am the mediator between you and Jesus Christ just as Jesus Christ is the mediator between mankind and his eternal father. My dear Daughters, I then grant you the prayers that you request.

There are six virtues, six qualities to obtain, according to your request. Then, unite your prayers to mine with fervor, and Heaven will not be inexorable. We shall follow the order that I indicate. We shall begin on Monday, the 14th of this month and finish on Saturday, and on the next day (Sunday the 20th) you will try to receive Communion and you will return thanks to God. On my part, I shall not forget to say my prayer, according to the same intention: Monday the 14th, for greater humility; Tuesday the 15th, for the practice of obedience; Wednesday, the 16th, to obtain the love of labor; Thursday, the 17th, for the maintenance of respect towards the Mothers; Friday the 18th, for union among all of you; Saturday the 19th, for mutual endurance of your defects; Sunday the 20th, thanksgiving and Holy Communion.

As a result, you will take care to maintain the growth in virtue which God has given to each.

I pardon you from the abundance of my heart past faults, as I count on your resolutions to do better in the future. If you are faithful to this agreement, my dear Daughters, I am authorized by our divine Master to promise you numberless blessings. I am doing it with all the joy of a fatherly heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. As regards prayers and practices for each of seven days: 1) the prayer of St. Bernard. The Memorare and three *Ave Marias* in honor of the three relations of the august Mary with the adorable Trinity; 2) two acts of each virtue, corresponding to the day; 3) several acts of the virtue of the day. I am taking note of everything so that I myself may know what to do each day.

* * * *

The reputation of the schools of Agen is spreading already beyond the limits of the Department of Lot-et-Garonne. The Sub-Prefect of Lectoure, in the Department of Gers, asked Father Chaminade to open a similar school. Here is the Founder's reply.

187 – TO THE VICOMTE OF LASTIC,
SUB-PREFECT OF LECTOURE

Bordeaux, January 12, 1822

M. Sub-Prefect: I am very appreciative of all the kind things in your letter of December 30 concerning the free schools.

I can only second your desires for a similar institution for the citizens under your charge. I see no irremovable obstacles in the way your wish speaks for itself. Your name, M. Sub-Prefect, and your rights to public esteem would receive the highest endorsement from me. Nevertheless, I am very glad to have the occasion to recall Father Elicagaray, as you wished. His kind attentions flatter me—I can refuse him nothing.[1] But it is true that I did not have the opportunity of seeing him at the time of his last stop in this city. He was not feeling well and stayed only a short time. I was not told of his arrival soon enough. For a number of reasons, I was not able to come to his house until the moment after he had just left. However, it is sufficient for me to know that he holds this thing close to his heart, just as you do, M. Sub-Prefect. I do not lose sight of the fact.

I am not yet free from administrative responsibilities in the Lot-et-Garonne. The decisions of the Councils are not final, as we still await some answers from the Ministers. I must hold to my promises.

But, supposing that I am finally free from my promise concerning the Lot-et-Garonne, it doesn't seem that your city is in a position to furnish a suitable locale. Such is always a condition for holding assemblies of the children. The professors would also need living space. Space needs for the classes turn out to be greater than is generally thought. A fifty to sixty foot classroom is not too big. It would be full and would have to be furnished. Two other classrooms half as big would also be needed. The method we follow calls for three different rooms so that the teaching can be well heard, accelerated and without breaks.

If other necessary conditions are not met by the Commune and its financial aid, it is likely help could come from some of those fine ladies who are always on the lookout for good to do. I would consider it an honor to be of any help to them.

You can see from these few words, M. Sub-Prefect, what would have to be done. Your influence and example better than anything else can procure for your people the desired help.

[1] Fr. Elicagaray (1760-1822) originally from Bayonne, fled to Spain during the Revolution. He returned to France under the Directory and under the Restoration, was named to the Royal Council of Public Instruction. At that time he was busy visiting the universities in the south of France.

Good schools will be a source of prosperity for the state, the pledge of public tranquility, and the assurance of happiness for families in the days just ahead. But I don't need to point out to you their real usefulness, for the care you have taken to bring them about tells us your thoughts as well as your love for good institutions.

Please accept, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following letter brings us back to the affairs of Alsace.

188 – TO LOUIS ROTHÉA, RIBEAUVILLÉ

Bordeaux, January 25, 1822

I speak again to you, my dear child. If I do not write oftener or at greater length, you know the reason. All hesitation would cease and I would run to you if you had some serious personal trouble. A tender and altogether fraternal affection will follow you wherever you happen to be even if you are on the other side of the world. Its constancy and permanence are assured by the very perpetuity of our friendship.

Father Mertian seemed surprised to be receiving so few letters from me, but if he is willing to reflect a little, he will see that it was not necessary that I write more. He was also surprised that your obedience was for only one year. You did not remember that the little letter I enclosed with you gave him the reason for that. While writing it, I kept in mind both his request and my answer. I kept account of the matter from day to day. You know that I keep a copy of all letters that refer to some agreement, so much am I interested in fulfilling my part exactly. We must give him no anxiety in this matter. What kind of rapport would we have if some doubt or mistrust arose concerning the frankness and loyalty of our promises?

An alliance with the Institute of Mary, whether it be with the Brothers whose novitiate you are directing or with the Sisters of Providence, is a very serious matter. I might also say it is especially difficult and delicate because of the distances involved and the two languages spoken in Alsace. But since I am aware of the very great good for religion that could result from a union I do not refuse if it is possible to come to an agreement which would give us the necessary freedom to do real good in these provinces, according to the spirit of our Institute. I am so certain that we have found the means of restoring Christian morals, of propagating the spirit of religion and of opposing with strong barriers the seductive and corrupting torrent of philosophism that I would never suffer it to be denatured or even weakened. The simplest approach would be to merge the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine and the Sisters of Providence with the Institute of Mary and charge the latter with the task of realizing, in its own way, the ends and purposes of the two other Institutes.

Father Mertian seemed inclined to give his Institute of Brothers to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. It is not up to me to say anything for or against this project. Father Mertian must know his own mind for the Institution he founded. He must know the interior and exterior regimen of these respected Brothers. We neither can nor should we think that he can determine all the serious consequences of a union without a careful examination of the entire question. It seems a bit strange that Father Mertian, to attract these brothers to Alsace, should have acted in the manner he did. I think I am completely indifferent as to what course he will decide to follow. May the will of God be done and may his greatest glory be procured! When I permit myself for a moment to imagine his union as an accomplished fact, I experience some joy, from the point of view of grace. From the natural point of view, I fear more than I desire that Father Mertian is leaving the entire matter in our hands. You doubtless understand that from the moment the union of your Brothers with the Brothers of the Christian Schools is completed, your mission will cease and that you will have as much pleasure in coming back as we shall have in receiving you. . . .

Your brother is taking it upon himself to answer different sections from your interesting letters. What he will surely not tell you is that fervor reigns in our little novitiate. Oh, how I wish, my child, that you also grow in the practice of the religious virtues! How I wish you to become a saint! Let us count as synonymous the expressions saint and child of Mary! May the paternal blessing I am giving you here, with a full heart, produce this happy effect!

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. The printed information about the Constitution of the Society that I permit you to give to the two worthy ecclesiastics you mentioned is to be understood in this sense: 1) that they themselves are not to pass it on to others; 2) that they are to make no copies of it. They may keep it several days and think it over, and if they should want to give us their opinion of it in writing, we would be very grateful.

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Let us cite, among many others, a sample of the correspondence relative to the affiliation of the Sodalities. We shall note the kind of role assigned to the director: the Sodality is to be the work of the sodalists themselves. This is the condition of their vitality.

189 – TO FATHER FOZIÈDE,
DIRECTOR OF THE SODALITY OF PAU

Bordeaux, February 10, 1822

I have the satisfaction of sending you herewith the documents relative to the founding and affiliation of the Women's Sodality of your city, consisting of: 1) The letters of founding and affiliation; 2) The nomination of Mlle de Courrèges as Prefect; 3) A general instruction, such as has been used until today; 4) The duties of the sodalists; 5) Your brief of nomination, subject to the authorization of the Ordinary.

Apart from the conditions herein enclosed, I must warn you particularly in regard to two things. The first is that in the meetings of similar sodalities, you are to be only the moderator, the counselor, the director, to prevent evil and promote good, without taking any part in anything concerning civil engagements. The second relates to the formula you are to apply to each new member, before his reception, the indulgences granted by the Bulls of the Sovereign Pontiffs. . . .

I beg of you kindly to etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

The following letter allows us to enter into the intimacy of the Founder's family life. Father Chaminade had his sister Lucrèce (1759-1825) with him. She had been widowed after a year of being married to M. Laulanie, a lawyer in Parliament. She kept house for him and shared his works of zeal and charity. François Lala sends them a bag of chestnuts and a turkey stuffed with truffles, specialties of Périgord. Father Chaminade thanks him but profits by the occasion to give a lesson of Christian life to Firmin, his grandnephew, who had left the boarding school on Rue des Menuts and returned to his family.

190 – TO M. FRANÇOIS LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, February 15, 1822

I am quite ashamed, my dear nephew, always to be obliged to excuse my long delays in answering your letters. What is to be done? I have to make up my mind to accept this shame, although it is often difficult, especially in regard to those I especially care for like you, Sophie, Firmin, and, although I have never seen her, Mlle Mondesse and several others living elsewhere.

Whether from your complaints or from the stirring of his own conscience, the boatman of Libourne saw to it that I got the bag of chestnuts you had the goodness to send me. I also received the turkey stuffed with truffles in good condition, the one you put on the coach for me. We have given it all the honors it deserved. We ate it with gratitude and in memory of you.

I hope that Firmin will keep the promises he made me, that we shall see a man and a Christian in him yet. I would like him some day to tell me honestly what he understands by being a man and a Christian. Could it be that we would both see such important things in the same manner?

I offer you the assurance of all my affection.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My sister always joins me when I send you regards. The same to Sophie, Firmin, and Mlle Mondesse.

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Here are two letters addressed to Agen, remarkable for their counsels concerning certain difficult subjects.

191 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 19, 1822

We are celebrating today, my dear child, the feast of our glorious patron St. Joseph. In spite of the pleasant and sometimes the unpleasant occupations of this feast, I want to write you a few words. I hope to speak longer for you before the good God than I shall speak to you in this letter.

We must never drive to the limit those who get excited and fly into a tantrum in time of temptation or crisis. When they are calm, we must speak to them seriously and make them understand that the Institute cannot keep such subjects. If they want to leave as a result of this declaration, saying they can't hold back, the doors must be opened for them. If they say, on the contrary, that these crises will not happen again but that they will control themselves, that etc., it is necessary to wait but to promise them trials. At a new crisis, the same representations, the same liberty, etc. If they promise again, patience until the third crisis. But when the third crisis has passed, then no more grace.

The motive for patience comes from the fact that, in their times of crisis, most persons preserve enough liberty, at least at the beginning of the outbursts, to master themselves. I know several persons who cured themselves by certain restrictions imposed on them by myself or other experienced persons. Some who experienced distressing crises have admitted to me that they maintained their liberty, that they were not angered over such conditions, and that there was even fun or malice involved.

According to these principles, you can come to a decision in the case of Sister Rose and others of the same kind. These persons must be well persuaded that their superiors know their tricks or, if they prefer, the wiles of the devil who is tempting them.

You will be able to make an application of the same principles to Sister Angélique. Melancholy characters can be corrected, especially in the first stages. I have already had experience of this. But they must have a certain strength of soul and great confidence in their guides. In the first place, they must be well instructed about their trouble and persuaded that their cure depends on themselves.

Today's feast now calls me to the church. Furthermore, the mail is about to leave. I shall not forget our dear Daughter Thérèse of St. Augustine.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am not rereading what I have written. I have received the box of prunes with gratitude.

* * * *

192 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 22, 1822

My dear child, I am returning to your recent letters. I preferred to answer them myself rather than leave them to M. David. Answers are hardly needed by the time he is ready to give them.[1] As regards Mlle Gayet and all those who have similar defects, one must be careful not to antagonize them. It is from themselves, so to speak, that the energy must proceed to correct themselves. It must not be an energy that is imposed on them but one inspired by the love of obedience. No outside effort really corrects them. They must do that themselves. Toward this end, they must know their defects, the influence these have upon the bodily health, and the way they must go about the task of gaining mastery. I am not sure who will need the greater patience, the superiors or the subjects.

While rereading, my dear child, the little you tell me about Sister Félicité, it seems to me that you and the mistress of novices ought to accustom yourselves, as did St. Thérèse, to know characters well, their defects and the remedies for the same. If you do not succeed in this or succeed only poorly, then you might consult me.

I shall say only one word about restless characters. They are such, ordinarily, only because they do not find in themselves the energy which activates, urges on, or excites them, etc. If, little by little, you could lead them on to act only by faith, to live but by faith! Faith is in us a powerful source of energy.

I cannot understand why Mother St. Vincent should find fault with Sister of the Incarnation, who devotes one hour each day to a correspondence prompted by zeal. I imagine it is doubtless because she is still in the novitiate. This reason, in general, is good, but it might well not be applicable to this Sister, who has already been the treasure of several novitiates and who is a novice, so to say, only as a matter of form, and through humility. Furthermore, this correspondence, prompted solely by zeal, is entirely within the spirit of the Institute. When the novices are really zealous, when they have enjoyed great consideration in the places they come from, their correspondence may become very useful, even more than if we waited until they are professed religious. It is easy to guess the reason.

I follow this manner of proceeding for the men, but one must be careful not to act awkwardly.

[1] He is so tardy with correspondence.

There can be only usefulness from the correspondence, at intervals, of the Sister companions with their parents, provided that all these letters are inspired by zeal. There would be few letters not producing great good if their writer had the holy motives of charity.

May the good God, my dear child, make you very wise and prudent!

William Joseph Chaminade

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In the spring of 1822, Father Chaminade, seeing the novitiate full of good subjects, consented all the more willingly to push the matter of the free schools. He was asked to open them in various places, even beyond Lot-et-Garonne. He then charged Brother David to go to these places and negotiate the successive acceptance of the various schools that had been requested. He also confided to him the care of preparing a brief account of the Institution of Free Schools that could be presented for royal approbation without raising the difficulty of the religious character of the teachers.

Brother David left for Agen in the early part of April 1822, and stopped at the office of M. Lacoste, Counselor of the Prefecture and devoted friend of the Institute.

The following letters show us how Father Chaminade, not without difficulty, followed and directed the overtures of his representative. Brother David was cleverer at starting an enterprise than in maintaining it: in the face of difficulties he became troubled and discouraged.

193 - TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 16, 1822

My dear son, I shall not tell you the pleasure your letters cause me, not only because they give news about matters that interest me, but just because they are your letters. But let us get down to business.

The newspapers were doubtless mistaken in stating that the mayor of Villeneuve was in Paris, in the Chamber of Deputies, since you last met him in Villeneuve.[1] There was nothing doing in that town.[2] Let us hope this is now changed. It was then very essential for you to be there. It is said that it would be up to us to give them a principal for their school. I think they are right, and I would be very much in favor of giving them Father Collineau. He is suited for the post, and it is better to deprive ourselves, even to pinch ourselves, so that Villeneuve be well provided for. I see very few serious reasons against but all sorts of reasons for this move. If you don't see any more inconveniences than I, you may arrange

[1] M. Vassal de Montviel, Deputy of Lot-et-Garonne.
[2] In Villeneuve, a remark of Brother David.

the matter. Nevertheless, I need not tell you that it is important that the merchandise be given at its true value . . .

I understood that it was with M. Lacoste, provisional prefect, that you were going to treat the matter of approbation for the Institution of the Free Schools. The little plan based on your given authority[1] seems clear to me: Agen, center of the Institution, Bordeaux center of the direction. But the Institution probably should not be confined to the Department of Lot-et-Garonne. You might think it suitable to make mention of the requests from various Departments and particularly from the sub-prefect of Lectoure, Department of Gers.[2] Glory to Agen, to its worthy prelate, to the prefect, to the mayor, to the general Council of the Department! It would be very fine if M. Lacoste found his real place there.

It is very surprising that with 9,000 francs we do not dare to undertake a work calling for 12,000 francs. But I must put an end to my remarks, for they might be looked upon as those of a man who is no longer of this world and who cannot form for himself an idea of the progress of affairs. I want to keep thinking that the debt at Agen is little increased by what M. Laugeay would have thought useful and convenient. Nevertheless, the thing must be thoroughly examined. . . .

The frost here has done great harm, especially in Saint Laurent. It is said that Mélac has suffered next to nothing.

We must always put a good face on things and not let anyone notice our embarrassment as befits persons who are wise, discreet, and well-intentioned.

The good God always wants to test our confidence in him. Concerning the last bill for a thousand francs, which fell due last February 28, I came to see a way of paying it only on the eve, the 27th. The thousand francs were charged to me only an hour and a half before payment. The good God did not act in the same way with regard to the 3,000 francs that I have to pay to the MM. Lassime on May 5. He has just sent them to me by a person whom I would have believed it my duty to give money to than to ask for some.

I am almost determined, in spite of this lack of funds, to arrange for a dormitory for the novitiate at Saint Laurent. I see all kinds of reasons for this. Only our lack of funds argues against it. I gave up the idea of having one built over the storage shed. I would like to have the older part of the building raised, the part that comprises the kitchen, the parlor, and my room, length 63 feet, width 20 feet. Building over the shed would end by costing more and would offer no advantages—it would deprive the house of garrets, pantries, etc. By raising the house itself, we would have exactly the opposite results.

[1]Authorization given Bro. David at the time he left Bordeaux.
[2]See Letter 187.

At the end you say: “The Constitution of the Institute did not receive a smiling welcome.” From this sentence, I understand nothing else than, having spoken to the prefect of our desire to have the institution at Agen approved, you also talked about its dependence on the Institute.[3] However the case may be, let us work only for the glory of God, for the support of religion, according to whatever measure of wisdom the Holy Spirit inspires us with and without our awaiting the approval of men. In choosing us as instruments of his mercies, the good God arranges all for our own salvation, and that is the main reason for this continual alternation of trials and consolation, of successes and reverses.

I must leave you now. I desire for you, my dear son, the two-fold peace that our Lord Jesus Christ wished to his disciples on the day of his resurrection.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I have the honor of greeting M. and Mme Lacoste and their entire family.

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194 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 18, 1822

I have, my dear son, no further observations about Villeneuve. You have done well to replace the officers of the men’s Sodality. May this renewal bring about a revival of zeal and fervor. Be, I beg of you, the interpreter of my sentiments, both with the officers and with the entire Sodality.

More and more I feel the necessity of spending some time at the convent of the Daughters of Mary, almost solely occupied in forming and instructing, in reforming abuses, dispelling illusions, etc. Patience! Always patience!

Mlle Rangouse, called Sister Anastasia, has just written me by this mail to ask permission to come to the convent from time to time during her stay with her parents. She doesn’t give me her new address. I would have answered her directly if she had taken this precaution. I shall be obliged to you if you will let her know about it and that, furthermore, although I am convinced that she would not abuse the permission, I cannot go contrary to the orders I have just given. I nevertheless permit her to come once, during her absence, to the convent of Tonneins to see the good Mother Thérèse and to receive her counsels.

[3]Fr. Chaminade meant to have only the free schools approved, not the Society of Mary itself.

Nothing extraordinary here. The elder Brother Rothéa gives evidence to many of the anxiety in Alsace over not having received an answer to Father Mertian's propositions.

Several young priests are asking to enter the Institute of Mary. I have accepted one definitively, along with a young man who is highly praised. The exeats and substitutes are not easily obtained.

I wish you, my dear son, a great increase in this beautiful life of faith which the children of Mary should live by. Our young religious in general are still really novices from this important point of view.

William Joseph Chaminade

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195 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 26, 1822

I have not written you, my dear son, these last few days because I thought you had left Agen last Monday as you told me you would. I have nothing to say about Villeneuve. Do for the Sodality what your wisdom suggests.

If the Mother Superior has signed only what I agreed upon with Larodère,[1] I don't see where the inconvenience to your arrangement of the classes is coming from. But it is evident, as we have seen, that the facilities are too small, either for the schools or for the Sodalities. So that we may have peace and order, we should reserve the big parlor for the Ladies of the Retreat. In case of need, the Third Order might be added, since its meeting times do not conflict with the Ladies. In the meantime, and always with patience, if we must have schools built, workshops and large halls for the young people's Sodality and for the meetings of the young people of the Grand Catechism, we'll have to do what we can.

However difficult Larodère's character may seem, I think we can succeed in getting along with him concerning the part of the convent he occupies. We would have to agree on seeming to have obligations toward him and would have to be willing to make sacrifices at the same time. We can control carefully the sacrifices already made and almost certainly as a result of this, we will have the opportunity to develop the greater part of the convent's works in good order.

Try to determine well all the characteristics of the place that would work against regularity and what changes might be made. As far as possible none of the activities of the community should be hampered: *Omne violentum non est durabile*. We must not lose sight of the fact that facilities large enough for a sizable community are needed. Having arranged everything, you will inform me at the time of my first visit, and I shall see to it that all the necessary and possible changes are made.

For the time being, I see that there is nothing to expect from the convent for the other institutions. On the contrary, it would need help—but I suppose that with prudence it could get along by itself.

[1] Apparently a matter of vacating a part of the convent which was still occupied by a troublesome tenant.

I am coming back to the subject of Larodère. I should wish that, without seeming to have great need of his place and especially without seeming to be in a hurry, he nevertheless could be persuaded to move elsewhere. If I tried to do so last summer, it was only a matter of respect and also, without doubt, of a kind of prejudice against him caused by the little suit he filed against the Good Mother. I don't think that, with this place, we shall be dispensed from building, but it is evident that we shall not be in a hurry, that, etc. . . .

You speak to me, my dear son, in a very alarming manner about the free schools for boys. But I can say nothing about generalities. They give us no clue about how to remedy the evil—or rather all the evils, the disorders you have witnessed. It is because of a double evil—or rather, a whole variety of evils—that the disorder in the Agen institution makes you forget about the disorders of the establishment at Alsace. It would seem rather that you should have more understanding about how to prevent these disorders in the future. If we delay answering any longer it is to be presumed that the enterprise will fail and with it a certain number of others.

Necessity obliges me to stop here. I shall come back later to what you say about the pupils to be sent.[1] Nothing is pressing in this matter. I embrace you tenderly. Take care not to be too busy, but take all the more care not to be discouraged. I note with pleasure that you need to pray, provided that while having recourse to prayer, you not lay down your arms . . . I embrace you tenderly.

William Joseph Chaminade

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196 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 30, 1822

. . . You say, *there is no management in the free schools. Each one in them does and orders as he pleases*. Here you have the evil or the source of the evil. But isn't there the management that you have created? If this management has broken down, if each one does and orders as he pleases, can't you straighten what has become crooked, check the abuses, restore the management to its first energy? Can you not work out a method to bring them back to the point where the deviation started? Is there incapacity or lack of docility in the subjects? If they have made mistakes, if they have made indiscreet and enormous expenses doubtless we must bear with them, but shouldn't they be punished? If the subjects are unruly or recalcitrant, can they not be replaced? But it is hard for me to believe this of them. If you don't think you have enough authority to correct everything, why don't you tell me in all simplicity to order or to forbid this or that thing? If, after having regulated

[1] A reference to the postulants from Agen, destined for the novitiate at St. Laurent.

everything, you fear that the rule coming directly from you is not sufficiently respected, why don't you have it sent to me so as to give it an appropriate sanction? If you are about to leave—well, at the time of your arrival, tell me all about it. You ought to know my intentions.

It is very hard to understand, my dear son, why you should have been told only the day before yesterday about a building to be put up against the wall and even on the wall of enclosure? Is it not possible they were afraid of your veracity and told you about the evil only after it had gone to an extreme? Whatever the case may be, we must doubtless bring to the situation all the mediating still possible always with wisdom and moderation.

Let us do what we can, but always with patience, always with submission to the dispositions of Providence.

Before the Revolution, the Ursulines of Périgueux experienced the same inconvenience. They wanted to oppose it but had to yield. I know, as you are well aware, precious little about the civil laws, but here is what I think: 1) We must make use of all the right of opposition we might have, only after we have had the best counsels of the city, and we must make these widely known. 2) We must see if we cannot prevent the harm, whether we might not be able to raise a wall of enclosure in this part or at least put up a counterwall. 3) If our rights are questionable, then we must try to come to an agreement. 4) If these neighboring buildings were not very advanced, we might suspect that they have been undertaken only to oblige the religious to buy, at a great price, what they might have had for 3,500 francs.

How many pupils are there, ready to come to Bordeaux as postulants? I have never thought there might be more than two or three. I do not understand that, if they lacked absolutely everything, more than 100 francs per head and possibly far less would be needed to make ends meet. We are really in straits here. I have not begun the building at Saint Laurent, as the expenses frighten me. I want to be forced by necessity: then without fear, I would go ahead.

I have just received good news from Colmar and from Paris. So far I have gone over the report only rapidly and have not yet had time to reread this letter. Thus, I am far from being able to give you this news by the present mail. . . .

You are probably reserving for yourself the pleasure of surprising me agreeably with the approbation of our institution.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

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In the meantime, the Founder was receiving excellent news from Alsace. On the one hand, Father Mertian urged him to consent to the fusion of their respective Orders and on the other hand, Father Maimbourg, pastor in the city of Colmar, expressed the desire to have the Daughters of Mary for a boarding school and some religious of the Society for the communal collège.

Father Louis Maimbourg (1773-1854), a native of Ribeauvillé, ordained priest in 1796 in Lucerne by the Nuncio Gravina, secretary of Bishop Saurine and Canon of Strasbourg (1803), pastor of Obernal (1811) and of Colmar (1814), honorary Vicar-General of the Upper Rhine (1827), played a role of the first rank in the Church of Alsace for half a century.

A man of superior ability, he exercised an almost episcopal influence in the Upper Rhine and, in the familiar expression of Father Louis Rothéa, "held all the authorities of the Department in his pocket." He had the most intimate relationship with Father Chaminade from this time on. It is thanks to his collaboration that the Society was introduced and developed in Alsace. "Of all the good I was able to do in Colmar," he declared a few days before his death to a religious of the Society, Brother Jacques Thomann, "what gives me the greatest joy now is to have introduced the Brothers of Mary. Your Founder was a man enlightened in the ways of God, an incomparable director of souls. He was a saint, and he formed saints." (See the *Apôtre de Marie* XVI, p. 231)

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197 – TO FATHER MAIMBOURG,
PASTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, May 9, 1822

Reverend Father, the information Father Rothéa gave me about the letter you sent him gave me real pleasure. In spite of my desire to have the Institute of Mary render service in Alsace—all over Alsace—I feel a secret reluctance to start foundations so far away from here without help, without support, especially foundations involving religious women. The style of the proposal and the frankness that you assume in your letter embolden me much. Our establishments would have in you, I have no reason to doubt it, a steadfast protector. I am going to propose with simplicity some reflections on certain points in your letter.

1. I am very glad that Father Mertian promised you Brothers for the opening of classes. I shall see to it that your Christian schools get along well. This part of the undertakings of the Institute of Mary gives me great consolation. The good God is showering very abundant blessings on these budding institutions. The method that we follow attains a double object that we propose to ourselves, instructions and moral and Christian education. You know, I am sure, of my rapport with Father Mertian. With little or no apparent shifting, the two institutions really form only one. Father Mertian will continue to be the Superior of the novitiate and of all the schools to be opened in Alsace. Our union would have already been consummated some time ago if my private secretary hadn't been so busy and if when the moment of union was almost at hand I had not been obliged to

send him to the Prefect of the Lot-et-Garonne. The General Council there had petitioned and granted funds for several new establishments. But it is here that the following words may be applied: *Non est periculum in mora*.

2. I shall never consent to send religious Sisters, if the Sisters of Providence would have to suffer as a result. . . .

Rev. Father, you apparently wish that the first foundation be made a league from Colmar. That seems to be out in the country. I want whatever you want, because I am persuaded that you want only the greatest good after having thoroughly searched it out. In the country, who will be their chaplain and confessor? In the country, what will the religious Sisters have to do? In the country, no Sodality, no Third Order, no schools, no workshops, etc. No meetings of any kind. The most they could have would be a boarding school or a novitiate, and what expenses would have to be made if it is a boarding school! Would it not be better, as a start, to make these expenses in the city—for example, to enlarge if possible the house occupied by the Sisters of Providence? The more room you give them, the more they can do good to the different classes of people, to groups of their own sex, from childhood to the most advanced age, from beggars to the most advantaged—and all with order and without confusion. The good fortune of founders is sufficient, with your protection, to go ahead. Let us recognize, anyhow, all that Providence reserves for an establishment in which all the members breathe only for its glory! What further benefit there would be if the collège were directed by religious of the same Institute! . . .

Here you have, Rev. Father, the few reflections that your letter suggests to me. They will be much improved by those you will be kind enough to make. You are too discerning not to see the happy results these first establishments will bring along for all of Alsace. I am as yet taking on no obligation, but I shall willingly do so with you when the proper time comes. My correspondence in Alsace has made me realize your great merits.

I am with profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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At the same time that he was arranging for the introduction of the Institute of Mary in Alsace, Father Chaminade didn't believe he should let the opportunity of installing his religious in the sanctuary of Verdelais slip by. Archbishop d'Aviau had just acquired the church and the old convent of the Celestines with the intention of making of it a house of retreat for the aged priests of the diocese (See Letter 124). So the Founder, through the mediation of Father Barrès, the Vicar-General, was making known to him his humble and confiding offers to this effect.

198 – TO FATHER BARRÈS,

VICAR- GENERAL OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 3, 1822

Reverend Father, I am taking the liberty of putting in this envelope unsealed the letter I am addressing to the archbishop.

If the proposition I have the honor of making to him coincides with your views, I beg you to seal the envelope, give it to him, and assist with reasons of your own. You will not be leading His Excellency into error by presuming for him all the most favorable reasons. Might it be supposed, for example, that an institute that devotes itself in such a particular manner to the Blessed Virgin will always make the greatest effort to honor her in one of her most distinguished sanctuaries in the diocese where it was born?

If His Excellency and yourself have agreed upon some other plan, have the kindness, I beg of you, to return my letter, and I shall no longer speak of the matter.

I have learned that the trustees of the city parishes and, perhaps even the Rev. Pastors themselves, murmured against the archbishop's order for the deduction of 1/6 of their revenue. I have not read the order, but if it refers to Verdelais, His Excellency would have, in accepting our services a motive for lowering his expectations without appearing to go backward. The trustees seem to consent willingly to 1/12 or even to 1/10. However poor we may be, we would be saddened by the prospect of supporting this effort through a dependency on the other churches. We would doubtless receive the offerings given there, but only those inspired by piety. If the good God asks this work of us, we shall willingly undertake it, for we have no fear that providence will ever fail us.

It is with this same confidence that I am going to make the needed repairs on the Madeleine. I am seeking to carry out, little by little, the project of a mission house you once had the kindness to speak to me about. I am also going to have new buildings put up in the country[1] for we no longer know where to put the beds. May religion always continue to bring about new triumphs in our unhappy country! This is the sole desire of my heart! I am with profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Saint Laurent.

199 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 3, 1822

Your Excellency: For some time now I have been habitually occupied with the idea of the former splendor of Verdelais, of the need to restore it, and of my duty to offer you, to this effect, the services of the Institute of Mary, however feeble these may be.

Before making the acquisition of this old monastery you smiled at the project that I presented to you.[1] As I have since come to believe you had other views, I no longer dared to speak to you about it. Now were I to consult only my actual means, I should continue to hold myself aloof from this enterprise. For the moment I can only offer you two priests, and even that hampers my own operations. They are both good religious—one of them you could name officiating pastor and the other as assistant. The younger of the two priests has already exercised the holy ministry, both as assistant and as pastor. This is Father Rothéa. Besides that, he knows how to play the organ. In Verdelais, he could train a few in this art. To help the singing and give the exercises of religion at least an initial dignity, they could bring along two young postulants, both very pious and with good voices. I have reason to look forward to an increase in the number of subjects. I also have confidence that our Lord will send us still greater means to have his august Mother duly honored.

If, Your Excellency, you see no rashness in the enterprise I have the honor of suggesting here; if the mediocrity of our forces and of our means does not alarm you; if, furthermore, you are willing to second our efforts with your protection, I shall have the honor of seeing you and discussing with you and Father Barrès the best way to carry out our plans promptly. *Ad majorem Dei gloriam Virginisque Deiparae*.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The project did not happen. Apparently the archbishop's advisers were opposed to it. The older of the two priests proposed by Father Chaminade seems to have been Father Bouet, an old friend and spiritual son of the Founder who had become a Trappist at Saint Suzanne in Aragon and who had been expelled from his monastery by the revolutionary government of Spain. Father Bouet had just returned to Bordeaux (see later Letter 208).

[1] In 1819.

He is referred to in the following letter which shows us the progress made by the Little Society and permits us to glimpse hopes cherished for the future by Father Chaminade. It is these manifest blessings of Providence that justify his founding projects.

200 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, June 7, 1822

My dear son, my pleasure over the news of the dispatches from Villeneuve is quite tempered by the inconceivable delays involved in this affair. Doubtless we must have patience, but we must also keep alert so as not to let any other establishment work its way through the same methods, if it is possible. Won't the Prefect's decree cause new delays? Nothing is begun yet and undoubtedly nothing will begin until after the contract is awarded.

I imagine then, my dear son, that you are suffering from all the delays that you find yourself unable to prevent and that you suffer all the more because your absence hinders other matters that are still more important, at least in their totality. Father Mertian is very much put out at not having even an answer. Does he perhaps consider himself compromised in the matter? I have certainly tried to make excuses for the first delays, but how can I excuse their interminable prolongation? The disorder of our administration will always be evident no matter what precautions we take to hide it.

When can I leave on my journey to Agen and the Haut-pays? I cannot yet settle on a date. I have at least three other things that must be settled: Verdelais (that has come up again), the raising of the novitiate buildings, which I have finally arranged for; and the beginning of a community at the Madeleine.[1]

The tenant of the house on Rue de Lalande has just left, while the one at the Montesquieu[2] has just about half made up her mind to leave too. We have honored all the signs that were outside, but there are large holes to be stopped up, there is Tonneins, but—everything must be provided for before I leave, if at all possible.

It may be that, if you come quickly, I may free myself promptly enough. Is it possible for me to lodge at the Grand or the Little Seminary despite the priests' retreat which may well coincide with my stay in Agen? Father Maurel[3] would surely like this coincidence.

I am planning to take Father Caillet along. He is now here in the novitiate. Father Caillet is that old friend of Father Rothéa, director of the Seminary of Porrentruy, whose name has come up several times among us. His Lordship the Bishop, Prince of Bâle, has

[1] See Letter 198.
[2] Doubtless intended to replace the boarding school on Rue des Menuts, which had become too small.
[3] Missionary of Bordeaux and great friend of Fr. Chaminade, who directed the priests' retreats in Agen.

given him to us only with great regret. He is right in regretting him, for he is a good priest, a completely formed religious.

Father Joseph Bouet, the Trappist, is here. A Spanish Trappist, Brother Macaire, has also just arrived. Both are going to enter the novitiate. I shall prepare their letter to the Holy Father for the necessary dispensations. They will give up their Trappist habits as soon as the petition has been mailed by the archbishop. Both are holy religious and have a pleasing holiness. Father Bouet is subject to a nervous condition. The Brother has a genial disposition which makes him capable of many things. Besides, he is in good health.

We have reason to hope for several other good subjects. There is especially one in the diocese of Bayonne, a young pastor, Father Boutoey, whom I desire very much. The better he is, the more His Lordship makes difficulties. He has good reason to.

My writings increase every day. Pray to the good God for the one who loves you as a tender father.

William Joseph Chaminade

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201 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, June 11, 1822

My dear son: I have just opened a roll of papers sent here from Villeneuve to be given to Brother David, Inspector of the Free Christian Schools. The roll contains: 1) The plans for the establishment; 2) An extract of the deliberations of the Council of the Commune; 3) A letter from the assistant to the mayor. The mayor has left for Paris.

The assistant mayor's letter explains his purpose in sending the papers to you. And he adds: "The present and indispensable need of a principal for our school remains the same. At the time of your last interview with him, M. de Vassal told us of his worry about this. When he left, he asked me to remind you again of his entreaty: he was still cherishing the hope you would make every effort to secure someone fully capable of filling this post. Before telling him of your solicitude, I shall wait until you are kind enough to tell me what you have done in this matter. Please accept, I beg of you, etc. Darfeuille, Assistant."

The extract from the Council's deliberations raises to 13,700 francs the funds needed to complete everything according to the first estimate, including procuring all needed objects for furnishing the house. I am not sending you a copy as you must have seen it, at least in the package sent to the prefect. I wanted only to have you take notice of the estimate.

When I took up my pen, I thought, my dear son, of writing you a long letter. Now I see myself obliged to end at the very moment I was planning to continue . . .

They are asking for a principal. I had already offered you Father Collineau. Well, what do you think? They have been asking now for nine months, and for that long they have been going back on their word. . . . They are haggling over the matter . . . Someone from Villeneuve entered my room as I was undoing the roll. He said to me that the administration had allowed a principal to leave because they did not want to negotiate with him according to his capabilities. In short, although I have spoken from time to time of Father Collineau's taking over the collège in Colmar, offer him for Villeneuve, if you see: 1) that everything is being done honestly; 2) that he can do good there, i.e., that he will already be master of the situation, that he can select his own teachers; 3) that the archbishop agrees we can have the services of some of the teachers from his seminary until we can replace them by religious. I made the same condition for Colmar. It will create no difficulty, as far as I can see . . .

May this incident not detain us in Agen. We can handle it as well from here, and perhaps even better. May I lodge in the major or the minor seminary? I must now come to a close. May the Lord shower his blessings on you, on my four school children, and upon all my Daughters.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Other no less serious matters were pressing from Alsace. Under the influence of the Rothéa Brothers, Alsace insisted that the Founder give his attention, his zeal, and his experience to this province. Since February 22, Father Mertian and Father Fréchard, another founder of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine in Lorraine, had been preparing a very detailed plan for the fusion of their institutes with the Society of Mary. (See on this point, the Life of Father Chaminade). Without approving of the most influential principles behind this plan, Father Chaminade thought the fusion possible and even close at hand. He gave Brother David the task of answering. But Brother David had left for Agen, taking with him Father Mertian's letter and Father Chaminade's notes. In each of his letters, Father Chaminade urged Brother David not to defer his answer. But nothing was done.

It is then that Father Chaminade himself wrote to Alsace.

202 – TO FATHER MERTIAN, RIBEAUVILLÉ

Bordeaux, June 18, 1822

Rev. Father: I am altogether ashamed not to have answered you concerning the propositions you have taken the trouble to offer me. I had originally answered each article

immediately, at least in substance, and you would have been satisfied a long time ago had my private secretary not taken our correspondence along when he left on an urgent mission. He took it along to write out my answer en route and to prepare for a union, but any number of difficulties kept him from it. I hope to see him soon, and this is the very reason which prevents me from leaving on my own annual round of visits.

I am pleased that this unavoidable delay will have no untoward effect, since everything is to be submitted to the Prince's[1] approbation and that His Lordship is to be in Strasbourg only at the end of August.

Our schools in Agen are getting better and better. The effect I want in such establishments is being visibly realized. The 500 children who attend them are becoming little apostles for their parents. Those of the common people who are most misled, who no longer practice their religion, at least give these establishments indications of real esteem.

You have promised Brothers to Father Maimbourg for Colmar for the reopening of classes. I want the schools of this capital city to be equipped exactly like ours so they can serve as models for the rest of the diocese. A novitiate cannot be a normal school. If young religious are employed after their leaving the novitiate, they are soon bewildered. They have to be trained under old masters in the schools already in full operation and well staffed. If we do things only by halves, there is no use giving ourselves all this trouble. With imperfect institutions, we shall never succeed in attracting all the country children in the place where they are formed. From this lack will result the mediocrity of their influence for the correction of the people's morals and the Institute of Mary will not be attaining its end in one of its principal fields. Oh, what deplorable consequences! I believe we should not, at first, concentrate on the multiplication of establishments but rather in building really good ones.

Considering these things, Father, don't you think it wise to choose the best subjects in your novitiate and send them to me? I shall keep them in the novitiate only as long as they need to rest and perhaps receive some instruction relative to their state, and then I shall send them to Agen without delay. There they can be trained in what they will have to do thereafter. If you happen to have any doubt as to the correctness of your German reading lists, they could bring some along and we would try to correct them and adapt them to the general Method. So as to lessen the cost of the trip, they could make it on foot, or at least a part of it. That would be a kind of little trial for them. I shall be obliged to you if you spare me all possible expenses.

I am with profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

[1] The Prince of Croy (1773-1844), Bishop of Strasbourg from 1819 to 1823.

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Father Chaminade took the initiative and wrote Father Fréchard at the same time as he did Father Mertian.

Dom Joseph Fréchard (1765-1849) the last Benedictine of the famous abbey of Senones, where he had made his profession in 1790. He exercised an active ministry during the Terror at the peril of his life in the parish of Colroy (Vosges), where he was later named pastor. By 1817, he was preoccupied with the training of Christian teachers. To this effect, he came to work closely with Father Mertian of Ribeauvillé. He even sent the latter some well-disposed young men for his institute. Encouraged by Father Mertian's success, he founded the same kind of institute under the name of Brothers of Christian Doctrine of Nancy, which he established in Vézelise (1821). He obtained government authorization for this institute on July 17, 1822. The work was interrupted by the Revolution of 1830 and reestablished in 1833 by the Baillard brothers, whom Father Chaminade knew, and transferred to Sion, Vaudémont. After some sad misadventures in which the work of the Baillard brothers was ruined, the Brothers of the Christian Doctrine of Nancy came back to Vézelise to their founder (1846). Their congregation grew and exercised a fruitful apostolate until 1903.

203 – TO FATHER FRÉCHARD, PASTOR OF COLROY

Bordeaux, June 18, 1822

Rev. Father: I am altogether disposed to back you in the establishment of a novitiate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools for the vast Diocese of Nancy. Christian schools directed according to the method adopted by the Institute of Mary and conducted by its religious destined for this good work are a powerful means of reforming the people. The children there generally make such rapid progress and become so docile and Christian that they carry the good odor of virtue and religion into their respective families.

The children become, as it were, apostles to their parents, and their apostolate always produces some happy fruit. That is what makes me call the schools a means of reforming the people.

Brother Rothéa has spoken to me several times of your views on this and quite recently he wrote me that you wanted to get in direct contact with me through correspondence. This is what induces me to let you know of my sincere disposition of obliging you and of getting into a common plan of action with you.

We have very few available subjects at the present time, but while awaiting the moment when we are completely stabilized, Providence may send us a few. I shall be much obliged if you let me know in detail all your views in this regard as well as the means presently at your disposal. I shall make it my duty to answer you in all the frankness. If I were obliged to oppose some of your ideas, I hope that you would see in this only the most sincere desire to realize the good you yourself want.

I am with respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Finally, in the same mail, Father Chaminade wrote Father Maimbourg with the possibility of a foundation of the Daughters of Mary in Colmar. He did not even despair of being able to furnish a principal, provided the rest of the personnel could be supplied by the major seminary.

204 – TO FATHER MAIMBOURG,
PASTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, June 18, 1822

Rev. Father: What you foresaw has happened. Our correspondence simplifies our ideas, clarifies the facts, and seems to render possible what at first seemed frightening.

I agree that, considering the facilities that Providence offers, it is better to start by establishing our religious in Eguisheim rather than in Colmar. It is up to them to make themselves desirable to the capital city. But, to proceed with some order: 1) It seems to me that the founders should write me and let me know their intentions and the sacrifices they are ready to make to achieve them. I shall always answer them through you, as you will always be the director, and, if need be, the mediator of this foundation; 2) As soon as possible, I shall visit our establishments in Tonneins and Agen and see what subjects can be available right now; 3) If, in the meantime, we can agree on something for the collège, we can only go right ahead.

Let us speak a little about the school. I have not proposed Father Baumlin[1] only because he had already been asked and with insistence, according to what I was told, to take the directorship. If he entered the Institute, while abandoning himself entirely to the direction and impetus he would be given there, it seems to me I would make use of his talents and tastes in a more suitable and profitable manner.

I am beginning to realize the possibility of giving you a principal and even several other subjects for the administration of temporalities and for the direction of studies. I must, nevertheless, always take for granted the possibility of choosing some backers from among the good seminarians, at least for the first year. I hope it will be possible for me to give you exact information between now and the month of August or on the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. I shall be much obliged if you explain what relationship

[1] Pastor of St. Marie-aux-Mines, who had expressed his intention of entering the Society.

we should have with the University, granting that we can take charge of the school. Shall we pay all it asks for in exchange for a diploma for the principal? This, I believe, is about as far as we can now go—apart from that, liberty, and complete liberty! We are working at a general plan of studies, but we did not think we should change anything as yet. We are limiting ourselves to putting order into ordinary teaching. The classes are strong. The execution of certain parts of the general plan gives cause for much hope. We have hardly more than two subjects who are prepared to work at it and these two are continually interrupted by other tasks. One is a former lawyer who joins great creative power to vast erudition[1] and the other is a young priest whom the good God has blest with very rare talents for the handling of all sorts of subjects.[2] You may have him some day as preacher and professor of eloquence and rhetoric, but I am not permitting myself to think of it for next year.

Taking for granted the first establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Eguisheim, we don't have to bother about the city of Colmar for the time being.

I promised you I would always watch over the establishment of the Christian schools of Colmar. Father Mertian is to give you brothers from his novitiate for this purpose. I am writing him by this mail and I shall insert with this letter an extract of the one I have the honor of addressing to him. You can judge for yourself of our interest, particularly in the establishment planned for Colmar. I am not informing Father Mertian that I have given this extract to you. You can make use of it as you see fit.

Nothing remains but to thank you for all the detailed information you gave and also for your kind encouragement. You have wisely judged that I needed courage to undertake establishments at more than 250 leagues from here at my age and, above all, with the desire that I have for a strict regularity.

I am with respect, Rev. Father, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Only after the sending of these letters did Father Chaminade learn of the nervous attacks which had begun to trouble Brother David. He wrote him immediately.

205 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, June 21, 1822

[1] Brother David Monier.
[2] Doubtless Father Lalanne.

I am holding my pen, my dear son, and I am in a state of uncertainty. I don't know whether I ought to be thankful or not. I understand it was at your request that I have not been informed about the violent and critical condition from which you are recovering. Anyhow, I appreciate your good will in not wanting to cause me any anxiety.

I have just experienced another shock. The same day His Excellency confirmed 500 persons, he fell sick. He came to the danger point, was anointed, and has come back to health. It was immediately noticeable how much this saintly prelate is loved. Public prayers were said in all the churches and with a fervor that showed the most lively interest. It seemed that God could not resist so many and such pressing entreaties. Some parishes continued their novenas, and each community did what its piety inspired it to do. The Miséricorde sent a kind of delegation to Verdelais. The two directresses, chosen by lot, went as if in fulfillment of a vow, on bare feet, etc. . . .

Do not leave, my dear son, however much we may need you here, unless you feel strong enough not to feel the strain of the trip and of the heat. I am thinking seriously enough of leaving this place on the third or fourth of July. As traveling companions, I shall have Fathers Bouet and Caillet. Each are exemplary priests. You will doubtless understand that I have my reasons, but I simply haven't time to tell you more. If, because of your illness, you cannot be here five or six days before my departure, it would be better that you wait for me. We must take care not to miss each other . . .

Whatever accommodations furnished us at the major seminary, we shall be satisfied, as it is only for the night. The convent cannot accommodate even one guest. Neither can the little community of our Brothers, nor Brother Dardy. Furthermore, it seems to me, there are inconveniences everywhere else, and in the seminary these two good religious will be able only to edify the seminarians. Father Caillet, although young, was, as you know, director of the Seminary of Porrentruy.

Building has been begun both in the city and in the country.[1] When your observations arrived, everything had just stopped, at least at Laval. Stone had been ordered. You know that I am pretty much feeling my way, but that I hardly ever rehash what has already been started. I have been speaking to you about all this at least since the beginning of Lent.

Let us put all our confidence in God and in the protection of the Blessed Virgin. I offer you, my dear son, to the Lord with all those in Agen who belong to me, including M. Lacoste and his entire family.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] At the Madeleine and at St. Laurent.

Father Georges Caillet, who is referred to in the preceding letter, was born in 1790, in Porrentruy, Switzerland, of a family long faithful to the best traditions. He was drawn to the Society, being already a priest, by Father Rothéa, his friend and comrade in the seminary (1822). After his perpetual profession (1823), Father Caillet was called to Bordeaux, and under the guidance of the Founder, he was initiated into the works of zeal which had the Madeleine as a center: confession, preaching, direction of the sodalists, of the Ladies of the Retreat, of the Daughters of Mary, of the Carmelites in Bordeaux and the neighboring regions. In this way the first twenty years of Father Caillet's religious life were spent.

As a consequence, a great intimacy developed between him and the Founder. Upon occasion, Father Chaminade confided to him the most important mission—getting Saint Remy started, the work of the retreats and the normal schools (1824), and the legal recognition of the Society (1825). When Father Chaminade used to leave Bordeaux, as during his travels of 1826, 1827, and 1829, and especially during his long absence from 1831 to 1836, it was Father Caillet who replaced him at the Madeleine. By reason of this prolonged relationship, no one, according to Father Chevaux, knew the Founder as thoroughly as Father Caillet. Father Caillet himself did not fear, in a special notice, to speak of the "effusions of intimacy in which our venerated Father used to reveal to us the great things God had done for him and by him."

Named general Head of Zeal in 1833, he was elected Superior-General at the chapter of 1845 and found himself, God permitting it, in opposition to the views of the venerated Founder. It was for each of them a cruel trial, destined, it may not be doubted, to consummate Father Chaminade's growth in holiness. "I experienced for the person of our Good Father," Father Caillet said later, "such an attachment, that, running over in my mind all possible worries I found none more cruel than finding myself in disagreement with him." When the last hour came, God had caused the trial to cease, and Father Caillet, on his knees at the feet of the Founder, received for himself and for the Society his final blessing.

The long généralate of Father Caillet (1845-68) was marked by a constant effort to strengthen and perfect the work of the Founder. It is toward this end that his numerous circulars forcibly recall the principal points of the Rule. It is with this in mind that the General Chapters of 1858, 1864, 1865, and 1868 took place and brought to a head the editing of the Constitutions in 1869. Sad trials, relative to the organization of the Society, and also great consolations, such as the approbation of the Society by the Brief of 1865, were the lot of the Good Father. During his généralate, the seat of the General Administration was transferred from Bordeaux to Paris (1861).

After the General Chapter of 1868, Father Caillet lived in retirement, in the company of Father Chevaux, his successor, who surrounded him with the most affectionate and filial attentions. He led a life of prayer and gave until the end examples of the most edifying of the religious virtues. "Everyone knows," wrote Good Father Chevaux, "that he extended to the limits exactitude, punctuality, and regularity in his daily life. This fidelity followed him until these last days, and all those who have been its witnesses will always keep it in memory." He was no less admirable in his spirit of obedience. Even in his last illness, and for the least things that were proposed to him, he had an invariable answer: "I must first find out what Father Chevaux thinks about it." And when it was insisted that the Good Father wanted anything that might give him relief, "No," he would insist in his turn, "I may not and I do not want to do anything without the advice of Father Chevaux. He is my superior." In the morning on the 18th of August, Father

Caillet had again received Holy Communion. Toward noon, almost without agony, he peacefully rendered his soul to God.

Good Father Caillet was a man “simple, upright and fearing God.” . . . “He has neither very great intellectual eminence, nor much acquaintance with the ways of the world,” the Founder used to say of him, “but he is full of faith and has sound judgment.” . . . “He was a man straightforward and all of one piece,” again says one of the religious who knew him best, having witnessed his sense of responsibility and duty but only modestly endowed with the suppleness needed to govern men.” He was, above all, a man of great faith, and in this way a worthy son of the Founder, who had recommended him to the Ladies of the Miséricorde. He had inherited, as the most precious patrimony, the filial piety of the Founder towards the glorious St. Joseph and especially toward the august blessed Mary. In a series of circulars, he has faithfully transmitted this heritage to his successors with burning enthusiasm. “I declare it,” he writes in Circular 67, “and I repeat it with all the energy of my soul and all the depth of my convictions, that the religious of Mary cannot attain the end of his vocation—his own sanctification, that of his confrères, and of the souls confided to his care—except by the powerful, unique, and universal means of a special devotion of Mary.”

206 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, June 25, 1822

I thank you very sincerely for the care you have given to the good Mother Thérèse, as well as for the trouble you are taking to keep me informed about her condition. Without your letter, I might have been led to some imprudence in her regard. At the same time, I was hearing from Agen that her health required her transfer back to her previous convent. I am answering with this letter that she should not leave Tonneins until you think it best. You have already told me you cannot reach a definite decision before eight days, etc. . . . Please continue to give me news about her condition. When she has really recovered, might it not be good to let her recover more strength before departing? If you think so yourself, I might take her along when I pass through Tonneins. I would like to leave Bordeaux on the third or fourth of July. I shall have two priests with me. Would it not be somewhat indiscreet for the three of us to stop at your house? Receive, I beg of you, the assurance of my sincere and respectful attachment.

William Joseph Chaminade

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207 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, AGEN

Bordeaux, June 26, 1822

Another letter from M. Lacaussade accompanied yours, my dear son. It told me in detail about Mother Thérèse’s illness. He adds that only after eight days can a definite prognosis be determined. The eight days are passing by. Let us be patient! To me, it would

not seem prudent to withdraw her from his hands before she is definitely recovering. I am writing M. Lacaussade by this same mail, as well as the Good Mother.

It is an effect of Providence that Mother Thérèse's journey and my visit should coincide. With her assistance, I hope to leave the convent in the spirit we both have so much at heart. Perhaps, in passing, I could very simply take Mother Thérèse along. I would be much inclined to name Mother Dosithée in her place, always in the supposition that she will be able to make the trip and to absent herself for only two or three weeks.

Profit, my dear son, by the prolongation of your stay in Agen. 1) Give me sufficiently detailed notes regarding what prevents the greater part of the community from leaving with the real spirit of the Institute and also how to remove the obstacles and come to a union of views and sentimenst. I understand very well that you will be obliged to speak to me about personal failings, but do not hesitate in this instance to tell me all you think. 2) Give me also notes about the free schools in general and about Agen in particular. I should very much like to consider completed the Method which the Brothers will have to follow.

Have you the correspondence of Fathers Mertian and Rothéa and also the work you had done? If you don't have it, tell me by return mail where it is to be found among your papers.

Take care of your health, my dear son. I embrace you *in visceribus Christi*.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following letter, addressed to Father Rigagnon, assistant at the church of St. Louis of Bordeaux, refers to Father Joseph Bouet, who appears at different times in the life of Father Chaminade. Born in Bordeaux in 1766, of an honorable and noble family, Joseph Bouet entered the seminary to prepare himself for an ecclesiastical career. The Revolution chased him from it and took away his father, who was guillotined. Overcome by an excess of misfortunes, he was seized by a nervous malady, a diabolic obsession, which could be excised only by the force of exorcisms. Ordained priest in Paris in 1797, he returned to Bordeaux and associated himself to Father Chaminade, whom he followed into Spain. In 1799 he entered among the Trappists of Saint Susanna. After a series of travels caused by the wars and troubles of Spain, he left the Island of Majorca, where the monks of Saint Susanna had gone and where he had become Prior of the Desert of Saint Joseph, and took refuge in France (1822).

Father Bouet came to Bordeaux and stayed with Father Chaminade. His mother wanted to keep him with her and made him such fine offers to this effect that he fell sick as a result. It is to this situation that the letter of June 30 refers.

Father Bouet accompanied Father Chaminade to Agen, where he was much edified by the life of the Brothers. Returning to Bordeaux, he retired into the apartment which his mother had prepared for him and resumed for some time his monastic life. In 1824, Archbishop d'Aviau tried to found a Trappist monastery at St. Aubin, at the gates of Bordeaux, a project that was to be of short duration. Father Bouet joined the Society of Mary and rendered it all the services within his power, preaching retreats and directing the religious until his death in 1848. He even became the Good Father's confessor.

208 – TO FATHER RIGAGNON, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 30, 1822

Rev. Father: You will learn with sorrow that Father Bouet's infirmities are always increasing. The nervous outbursts are getting more and more frequent and lasting longer, so that the intervals between them have gotten to be very short. Recently there have been convulsions, which chill the heart of those who witness them. Each time since his arrival that I have seen or heard about some new crisis, I have sought for the cause. You know that I had the hope, if not of curing him entirely, at least of relieving him enough so that he could exercise the holy ministry. I have never discovered any other cause for these disturbances than his relationship with his mother or the news about her that reaches him. In proportion, as his mother calms down or becomes exasperated with him, in that proportion the crises increase or diminish. The cause here is evident.

You are connected intimately enough with Mme Bouet, Father, to confer easily with her and to come to some kind of mutual agreement. If she thinks she will be quiet if her son comes to stay with her, however attached he may seem to be to the little refuge he found with me, he is ready to sacrifice it and to go his mother. He wishes her to recover her peace of soul.

Since Father Bouet has at times spoken to me of the benefit little trips have for his heath, I invited him to accompany me on the one I am going to make to the Haute-pays. He accepted with pleasure, and has been preparing for it for some days. Nevertheless, this morning, I found him, although undergoing a violent crisis, fully disposed to sacrifice the good the traveling would do to his heath. Although very ill, he is prepared to go to his mother, if his presence would calm her. Mme Bouet has but to say the word. Either he will go to her, or he will leave with me on Wednesday. If she decides that he should depart, it is quite important that she will do it in good grace, in order that her son be not bothered by his imagination, which will not fail to dwell on his mother's condition.

I know, Rev. Father, that you respect Father Bouet's virtue, and his present circumstance is a proof of the great generosity of his soul. In this, he is sacrificing to filial piety his strength, his health, and one might say, even his life. Although he has no thought of submitting the exercise of his ministry to the maternal regime, he has too much character not to realize that, in living with his mother, he becomes, as it were, useless to the Church. You are aware of his consuming zeal. Judge then the sacrifice he is offering to make. Judge the constraint he must live under.

I am not permitting myself to give Mme Bouet any advice. I don't know why she has taken so hard the change of my dispositions. For nearly two years, I had been doing everything I could to make her happy by letting her son come to her, the object of all her tenderness. As I saw the thing, the son had the possibility of being cured, little by little, of his infirmities. He could devote himself according to his zeal, while his mother could see

him whenever she wanted or all the time she wanted. She and her servant could profit from his zeal for their own sanctification. The exact contrary has taken place. The son, so as not to become more ill, has found himself obliged to lessen and shorten his visits, etc. . . .

As far as I am concerned, I have wished to make three more people happy: now I adore the secret dispositions of Providence that did not permit it. Mme Bouet, besides, must know that her son has had all along the same liberty he still has, of going to her whenever she says the word . . .

Friendly and respectful greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade made the trip to the Haut-pays at the time under the conditions indicated. He went as far as Villeneuve, where he immediately accepted the direction of the Collège and, for the following year, the communal schools. He made Father Collineau principal and charged him, along with Brother David, with the preparation of everything for the reopening of classes.

The distance from Agen to Tonneins was too great to give the various communities all the help they sought. This was a great lack, but the religious did not grieve over it. On the contrary, they seemed quite happy over it, as in this letter addressed to Mother Saint Vincent, Économe Général, upon his return.

209 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 16, 1822

My dear Daughter: Before taking up my pen to answer you, I looked over our financial situation, our obligations, and our means of meeting them, to see if I could free you in some way.

I see no way of doing it, at least for the time being, but I shall not lose sight of your need. In the meantime, do what you can to free yourself, but with neither trouble nor disquietude . . . .

During my stay in Tonneins, Mother Holy Ghost told me, on two different occasions, that she had only five or six francs in her cashbox. I asked her what the Sisters had when I first brought them to Tonneins and whether they had ever lacked what was necessary. She answered that when they came they had nothing but that they had never been in want since. I told her on two different occasions that I was afraid her anxiety over the future

would stop the ways of Providence . . . and that, in case there should be too great a need, she should let me know about it.

I was surprised that she accepted the 150 francs from the convent of Agen. What a trial to have been obliged to borrow twelve francs from the account of the poor! My surprise was also very great when you sent me Mother Thérèse's letter requesting an allowance for Sister of the Incarnation. If I have the time to write to her, I shall invite her to enter into herself and make her *coulpe* before me regarding such a letter. If we are going to carry on in this way with regard to our little human problems, we shall not be doing much else. We shall no longer be fit to be employed in God's work, etc. . . . I have been more grieved because of this than over the biggest losses we might have suffered. I willingly give you the permission to write to Tonneins about it and to talk to the Good Mother but not to the convent, because of Sister of the Incarnation.

Why should we not make an example of Sister Angélique? By the way, she has a name that fits her very poorly. Tell the Good Mother, whom I don't think I can write, to take all the suitable precautions that prudence may suggest, but leave the community out of the whole business. By yesterday's mail, I received the request of four young lades of the Canton of Berne, in Switzerland, to enter the Institute, but what a difference between our capricious young ladies and those of Switzerland! Well, I think I shall accept only one, Father Caillet's sister, whom you saw with me in Agen. The good God seems to have been preparing her for many years expressly for the Institute, just as he had prepared her brother.

You cause me great pleasure in telling me that the Mothers and the novices like to talk about the instructions they heard during our stay in the convent. The Institute of the Daughters of Mary will develop beautifully, 1) if there is among all of them a real bond of charity; 2) if there is perfect subordination. These two points include everything. The Daughters of Mary, in whatever part of the world they may be, will form but one and the same family. Everywhere, they will have the same views and the same interests. Like the angels in heaven, they will always be ready to leave or to carry out the orders of God as made known to them by their superiors. Tell the good novice mistress and also the mother of the Sister companions to test the novices, to bend their wills, even in matters that seem little reasonable. It is necessary, so to say, to mold and remold them until there is no longer any shadow of inconstancy. A Daughter of Mary bases her views on God's. Her heart embraces, as it were, the whole universe. Caprice! how it narrows the thoughts of the mind and locks up the sentiments of the heart! A capricious young lady, full of selfishness, seems to live but for herself . . .

May the blessings of heaven come upon the Good Mother, upon you and upon all my Daughters in the convent of Agen!

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Collineau's nomination to the direction of the Collège of Villeneuve was to be approved by the University. Father Chaminade wrote to this effect to Bishop Frayssinous, whom he knew personally and who had just been named president of the university.[1]

210 – TO BISHOP FRAYSSINOUS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS

Bordeaux, September 16, 1822

Your Lordship: The Inspectors of the Academy of Cahors, exercising the functions of rector of the same academy, have temporarily named Father Collineau principal of the Collège of Villeneuve. They have, doubtless, asked Your Lordship to confirm this appointment.

M. Vassal of Montviel, Deputy of Lot-et-Garonne and mayor of Villeneuve, immediately requested the same favor of Your Lordship, if the young priest had the exeat (i.e. to leave to go from one diocese to another, ed.) from his diocese. The wise answer of Your Lordship has been transmitted to me, and this gives me the honor and advantage of explaining my position to you. I shall do so as clearly and as briefly as possible.

Following the organization of several Sodalities affiliated to the one in Bordeaux and also following the founding of the Daughters of Mary, which I had the honor of speaking to you about in the palace of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, Providence has rendered me the grace to establish a religious society of men. It is composed of priests and lay members. It is to the class of laymen that the young religious, running the free schools of Agen, have been admitted. The same will be the case for the similar schools being built in Villeneuve-sur-Lot.

Last July, while going to Villeneuve to view the progress of the construction, I was deeply upset by the pitiful condition of the collège. I permitted the collège administration to present to Your Lordship Father Collineau, one of the priests of the Institute of Mary, who is capable of putting the place back onto shape and of inspiring confidence in the city and Department. No priest joins the Institute of Mary without an exeat from his bishop, and no priest works in a diocese without the approval of the local Ordinary. Every institution, either of men or of women, is expressly under the jurisdiction of the Ordinaries of the dioceses in which it is founded. I am myself subject to the same ruling, by my letters as Missionary Apostolic. All the canonical forms have been followed in the case of Father Collineau. I

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[1] Bishop Frayssinous (1765-1841), famous for his conferences on apologetics which he gave in Paris under the Empire and the Restoration, was named first chaplain of the King, Bishop of Hermopolis, President of the University (1822) and finally Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction (1824-28).

Father Chaminade became acquainted with him at the Seminary of Laon in Paris in 1782 and met him again in Bordeaux at the famous lectures of 1817.

presented him even to the administration of the collège only after having assured myself of the Bishop of Agen's approval.

I believed, Your Lordship, that prudence could not permit me to explain myself clearly enough to the civil officers, nor even to the Academy of Cahors. If the divine mercy on our unhappy country had not placed you at the head of the University, I would have preferred to withdraw Father Collineau than to try to explain myself. I am even afraid that, while writing directly to Your Lordship by mail, my letter may not reach you. I am taking the liberty of having it delivered to you directly by one of the honorary canons of our cathedral, a zealous sodalist who happens to be in Paris at this time.[1] I am with the most profound respect, Your Lordship, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade did not fail to sustain through his letters the fruit of his visit to Agen. We note his wise counsels relative to the probation of the subjects and his views about a Third Order Regular yet to be founded.

211 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Agen, September 24, 1822

I am taking up my pen, my dear child, with the intention of keeping this letter as long as I can. I shall begin with your last letters. . . .

1. Sister Angélique. It has been only thirteen or fourteen months since her dismissal was decided upon, but today she is doing well and gives no cause at all for being sent away. I ask a question from my side. Is it by a spirit of faith that she maintains herself in the observance of the Rule? If there is a reason for believing it, if by herself she takes the means suggested by faith, if, in one word, God has visibly touched her heart, not only would we have to be patient with her, but we would have to work with grace and sustain her courage. If, on the contrary, it is only the fear of being sent away that sustains her, you must seize the first occasion that presents itself to dismiss her. Your way of dismissing candidates is not the one usually followed. Someone among the heads tries to persuade the subject that he is not made for the Institute, etc., that he would do well to retire without

[1] Doubtless, Rev. Goudelin, who, as director of the Institute of Deaf-mutes in Bordeaux, had just been put in charge of the similar institute in Paris.

display, that he needs aid and support outside of the community, etc. This should hardly be noticed within the community. Once the dismissal of a subject has been decided upon and he or she has been told about it, then the dismissal must not be delayed, because ordinarily subjects will talk about it to their companions, and this causes harm. As much as is possible, subjects must be spared the odium of dismissal.

I would like very much, my dear child, that you finally adopt this attitude of wisdom and firmness that would spare you so many cares and worries. Since it is you who admits to the postulate, it is you and you only who carry out the dismissal agreed upon in Council. You choose your own time and the proper means, etc. . . .

Sister Angélique's departure gives rise to several very serious incidental questions. Could the Third Order furnish subjects for handling the schools in small towns? I believe it could and I wanted to establish it years ago, but there are many precautions to be taken, and, in spite of my good will, I cannot as yet bother about it. While passing through Marmande, a pastor came to offer me a locale, gardens, some revenues, and a good subject for a similar establishment in his parish. I held out some hope, but I have not yet done anything about it. Father Mouran has to be responsible for Auvillar, and Sister Angélique must be placed. Father Mouran, in answering, might be able to propose Sister Angélique and another subject of the Third Order, or anyone else who Angélique and another subject of the Third Order, or anyone else who might desire, agree to, and be able to live with Sister Angélique, but there would be no question of the community, the Third Order, and affiliation to the Institute. We shall see, when the times comes, how we shall work out this kind of establishment. It is more difficult than we might think at first, especially when we want everything to go well. There are ten kinds of Sisters of Providence who busy themselves with this work. They are constantly growing worse. Those whom Father Mouran has reformed in Alsace and for Alsace seem to be the only ones who are doing tolerably well . . . Father Mouran might write and confide his message to Sister Angélique, who would present herself at the same time. That would be an excellent way of getting rid of her. Then we would find her a companion. Neither you nor any one of our Daughters need bother about whether she is to be or not to be head of this little establishment. It is cause for amazement that you should use any time during the Council meeting to treat of matters that in no way concern you.

The question of the admission of widows up to a certain number is still postponed for further consideration. God must be consulted. I am saying "up to a certain number" because we might admit one or two who might find themselves in a situation where they might be associated with the Sisters without inconvenience. We never expect to reject those that God sends us.

We also have to be thinking of the works of zeal which the Sodalists or Tertiaries would have to perform around the cities of Agen and Tonneins.

I shall return to the matter of the other two postulants. I already consider Sister Angélique as out of the convent, and in a very peaceful and honest manner, however little you may be able to do about it.

2. Sister Félicité. I shall give her a short answer . . . It is done. You may send her away or retain her, according to the disposition she is in when the letter arrives. In general, my dear child, to judge subjects well, see whether you can find in them a real faith, a great desire for salvation, a decided fear of damnation, the spirit of penance, hatred of sin and of self as sinner or inclined to sin. If these sentiments exist, then see what actions they have produced. "Show me," said the Apostle Saint James, "your faith by your works."

This examination, ordinarily enough, is to be preceded by another on Christian doctrine and on the principles of religious life. Instruction in Christian doctrine should precede the more particular instructions on the religious life. Here is the way of proceeding: A subject enters the postulate. 1) Does she understand her catechism? 2) Is the knowledge of the great truths of religion the motive for her entrance into the convent? 3) Does she know what religious life is? 4) Is she determined to embrace religious life by the motives of faith, which are supposed to have determined her entrance into the convent? 5) Does she understand that the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is a real religious Order?

3. Sister Présentation. It could be, my dear child, that this young girl was brought to the convent by human motives and that today supernatural ones are keeping her there. I suppose that you have examined well this young girl and, on this supposition, if she does not seem fit for the Institute, I am much in favor of your notifying her uncle. I would wish her departure to be judged necessary by her uncle and by herself, not be harmful to her reputation and not excite her against the convent. May the Lord, my dear child, fill you with the spirit of wisdom.

4. Sister Blessed Sacrament. Tell her to write me a little letter in which she can give me a short account of her conduct since my departure from Agen. Besides, my dear child, I beg of you to watch over, or have someone watch over, whatever she does, until we have the assurance that she is truly converted and is really seeking her salvation.

5. Sister Antoinette. I see only good in letting her strengthen herself in virtue. She has been in Tonneins such a short time.

6. Sister Saint Joseph.[1] If the 100 francs that her grandmother sent her have been used without consulting her with the intention of trying her, nothing is to be said about it. Her conduct in this matter is a new proof that she will be a good religious. However, in the future for her and for other novices, what should be done in like circumstances? I would wish that they be permitted to have what is sent them and to distribute or use it as they prefer. That would be a means of having them acquire one more merit and a way of getting a better knowledge of their dispositions. Give her, I ask of you, some tokens of my kind remembrance.

[1] Elizabeth de Casteras, second cousin of the Foundress, and later third Superior General of the Institute.

Father Laugeay tells me that he hasn't a cent for a trip to Bordeaux with his little group for the annual retreat. He even owes forty francs. He wasn't able to address himself to M. Dardy, his ordinary cashier. I am writing to tell him to come to you this time and that I am notifying you about it. Their journey must be in the most economical way possible, the way most compatible with young men who make profession of poverty.

I wanted to answer Mother Saint Vincent's last letter, but it was not possible. It is too interesting to be answered in a few words. I am not rereading what I have written. I hope I have done no worse than omit some words that it will be easy to supply.

I must, nevertheless, acquaint you with the departure of Mlle Caillet of Porrentruy, which must have taken place yesterday, the 23rd. She has more than 300 leagues to cover. I am planning to keep her here a few days. She is traveling alone. The companion that I was giving her has been scared off. Pray for her. If she is like her brother, as I hope she is, you will have a good religious in her.

May the blessings of heaven be showered more and more upon you, my dear child, and upon all our beloved Daughters!

William Joseph Chaminade

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212 – TO REVEREND MAIMBOURG,
PASTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, September, 1822

Reverend Father, I believe there isn't a day when I don't think of writing to you or of hearing from you. I have not forgotten that before August 15 I was to tell you whether we could find you a principal for the collège in Colmar, but as my promise depended on the visit you were to receive from His Lordship the Bishop, when I learned it was to be delayed I myself delayed too. I always kept alive the hope of satisfying you. I am still waiting, and I now note with regret that this project must be abandoned unless, next year, you still have the same need. In the novitiate, I have a 55-year-old priest whose talents had distinguished him in the University before the Revolution—Father Bouet. But there are serious reasons not to recommend him for this appointment, at least for some time. In my annual round of visits to our establishments in the Haut-pays, I granted the collège of Villeneuve-sur-Lot as principal the young religious I wanted to give you as vice-principal. He was installed on the 31st of August. I have been very much concerned at the many disorders that prevail in this school. The subject of my choice, although young, is able to achieve the moral rescue of the place and to win it back to the esteem and confidence of the public. But your need is not so urgent. The city is not so important as Colmar. It is not very far from Bordeaux, although in another Department, and I am making him at the same time superior and director of the Brothers of the free schools that I have just founded there.

You know that I had written Father Mertian that he should send me two of the young novices whom he destined for you, in order to have them well trained at the end of this year under experienced masters. He did not think this precaution necessary. I gave him evidence of my surprise at this fact. I hope that he will not himself make what is called a school,[1] while neglecting some precautions ordinarily necessary. Our novitiates[2] cannot be normal schools for this kind of teaching. I would not want the success of these schools at Colmar, the capital city of the Department, to be jeopardized in any way.

The union of Father Mertian's institution with ours is not yet accomplished. I believe that, if we really desire the good, a union pure and simple is necessary, or there won't be any union at all. I wrote to Father Mertian about this on the eighth of last month. I don't think I have omitted any essential condition, but I have not as yet had an answer. The approaching arrival of S.A. is doubtless the reason for it. The matter will surely be submitted to her, and I hear that the account of it made to her will not be sufficient. If you have occasion to see S.A. beforehand, you might have her promise to hold on to my last letter. I believe I have destroyed the most violent prejudices of Alsace. If the objection were made only by reason of the Statutes[3] already approved by S.A. and by the King, the superior's nomination is up to the Bishop. You will call attention to the fact that since the Institute of Mary recognizes in all diocese the Ordinaries as first superiors, any choice of local superiors that the Institute makes would really be only a

[1] "Make a school," i.e., an experience in the pejorative sense of the word.
[2] In particular, which Brother Louis Rothéa had just begun to direct, from which Father Mertian had planned to draw two leaders for Colmar.
[3] Concerning Fr. Mertian's Brothers of Christian Doctrine.

presentation to their Lordships the Bishops, who actually make the appointment. Acceptance or refusal, everything is in the hands of God![1]

During my long stay in Agen, I made sure that I would be able to send you a little group of religious, without impoverishing the Daughters of Mary too much. I tried to sound out their dispositions. In general, all seemed ready to go to the ends of the world if they received the order to do so. If the Founder had written to me in the way that I wrote you, we might have been able to make the foundation this year. Might his silence have some unfortunate cause?

I am with profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Father Rothéa, whose writing you may recognize, is replacing the secretary with pleasure and has the honor of offering you his respectful remembrance.

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The reputation of the Institute was spreading more and more. The people of Montignac, a little town in the diocese of Périgueux, had conceived the idea of confiding their school to Father Chaminade, their compatriot. The Vicar-General of the diocese transmitted their request to the Founder backed by the recommendation of the bishop.

Father Chaminade's answer shows his prudence in business matters. We are reproducing it from a sketch written by Brother David.

213 – TO M. LOQUEYSSIE,
VICAR GENERAL OF PÉRIGUEUX

Bordeaux, September 28, 1822

Rev. Grand Vicar: You may not doubt my great satisfaction, doing something agreeable to your worthy prelate.[2] Please, I beg of you, while letting him know my good dispositions, ask him to accept the sincere and respectful homage of my veneration.

If your request may both please you and free me from the debt I owe my native diocese, we have an overflow of advantages, which I can't help appreciating.

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[1] On October 2 Fr. Mertian wrote to Fr. Chaminade that the new bishop was against the fusion of the two congregations. He concluded: "If we can't be united as a congregation, then let us at least be united in prayers." The matter of the reunion was to be retaken later on, as will be seen. (Letter of January 4, 1825).

[2] Bishop de Lostange (1763-1835), had just taken possession of the See of Périgueux, suppressed by the Concordat of 1802 and reestablished in 1821. On this occasion, he had asked Archbishop d'Aviau to let him have several priests employed in the Bordeaux diocese but originally from the diocese of Périgueux. "There is another," he continued, "but I am not referring to him, as he is doing too much good where he is. It is Father Chaminade."

It is then up to me to thank you for the occasion your charity gives me to explain myself about so many duties. Without doubt, I shall do for Montignac and for any other places His Lordship and yourself may indicate, what I have done for the localities where I have only occasional connections. It will not be my fault if I do not do even better, if this is possible.

In order to get to work immediately, Your Reverence, I am going to tell you what I think of the request addressed to you by the gentlemen of Montignac. I imagine they want to succeed and so they must take the only possible means of doing so. I shall ask two questions: What is the actual condition? What is the condition that is sought?

Concerning the actual condition, your letter tells me that the place is all right, that the garden is spacious. I see clearly that your letter was to be a kind of summary and was not to say much. However, it is necessary that the local authority explain more than that.

How many beds would the dormitory contain? How many places in the refectory? And in the buildings, how many classes and study halls? And for the teachers' lodgings, how many separate units? The yards? The chapel, etc.?

A general idea will be sufficient because it will be possible to finally decide without my actually going there myself. Or at least I will send a Visitor accustomed to this kind of inspection. This is the smallest part of the indications I need to get a fair idea of the needs and, consequently, of the remedies to be provided.

Is the school royal, communal, or private? Is it a full-fledged collège, with or without philosophy? How many professors teach the classes? Is there question of replacing the principal, or is the post still free? Is it urgent that the classes be resumed? How many boarders at a minimum? How many day-scholars?

Another set of questions comes next. Has the Academy or the University permitted you to go ahead with your project? Has it promised to accept your choice of place, personnel, equipment, number of students, etc. as would be compatible with your plans? Are the treasurer, the study supervisors, or other officers of the Administration to be entirely replaced or only partly?

William Joseph Chaminade

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Here are inserted two letters to Archbishop d'Aviau.

214 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, September 25, 1822

Your Excellency: At the time when agitations arose against the little Church of the Madeleine[1] you determined, in your wisdom, that I was not to give Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday of the year, that I should limit myself to the first and third Sundays of the month. I have always respected your orders. But today, Your Excellency, now that we have had peace for several years, and no more attention is paid to us (in fact, we are doing nothing to draw it upon ourselves), it seems to me that we could give Benediction every Sunday without inconvenience.

If you deign to permit it, I shall do so without announcement and so those who have assisted at the service will at least have no reason for murmuring. I am with the most profound respect, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The Archbishop did not consider it prudent to grant Father Chaminade's request. He was afraid to reawaken the susceptibilities of the past, but the Founder was able to add this with his own hand, to the archbishop's answer:

> His Excellency has told me, in an interview, that he would readily give in, as regards the even Sundays, during which there would be some special devotions. We have chosen the second Sunday of November for the feast of the Dedication of Churches.

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215 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU, ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 22, 1822

Your Excellency: The pastoral solicitude which absorbs you at present,[2] that of strengthening in your clergy the method of instruction needed by your people, makes me fear that I am choosing an inopportune time to recall to you another matter of lesser importance. It is the anniversary of the little Society of Mary's retreats. You have given this little Society such plain tokens of your benevolence that it would have been an oversight on my part to omit reminding you of the event. I have too much consideration for your occupations to dare to ask,

[1] An allusion to the difficulties that arose between the Madeleine and St. Eulalie's parish.
[2] The pastoral retreat of the clergy.

Your Excellency, any of the favors which might compete with the pastoral care you are giving your clergy.

However, duty obliges me to acquaint you with the development of the little Society of Mary, since your last annual benediction. Both the members and the works have increased. The collège of Villeneuve-sur-Lot, which we direct, has made the most remarkable progress.

Would Your Excellency deign to indicate the time and place where the little Society could again receive this benediction, which has always been followed by blessings from on high? Whatever you indicate, we shall believe ourselves to be on the road Jesus Christ points out to people worthy of being blessed.

I can have no more fitting occasion for offering you my homage and veneration, Your Excellency, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. A little delegation that I am sending you will receive your orders.

* * * *

On the letter, the archbishop wrote in his own hand: I have gone there, following this request presented by Brother Auguste.

The little Society now numbers twenty religious, among whom there are four priests: Fathers Lalanne, Collineau, Rothéa, and Caillet; and sixteen laymen, divided among four establishments: the residence of the Madeleine, the novitiate of Saint Laurent, the boarding school on Rues des Menuts, and the primary school at Agen. To all of these the collège and school of Villeneuve is to be added.

Five novices also assisted at the retreat. They made their profession at its close. There are also 21 postulants, eight of whom were received as novices and seven affiliates or friends of the Society, among whom were Fathers Mouran and Bouet and MM. Lapause and Lacoste.

How all these were able to lodge in the buildings at Saint Laurent, even when they were enlarged, we can get some idea from a document of the time. It speaks of the 53 retreatants of the year 1823: thirty in the large dormitory (12 meters by 8), four in the small dormitory, two in the infirmary, four in the study room, two in the Good Father's room, two in the parlor, two in the storeroom, six in the garret, two in the workshop, one in the cellar, and two in the wine shed. The spirit of poverty and family spirit made this embarrassment joyfully accepted.

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Here are two more letters of Father Chaminade to the superioress of the Daughters of Mary, which give interesting directions on religious government and on the admission and exclusion of subjects.

216 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 12, 1822

My dear child, I am continuing the examination of novices and postulants. I have before me the two extracts of the Council.

I approve the admission of Sister Antoinette and Sister Mélanie. Although the latter has not had an entire year in the novitiate, she and I are determined enough, as regards her vocation, not to delay her sacrifice, especially since she finds herself united to a great number of victims of divine love.

I have confidence that Sister Justine will become a good religious. Sustain her courage! I am also of the opinion that you should admit her to the profession of annual vows.

Concerning the taking of the habit, I see no inconvenience in the admission of Sister Holy Savior,[1] Sister Isabelle, Sister St. Paul, and Sister Louise-Marie. Now that their good will does not waver, will they not struggle with greater advantage in the novitiate against what remains of the old man? Besides, they now have up to the eighth of next month to prepare themselves. It is enough. I shall answer Sister Louise-Marie at my first free moment or, at least, when other matters are not in jeopardy. For a long time I have had no really free moments.

The entire Council admits that Sister of the Angels is lacking in judgment. If that were entirely true, I do not see how I could grant her a dispensations from the Rule that requires it so rigorously. But, from all that has been said and from what I have seen myself, I find it hard to believe that this defect goes to the point of rendering her entirely useless in religion. I am of the opinion that her admission to the religious habit should be still delayed, that she should be carefully instructed, well trained in the practices of the religious state, and that she be examined. In the meantime, she could write to me about what she has at heart (whatever she cares to write), what she thinks of the religious state, how she considers the vows. In a word, it should be a sufficiently long letter without aid or counsel of any kind.

Concerning Sister Présentation, I am surprised she is not succeeding. But finally, since everything has been tried, you must speak with her parents, and especially her uncle. She ought to be persuaded, if possible, that since she is not called to the religious state—at least, not to the Institute of Mary—she ought to ask to withdraw. There are to be no reproaches, no grumbling, no punishing, except when subjects are to be kept. But once it has been decided that someone is to be sent away, only mildness, persuasion, and honesty are to be used.

I am stopping here. Among the many affairs I must treat, I have an establishment of the greatest importance, Saint Remy. Pray yourself and have prayers said that I may neither say nor do anything except what God wants and in the way he wants.

May the Lord shower his blessings on you and on all our beloved daughters.

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[1] Mlle Caillet, already mentioned in Letter 211.

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217 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 19, 1822

My dear child, I have read the letter of Mlle Latourette, Sister of the Angels, and all that the different letters from the convent tell me about her. From all this, I conclude that she is not without judgment. I think there is some confusion here between intelligence and judgment. It is true that hers is a dull mind, but her judgment is correct as regards what her mind can penetrate. Her heart also appears upright. Since she is in the convent, I would favor her being received, but I would go back to my first thoughts, that she be received as a Sister-companion. The result would be, it seems to me, advantageous both for herself and for the Institute. For her, by keeping her true vocation since the good God gives her only what is necessary for the temporal service, what she needs to serve in a subordinate capacity. Why, then, not follow the indication that Providence is giving us? If she takes the veil among Mothers, valuable time will be lost. The novitiate will be four times too long for her, instructions will in no way suit her. Disgust and temptations will follow, etc. If she is among the companions, we shall see that the Institute does not make preference of persons but of qualities, of indications given by Providence, that we do not intend the category of Sister-companions to be made up of girls, so to say, of the vagrant class. Why then do the Sisters fear the name of companions, and the superioresses that of mothers? . . . If the Council adopts these ideas, which I am not ordering, I shall write this good Sister to prepare her for the vote of Council, or rather, for what she herself asks.

The novitiate of Saint Laurent is entirely without linen. The Community on Rue des Menuts has furnished some until now, but, as things are now, it has hardly enough for itself. I was thinking that the Agen Community might try to adopt this good work, and here is how it might be done. It would procure the linen, make the various articles needed, and take its time in paying the merchant supplying the material. If the convent is in a condition to pay for it, it can do so, if not in entirety, at least in part, letting me know the amount of its indebtedness. This is what I call trying to do this good work.

The novitiate is presently composed of twenty-five persons. I judge that a hundred shirts would be needed, fifty pairs of small bed sheets, twelve to sixteen tablecloths, eight dozen napkins, some towels and kitchen aprons. The work of making these would be done in our sewing rooms and they would be sent to the novitiate as soon as ready. A fourth of the shirts would be of the smallest size, for children twelve to fifteen years of age, and the others of ordinary size. The linen ought to be common but good and strong. You know the kind.

I shall answer the different letters I have received. We are giving the retreat for the men’s Sodality. I have much trouble in sending on what is most urgent. May the holy names of Jesus and Mary be ever glorified! Take good care of your health. Above all, do what the good Mother St. Vincent wishes, as she is the mentor of your health.

IX
THE FOUNDATION OF SAINT REMY

(November 1822-January 1824)

To the propositions coming from Alsace, others from Franche-Comté are added.

At the beginning of November, Father Chaminade received the following letter from Father Tharin, Vicar-General of Besançon, who some months later was to be promoted to the See of Strasbourg.[1]

Archbishop's Palace, Besançon Besançon, October 29, 1822

Reverend Canon, I have the honor of transmitting to you a note from Father Bardenet, missionary of this diocese, in which you will find a description of the château of Saint Remy, with the proposal which he has the honor of making to you. Archbishop Adana, Coadjutor of Besançon,[2] has been informed of the steps that Father Bardenet has taken to receive a number of your Congregation into the diocese of Besançon and he asks me to beg of you to send me the Statutes of your Congregation. When I have received them, I shall give them to his Lordship, the Coadjutor, who will read them. I have no doubt that, if you accept Father Bardenet's proposals, the archbishop will hasten to authorize you to make a foundation in the château of Saint Remy. As regards myself, I am rejoicing in advance in the firm conviction that the Brothers of Mary will spread the good odor of Jesus Christ in this diocese.

I beg of you to accept my respectful sentiments.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Fr. Charles Marie Tharin (1787-1843), of a noble Besançon family, had been a member of the Community of St. Sulpice in Paris for some time. After having been Vicar-General of Besançon, he was named Bishop of Strasbourg (1823), then preceptor to the Duke of Bordeaux (1826). He later resigned his bishopric and after 1830 lived in retirement.

[2] Archbishop Paul de Villefrancon, coadjutor of Archbishop Pressigny in 1821 and his successor in 1823 in the See of Besançon.

To this letter was joined the following note, written by Father Bardenet.

The château of Saint Remy, domanial property, is five leagues from the nearest city, close to the village of the same name. It is in the Haut-Saône, diocese of Besançon, with a big population on its periphery. M. de Rosen built it sixty years ago.

It consists of a group of buildings. The largest one is 266 feet long by 45 feet wide. At its two extremities are two wings each 130 feet long and 34 feet wide, and at the west end of these is a shed of the same length. Farther off, there is a greenhouse 180 feet long by 35 feet wide.

All these buildings are solid, with the exception of the last, which could be torn down without any trouble. The appendages of the château are the 300 *journals*[1] taking in the gardens, the orchards, yards and comfort stations. All was enclosed by walls.

The largest part of this property was park space, where today wood is cut, where meadows, fields, vines can be cared for and enough wood procured for the use of the house.

In its day there were also two large barns.

It is easy to add 200 quarters of arable ground which touch the walls and a mill with adjoining properties which would furnish all the resources of the community to be established at Saint Remy. The actual owner of the château is a priest, a missionary in the diocese of Besançon who has contributed to different establishments of this diocese that interested him. It is for this reason that he could not, purely and simply, give over Saint Remy with its dependencies. However, he would want to be promised payment in time, once the house profits by its advantages, the sum of 30 to 40 thousand francs, which he would apply to the help of establishments already begun. If this condition could not be reasonably met, he would reduce it as much as possible.

Furthermore, he gives hope that, in case he still lives several years—I must tell you, he is not yet sixty and enjoys good health—he will favor the establishment that would be started at Saint Remy, at the figure that we could meet. It is with this evidence of good will that he asks of the Father Superior the permission to occupy, at different times of the year, an independent quarter of each building, and to enjoy a close relationship with the Community.

The author of the note we have just read, Father Bardenet (1763-1844), was henceforth to become one of Father Chaminade's most active collaborators in Franche-Comté. Originally

[1] The *journal* was a stretch of land that a man can take care of in a day. It consisted of four quarters, each measuring 800 square meters and about 80 square yards. The appendages of the château consisted of about 200 acres and the entire property of about 300.

from Chassey-lez-Montbozon (Haute-Saône), he was pastor of Mesnay-lez-Arbois (Jura) when the Revolution broke out. His life, during the Terror, was the same as that of other confessors of the faith who escaped death only by a miracle. After the Revolution, Father Bardenet, gifted with a burning zeal and a rare business sense, busied himself entirely with restoring good works in the dioceses of Besançon and Saint Claude. The construction of the diocesan House of Missionaries of Beaupré, at Ecole, near Besançon, was his first principal undertaking (1816). It was he who afterwards took care of the coming of the Society of Mary to Saint Remy (1823) and of the Daughters of Mary to Arbois (1826). He had a part also in the foundations of the Society at Courtefontaine, Marast, and Saint Claude. He finally introduced the Daughters of Mary to the abbey of Acey in Saint Claude, where he himself settled down and served them as chaplain until his death.

In spite of his repugnances at undertaking faraway foundations at this time, Father Chaminade could not avoid seeing in the appeals from Besançon and Colmar a manifest indication of Providence. He immediately prepared to answer them. The two following letters concern this.

218 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 12, 1822

I am sending you, my dear son, the first sketch of an answer to the Grand Vicar of Besançon. If it is only a rough one, you can refine it well. Make a second draft and we shall work out a good reply.

I take it for granted that you have the courage to go so far north and in winter. I also suppose that you will keep on drawing up those statutes that I consider general because they are to contain, in effect, only the first principles or general bases of the Institute of Mary. But they should really give a true idea of it.[1]

I have noticed in you for some time, my dear son, as other persons have also, or think they have, a deeply-rooted sadness or discontent. This condition is not good for your health or for the religious interests that concern you. You can and must aspire to a fuller peace rather than simply to resignation—the very peace of God. You concentrate too much and too long on the difficulties you experience.

I am examining quite carefully our pitiful financial state. I shall constantly tell you about the precautions we have to take . . . Brother Rothéa is now entering my room and tells me that, on Rue des Menuts, they are complaining of the expenses being made for the maintenance of the novitiate. These complaints seem to scandalize him. I'm not really scandalized, but I am surprised. *Pax Dei sit simper tecum!*

P.S. There is a meeting of the Fathers of Families this evening.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Fr. Chaminade had charged Bro. David with the task of preparing an edition of the civil statutes in view of an authorization of the Society by the Government.

219 – TO FATHER THARIN, VICAR GENERAL OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, November 21, 1822

Your Honor, I have hesitated several days before answering your letter. The importance of the establishment, its great distance from me and from the other establishments of the Institute of Mary, our small number of subjects, and the quite frequent requests for establishments I get from various places are about the only causes for my hesitation. I have finally reconciled myself to the inevitable before God, urged interiorly by the sight of the great good for religion which would result. I have also been especially encouraged by two of our priests, Fathers Rothéa and Caillet, who have both made their seminary in Besançon. They don't cease speaking to me of the zeal of your missionaries, of their complete frankness and loyalty, of the harmony, rather of the intimate union that reigns between the episcopal palace, the Missionaries, the seminaries, etc.

I therefore accept, Your Honor, the propositions which Father Bardenet makes to me. I look forward to entering into discussions with him and his worthy confrères concerning the good works. In consequence, I seek to prepare a small group of subjects to form the nucleus of the establishment he has in view. I hope I can increase the number gradually as the need shall arise. I have the honor of transmitting to you the greater part of the summary or digest of the Institute of Mary or its statutes.[1]

May Your Honor permit me to add here a few observations.

The first is the near impossibility, at least at the present moment, of meeting the expenses necessary to realize this establishment.

The second is that it would seem to me in place that you name one of our religious to be my second in the formation of our establishments. How much must be foreseen, regulated, prepared if an establishment is to function well from the very beginning! And I insist very much that there be no time in which the religious, no matter how small their number, do not live in compete regularity. Furthermore, my second could bring along with him the complete Constitutions of the Institute as well as its general and particular regulations.[2] The copies are bulky. I do not know if His Excellency the Archbishop can grasp from the summary that I have the honor of sending you the Institute as a whole as well as its various developments and interconnections. These statutes are only the barest essentials of the building. Will His Excellency be able to judge, from these outlines, the elevation which is to be justly given to the entire edifice as well as the precision and proportion required of the groundwork?

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[1]The Institute of Mary, read at the retreat of foundation in 1818, after having been approved by the Archbishop of Bordeaux (see the *Spirit of Our Foundation* No. 820).
[2] The Grand Institut and the Regulations of the Daughters of Mary. (ibid., No. 813)

Third, I am not sending you the fourth chapter of the summary, the one about government. It does not seem necessary at the moment.

I shall work with all the speed you want in spite of the severity of the season. I am determined about this. I rejoice in the opportunity this occasion opens up of offering the Institute for its encouragement, the fine example of the Besançon clergy. I offer you, in particular, the token of my profound respect, Your Lordship.

P.S. May I dare to ask you to present my respectful greetings to the archbishop. I am very mindful of the deep interest de deigns to take in the Institute of Mary.

Note of Secretary[1] His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, has given and continues to give on every occasion marks of a very fatherly interest in the Institute of Mary. The first reunion of its members took place only after his approbation and after a summary of the statutes just made by the Secretary had been put into his hands. It is equally the Archbishop who appended a recommendation to our Founder's request to the Sovereign Pontiff about the new institution, outlining its general principles and asking different favors for the religious. The Sovereign Pontiff received the request favorably and granted all the favors requested.

The Institute of the Daughters of Mary, which was founded at Agen some years before the Sons of Mary of Bordeaux, has since been approved and has always been favored by the bishop of Agen, who personally examined it and also had the Constitutions, general and particular regulations, studied. The summary of all this has been deposited in the secretariat by our Founder, who signed it *ne varietur*. The Sovereign Pontiff has also enriched it with his favors.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Before continuing the correspondence relative to the foundation of Saint Remy, let us cite extracts concerning the acquisition of Father Conne's library, which was referred to in Letter No.177.

Father Chaminade had taken part in this matter only with fear and hesitation. After signing the act of transference, Father Conne raised difficulties either about the delivery of the library or about the conditions of payment. The following letters refer to a series of conferences which resulted from these difficulties.

[1] This note, intended to be recopied by M. David Monier following the letter of M. Chaminade is written by M. Chaminade.

220 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 18, 1823

What you have reported to me, my dear son, of the conference held in the venerable Father Conne's home cannot make me change anything in our contract. I invite you to go see him personally and to acquaint him with most precise observations. The venerable Father knows, and you know it also, that I did not want his library at all, that I charged you expressly to tell him so, and that my refusal was definitive.

The motives which made me change my mind were those given me by Father Bournac, Father Conne's director who had only religious views. Here they are: this venerable Father would like to consider them once again.

Father Bournac showed me that Father Conne thought he was obliged to sell his library before death should surprise him in order to obey a rule of the Order of Saint Francis, to which he belongs; and, as I was the only buyer then proposed, my refusal to buy was putting him in jeopardy. I decided then to take back my refusal. I think that the way the venerable Father has avoided making the delivery for a year is worse than if he had abstained from selling. Not selling, he kept the accidental possession. Since he has actually sold, he has a voluntary possession. I surely have the civil right to force him to make the delivery—but, if I do so I take from him the merit of the free dispossession, which was the religious purpose of the sale and of my purchase.

Father Bournac represented to me, on the other hand, that, for the part of the price that Father Conne did not need, he would agree to a delay of ten years without interest. In this way, if I were buying with the thought of our teachers in mind, he would consent to the preservation of the collection in the interest of religion. This was a sort of reparation for the possession he had kept in violation of the above-mentioned rule. The venerable Father Conne, in complaining today of the ten-year term without interest, destroys what his confessor had maturely arranged. It even brings to this religious part of the contract a kind of disfavor, which is out of place and almost slanderous. If there had not been question of these two religious views and of his director's interest in his salvation, I would not have had anything to do with the library.

I am going to suppose, now, against all belief, that the venerable Father Conne has forgotten, by reason of his age and infirmities, these two principal motives behind our contract, and I am considering it as an ordinary civil contract.

From this last point of view, here is what I see. The venerable Father Conne wanted to procure for himself 3,000 francs, and I have immediately given them to him. However, for a year or fifteen months he has enjoyed the use of both the money and the library, that is to say, of the thing and of its price. I do not believe he can safely permit this, since the buyer wants the delivery of the books.

The venerable Father says himself and encourages others to say that his infirmities, his age, his needs were not considered when the agreement was made to pay the remaining 9,000 francs only many years later and without interest. But the contract states clearly that he will be able to demand as much as 500 francs each year if his infirmities and his needs require it. He himself is the judge of his needs, and this additional payment is to last four entire years, at whatever time he begins to use the privilege. God, so to say, inspired me with this forethought, for no one was thinking about it. These diverse circumstances give to the reproach about the length of time allowed for payment a character very little in accord with the truth.

The agreement specifying that the sums not paid would not bear interest also had its just motive. The right to keep his library indefinitely is granted the venerable Father. He wanted it thus. This clause is equivalent to a preserve of complete or almost complete enjoyment. He will always keep the books to which he is most attached, and these are the most valuable. I am asking if he is being reasonable in receiving 3,000 francs in cash and 2,000 more over four years, keeping the equivalent of enjoying the library, and then requiring that we pay him interest on the 7,000 francs that will one day make up the total price of 12,000 francs? Allowing him to thus enjoy the thing and its price would not have been buying his library for 12,000 francs, but for 24,000 which exceeds by half the value put upon it.

If there had been no attempt at distorting the correct idea of the contract, if its justice had been recognized, since it is almost perfect and to the advantage of the venerable Father, it would have been easier to lend ourselves to new needs, to new circumstances, which are alleged to change the time and the order of the payments.

But what can a debtor do, who respects himself, when the report about him has been spread that his contract is not fair? Is he not constrained out of self-respect to hold to his contract? If he changes it, it will be all the more said that there was something unfair about it.

I believe that the venerable Father is late in delivering the books and as late in wanting to do so.

I think that his complaints in the statement regarding the civil and politely considered contract are badly founded. I think that his delay and his complaints about carrying out the religious motives which have brought about the whole business, are real faults, and, in conscience, I think it my duty to tell him so.

Nevertheless, the venerable Father, in his tendency to delay the delivery or to bring about sooner payments, makes another insinuation. It is, he says, if we do what he is asking, we shall have no reason to regret it, which means that the delivery will be more complete.

I answer that if the delivery contains only what is sold, there will be no favor on his part, that if it contains something valuable and beyond what is actually sold, it would be an injustice to heirs who have no need for privation . . .

The prompt and faithful carrying out of the contract seems to me to be the only thing to do.

All justice being rendered reciprocally, I have no obligation to being offered, in favor of a religious whom everybody reveres, compromises and advantages that I would more easily grant, if there had been no other agreement between us or if that which binds us had been honored, as religion and justice demanded.

I greet you very tenderly.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. You will do well, my dear son, to communicate this letter to Father Roux.[1] His prudence will judge what will have to be done by the good Father Conne, as well as ever it should be done. To have this taken care of sooner, I am sending you a plan for redressing our contract of November 5, 1821. If convenient, have it copied on stamped paper and I shall sign it.

* * * *

The new measures taken by Brother David concerning Father Conne remained without result. On January 29, two replies were written, one quite short to Father Conne written by Brother David, and the other more developed to Father Roux written by the hand of Father Chaminade. The latter seems not to have been sent. We are reproducing it to give an idea of the Good Father's thought in this delicate affair.

221 – TO REV. ROUX, THEOLOGY PROFESSOR
AT BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 29, 1823

Rev. Father: My first negotiations with Rev. Father Conne were already so painful to me that I thought of giving up the idea of buying his library without further explanation, out of respect for him. The letter I wrote him to this effect still exists.

[1] Professor of theology in Bordeaux.

Father Conne is extremely sensitive. Father Bournac, his friend, his adviser and I believe, his confessor, wrote me to let me know his extreme regret and actually begged me to complete the transaction. He had all the power necessary to handle the matter.

I did the buying according to the conditions given in the contract. To avoid reprisals, Father Bournac, in my presence, immediately wrote the said conditions. They were brought to Father Conne. The document was drawn up and signed only a few days later, without any complaint or protest. I have no recollection that, prior to Father Bournac's death, Father Conne expressed any regret. There was never any question of the delivery of the library. His regrets began, or at least became strong enough to attract attention, only when someone, I don't know who, seemed to offer him more advantageous conditions. Having become aware of the pressing need he had of the 2,000 francs, I have just promised them to him. It is not because of justice that I am making this promise, as I have done him no harm. It is to oblige him and also to have the matter over with.

You propose to me, sir, the mediation of the archbishop. Neither you nor he can offer one more respectable and more agreeable to me. But before accepting permit me one observation. A mediator is taken, it seems to me, to resolve or decide some difficulty that really exists. But here the agreement is simple and transacted in good faith. The difficulty lies in the will of the good priest and in the affection I would say almost too great an affection that he has for his library. How could His Excellency remove this difficulty?

Nevertheless, if Rev. Conne finds difficulty elsewhere than in his extreme attachment for the fruit of his cares and labors, then let him either himself consult the holy and learned prelate or ask to cancel the sale.

In the first case, honesty will require him to communicate to the archbishop the deed and the papers that go with it, my last letter to Brother David, and this one which I have the honor of writing to you. He will not fail to observe to His Excellency that he had looked for a buyer who would take care of this library and make it serve the progress of religion, etc.

In the second case, I hope that in paying back the 3,000 francs which he has received, he will have consideration for the expenses which have necessarily followed the sale of the library, which he made to me. I don't intend to speak of those that would not be so clearly seen.

The pros and cons of this affair are very nearly indifferent to me. What I do care about is that it come to an end and that nothing further be said about it. I find it hard to understand how one can go back on a promise given, a promise written only after several days of reflection.

If Father Conne had greater needs than those I had foreseen, were we not sufficiently close that he could have made them known to me without complaining of a

contract that I entered into largely to oblige him and to further the religious views he had so often expressed to me?

I am with respectful consideration. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

Here, finally, on February 11, following a lively letter from Father Conne, we have a last note, written in Father Chaminade's hand and not less characteristic of his way of treating others.

222 – OBSERVATIONS

Bordeaux, February 11, 1823

1. I bought only because I was strongly urged thereto by Father Bournac. The conditions for the purchase were written by Father Bournac. This writing must exist as must the renunciation I wrote before purchasing this library. Furthermore, I presume that a copy of these conditions will be found. It was then at least drawn up, when. . . .

To say that Brother David did not conform to the conditions in the drawing up of the deed is a serious accusation, but it can easily be proved false.

2. In spite of the financial embarrassments that this acquisition causes me, I have never asked to breach the deed of purchase, because I have never gone back on my given word, whatever might have been my loss in consequence. But the Father himself proposes this breach. I accept it with the understanding that he will pay me back the 3,000 francs that I gave him at the time the deed was signed.

I shall prove to him by particular documents that I paid heavy interest so that I could give him 3,000 francs.[1] He could see, or he can still see, the considerable expenses that had to be made to get this library. I wish whatever Father Conne will decide. For the interest on the 3,000 francs, as for the expenses needed to receive the library, I submit all to the sole judgment of his conscience.

3. If, instead of attacking an act performed with so much good faith, Father Conne had exposed me to his needs as well as those of his family, he must know my dispositions well enough to believe that I would have agreed to the propositions he made to me. On my own initiative when I learned of his niece's marriage, I offered him 2,000 francs right after the delivery of the library, and I had already told Brother David to compare the terms for the remaining 7,000 francs—that this sum was to be divided into three parts, to be paid from year to year, the first in four years, after the day of the new propositions.

[1] Father Chaminade had been obliged to borrow money in order to give Father Conne the 3,000 francs.

4. I desire that these considerations be nullified and of no effect if Father Conne is not affected by them. I shall remain silent, even if he retains both the money and the library. He can count upon it.

The affair of Father Conne's library did not end until the end of August of this year, 1823 (See Letter 249). The library itself was installed in the boarding school Sainte Marie, followed its destiny, first to Rue des Menuts (1823), then to Rue de Mirail (1825) and finally to Layrac (1835). At the closing of the Layrac establishment (1845), it came back to Bordeaux and was lodged in the Madeleine, where it occupied a large hall on the second story of the seminary of the Society.

During the last years of the century, the library's most important and most precious books were sent to Paris, to the General Administration from whence they emigrated in 1903 to Fribourg in Switzerland, in the seminary of the Society. The remains of the library, after the demolition of the house, No. 8, Rue Lalande, were transferred to a hall below the sacristy of the Madeleine.

* * * *

With the following letters, we are returning to the foundations in the North. Brother David, Father Chaminade's representative, again caused him anxieties, which the course of events will make only too plain, as will be seen.

223 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 23, 1823

I haven't the courage, my dear son, to give the copier my letter announcing your coming departure. I had understood that the statutes which organize the Brothers' life and the extract of them that is to be presented to the Government were ready, at least to be discussed. I believed that you had, as it were, settled on your plan for teaching the arts and crafts. And, what about the method for our schools which you have complained for so long is not being used but which you, nevertheless, do not settle? And the guiding principles of education to give the children, etc. . . .

You will leave. You have your own ideas. You will establish. You will found. You will cause to be approved. But who will see to the execution of what you have hardly shown even in profile? Where are the means of execution? If you. . . . I don't want to cast any blame, but I would like that we act with prudence. If I am obliged to make an offer, if I am made to take on an engagement, it seems to me that I ought to know and even understand thoroughly what I am doing.

What stand shall we take, my dear son? You have too much judgment and shrewdness not to give a reasonable answer to this question. We are, so to say, hitched to a cart that we have made ourselves, and we don't go far if we don't pull the same way. You like to go forward, and I like it also. The little time we still have to live obliges us to make up our minds, but I should not like to start everywhere and finish nothing. To speak truly, there is great imperfection in what we have done and what are we doing to remedy the situation?

I know, for my part, that it pains me greatly and that the time I use in holding up, now one side, then another might be better employed in the genuine progress of the work. *Pax tibi, fili mi!*

Thursday morning, January 23, 1823

P.S. I was sleepless a good part of last night. I made so many reflections about our works that it seems to me I could easily make an entire volume of them, if I wanted to write them all down. If in the few I have just made for you there is one or the other expressed in a way that displeases you, be assured that I have only wanted to do well and not, in any way, to humiliate you.

* * * *

Brother David gave on the very same day a satisfactory answer to all the questions that had been asked of him. In these, he manifested deeply religious sentiments. In fact, professing docility, he appealed to the confidence of his superior and asked him not to be sparing in his remarks to him. "Even if I were more sensitive," he said, "it would be much better to face this instability and recognize your right to do it, you from whom I have sought the way of truth."

Only half reassured and counting on the fidelity of Brother David to keep him informed about everything, Father Chaminade believed he would go ahead. In the following letters, he announces the departure of his representative to Father Maimbourg in Alsace on the one hand and to Father Tharin in Franche-Comté on the other.

224 – TO REV. MAIMBOURG,
PASTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, January 24, 1823

Rev. Father, I was very sorry I could not fulfill your desires completely and especially that I could not give you a school principal. The elder Father Rothéa had the honor of writing you last October 17 and of letting you know just what I was able to do. However, if there was and still is difficulty in finding you a suitable and competent principal, there is none for the establishment of a good free school and there is still less for the foundation of a Sisters' convent in Eguisheim. At the time of my last visit to Agen and Tonneins, I found all of the subjects well disposed for such a foundation, even though it is so far removed from the Motherhouse.

I am sending, Rev. Father, one of our religious, my secretary and the secretary general of the Institute, into a Department quite close to Colmar. He is charged with looking after the necessary preparations regarding the Institute of Mary. I shall prolong his journey as far as your place, and you two could confer with great profit about all your projects.

Capable as he is of seeing things clearly, he would promptly inform me regarding a great number of questions that are rather difficult to understand and discuss by mere correspondence.

I am happy to have had the occasion of again assuring you of my respectful attachment.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My letter had been written when Brother Rothéa told me that he was afraid the main difficulty for our foundations in Colmar lay in the prejudices that had been suggested to His Highness the Grand Almoner against the Institute of Mary.[1] If this were the case, it would not seem difficult for me to find the reason for it. The religious could explain things to him during his stay in Paris after he had had an understanding with you.

* * * *

225 – TO FATHER THARIN,
VICAR GENERAL OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, January 25, 1823

Reverend Father: On the fourth day of the present month, I received your honorable answer. The religious I promised will leave shortly. He is our secretary general. I shall have him meet you personally in Besançon. I shall be very much obliged if you introduce him to His Lordship the Coadjutor and if you notify Father Bardenet, with whom he will especially have dealings.

I have understood that the château of Saint Remy is in the Department of the Haute-Saône. If Father Bardenet were there, or even if he were in Vesoul, the religious, who cannot come to any conclusion without having seen the property, would go there to meet him.

I shall direct our small band to leave once I have received word that it is time to begin. I shall have a religious priest join them as head of zeal. The group will be small at first because of other establishments that we must further take hold of or sustain, but it will be sufficient to make a start.

For this establishment at Saint Remy, I feel a confidence I have not experienced with many others which, nevertheless, have worked out well.

[1] The Prince of Croy, Bishop of Strasbourg, had been promoted to the rank of Grand Almoner and, under this title, resided in Paris.

To complete my joy, I now have only to go as far as Saint Remy, or rather to Besançon, in my annual visitations to see for myself all the good I have heard of its respectable clergy and especially to offer you my sentiments of devotedness and respect.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I shall have the honor of writing you soon, on the day the religious secretary-general leaves.

* * * *

226 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, February 17, 1823

I will avoid mentioning, my dear son, everything I think I can take care of myself, so as not to delay your departure. If you have screened out anything that could embarrass me, at least let me have a little note of guidance. Draw up the legal authorization that you might need.

I am prepared to shower upon you all the blessings that my ministry can obtain from heaven and to give you my paternal kiss with a great sentiment of tenderness.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. This note is called for, as you can see for yourself, by the interview you had with Brother Rothéa.

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Here is the wording of the legal authorization referred to in the preceding note.

227 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, March 4, 1823

I, the undersigned, William Joseph Chaminade, honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux, give power to Brother David Monier, who is to go to Paris in the near future, to solicit, in my name, authorization from the Government for the establishment of a religious and benevolent Society, for the purpose of training teachers for the primary schools, of establishing free schools of this level and of joining to them the teaching of the most useful arts and crafts.

To this effect, to present, if necessary, the Statutes, Regulations, the Method, to consent to all suitable changes and modifications, to supply all petitions, memoirs and requests, to make all declarations and submissions, to sign all papers, to substitute in whole or in part what is here said and, in general, to do what I could do myself if I were there in person, should the power thereto not be expressed or contained herein.

Given in Bordeaux, under my private seal, March 4, 1823.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Brother David's departure was delayed longer than Father Chaminade had expected. March 4 he again urged his representative to be on his way and gave him letters of recommendation to Fathers Tharin and Bardenet. It was, nevertheless, only on March 10 that Brother David left Bordeaux, as will be seen in the correspondence which follows.

228 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX,

Bordeaux, March 4, 1823

You will do well, my dear son, to leave as soon as possible, for you know to what an extent long, unexpected delays confuse and often are the cause of changes in views and operations. You will have this evening nearly 440 francs. Do not lose sight of the fact that we are not able to make expenses for the establishment at Saint Remy. On the contrary, we need, and that in a short time, that it come to the aid of the other establishments.

Once in Saint Remy, you can judge if the trip to Alsace is important enough to be undertaken. You will not judge it to be such if the establishment at Saint Remy fails or if it comes off without your having to wait for the founding group to get it started. In every decision of this kind you must weigh the time employed against the expenses to be made. . . .

With this mail I am planning to direct that children less than five years of age not be admitted to the school unless they have older children to accompany them or unless they are docile or precocious enough to be easily controlled. Agen does not merit that a Brother be assigned for these little children.

Greetings and the peace of the Lord!

William Joseph Chaminade

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The rough copy of the three following letters are, as can easily be recognized, in Brother David's hand, but they reproduce very well the thought of Father Chaminade, who reread and corrected them himself. Letter 231 had been prepared before Brother David's departure and the date of March 10 was added to it only after he left.

229 – TO FATHER THARIN,
VICAR GENERAL OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, March 4, 1823

Rev. Grand Vicar, this letter will be transmitted to you by Brother David, whom I have already been careful to make known to you.[1] I do not doubt you will be good to him. You will kindly recommend him to the protection of the archbishop and I hope that you and your commendable friends will give him full credit for all he is doing for the success of our works.

Whatever you settle with this envoy, I hold it as settled with myself.

He already has in his hands all the correspondence relative to the proposed work at Saint Remy. Our statutes, constitutions, and regulations are well known to him. He has the main copies with him. He is even in a position, I am sure, to answer all requests for precise explanations that might be needed.

This collaboration, if God wills that it take place, will produce salutary effects. There is question of reforming morals and of bearing witness to religion, and this cannot be done without working together. But it is hard to keep together when such great distances separate us. The union of those who are of God is the most indispensable thing and it is this which I most ardently ask of God in my prayers.

The only obstacle that I noticed concerning the establishment at Saint Remy—and I had the honor of telling you about it already, Your Honor—lies in my surcharge of other duties. Establishments already founded have not received the attention they need from me, nor have the promises made to them been fulfilled.

The work at Saint Remy, even though it came after the others, attracted me because of the great results for religion that I foresee from it.

Without the graciousness of the worthy Missionary, who really wanted us there, and who offered a moderate price and convenient terms, I would not have thought the thing possible.

Still remaining to be considered are the expenses, the disbursements from the transfer, all the furniture needed by the personnel, all school furniture and whatever will inevitably be needed for the various projects to be undertaken, instruments, books, and all accessories for the proper functioning of every department, good government in everything . . . this perspective takes in more than is ordinarily believed.

[1] Letters 219 and 225.

Then, in a region little known to us, we have reason to fear that in the actual operation there will be many worries not necessarily connected with schools,[1] if we don't find kind persons ready and willing to aid us.

From all this and from many other resulting considerations, you must be convinced, Your Lordship, that it would be dangerous to disguise the material difficulties of the enterprise. I put confidence in my envoy to reduce these apprehensions to their proper scale. But, he would do poorly if you were not to give him or find for him the proper assistance.

If, as I believe, this enterprise is the work of God, all difficulties in the way of its realization will eventually disappear. Each one of the cooperators that Providence has chosen will do his part. I shall certainly do mine.

Believe me, Your Lordship, when I say that I have already done at least something in sending my collaborator in my existing works to a place 200 leagues from here. I hope that his visit with you may be shortened and its purpose easily accomplished. But all sacrifices will mean nothing unless we procure the greatest glory of God and under all circumstances know how to submit ourselves to the hidden designs of divine Providence.

Confiding the entire matter to you, I no longer need tell you of my deep consideration and profound respect . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am at the feet of Your Lordship and I beg your blessings for our works.

* * * *

230 – TO FATHER BARDENET,
MISSIONARY IN BESANÇON

Bordeaux, March 4, 1823

My most honored confrere, doubtless I should have written you as soon as the first vicar general of your diocese acquainted me with your plans for Saint Remy . . . Be kind enough to excuse me from your heart, my beloved and honored confrère, at least by that ardent charity which unites us in Jesus Christ.

To get to the bottom of things, I cannot help being amazed that we have been brought together. In spite of the distance that separates us and the fact that we have never met, I could not help exclaiming: "Oh Providence!"

[1] That is to say, costly experiences.

What are the views of this Providence in this circumstance, and what is being asked of us? This is what has particularly attracted my attention. I explain it to myself very simply. I say to myself: our bishops, successors of the apostles, are the apostles of the time in which we live. They have a high mission.

When the Church, brought to the east of France by apostolic laborers, asks of me, a petty minister placed at the other extremity of the kingdom, if I can send you workers and says that the Master is waiting for them, there only remains for me to answer as in the time of the apostles—and God wants it thus! This is obeying and giving to the summons everything in my power. I have indicated the limits of this power because I thought it my duty to do so. My power is feeble, but it can become strong in our divine Savior. His holy will shall be done! When this divine Mediator deigns to associate me with men far more worthy, he has taken into consideration my weakness and this is cause for great consolation. I have confidence in the work undertaken and I am obeying. On your part, you will do all you can with the help of grace. Let us be united in God alone!

My envoy can explain my thought to you in detail. He knows it better than anyone else. He was with me during my imprisonment, in my labors for the institutions in which God wished that I should be his weak agent. He will not cease working with me, even while working together with you, my very honored confrère, at a task that will soon be common to both of us.

Even more than I, he will have the advantage of being edified with you and your clergy, about whom I have heard this word of high praise: “In their midst, there is but one heart and one soul.” My envoy will easily share this same spirit, although he is not a clergyman properly so called. He is neither a stranger to nor useless to the clergy, since he is working in the religious[1] state, supported by grace in the service of religion.

I entirely agree to anything you may settle or work out in conjunction with him. I shall consider it as settled or done with myself. My very honored confrère, do whatever you consider worthwhile so that good morals and religion may be assisted and made to flower as purely, if possible, as in the early days of the Church. May the works of faith and the fruits of charity abound!

This Providence, which has deigned to bring us together, gives me hope that it is not in vain that we have been drawn together on a holy path. This hope and this desire unite me to you in Jesus Christ and leave in me no other sentiment than to beg you to consider me sincerely, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

[1] Bro. David had written monastic, Father Chaminade corrected this with the word religious.

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231 – TO FATHER THARIN,
VICAR GENERAL OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, March 10, 1823

Your Lordship,

My last letter to you was dated January 25. It mentioned, in substance, that my intimate cooperator would soon visit you and Father Bardenet under the direction of Bishop d'Adana, who governs your great diocese.

This "soon" has become later than I hoped, but no one better than you, Very Rev. Grand Vicar, can appreciate the difficulties that arise when one attempts to interrupt the general run of business. It was thus in vain that the departure was set for the first days of the month of February, then for the 19th, later for the 24th, and then indefinitely postponed. And now at last, the departure has finally happened. And our traveler has already been six or seven hours en route.

It will take him sixty to seventy-two hours to reach Paris. His length of stay in this city will depend largely on the duties he has to fulfill. I don't think he will be delayed more than four or five days, and from there he will go directly to Besançon. Then Your Lordship will deign to give him his orders to go to Vesoul to meet Father Bardenet there or elsewhere if necessary, and then at his convenience to visit Saint Remy without further delay.

He himself is the bearer of a letter in which I go into some detail that would needlessly prolong this one and in other respects refer to some of my preceding letters.[1]

May Providence, which shows us the way to this great venture, render it useful to the salvation of a great number and bring my collaborator and I to labor there only for the glory of God. You can see, Your Lordship, what an array of forces, what a multitude of graces we shall need. Be kind enough to remember us specially in your prayers and at the Holy Sacrifice.

Please accept the token of my sincerely felt consideration and of my profound respect.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My representative is called David in religion. It was one of his characteristic names in the world. He was a member of the old Bar Association before the Revolution. He remained attached to his religion and to the king. Having retired from business, he dedicated himself to the Institute of Mary, which he helped me to form and to sustain. This

[1] See Letter 229.

is a way of letting you now I place my entire confidence in him and willingly hand over to him the management of affairs.

He will be able to tell you, in a few words, about the costume of the Order, which differs but little in appearance from the most modest and ordinary dress—except that it is the same for all and should not lose this quality over time. This should settle things: you ought not to wait for a cassock.

Father Bardenet will receive a letter from me through my collaborator. He will be kind enough to forgive me if I have not made clear how much I am aware of my good fortune: being able to cooperate in his works. Your charitable mediation will further assure him of this.

Be kind enough, Your Lordship, to make known to the Most Rev. Coadjutor my sentiments of veneration. Tell him how privileged I feel to learn that he expects great good from our institute and will not refuse it his blessing.

* * * *

Here is placed the first letter of affiliation to the Society of Mary which has been preserved. It is addressed to a person who otherwise we don't know and bears the mark of Brother David Monier.

Other persons had been affiliated to the Society from its origin and under various titles: for example, Fathers Laumont, Mouran, and Serres, priests of the diocese of Agen; MM. Lacoste, Magnon, and Lapause, friends and benefactors of the Society; Father Bouet . . .

Regarding affiliation to the Society, see the articles in the Apôtre de Marie, *VII, p. 425 and VIII, pp. 2 and 41.*

232 – TO M. JEAN VEYSSIÈRE, ST. JEAN d'ESTISSAC

Bordeaux, March 31, 1823

WE, WILLIAM JOSEPH CHAMINADE, PRIEST, MISSIONARY APOSTOLIC AND SUPERIOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF MARY.

Upon the special request for affiliation that has been made by M. Jean Veyssière and upon the proofs which the candidate has given us of a sincere desire and praiseworthy intention of cooperating to the full extent of his power in the spread of the works actually in operation and of those that might be undertaken or founded in the future by the said institute, in the well-founded hope that the candidate will become, as a result of the said affiliation, a sharer in its merits and in the efficacy of its prayers; after having taken notice

of the good life and morals of the candidate, being informed particularly of his tender devotion toward Mary, and upon the other good and sufficient reports given of his exactitude in the accomplishment of his religious duties, his charity toward the neighbor, his discretion and wise prudence in his handling of religious and human affairs, have, by these presents, signed with our name, affiliated our above-named J. Jean Veyssière to the Institute of Mary, which has been established in Bordeaux under the title of the Immaculate Conception and of which we are the director, to be, by the undersigned, participant in the good works and merits of the said institute and the associations which are members of it or will be in the future. In consequence may he enjoy through it the prerogatives, privileges, and indulgences which are attached to the said affiliation, in saying with devotion and at the times indicated the customary prayers and in receiving his monthly Communions in the principal church where he now lives or will live later on: all in conformity with the Bulls granted by Popes Pius V, Gregory XIII, and the reigning Sovereign Pontiff.

Given at Bordeaux, March 31, 1823, under our personal seal and countersigned by our Secretary.

The Superior of the Institute of Mary.

* * * *

Brother David arrived in Besançon after a short stay in Paris. Father Chaminade acknowledges the receipt of his first letters and sends him his new directions.

233 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, March 31, 1823

I have received, my dear son, your three letters from Paris, dated March 14, 18, and 24. I was equally touched by your resignation to the violent illness you experienced upon your arrival in the capital and by the blessings which God gave to the remedies which have delivered you from it. I think that the treatment of your malady and the prolongation of your stay in Paris must have made quite a hole in your purse, already so shallow. If the loyalty of Father Bardenet and his respectable confrère does not replenish it to a sufficient degree, you will be kind enough to let me know. I hope, no matter how deeply I myself may be in straits, I can supply you with what you need. In all cases of serious and pressing urgency, so as not to lose any time, you could always borrow from Father Bardenet and leave the payment of the debt to me.

I am not surprised, my dear son, at the welcome you received at the hands of the archbishop of Besançon[1] and the first signs of benevolence which he showed you. You will

[1] Bishop Gabriel Cortois de Pressigny (1745-1823) bishop of the diocese from 1821, died in Paris on May 2, 1823. His coadjutor was Bishop Paul de Villefrancon.

recall that we saw, from the very first days of our correspondence, that the clergy of Besançon—by this I mean the archbishop, the directors of the seminaries and the missionaries—acted honestly and sincerely sought the good of religion. We also saw that the establishment asked for what was in the designs of God and that, in consequence, we should lend ourselves to its realization with all our heart. I hope you will find few real difficulties, at least with the founders. You must not look upon your mission as a purely human thing, for no natural or merely human consideration has confided it to you. Fulfill it in the same spirit. All or at least the majority of your confrères pray every day that the Lord may give you the spirit of wisdom and assist you. Novenas to St. Joseph are being renewed, etc., etc. Why then should you not succeed? But don't be surprised at any difficulty or contradiction that may arise!

I cannot tell you anything further, my dear son, about the proposition that Count N. made to you in Paris.

The eighty-year-old religious, who wants to found a normal school at Lons-le-Soulnier,[1] will write you and let you know his views and his plans for realizing them. You will share everything with me and tell me what you think. I shall answer as quickly as possible. I count on the assistance of the Holy Spirit in this as in everything else. Will we have to go to Lons-le-Soulnier? We should go to the ends of the world, my dear son, if God so calls us. But, from the little that you've told me of the views of this good religious, I believe we could realize them even at Saint Remy.

Villeneuve gives us both consolation and sorrow. Consolation because the collège is getting along well. Its students, especially the older ones, are taking to piety, making progress, etc. Sorrow because Father Collineau thought himself obliged to dismiss M. Medvielle suddenly . . . Father Collineau would have liked you to notify Father de Vassal, fearing inaccurate reports from the Bureau or from the city. It is useless for me to talk about everything here—all my observations to this "too young" principal. I shall send another teacher, a young man who has succeeded in all his studies and who has already taught for several years. It is sheer necessity that makes me do this, because I don't know the young man well enough as yet. I am admitting him to the Institute only as a postulant-boarder. He will be received as a novice only at the next October retreat if we recognize in him the required dispositions . . .

At Saint Laurent, everything is coming along as well as can be expected. Brother Clouzet has been here since Tuesday of Holy Week. Everywhere he has conducted himself like a true religious. Neither his long trip nor his stay at home has altered his zeal, his piety, or his recollection.

[1] Father Agathange, "former Capuchin, of eccentric memory" sought to make a foundation at Lons-le-Soulnier, capital of the Jura Department.

I have charged Father Lacoste to see what might be done for the schools with the new buildings acquired by the Sisters of Agen. I have tried to settle things with a view toward our further plans for the schools for the little girls and for the workshops to accompany them.

At the Madeleine all goes well with the exception of my health—work has become twice as great and very exacting since Easter. However, nothing prevents me from thinking of you and praying for you. I also often think of His Lordship the Coadjutor, of Father Tharin, and sometimes of Father Galliot,[1] of Father Bardenet and his zealous confrères, and of the Rev. Directors of the seminaries. It seems to me I am a member of their great family. I beg of you to offer to each one the homage, respect, and veneration that I owe him.

May the Lord shower upon you his most abundant blessings, my dear son!

P.S. I am so pressed for time that I haven't even a moment to reread what I have written.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Brother David visited Saint Remy. He came back with enthusiasm and immediately shared with the Founder the most promising projects. Father Chaminade joined in his great joy, but also brought him back to reality, pointing out the difficulties that would have to be faced.

234 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, April 23-25, 1823

I am beginning this letter, my dear son, on the 23rd of April, but I don't know when I shall finish it. I received your three letters from Vesoul, Belfort, and Landser. I am not rereading them, so as not to disturb the sentiments they have left with me. But in the end I shall reread them in case some serious circumstance apart from the main issues may have escaped me. I have been trying for several days to enter into a more perfect peace and to consider only the interests of religion.

My first sentiment has been one of joy. How could one love Jesus Christ and his august Mother and not rejoice over the dispositions you have found in Father Bardenet, his worthy colleagues, and the members of the clergy whom you have dealt with . . . but especially Father Bardenet, who is the mainspring of this great enterprise. I am sending an affiliation certificate to you, which I am sure he will accept with pleasure. We cannot be too

[1] Vicar-General of Besançon.

much united, for, infallibly, we shall have to work as one for the rest of our lives at so important a work. I have no doubt that Father Bardenet feels all the burdens of the enterprise. If it were true that he put only a modicum of interest into it, I would not feel it my duty to go ahead, since I now have a better understanding of things. I am repeating these last words, my dear son: "I now have a better understanding of things." They express a wide variety of sentiments created by reading your letters.

The members who would make up the founding group would not be suited, for the most part, to the works that can be undertaken on this vast estate. I am forced to rethink my priorities and make new choices. If we started a normal school in Saint Remy for the five hundred primary school teachers in the diocese of Besançon, I would not have, at least for the present, anyone to place at its head but yourself, and you know how necessary you are to me here as well as in many other establishments presently existing and yet to be founded.

For the future, Saint Remy offers means for subsistence. However, at present I don't see the money that is needed: 1) to get there; 2) to live there; 3) to equip rooms, kitchen, and possibly a chapel for retreatants; 4) to provide for needed upkeep and repairs and also taxes, to provide initial capital to clear the land, sow, and plant, and buy cattle so as to have revenue for the future.

You tell me, my dear son, that about one-third of the outlying land of the château does not seem to you to be within the enclosure and, consequently, is not included in the terms of the contract. I want it so, if that is what our respectable founders want. But would it not be prudent to examine: 1) if the land in the enclosure, given its full value and productivity, would suffice to meet the considerable expenses occasioned by the works to be undertaken? I don't need, my dear son, to point out to you that revenues are not always proportionate to the size of a property but rather to the fertility of the soil, to fertilizers and more or less considerable cultivation, to the quality of the products, to the ease in making improvements, in selling, etc. 2) If we leave this outlying land outside the enclosure, would we not have to fear the neighbors coming there in the future, unless it were understood that this third[1] would belong to the Rev. Missionaries, passing from one member to another, as would be the case with us?[2] I don't see too clearly what the latter would gain from this, seeing that they would not be on the spot to see to working the land, etc. . . .

I surely hope that Providence will come to our assistance once the establishment has begun to function. But, in the meantime, must not our zealous founders be, in a way, our providence in that they are at least its économes and wise dispensers? Providence always assists with this work—Providence does not recognize us as the custodians yet—but it does know these gentlemen. I had the honor of writing Father Tharin, telling him I

[1] Bro. David had evaluated the land outside the enclosure as one-third the size of what was enclosed, and had not included it in the contract.
[2] In regard to properties belonging to the Institute.

could not make any expenses, at least for some time, as for example, the cost for registration of the contract, which will be quite considerable, despite our precautions.

And, when I say that I cannot make any expenses, can I dispense myself from making any at all if you don't send me any money? Have I the courage to let my children depart without giving them the funds necessary to make the trip? And you now know what a trip it is without sufficient clothing, linen, etc. Never do I feel more that I am a father than when I have to be separated from one of them.

You will do well, my dear son, to indicate for me which religious you would most need for these beginnings. As a start, ask for as few as possible. Once I have been fully informed about these needs, I shall send you some, in proportion to what is necessary. These needs will hardly be slow in growing, if to the essential works you add repairs, labor, etc. Since your departure, I have admitted five or six new subjects. They are each good in their way, but I cannot send them to you. One replaces M. Clement, professor of third and of second Greek on Rue des Menuts. I have sent another to Villeneuve to replace M. Medvielle; a third is preparing to receive the subdiaconate on Trinity Sunday; a fourth is continuing his studies at the Madeleine; two others are in line to enter the novitiate of Saint Laurent. Several others are presenting themselves, but I do not know them well enough to admit them.

I have just spoken to you, my dear son, as if you were ready to start, but I failed to remember that the contracts are not yet signed and that you still have to go to Paris. As regards the contracts and the necessary notification, I have no intention of limiting in any way the powers I gave you at your departure by the reflections that I am sharing with you in this letter. I believe it my duty to make these observations for your guidance. Add to them as you feel the need, and do as you think I would do if I were in your place and saw the things you see.

I hope that Father Bardenet will make suitable efforts to put the enterprise in running condition. If I had available means, I would tell you with my ordinary frankness to draw on me for all the necessary sums that would not otherwise be offered. But you know of my embarrassment. I cannot support either the existing establishments or the subjects who present themselves, or even the incidental expenses that I shall have to make for Saint Remy, whatever be the generosity of its founders.

Concerning your trip to Paris, it can easily be delayed a little but not omitted entirely. You are well aware of its importance and opportuneness. I leave you, my dear son, to your own wisdom. I pray much and I have others pray much for you. These prayers are fervent and persevering, especially in the novitiate of Saint Laurent.

I do not dare oppose the work of a normal school at Saint Remy, on account of the incalculable good that it may do in the large diocese of Besançon. It is easy to foresee that the example which this diocese could give would soon be imitated by others and that the

Government would not delay in favoring a work which, without any inconvenience, would tend so directly to the regeneration of the people in our unhappy country. The Rev. Missionaries could very usefully exercise their zeal at the time of the reunions. However, if such works were started in other dioceses, we would be obliged to send them some of our own missionaries. May the holy name of God be known, published, and blessed in all places!

I said that I did not dare oppose this work and not that I really want to do it. You know that there are certain excellent things that are much desired but that are also feared, dreaded—and that it is only faith that can overcome all repugnance to them. I fear this enterprise mainly because it will, for so long a time, deprive us of your presence. It will be difficult to replace you suitably. However, I don't doubt that you will profit by your long stay in Saint Remy to start the most difficult workshops. I also fear the consequences of such enterprises. But, I repeat, I do not oppose this project. If you feel good—I no longer say about the success of this work but about its great utility—if Father Bardenet and his worthy colleagues suitably come to our assistance and stay with us at least until we can get along by ourselves, then I say let us go ahead! I shall help you in every way I can. It seems to me that my confidence in God increases in these events.

One more reflection about the workshops for the arts and crafts at Saint Remy. The château seems quite isolated for certain workshops to be established there. These large-scale workshops produce a great deal of work; who then would give us all this work to do? How would we dispose of all the work that would be produced there? I see only a small amount of agriculture in all of this as well as the trades necessary for the upkeep of so large a place and possibly shops for the elementary teaching of the arts and crafts. I would not have made this last reflection if I had not forgotten to say that you might profit by your stay in Saint Remy to make a start with the most difficult shops. This reflection is perfectly useless to you, I am sure, because you are far too observant not to have made it yourself, as with a great number of others that might be made.

My dear son, I am going to end this letter here so that it may reach you in Besançon, in case your stay there is shorter than you thought. I shall add only a bulletin that will describe what of interest to you has happened in the Institute since you left for Besançon. If you did not receive the letter I wrote you at the time of your arrival, be kind enough to reclaim it. It was addressed to Father Galliot, Vicar-General, to be handed over to you.

May the Lord deign to shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

In Bordeaux April 24, 1823

P.S. I beg of you to offer Father Bardenet the sentiments of my respectful attachment and, in general, to the reverend members of the clergy the tokens of my veneration. I put His Lordship, the Coadjutor, in first place. A week ago today, my dear son, I received your two letters, one from Belfort and the other from Landser, the first toward

noon and the second toward six o'clock in the evening. Since that time, I have received none, and this first silence gives me reason to fear for your health. I was surprised that, in leaving Besançon, you took no steps to make sure my letters would reach you no matter where you might happen to be. I received a big package of letters three or four days ago from Father Weber stamped "Belfort." This young priest speaks of your meeting with Brother Rothéa and of your correspondence with him. He did not like some of the expressions in your last letter, but a proper explanation will make things right. In the package there was a long letter from a young man who is in the rhetoric class in La Chapelle[1] where Father Weber is teaching music. This young man is asking to enter the Institute of Mary.

Father Collineau received the Rev. Rector of the Academy of Cahors. Apparently they like each other. The Rev. Rector promised to interest himself in a chair of philosophy in the collège of Villeneuve for next year. Since M. Medvielle's departure, new boarders are always coming in, several from other boarding schools attracted by the school's good reputation.

The boarding school on Rue des Menuts is getting along fairly well. Four pupils from Peru have just entered. Three belong to a deputy of the Viceroy in the court of Ferdinand VII. I met their father, a very good and Christian man, but I have not yet seen the children. Two others have arrived, and I am told more are on the way. It is believed that they will not choose another boarding school.

I shall conclude my visit to the Haut-pays only when all the business of Saint Remy has been completely concluded. Although I always have new reasons to praise and to thank God's adorable Providence over the entire Institute, I cannot help feeling, perhaps too often, the pull of cares and diverse anxieties, or rather of causes for disquietude.

The tenants of house No. 3 Rue Lalande seem now on the move to find themselves other lodgings. . . .

I cannot tell you how much Fathers Rothéa, Caillet, and Lalanne all embrace you tenderly and are praying for you.

I hasten to end this letter so that it won't miss tomorrow morning's mail. If it did, then I'd have to wait four days for the next. I prefer to write later if I have forgotten something very important.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you, my dear son!

In Bordeaux, April 25, 1823

[1] La Chapelle-sous-Rougemont, Little Seminary located near Belfort.

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Let us here insert a letter addressed to the convent in Agen, interesting from the point of view of the formation of the postulants, novices, and young religious.

235 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 5, 1823

You ask me, my dear child, if the baker may be admitted to the Society. He would like to know definitely. What can I answer that I have not already said? The young man has little piety, he doesn't know what religious life really is . . . He doesn't even know his trade as a baker, and we have not yet provided for a bakery. In the first place, a real baker is needed and not an apprentice. If the young man perseveres, let him go see Father Laugeay and ask that the latter give him the instructions he needs. Let him follow the little rule of life that will be given him. Let him be what we call a kind of day-scholar postulant. Let him master his baker's trade and all that this entails. At the time of my visit, I shall then settle the matter for him definitely, if possible.

When will this visit take place? You ask again, my dear child. Just now, I cannot say. However, I shall notify you as soon as I shall have been able to settle things. The principal reason for the delay is the final decision regarding the foundation at Saint Remy. This matter is about at the last stage of settlement. Brother David and the interested parties are to meet in Besançon on the first available day. My last observations about it must have been received by this time. I have to be here in case a group has to be sent, subjects have to be chosen, prepared and furnished with what is necessary, etc. Pray yourself and have others pray about this, which is of such great importance for the Institute of Mary and for religion in general. I shall give you the principal details when I learn that the contracts have been concluded. The sample registration of the contract will call for a fee of at least six thousand francs, etc.

It is true that I have given Brother Bouzeran hope that we would supply three hundred francs for his mother who seems to be in very great need. I want to determine what concerns both the son and the mother only after Pentecost at the time of my visit. Nevertheless, since Brother Bouzeran is doing well and usefully employed, I am saying nothing to him about the unreasonable demand of his mother. Give her some financial help and put it on the general expense account for the year. Her son is a good subject. If he takes on the genuine spirit of the Institute, he will be well worth what he has cost.

We must give the pupils "of the little costume"[1] all the education and instruction that they are capable of receiving, and we must not admit any to this class who cannot assimilate both to a certain extent. Great wisdom is demanded of the teachers if these

[1] That's how the postulants of Agen were called.

children are to grow in piety, in contempt of the vanities of the world, etc. When a pupil has a special talent in some particular line, it is well to cultivate especially this gift of nature, such as for example, a capacity for vocal or instrumental music, writing, etc.

It is otherwise with novices. Once they enter the novitiate, we suppose their education finished. The novitiate is concerned only with Christian and religious instructions, with labors, exercises, and practices of virtue, etc. If, however, there be a young novice who has received from nature (or rather from God) some exceptional talent, it is permitted to cultivate it, provided the novice is humble enough to be unharmed by this little distinction. A novice who would desire, who would ask for this distinction, would by the very fact prove that he already has very little of the spirit of his state. It is up to the mistress of novices to judge what may be suitable for such a subject. When she has judged that it is suitable that such and such a novice take special lessons, she has an understanding with the Mother Superior, who arranges whatever may be necessary. She may first consult the Mother of Instruction, but in every case, the latter remains charged with carrying out the orders of the Mother Superior and is responsible for the novice's progress in the special lessons.

If the Mother of Instruction should notice that the study is becoming harmful to the novice, she should inform the novice mistress. Both of them are to take every precaution that the special study produces no bad results. Everything must be sacrificed to the essential. We must always aim at having real religious.

There is difficulty among the Mothers about government, my dear child, only because the Mothers in different Offices do not strive with simplicity to attain the end of their respective functions. The Mother of Work, you tell me, thinks that the novices do not devote enough time to work. What does it matter to her, provided the novices who are put under her charge work as true religious, that they bring to their tasks all diligence, care, skill, etc., that they are capable of? The Mother of Instruction, you add, finds that there is too much that turns them away from their studies. What does it matter to her, provided those who are permitted to study employ well the time allotted them, that their lessons and assignments be carefully done, etc.? You tell me, my dear child, that someone wants to teach them geography. Well, to whom does it belong to suggest such a thing? It belongs to the novice mistress. She must see, in her wisdom, those who need it, considering their likely future employment. Furthermore, if she sees a real usefulness in this or any other study then she must be certain it will in no way harm their advancement in religious virtues. It would again belong to the Mother Superior to make her views known to the novice mistress, should she have reason to believe that the latter was forgetting about them.

In these same few reflections, my dear child, you will find the answer to the other difficulties you place before me. In the most famous group of teachers among the men[1] the novices set aside all secular study for two consecutive years. When they make their final

[1] The Society of Jesus.

profession, they once more become novices for another year, during which secular studies are again set aside. We believe that with some care it is possible to combine with the study and the exercises of the religious life some other studies, according to the dispositions of the subjects. That is what is being done in our novitiate of Saint Laurent, and so far I see no inconvenience as a result. I am still quite surprised that you have not brought this disorder to my attention before this. How can we form real Daughters of Mary in the novitiate at Agen?

I must add one more reflection. The young professed who are destined for employments calling for skills and knowledge and who are not sufficiently trained, could receive the lessons they still need, could they not? In this way, they could study longer and with less trouble. But, my dear child, let the Mother of Zeal be careful that these studies are made without prejudice to the interior and religious spirit!

May the Lord deign to give his blessing to your maternal cares!

William Joseph Chaminade

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But Father Chaminade no longer received news from Saint Remy. Brother David's last letter had let him catch a glimpse of the considerable expenses made despite Father Bardenet's good will. Insufficiently informed, fearing to compromise the Society and perhaps not wanting to miss an occasion that seemed sent by Providence, the Founder made his hesitations known to his representative as well as his total abandonment to divine Providence over the result.

236 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, May 21, 1823

I hope, my dear son, that this letter will find you in Besançon at last. I hope also that the death of the venerable archbishop of this noted city will not hamper the satisfactory conclusion of the business that brought you there. I answered after three or four days of reflection your letters from Vesoul, Belfort, and Landser. I addressed my letter to Father Tharin, vicar-general, to be put in your hands at the time of your second stop in Besançon. This very long letter contained a certificate of affiliation for Father Bardenet. I saw that everything was prepaid.

There is hardly a day, my dear son, in which I do not think of you and of this matter often. Ordinarily, I recommend you and your enterprises to the Lord and his august Mother. My dispositions otherwise remain about the same as I told you. I surely want this work, but I fear it. I wait to be lured, so to say, by the pull of Providence. I do not want to anticipate its designs; I do not want to go against them. This divine Providence, in which I place all my confidence, assists us visibly in all our undertakings, but it does nothing in advance, if we may so speak. It provides, at the exact moments, for our needs and for our loans but nothing more, in such a way that I dare undertake nothing I do that is not clearly seen to be in conformity with its views. I maintain, for example, all the works already undertaken, I refuse no subject who presents himself, however poor he may be, if he happens to have appreciable signs of a vocation, etc. . . . If the good God inspires Father Bardenet and his worthy colleagues to come effectively to our assistance with the costs and advance payments to get the work going, I shall look upon this inspiration as an indication of the will of God and I shall say to you: "Go ahead! God is for us! God is in favor of this undertaking. I promise to send you good subjects to sustain it, etc." If the contrary is the case, I am obliged to tell you: "I leave it to your wisdom, I accept what you think you should do in my name. I shall do all I can to be faithful to the pledges you make."

Father Lacoste had written to you in Paris, my dear son. The mail carrier delivered this letter to several hotels and several streets and no one wanted to claim it. The post office then sent it to Bordeaux, where we claimed it. I notified Father Lacoste in Agen. This letter does not contain anything essential—I will not go through it simply to report to you the testimonies of friendship it contains.

News of the good that is being done in our Agen schools has just been published in the two editions of the *Journal de Lot-et-Garonne*. I heard about this and asked for copies. The writing is good. I congratulated the editor (I suspected it was Father Lacoste). I was going to send you a copy of his answer. I just remembered it is in the secretariat: I shall tell Brother Rothéa to copy it at the end of this letter. I have already seen to it that the two articles are sent to you in Besançon. You can make use of them as you wish. I shall also see to it that any further articles will also be sent.

I also wanted to send you a number of the *Ruche d'Aquitaine* in which an anonymous writer inserted a report about a meeting of the Emulation Society of Brother Auguste's boarding school. This meeting must have concerned the special unveiling of the bust of the princess.[1] The unveiling was really interesting from beginning to end. The presentation of the bust was done with so much dignity that the assembly, which was quite large, was forced to stand, out of respect. M. Casimir de Sèze,[2] who was seated next to me, was completely enthusiastic, and you know he is no enthusiast. A sudden play of lights was without doubt a stroke of theatre. A small fire well placed behind the bust, topped off everything. The report in the *Ruche* is well enough written, but it does not express the depth of feeling that the majestic ceremony awakened. It even prevented a better report from being inserted in the *Memorial Bordelais*. The boarding school on Rue des Menuts has just received five young Peruvians as boarders. The father of three of them is a deputy of the viceroy of Peru in the court of Ferdinand VII. All of them took part in the meeting.

Father Caillet is on retreat. Tomorrow he will make his perpetual profession. There will be a reception of six novices, of four day-scholar postulants and two ordinary postulants. The classification is well made, since no one is a doubtful subject. This little three-day retreat gives me much consolation, even if it does greatly increase my occupations. I am writing you this letter in self-defense and in spite of being endlessly interrupted. May the Holy Spirit shower upon you his gifts, and in particular, his wisdom and counsel![3]

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade did not have to wait long to be fully informed about the business of Saint Remy. He received two letters in succession from Brother David. One dated May 16

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[1] The Duchess of Angoulème (see Letter 55) was then making a journey in the south of France, while the Duke was directing the expedition into Spain.
[2] Brother of Romain de Sèze, the defender of Louis XVI and president of the Chamber of the Court of Appeals in Bordeaux.
[3] At this time, it was the week of Pentecost. The retreat was preached by Fathers Chaminade and Bouet. In a note of the archives of the Society relative to this retreat, we read what follows: "Indulgenced crosses made of copper and wood were distributed to eighteen professed and six novices. This is the first distribution of this new kind of large crosses that took place in the Institute."

complained about the Founder's hesitations in the presence "of the most beautiful work that our life has presented to us." The other, written the next day, announced that the transaction had been concluded.

"My Good Father," said Brother David, "I have just signed the contract which makes you the proprietor of the château of Saint Remy, called 'château de Rosen'—about 400 acres surrounded by walls and about 125 acres outside the enclosure make up the whole estate. The buildings are of such size, solidity, and style as to be beyond price. These buildings, I have said it to you, have cost one and a half million francs! It is one of those foolish things of the century that God had disposed of to serve his glory."

Brother David had bound the Founder to about 60,000 francs, a rather small amount considering the value of the property, but a very heavy one for shoulders already overloaded. This news called forth various sentiments from Father Chaminade. He expressed them in his letter of May 27.

237 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, May 27, 1823

My dear son, I received your letter of May 17 thirty hours before the one dated May 16. I don't know why it happened this way except that the letter of the 16th came by way of Lyons and the letter of the 17th by way of Paris. Henceforth, we'll have to take this into account when we are in a hurry about our messages.

You have managed cleverly, my dear son. I am very glad, and all those whom I have acquainted with your doings share my satisfaction. We praise and thank the Lord, and we are all disposed to second your efforts and the views of Providence.

My letters, my dear son, would not have tormented you if you had not been so preoccupied. You should have recalled the letter you wrote me from Belfort, which explained the one you had written me from Vesoul. You would then have understood that I was giving you full liberty to negotiate, that having accepted things only on condition that you had seen them, I wished to extend to you a further freedom to say yes or no.

It is quite true that I thought Father Bardenet still attached to the Mission, although I was astonished at the reservations he was making.[1] The superior of the Mission, whom you brought to St. Remy, as well as many circumstances, left me with the opinion that although the work was done at Father Bardenet's expense, it was nevertheless common to all the Missionaries.

[1] In his letter of May 16, Bro. David let Fr. Chaminade know that Fr. Bardenet had just separated himself from the diocesan Missionaries, and that he counted on retiring to St. Remy, where he was reserving for himself a place to live, some land, and certain privileges.

I am somewhat sorry about the way you go back over your doings in Agen, not so much on account of the reproaches you seem to make to me, but because of the harm your complaints may work upon yourself. If you did for the Haut-pays what you had to do and could really do, if I had not always agreed with your ideas but had made some observations to you, what is there in all this to make you anxious about Franche-Comté and to make me anxious about Bordeaux? If I make observations, if I give some orders, it is because I consider it my duty to do so. I may be mistaken and I am likely so to be more than anyone else, but what is to be concluded from this? You must notice that even now I am tolerably afraid of being mistaken and that I am going ahead only after I think I have seen clearly enough the will of God. Am I to fear still more? If I had a broader view; if I were more closely united to God; if, etc., things would go better, I have no doubt about it. But, once more, what is to be done? Say nothing to you? Do nothing? Certainly that isn't what you want. If you answered me that I must speak and act better, all I could answer would be that you are right, but, the fact is I can neither speak nor act better.

You seem to find fault, my dear son, with the acquisitions and the repairs that I made.[1] How could I correct myself of such imprudences, if they are really such? I intended to do well, and I still think I did. There are few important actions I have taken that I would not do all over again if the necessity for them should arise. Not that I am not afraid before God, but pray the good God, my dear son, that he pardon my sins and that he choose a better instrument to do the works of his goodness and mercy.

You tell me nothing about the normal school to be established at Saint Remy. I think that the Rev. Missionaries would find it hard to give up those big meetings of the primary school teachers, both because of the expenses they made to build a big house to accommodate them at Vesoul and because Father Bardenet has separated himself from them. The work in itself would be of the greatest importance, if it attained a complete success. The other dioceses would, little by little, follow the example of Besançon, if the Government especially and the University gave their consent.

Would it not be possible for us to start a boarding school, a kind of collège, in this big place? Independently of the intrinsic good of this work, we could find in it the means of sustaining all the other works of the Institute and of training subjects.

I cannot make the definitive choice of the subjects who will finally make up the group until you have given me your last reports. In the meantime, I shall make my visit to Agen. The General Council of the Department is to open there on June 5.

The priest I had considered for the group was to have been Father Rothéa. I believe today it would be more prudent to send Father Caillet, however great my need for having him here. It seems to me that Father Rothéa is not yet sufficiently mature. I want to keep

[1] In Bordeaux, at St. Laurent, or on Rue Lalande.

him with me for awhile, because he is not being trained fast enough at Saint Laurent. I think I can make Brother Fayet a member of the group. I mention him because you may know him. He may not come into any of our houses here because of a kind of hatred that his father bears toward religious. This young man is very pious, rather tall, well built, very modest and quiet. He would have been a priest by this time if studies and a sedentary life had not seriously injured his health. Movement does him good, and I think he'll have plenty of it at Saint Remy if he is employed in supervising the work here, the repairs to be made, etc. The fear he has of the corruption of the world would seem to have been the only obstacle to his choice of a state of life there . . . Would we not need some farm workers, peasant religious? The promised priest was to be part of a group of nine, but no matter. When you have told me your needs precisely, I shall be better able to make my choice. At the outset it would seem that the establishment at Saint Remy could receive men converted through missions who would have need of a retreat for a short time or continually. If this were to help, then we would need a certain number of Brother-servants . . .

Father Baumlin, pastor of Sainte Marie-aux-Mines, would be pleased to be in this solitude, especially with Father Bardenet as a regular resident.

You speak to me several times, my dear son, of your replacement. I thought of leaving you at Saint Remy only as long as you are absolutely needed there. For example, if a normal school were established there, if we organized a boarding school for letters there, if we started a polytechnical school for arts and crafts, you would be needed for quite a long time. You know that we have no subject at all trained to sustain such large enterprises. It would be quite a job to find someone sufficiently qualified to be rapidly formed for this responsibility.

Furthermore, my dear son, whatever arrangements you might prefer, after sufficient temporary arrangements, you will have to go to Paris to seek government authorization with the understanding of coming back to Saint Remy.

It is only today that the departure of the tenants of the house at No. 3 Rue Lalande has been completed. This house is very big. More people can be lodged here than at Saint Laurent, in spite of the extensive repairs I made there last year. I am going to have it put into shape for occupancy right away. I shall give the main direction of the work to Mlle de Lamourous. It will, I think, be completed before my return. Only what is rigorously needed is to be done, so that the house may be decently occupied.[1]

The time for the Paris mail having arrived, I am now coming to a close, my dear son. I wish you all sorts of blessings . . . Everyone is deeply mindful of your tokens of affection and remembrance and returns them to you by my pen.

[1] Concerning the destination of this house, see Letter 249.

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A new letter came from Brother David, full of enthusiasm, following a more detailed inspection of the domain. "Versailles has greater riches," writes he, "but it is not more beautiful. The finest sights I have ever seen, even in Italy, have not affected me more." And he draws this interesting portrait of Father Bardenet: "He makes use of a loyalty that is far from common. His character, I believe, is to do everything to oblige even when this is not expected, and he does it with great care, the more so when special importance is involved. If anything like bickering arises or seems to arise, forthwith he takes his leave. He does good in his own way. If he meets obstacles in one place, he goes elsewhere to do good and in some other way. We two have never failed to be in perfect agreement." Toward this end, complaints as usual and the announcement of his departure for Paris.

To which Father Chaminade answers—after some indications relative to the postal services, which had not handled the last letters to Brother David in time to be of service to him.

238 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, PARIS

Bordeaux, June 3, 1832

. . . I thank you, my dear son, for your consideration in sparing me the anxiety which the news of your serious indisposition and your sufferings at the time of your first visit to Saint Remy would have caused, but I beg of you not to spare me in the future. I would not be so tranquil if I thought you were remaining silent about your health.

The new details which you give me about the château make me feel more and more the importance of this work. I shall await your further reflections before definitely determining the choice of the nine subjects who will make up the founding group. I entered into some details about this in my last letter. Father Rothéa has the tertian fever, and that prevents me from taking him to Agen. This young priest seemed to me much in need of being well trained along certain lines before being sent so far. I was also talking to you in this letter of M. Fayet. This young man has lived almost like a religious for some years. The Superior of the Seminary, his confessor, approves of his vocation. By his education as well as by his imposing physique and his need of exercise, this young man could be put in charge of the farm work. You seem to desire Father Laugeay. If you think he may be of any

particular use to you, I shall try to replace him in Agen. Enter into the smallest details about the suitability of the subjects, and I shall try to accommodate you as closely as possible.

As soon as I learned that you had just drawn up the deed in Besançon, I decided upon my visit to Agen. It will coincide with the General Council of the Department of Lot-et-Garonne, in which our schools for the little towns of the Department will be discussed. Other institutions are trying to influence ours, and the name of Father de Lamennais makes this all the more striking. I have already written Father Lacoste a letter, which he gave to the prefect. It had a good effect. On arriving, I shall make a little note, etc.—if you happen to have some details about the institutions of Father de Lamennais, give them to me. The little that I know about it seems to me to demonstrate the inconsistency of his system.[1] The letters you write me from Bordeaux will be sent to me in Agen.

On my return, I shall have your reflections and counsels, and I shall determine the forming group for Saint Remy. Father Rothéa will have recovered from his illness. I shall arrange everything for an early departure.

I counsel you to see to it that my two letters are returned from Besançon to Paris, in case they haven't been give to you by Father Tharin, as I asked him to do.

How much I have yet to say! But the direct mail to Paris is about to leave, and this letter will gain two days by my ending it now, a half-hour before my scheduled time. You should be in Paris now or on the point of arriving. You will begin dealings of greater importance than those of Besançon, and I see the need of redoubling our prayers for you.

I am not rereading what I have written. May the Lord shower upon you His most abundant blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade

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As he said in the preceding letter, Father Chaminade went to Agen, where he obtained from the General Council of Lot-de-Garonne a favorable decision concerning the school at Agen and subsidies for the spread of the free school throughout the Department.

[1] The Venerable Jean-Marie de Lamennais (1780-1860) brother of the famous Félicité de Lamennais, founded in 1817 the Institute of the Brothers of Christian Instruction of Ploërmel. In a letter of March 2, 1837, Father Chaminade thus explained his thought: "It is very true that the institution of Fr. de Lamennais, like that of Fr. Mertian, was offering very appreciable advantages, that, for example, of being able to send a Brother alone to a small parish, but we don't believe that this advantage can outweigh the inconvenience of the dangers to which this young religious is exposed of losing the spirit of his state and even of losing himself . . ." Experience proved that Fr. Chaminade was right and the Brothers of Fr. de Lamennais, as they developed, gave up this character of their institute. It is no longer found in their present rules.

From Agen, on June 10, he addressed the two following letters to M. Lacaussade and to Brother David Monier, respectively.

239 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Agen, June 10, 1823

Dear Sir: The Tonneins schools affair has been treated in the General Council. If Marmande refuses or does not accept the 12,000 francs that are being offered, they will be given to Tonneins. Although your letter to Count de Beaumont came only after the decision of the Council, I hope it will have produced its effect. Before sending it on to its address, since it was unsealed, I shall present it to the Prefect and then to the Count, who lives in the Prefecture, and who had the goodness to come out of the Council to speak to me. It would have been a real benefit had I arrived in Agen two or three days before the Council. . . .

Everything around here is getting along tolerably well. Before my departure, I shall try to have an extract of the deliberations and decisions to let you have it at the time of my coming. Time is so pressing. I write you these few lines only most hurriedly.

I have the honor of offering you my respectful greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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240 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, PARIS

Agen, June 10, 1823

My dear son, I was in Agen yesterday when I received your letter from Paris. It was dated the fourth of the current month. It seems that you had not yet received my answer to yours from Vesoul. This surprises me, for I had used the address you had given me and that you still give me in your recent one. Would it have been necessary for you to have received it to have written M. Lavardens? You said nothing about it. But I shall make it with this letter. I asked you in my last letter to have the two letters I wrote to you in Besançon returned during your second visit to Saint Remy. How is it that you did nothing to have the letters I was writing you about forwarded? You would not be complaining about my lack of correspondence if you took note that, since you last wrote from Vesoul, you have given me no address other than Besançon and in Paris.

Why not tell me clearly that you were taking along little Charles?[1] I had no idea you were taking charge of this child with all the affairs you had to look after. I was less inclined to believe it because in your letter from Vesoul you insisted several times that you were alone. Whatever the case may be, there is no reason for making the trip from Paris to Bordeaux to bring him there, since you would only have to return again. There are always trustworthy travelers coming to Bordeaux to whom you might confide the child.

From your last letter, my dear son, it would seem that you need to reach agreement with me in order to act. If you need further information, if you meet unexpected difficulties, why not tell me right away? It seems to me that you would find in this way of doing things greater facility in obtaining what we are after. This is a time, possibly unique in its own way, when the Government looks with pleasure upon all useful institutions.[2]

The joining of the teaching of the arts and crafts to primary school teaching[1] will produce admirable effects and will give us the greatest facility in propagating the principles of religion among the youth of the country. I exhort you to keep on working at the Method. You must not doubt that I am using all the means at my command to second your efforts.

To determine finally, my dear son, the choice of the subjects who are to make up the founding group, I am waiting, as I have said in nearly all my letters, for you to inform me about those you would judge to be the most suitable. I am awaiting the reflections you promised me from Vesoul. I did not want to leave Bordeaux before knowing about the conclusion of your dealings with Father Bardenet. When I received your last letter from Besançon—the one dated May 7—I thought I saw clearly that I could begin my trip to Agen. I was strengthened in this by your letter from Vesoul. I was really needed in Agen for the opening of the General Council of the Department, as I believe I told you in my last letter. I shall be back in Bordeaux in time, as far as I can see now, for following through on our promise.

In your last letter from Paris, my dear son, you hinted that you had liabilities in Besançon for 4,000 francs, and this for the end of the month. When you reached Besançon, you were telling me you were trying to negotiate for 3,000 francs that you would have to pay at the end of June and that you did not know if you would be able to do it. Now you have written again and said nothing about the matter. What am I to think? When you originally mentioned it, you seemed extremely tired and perhaps even a little out of humor because you thought I was neglecting our correspondence. I shall calmly handle our affairs here, settle them as promptly as possible, and then return to Bordeaux.

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[1] Charles Bernhard, 13 years old, from Ribeauvillé, was coming to rejoin his two brothers Anthonine and Bernard, already postulants at St. Laurent.
[2] This had been the case since 1821, under the ministry of Villèle.
[1] Regarding the Schools of the Arts and Crafts and the conjoined schools, according to the views of Fr. Chaminade, see the Life of the Founder, *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, III, No. 34 and the following, and, in succeeding letters, the project presented to the Government on April 7, 1825.

If you are embarrassed to the point of not being able to free yourself, tell me so in all simplicity and I shall do all in my power to come to your aid. But I do hope your malady will not be as serious or your needs as urgent as they seemed in your last letter.

For three or four weeks, Father Lacoste has sent the newspaper of Lot-et-Garonne articles about our primary free schools. So far there have been three, all of them good and in a very readable style. I sent the three to you in Besançon in one bundle. They can be sent to you from there.

My eyes are closing. It is past ten o'clock (p.m.) . . . Everything around here is going along reasonably well. At another time I can enter into greater detail. For the moment, I am adding only the paternal blessing I give you from the bottom of my heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. All our good Brothers greet you respectfully.

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Brother David, in the meantime, was just in Paris a short time. He did not begin the negotiations there for the legal recognition of the Society he was supposed to complete. Instead he left for Bordeaux and arrived there before Father Chaminade.

241 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Villeneuve, June 17, 1823

My dear son, last evening in Agen I received two of your letters at the same time—one from Paris dated June 7 and the other from Bordeaux. This last is the second one from Bordeaux. The first from there came at a time I was so busy that I asked Father Lacoste to answer it . . . .

I cannot understand how, in almost all of your letters, you can reproach me, and with pretty much bitterness, for having neglected to answer you. Look at all my letters, as I have all of yours, and it will not be difficult to see whether I have not answered, date by date, all that seemed to call for an answer.

In all my letters, from the time of the purchase of the château and even, I believe, before that, I asked you about the qualities of the subjects to be sent to Saint Remy. It is only in your last letter, from Vesoul, that I learn that, at least for the present, we are not to think of a normal school for primary school teachers. In this letter you also tell me you will give me your reflections on the use of this big place. Until I knew about these things, I did not want to decide anything about my trip to Agen. I made up my mind and I left, providing sufficient time for my round of visits. I limited myself only to what was absolutely

necessary, in case I learned that my return was eagerly awaited. Were you really expecting to find the group of subjects in Paris at the time of your arrival? And, if I had had the imprudence to send them, would you have been there to meet them, considering your hurried departure from that city?

Now, my dear son, you say that your first mission is finished. But you are mistaken, because your mission for the establishment of Saint Remy is just coming into its own. The purchase of the château is a great advance, but it is not the whole thing.

I am hastening to end this letter on account of the mail carrier . . . I ask you, my dear son, to tell Father Caillet to invite Father Goudelin to preach on the feast of Saint Peter, feast of the master bakers. I am expecting to arrive in Bordeaux, at the latest, two days before. If Father Goudelin cannot preach, Father Caillet should be prepared to do so, unless he can find a good substitute.

Pass the good word along to Marie, very especially from me.[1] Speak to the folks on Rue des Menuts, at the Madeleine and at Saint Laurent as their father would were he not in such a hurry to get back to Bordeaux. Especially, don't forget my sister. I cannot tell you anything at this time about Villeneuve. I am writing from there. I shall spend the night at M. Vassal's preparing the letter he wants to write you for the University.

Don't worry, my dear son. I have the greatest confidence in you, and I am always intimately united to you. Let us arise and go forward for the glory of our God in true harmony. Let us mutually pardon one another the failings we can each attribute to each other. Let us cease this petty warfare, which might harm the work of God. . . . I am not rereading what I have written.

May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade returned to Bordeaux immediately. The following note shows him occupied with the personnel for the new foundation at Saint Remy.

242 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, July 1, 1823

[1] Marie Dubourg, servant of Fr. Chaminade, since the time of the Revolution, who had several times exposed her life to save that of her master. She remained in his service until her death in 1847.

It seems to me, my dear son, that the little group destined for Saint Remy would be better chosen and more promptly organized and equipped if you had an agreement with the director, Brother Clouzet.

See that he has a clear understanding, see that he even appreciates what you have in mind. Make him, as it were, your adjutant. To all appearances he will make the best choice possible. You need have no fears about his not consulting anyone, nor that his choice is not always subject to our approval. If you take all this into consideration, you may be sure of bringing along nine or ten subjects full of good will who will be true to their various posts, etc.

Father Rothéa must no longer be uninvolved in your schemes, and Brother Clouzet must remain in perfect agreement with him.

The retreat, more or less long, will not delay the departure in any way. The main thing is that the director undertake, according to the views inspired by faith, the enterprise which divine Providence offers us. Yours very truly . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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The choice was finally made. It comprised Brother Clouzet as director and head of zeal, Brother Gaussens as head of instruction, Brother Bousquet as head of temporalities, Father Rothéa as spiritual director and chaplain, and Brothers Dubarry, Pascal, Coustou, Constant, Molinier, and Marres.

The little group left Bordeaux on the 18th of July, under Brother David's leadership, and arrived at Saint Remy on July 30 or 31. The account of the trip is to be found in the Apôtre de Marie XV, *p. 443, f.*

The following letters return us to the affairs of the Daughters of Mary in Agen.

243 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, July 29, 1823

Sir: The order, conveniences and needs of our administration would call for the sending of Mother Thérèse to Agen and giving the convent of Tonneins another superioress. The three years of her superiorship are coming to a close. I have an excellent subject to give you, worthy of replacing Mother Thérèse.[1]

My greatest difficulty is the latter's health Is she in a condition to be guided by correspondence? Your orders would be better carried out in Agen than in Tonneins.[2] There she would be under your immediate direction. Besides, she would be exercising an office that is easier and more in conformity with her character and her inclinations—Mother of Zeal.

I wish to repeat to you the expression of my friendly sentiments.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I need not remind you of secrecy about the projected change.

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244 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 3, 1823

My dear child, I am awaiting an answer from Tonneins about Mother Thérèse's health before deciding upon the projected replacement. Your idea about Sister Holy Faith seems very good; i.e., in making her submistress of novices while letting her act as if she were the real mistress we would then see if she is really capable of this office. You have two very apparent reasons for making this change. The first, the presumed increase in the number of novices; the

[1] Doubtless, the Mistress of Novices, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart, who eventually replaced Mother Thérèse at Tonneins.
[2] We know that M. Lacaussade was a doctor.

second, the severity with which she will exact the reports of the various heads in the exercise of their functions.

The functions of the Mother of zeal are extensive. I see the need of giving to each head of a department notebooks or rather models of how they are to keep the accounts of their office. To be accountable, they will need only to copy what is in their notebooks. All of them are to be arranged in the same way as the General Administration's.

I had to make my last secretary, Brother Rothéa, head of the novitiate at Saint Laurent. I am going to take another, but he will have to learn by himself. I hope it won't take too long.

I do not have, at present, my notes about Sister Agnes, so as to be able to answer you particularly, but in general, those in bad health should not be kept, especially if they belong to the Sister companions group. We should not even receive anyone in feeble health, for whom continual mitigations are necessary and who is not able to follow the regime of the Community and must always receive dispensations, etc. . . . These subjects, however holy they may be, ought to sanctify themselves elsewhere. Our religious have to lead a very active life, and for that reason they need strength and good health. My dear child, be reasonably severe on this point. One of the novices, one of the group that left for and arrived at Saint Remy, had an inner sickness that he had never disclosed even to his own family. He was on the way a really heavy cross to the entire group. Brother David tells me from Moulins that this young man cannot live long. Perhaps he has already died. Of course, there is no fault, neither on our part nor on his family's. Perhaps, there may be some on my part, for it occurred to me several times to have him examined, on some slight indications of illness, but I passed up the idea because he seemed cool and lively. That was after he had been in the novitiate only three months. I am telling you this story only because you are the superioress—I hope you may see more and more that you must rise above every kind of indulgence. Do not fear that God will not send you enough subjects and good ones at that. Have patience!

I am again receiving requests for an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Colmar. Most of the difficulties have been cleared away. Let us think of putting real order in the administration. Let Father Laugeay know, if you please, that he will receive two supernumeraries for the schools this week. . . .

Mail as few letters as possible, but don't hesitate to let me assume the cost when there is question of something pressing.[1]

The work of the "little habit," that of the postulants, must be suspended, as I wrote to Mother Emmanuel to notify her parents. I shall not delay in writing to the parents of those that you have. If Father Mouran's niece could only go to the novitiate! From the letter of the assistant pastor of Damazan, you would probably find a very good subject in the young lady who is asking to enter the convent.

May a real spirit of fervor animate you and also all of your beloved Daughters.

[1] Mailing costs were very high at this time, and every occasion was used to send letters by other means.

P.S. The travelers to Saint Remy conducted themselves, on the way, in the most edifying manner. Brother David told me a word about it. It was an itinerant community. He fears that the girl postulants received his letters too late to have their meeting on time.

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What follows is the acknowledgement of the receipt of the first letter from Saint Remy, after the little group's arrival.

245 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, August 17 & 18, 1823

I was very anxious, my dear son, to know about your arrival. Although you tell me nothing either about your health or about your fatigues, I understand that this enterprise must cost you many worries of body and soul. I shall be glad to do what I can to lessen them, but, as I am of so little consequence, I ask God to pour upon you the unction of his grace, which may lead you to love even your worries.

You must have received my two letters. One was sent to your address and the other to M. Bardenet, lawyer at Faverney, to be given to you. This one is the third. I shall do all I can to keep you from worrying in expectation of my letters. I willingly assume the obligation of writing you at least once a week, even when there is nothing very pressing.

You seemed surprised, my dear son, to find the house destitute. Who better than you could remember how you had left it? The least clearheaded of our Brothers have seen this. I don't think I had them expect anything else. Once in a while, I could help one or the other appreciate what resources they had in your experience and your genius, but I don't believe I stopped there, for I must surely have spoken to them the language of faith.

I very sincerely admit to you that I would be much more disturbed about this establishment or others already founded or yet to be founded if the good God did not reassure me, allowing me to consider them only in the order of his merciful Providence. If the works that we undertake are the works of God, and if we undertake them only to the extent that we have reason to believe that God asks us to take them up, why should we trouble ourselves? Why, in contradictions, reverses, or the lack of means should we be anxious? Let us always say with Saint Paul: "He who has begun a good work, will complete it." In peace and confidence, let us make use of all the means that God has placed at our disposal, and he will know how to provide for all that we may lack. What good reflections might we not draw from all this. However, this is not the place for them. I have made these last only because your letter indicated some little worry.

I made someone promise you I would see to it that you got the 500 francs to acquire the property. I did not expect, and it seems very much that you also did not expect, that you would

find them upon your arrival in Saint Remy. With the Paris mail, which is to leave tomorrow, Father Rothéa will write to his brother Xavier for 1,000 francs. This is the way we thought most prompt and the least likely to meet with inconveniences. I presume that you have already received something from our postulant travelers[1] and that you have disposed of everything to make up your mortgages. If you haven't done so, you should do it now that you have heard from me. Our Father Rothéa does not seem to doubt that his brother can still give you 1,000 francs, and he asked me for permission to write you, since he has useful observations to make. He will do so by this mail.

I think I mentioned to you that Father Rothéa was no longer here. I have sent him to Saint Laurent in place of Brother Clouzet. I have chosen as my usual copyist young Tissier.[2] The delivery of Father Conne's library can now be taken care of. . . .

Tell Brother Clouzet, I beg of you, that I shall be pleased to receive a long letter in which he should freely tell me all his thoughts and sentiments concerning himself, his Brothers, his new position, or any temporal matters. Remind him that his liberty is guaranteed by the Rule, that his letter will be read only by me, etc. Continue, my dear son, to keep me informed about everything.

I have received from Agen a copy of the registers of the schools. This administration is wise, but we have not drawn all the possible advantage from it. I shall let you know how I think it should be used. I take as basis for the administration of all our establishments that of the schools, making allowance for each establishment, what its particular nature requires. The work is advancing, in spite of the number of my other occupations. When you have first formed your plan, let me have it, for it may be of service to me. The Miséricorde's, made a little at a time according to need, is meeting great success.

I am stopping now. I embrace you tenderly and all our good Brothers. Take courage, for the Lord is with us. Tomorrow, I shall go for dinner to the Archbishop's Palace, to begin to negotiate with Father Barrès and M. Jafard.

William Joseph Chaminade

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In this year of 1823, Father Chaminade announced to all houses of the two orders the adoption of the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary as the patronal feast of the Institute.

246 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 22, 1823

[1] Daughters of Mary.
[2] Jean Pierre Tissier, born in Agen, December 13, 1804, made his profession at St. Laurent in 1823 and severed as secretary to Father Chaminade until his death on January 19, 1826.

The Feast of the Holy Name of Mary, my dear child, will henceforth be the patronal feast of the Institute of Mary, for both the men and the women, without prejudice to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, which always remains the patronal feast of the Sodalities.

His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux has found the choice of this feast as patronal feast very appropriate and authorizes the Institute of the men to make of it the solemnity preferred to any other of higher rank. In the Roman rite, this feast is set for the Sunday within the octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, excepting when this Sunday happens to be September 14, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, in which case it is postponed until the following Sunday. However, for us, the feast is never postponed.

His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, was happily able to authorize us to take the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary as our patronal feast, but he was authorized to grant the solemnity only for the communities that are in his diocese. Right now there are only three like this: the Madeleine, the Auguste boarding school on Rue des Menuts, and Saint Laurent. In your case, you must make arrangements with the Bishop of Agen concerning your community and the one in Tonneins.

The eve of this feast, or the Saturday that precedes it, will be a day of fast for the entire Institute, wherever it may spread. On the feast itself, you are permitted to allow something a little extra at dinner and also a prolongation of the recreation. Let us rejoice, let us even manifest our joy, but let our joy be always holy. Let us rejoice only in the Lord!

My dear child, have three copies made of the first part of this letter. The first will be to add to the one you write to the bishop of Agen asking him for the authorization to solemnize the feast of the Holy Name of Mary in the Communities of Agen and Tonneins. The second will be sent to Tonneins with the permission of the bishop. The third will be given to Father Laugeay, and he will see what can be decently done in his direct dealings with the bishop.

Second part of the letter. Continuation of the registers of the administration for the personnel.

I was saying, in concluding in my last letter[1] the remainder of the community register is divided into three parts. The first will be entitled “Signs of Zeal,” etc. Each of the three parts must contain at least as many sheets as you actually have professed religious, reserving one sheet for each name.

You don’t have to have the sheets lined. Limit yourself to two little vertical columns on the left side to list the day and the year. You will write these indications of zeal on the part of your religious.

In the eight or ten days that follow the making of your community register, you will set down on the register on succeeding pages the description of each religious concerning the practice of zeal. You would do well, first to make a rough draft of each description, so as not

[1] Allusion to a letter which has not been preserved. Nevertheless, see a first to these registers in Letter 244.

later to be obliged to make erasures on the register. Then, after having reflected upon and reread the copy for several days, you would neatly recopy it on the register.

Every three months, you will make other descriptions, dated as the first. If you had not noticed anything good or bad in any of your girls, you could then limit yourself to write after the dates: nothing special during the last three months.

Observe two things, my dear child. First, as Mother Superior, you must especially exercise zeal toward the Mother in charge of zeal, who, by her office, is not subordinate to any other Mother except the Superioress. Second, you are not to make the descriptions of your Daughters recognizing zeal according to those of the Mother in charge of zeal but rather according to your own observations and all that you have discovered in the exercise of your functions as superioress.

Fourth register, kept by the Mother of zeal.

The register is very simple. It has as title “Descriptions of Zeal.” It is lined with only two vertical columns on the left side, to receive the day and the year. It must contain at least twice as many sheets as there are professed religious at the time, one sheet for each Sister, with her name only on the reverse side.

1. In the eight or ten days that will follow the making of this register, the Mother of zeal will make a description of all the religious of the community on the subject of zeal. 2. Every two months, she will note the progress in zeal and constancy in the spiritual combat for each religious on the folio of her register.

The Mother of zeal must make her descriptions according to the observations she has made or received herself. She must only put down what she is personally convinced of and not be governed by her conversations with the superioress.

If the making of these registers should embarrass you, my dear child, or embarrass the most intelligent Sisters, Father Laugeay might be of some help.

I thought I could still answer several requests you made to me or to Mother Saint Vincent, but it will have to wait for some other time. I am not less yours in J. M. J.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Mlle de Lachapelle's entry into the Daughters of Mary, which we have mentioned before (Letter 164), was the start of a foundation at Condom, her native place. It led to a prolonged correspondence between Father Chaminade and Father Castex, chaplain of the hospitals and director of the Sodalities in Condom.

We will notice this correspondence scattered over several months among the letters about the foundation at Saint Remy.

Of the two letters of August 26, it seems that the first had an official character, directed to the hospital administrators. The second, on the other hand, explained to Father Castex in a more confidential way all the Founder's views about the proposed work.

247 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, August 26, 1823

Rev. Father, I have received with satisfaction the proposal you make in the name of the hospital administrators.

I would look with pleasure upon the establishment of a group of Daughters of Mary in Condom. I hope, nevertheless, that the administration will not take it ill if I postpone formal consent so that the idea can mature and the archbishop of Auch can express his wishes. With this mail I am sending your letter to Mother de Trenquelléon, superioress of the Daughters of Mary. If, in the meantime, something special should occur, I would be very grateful if you would let me know about it.

Accept, I beg of you, the assurance of my sincere and respectful devotedness.

William Joseph Chaminade

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248 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, August 26, 1833

Rev. Father, here in all simplicity is my first reaction after reading your kind letter. I think of starting two establishments in Condom, one in the former hospital, a boarding school for girls and the other in the buildings of Saint Ursule, a community which would occupy itself mainly with Sodalities and schools. What do you think? I have just been told that a group of former religious Sisters had a similar boarding school. Could you give me any definite information?

In case there is only one establishment, I would prefer the old community of Saint Ursule. The hospital would seem good for a boarding school because of its distance from the city and its position off the main highway.[1]

When the owner returns, try to see him. Make sure that he wants to sell, on what terms and at what price. Perhaps you may not consider it prudent to tell him the same party wants to buy the two sections. Besides, the hospital administration might believe that there was duplicity in our dealings, not knowing our eventual plans. I leave everything to your skill. I shall not give a definite answer to the hospital administration until you definitively inform me about this last acquisition.

With a good heart, I am renewing the assurance of my sincere and devoted attachment.

P.S. I am completely ashamed not to have given you an account of the person you had directed to me. Wishing to expedite the most pressing affairs first, I am always behind in the others.

William Joseph Chaminade

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We return to Saint Remy. We will read through an entire series of letters in which Father Chaminade shows his prudence and patience in the face of the inextricable difficulties stirred up by Brother David. One can't help but notice the blending of a profound spirit of faith with a shrewd practical sense.

[1] Condom, a little town of 7,000 inhabitants, between Agen and Auch, had been the seat of a bishopric of which Bossuet, at one time, had been the head.

There, as in many other places in the old convents closed by the Revolution, new works arose.

The hospital of Condom of which there is question here, and where, in fact the Daughters of Mary established themselves, had been founded close to the venerable sanctuary of Our Lady of Pity or of Piétat and directed until the Revolution by the Brothers of St. John of God.

249 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, August 31, 1823

My dear son, I have received your two letters form Besançon dated the 22nd and the 25th of the current month.

Our three travelers, with the young Philippe, arrived in good health in the evening of the 24th.[1] Our religious postulants are preparing to leave tomorrow for Agen. They will be accompanied by M. Clouzet, whom I am sending home. I am not sending him away on account of misconduct but mainly because of too great a mediocrity in everything. I also have evidence of a lack of right judgment, as shown on three or four occasions. . . . I had certainly taken notice of some prejudices against you[2] as soon as it was decided, at the time of my arrival from Agen, that it was time to leave for Saint Remy. But I thought I had dispelled them all by the time we made the final choice. The choice, as far as I am concerned, was made in the best spirit. It is true that I often consulted Brother Clouzet, but I was far from imagining—I admit it to you and I still believe it—that Brother Clouzet wished to choose subjects with the intention of arousing opposition to you. Besides, I do not recall having accepted additions that he recommended, except Brother Molinier,[3] whom he put in place of an older religious because he was better qualified. This surprised me, but I accepted the change mostly because I wanted to have the matter over with and because I had no particular reason to oppose it.

My dear son, if you had read my letters with more attention and with less agitation, you would have seen that I had no intention of talking about the regulations properly so-called, but of the administration which seeks to enforce these regulations. Although it is true that, in general, the regulations are sufficient in number, that there are even some that might be considered administrative (for example, those that refer to the heads of departments), nevertheless, it is also true that the lack of sufficient registers is very harmful to each establishment. I pointed this out to you several times since the beginning of the foundation, and you yourself complained about it, especially as regards the novitiate at Saint Laurent.

Why, my dear son, while speaking of the admission of subjects, don't you point out to me one or two examples you have in mind, telling me clearly what you consider inadmissible instead of indulging in vague generalizations? Then I could profitably reconsider them.

As soon as you made known your distress and the urgency of the 500 francs needed for the mortgages, I directed Brother Rothéa to ask his brother Xavier to send you 1,000 or 1,200

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[1] There is question of three girl postulants and one boy postulant from Alsace.
[2] Doubtless, on the part of certain religious.
[3] Bro. August Molinier, born in 1805 in La Guépie (Tarn), entered St. Laurent in 1822 and was part of the little group that founded the establishment in St. Remy. In 1827, he was sent to Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, where the Society was opening a school and stayed there 45 years as professor and then director, until the closing of the school in 1827, at the time of the annexation of Alsace to Germany. He passed the rest of his days in Paris, at Stanislas Collège, where he died on February 18, 1879. "He was admirably prepared," wrote Bro. André to Fr. Lalanne, "calm, quiet, resigned as a child who goes to his father in the most complete confidence."

francs. I presume he has brought them to you personally. His brother, to whom I read your tirades on Alsace, told me he had a few hours ago.

I am not guessing who this sincere protector named to the diocese of Strasbourg may be.[1] Doubtless, you were sure of it, since you acted on it. A correspondence between me and Father Bardenet, whom you call your primitive associate, would have been a good way to proceed.

Perhaps you could have offered yourself as his secretary. He could have taken someone else—someone he didn't need to dictate to directly—provided that person expressed his ideas and sentiments faithfully. I had already suggested this possibility to you. Now I am only recalling it, in case you see some possibility in it. A correspondence between us seems to me so necessary that it is possible Father Bardenet suffers interiorly because of its absence.

I am dumbfounded, my dear son, to hear you tell me I am leaving ten or twelve of my children without resources. In what am I in arrears? I do not believe that you really believe this, but by this overdrawn portrait you try to move me to keep my attentions fixed on Saint Remy. I love the establishment of Saint Remy. I love still more those who have been sent there to inaugurate it, but will anyone be surprised that I am not abandoning the old establishments? Have I not written? Have I not said so from the beginning? Isn't this establishment, like all the others, in the hands of divine Providence? Recall, my dear son, what our Lord tells us: "Your Father in heaven knows that you stand in need of all these things" In any case, don't attempt anything more than you can safely handle. Is it in the views of God that we should look like rich people, like people to whom any amount of credit can be extended?

My dear son, you don't approve of the small foundation established at the Madeleine known as the "Little Seminary" or novitiate.[1] The same attitude exists at the Madeleine toward Saint Remy. Don't you fear the consequences of these clashes? "A kingdom divided against itself, etc."

You tire yourself and you lament about the bizarre reports that you listen to and that you doubtless believe. They tell you at Saint Remy that the Sister-companions have been divided into two groups, interns and externs, and you quite honestly deduce from this fact the hodgepodge of Agen! And if you believe that in Agen or elsewhere there are essential changes you do not know about, why not ask about them? Why not at least learn what it is all about, before passing judgment and especially before ridiculing? It is doubtless Brother Rothéa who told you about Agen.[1] Is he in a position to understand the conclusions reached at the end of a visit? At least, is there not reason to doubt that he has understood things well when his reports tend to ridicule the disposition of a visiting Superior? I have no intention whatsoever of making complaints, but I would like our correspondence to be simple. Let us learn for ourselves what is going on, what is being said, what is being done—in a word, the "yea, yea and the nay, nay" of the Gospel. Let us

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[1] Father Tharin.

[1] Novitiate destined especially for the students of secondary teaching. It was established in the house on No. 3 Rue Lalande, located to the right to the church and which was torn down at the time of the opening of the Cours Pasteur. It was directed first by Fr. Caillet, then from 1825 to 1826 by Fr. Lalanne, and then again by Fr. Caillet.

[1] See Letter 245.

help each other in bearing our sorrows and our contradictions and avoid afflicting each other and indulging in what I once called petty warfare.

Well, I am finished. I still want to tell you that Father Conne is handing over his library peacefully and even, it is said, joyfully.

It was not to draw you away from your distress that I spoke to you of order, of discipline, regularity. That would not be in accord with the tone of simplicity that should exist between us, but it at least gave you occasion to see how much I stand for order,
etc. . . .

In the near future, I shall answer the letters that have reached me from Saint Remy. I embrace you as a father.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following letter, the first addressed to Brother Clouzet, gives us the chance to publish a brief notice about this religious who played an important role at the time of the foundation and during the whole first of the Society's history.

Brother Dominic Clouzet was born in 1789 at Sarremezan, Haute-Garonne, of a family of merchants which finally settled in Bordeaux and there acquired a most honorable situation. Having entered the Sodality of the Madeleine from 1814, young Clouzet put himself under Father Chaminade's direction and was one of the first seven members of the Society of Mary. It was to him that, in 1821, the Founder confided the direction of the first novitiate at Saint Laurent.

At the time of the foundation at Saint Remy, a man of confidence was needed to direct the founders at such a great distance. This man was again Brother Clouzet, whose natural prudence and religious spirit were much appreciated by Father Chaminade. And in fact, during nearly thirty years, Brother Clouzet was the very soul of Saint Remy, and it is above all to him, after the initial difficult years, when his faith and wholeheartedness upheld the courage of his Brothers, that the work owed its development and its prosperity. Primary and secondary boarding school, normal school and teacher retreats, practical school of agriculture, Community of Working Brothers and its novitiate—these sum up the great work which Brother Clouzet accomplished at Saint Remy, with the aid of collaborators like Fathers Rothéa, Lalanne, Fontaine, and Chevaux.

For several years, before the organization of provincialates, Brother Clouzet was entrusted by the Good Father with the office of Visitor, and in 1839, with the functions of third assistant or steward general, which he was to exercise until his death. It is in this capacity that in 1851 he changed his residence from Saint Remy to Bordeaux and that in 1861 he followed the General Administration from Bordeaux to Paris.

Brother Clouzet was well proportioned, well sustained as he advanced in years, with a clear and ruddy complexion, agreeable and always expressive of kindness, having a dignified bearing and irreproachable neatness, a serious and easy gait, polite and attentive manners, gentle though somewhat slow speech.

His visits were feared by the religious who lacked order in their management or who let themselves get into trouble by irregular expenses. He liked to encourage the men of good will and took real pleasure in entering with them into the least details of their work. To a religious, a director who asked his advice, he traced this program: “Be sure to provide for your fellow Brothers wholesome food, and on this point, don’t consider the expense. This is how health is sustained, and this is necessary. In your purchases, buy only good merchandise, neither of the finest nor of the worst quality. Watch over the least expenses and keep an exact account of everything.” It is by this watchfulness and solicitude that he succeeded in improving and strengthening the material situation of the Society. Brother Clouzet knew, besides, how to soften, by his urbanity and his goodness, what his control might at times render painful, and so the communities rejoiced at the news of his coming. His grand manner was tempered by amiability, and his benevolence won him all hearts. He was always willing to grant the Brothers private interviews, and then, as well as in his general conferences, he spoke as a religious, not limiting himself to questions pertaining to his office but recalling the duties and exhorting to the practice of the virtues of religious life. The language of faith was familiar to him, and he used it in the most natural manner in conversation as in his correspondence. His bearing in the chapel revealed a man of more than ordinary piety, and his devotion to the Blessed Virgin and Saint Joseph was that of a real son of Father Chaminade.

Brother Clouzet had hardly arrived in Paris with the General Administration when he fell sick. His naturally robust constitution, worn out by age and work, soon had to give way, and he quietly expired on February 27 of 1861, in the arms of Good Father Caillet.

“His was a death, the easiest and most edifying that one can desire,” wrote the Good Father, “no fear, no anxiety, a boundless confidence in our august Mother and on his lips, endlessly, the names of Jesus and Mary, until without any agony, he peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. It is in witnessing such deaths that one realizes the better what it means to be a child of Mary. Called, from the first days, to the foundation of our dear Society, he devoted all his strength and every moment of his existence in its service. What fidelity, what zeal, and, at the same time, what prudence in the most difficult circumstances! You know if he has ever hesitated between his rest or his preferences and his duty, and you are well aware of the fruits that the Society reaped from his labors. We can well say that it is to him above all, after God, to the wisdom of his administration, that it owes today the security of its temporal existence.”

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250 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 9, 1823

Your letter, my dear son, gave me great pleasure. It makes me hope that your complete cure is not far off. However poor you may be, take good care of yourself.

The more there are difficulties to be overcome, the more you must be master of yourself. The more there are works, occupations and affairs of all kinds, the more prudence, patience, prayer, and recollection are necessary.

Listen with kindness to all your Brothers. Never tire of ever receiving all the suggestions they may want to make to you, and may they never leave you without some consolation and encouragement. Let them understand very well that you are ever mindful of their hardships, whether interior or exterior, etc. . . . and you will be able to do with them what you will, once you have won their friendship and their confidence.

I am not surprised, my dear son, that you have had trouble adjusting to the character of Brother David. Your two characters are so different! But it is from this very difference that peace, union, and concord will result. It is very rare that two similar characters get along a long time. But what a break, in whatever situation Providence places us, is a true religious spirit!

You are doing well to address yourself to Father Bardenet for confession, when he is in Saint Remy. Never delay concerning the politeness and attentions that are his due.

Have no other depository for the worries caused by exterior matters than your Good Father. To him, you can and you should confide everything. How, otherwise, might I be able to console you? How might I be able, especially from so great a distance, to give you the counsels you need? Keep me always informed about whatever concerns zeal, instruction, and temporalities—that is to say, about everything—because you know we include everything under these three titles and that a superior is, at the same time Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Temporalities.

Brother David is ordinarily an excellent counselor when it comes to serious and pressing matters, and he is reserved and very discreet—but be careful: the least distrust wounds him, but he rarely complains of his wound, and it is at times difficult to recognize the arrow that has wounded him.

I am coming to Father Bardenet. I am amazed that there is so little communication between us about an enterprise of such great importance. Does the establishment we are starting in Saint Remy correspond to the views he had originally entertained? I would like to know what he thinks, for or against. If doesn't write to me, either by himself or through a secretary, make a record in writing of anything he may have said to you and send it on to me. Correspondence between us, whatever kind it may be, is really necessary. Maybe he himself suffers from the kind of silence that I seem to be keeping toward him.

You speak to me, my dear son, of your lack of everything: provisions, furniture, money to have work done. Brother David doesn't stop talking to me about it in all the letters he writes to me. After this larger sum than he originally asked for M. Xavier Rothéa wrote his brother that he was going to send Brother David 2,000 francs by mail, that the 2,000 francs would be in Vesoul before his letter of advice would arrive in Bordeaux. It is very vexing that our letters from Bordeaux have such difficulty reaching Saint Remy. Here I receive your letters, dated from Saint

Remy and passing through Vesoul, in seven or eight days. How is it then that you don't get our letters from Bordeaux, also passing through Vesoul, before two weeks?

Of course, my dear son, I had imagined that our community in Saint Remy would experience needs of various kinds, that it would have to put up with all sorts of contradictions, that most of the men (even all of them) in the beginning would have to busy themselves with manual work. But I never thought—and even now I don't think—that if you and our beloved Brothers know how to be patient, if you put all your confidence in the paternal Providence of God, that you will have to suffer the lack of what is most necessary to life. That you are being tried; that the Lord is tempting you , so to say, in order to see if you are all true religious, if you are all truly devoted to the work of God, I am not at all surprised; and you know, my dear son, that this augurs well at the beginning of any establishment. Say to all very openly from me that those among them who may have lost courage or who may have gone to Saint Remy only to lead a life of repose and sensual satisfaction, that you are authorized, or rather that Brother David is authorized, on your recommendation to give them their obedience to come back to Bordeaux. There seemed to be strong reason that I should add to this letter an obedience to recall Brother Dubarry, but what you tell me at the end of yours makes me hesitate. God grant that he has really opened his eyes and really repents of the bad example he has given! God grant that he may become entirely master of himself and be constantly docile and edifying.

When I got to know better the situation at the château of Saint Remy, by the other details Brother David gave me, I began to fear an establishment there, and I wrote to him about it in Besançon before the acquisition. I was relying on his wisdom—he alone was acquainted with everything that was involved. I especially asked him to note the great expenses he would have to make and how very far we were from being able to meet them without help from somewhere. Whatever may have come from what I thought and whatever has happened since, we have believed we ought to undertake the enterprise, and that is what we have done. Our intentions are pure, so let us move forward.

Be always of one mind with Brother David, even as you make to him whatever observations you think suitable. Don't fear I will be bothered if you tell me everything. The Lord will be with me. I have no fear about that. The Lord will also be with you and with all my children. Do not cease telling them how much I love them and how much I desire their spiritual advancement.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I wanted to write Brother David and Father Rothéa, but this letter has become rather long, and a great number of other letters have come since this one was started. I expect to write to them shortly and also to those who profited by the occasion of meeting our religious postulants. Everything is going tolerably well in all our establishments. I have special satisfaction concerning the novitiate of the Madeleine.

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251 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 15, 1823

I received two letters from Saint Remy at the same time, my dear son, one from you, dated September 2; the other from Brother Clouzet, dated September 5. . . .

At each letter you wrote me, I consoled myself in the persuasion first, that you were going to get 1,200 francs, and then, that you would have received the 2,000 francs which M. Xavier Rothéa must have sent to Vesoul by general delivery. Many days ago M. Rothéa's brother received word you were receiving this sum. The cost of sending 2,000 francs to Vesoul is three francs. Was it possible that you did not receive the message M. Xavier Rothéa must have sent you? If you gave him the same address that you gave us, it is possible that his messages are also at Faverney.

I don't blame anyone who complains when he feels hurt, but I would come very near blaming him for directing his complaints against someone he has no reason at all to believe is their cause. You are correct in writing that I should not have sent the funds by way of Alsace; but when this first message came, the precautions had already been taken, and certainly you would not have been so promptly and loyally served had the funds left from Bordeaux. It would be much worse if my letters had contained negotiable papers entitling us to funds at certain dates.

This letter was begun twice twenty-four hours ago. During the intervening interval, M. Lacoste arrived from Agen. The prizes were distributed in Brother Auguste's boarding school. We have celebrated, for the first time, our patronal feast of the Holy Name of Mary. M. Lacoste embraces you. He is going to leave on vacation with his son. He seems very happy.

I am embracing you very tenderly. I also embrace all our children.

If Brother Dubarry does not behave better, send him to me. This letter will leave on September 15 at 7 o'clock in the morning.

William Joseph Chaminade

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252 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 30, 1823

My dear son, I noted with pleasure, at the end of M. Rothéa's letter, that you finally were going to get 2,000 francs in kind, and so I thought I no longer had to dread receiving your letters. But I was wrong—for your most recent one, of September 19, is even more annoying. I reread several of the letters I wrote to you and, in particular, that of August 18 from which you quote. You say that letter shows you the triviality of my promises in founding at Saint Remy a definite establishment.

These promises are doubtless those you suppose I made to Father Tharin, which you endorse. You well know—and you knew it long before your first departure was determined—that I had written Father Tharin that I could make no expense for this new establishment at least for some time. I don't remember having written Father Tharin since, except to tell him about your departure. It is nevertheless true that I wrote you from Besançon last April 24 something like a promise, but in what sense? Reread this letter carefully, and you will not find me contradicting myself. What is special in this letter is that I recall what I had written Father Tharin.

It is evident, my dear son, that if we seek the same end we differ very much in the manner of reaching it, and this is extremely vexing. My reasons seem illusions to you. You even see a spirit of darkness pervading the whole business. With such an attitude what value will you see in any reflections I might make about how I believe religious should act? You say it is as a friend, the only friend I have, that you seek to stop me from falling, even at the risk of incurring my disfavor. You have no need to fear, my dear son. I don't have such a good opinion of myself that I don't believe I can be mistaken. I shall listen to the advice which you and others give me. I shall weigh it and ask God to teach me whatever there be in it that is good and true, even if it does seem a bit out of the ordinary. And the good God has heard my prayers, for I have often profited by the advice of others. It is then not the poor opinion that you have of me or the compassion that you show for my illusions that caused me sorrow, but rather the consequences that may follow for the establishment of Saint Remy. You add: "I respond to your reproaches by overlooking them as a friend." If my reproaches have no foundation, if they are dictated by bad humor and caprice, if they suggest only a deeply wounded self-love, you show great virtue in forgetting about them. If, on the other hand, they are reasonable, why forget about them? How would it be a sign of friendship to forget them? Oh yes, my dear son, if you look upon them as harmful, then forget them, because I am very far from wanting to injure you in any way.

How disturbing then, our respective positions are, my dear son! But . . .

The very same day I received your letter, I had just written to M. Bernhard. My letter, which contained only marks of affection, was, I am afraid, a poor preparation for the business letter I would write later.

I easily understand that, with 10,000 francs, you could get things going far better, but what I don't understand as yet is that religious, vowed to evangelical poverty—in consequence, vowed to divine Providence both in their persons and in their works—should need to appear well-to-do, to appear rich. I also understand easily that these religious may not attribute the glory to themselves but to God, but I don't understand how God could be pleased with such a reflected glory.

You blame me having borrowed so much and, for a long time, of having washed one hand with the other. I can believe that I may have gone too far in this, although up to now the reasons for doing so have seemed a lot stronger than they have for the newer establishments. . . .

Must there be equipment for all the arts and for all activities? Yes, but we must have the patience to do at Saint Remy all the good we can, letting the good be seen only if we can actually do it.

And as regards Paris, what about the approbation of the Government? We had been thinking that the moment had come, that the times seemed favorable to ask for the authorization of the Institute.

The first proposition made regarding the château of Saint Remy presented the motive, the object, and the means to start a religious establishment of considerable size. The Missionaries had need of a community which could give retreats to the men they had converted, whom they could not continue to care for. I have always thought that these gentlemen would be glad to see, without prejudice to their own work, that other works were undertaken there. In fact, I was so convinced of it that I looked upon Father Bardenet and the Missionaries as the real founders until after the acquisition, as you can readily see from my letters. Then you showed me I was wrong in this.

Must we make this property an object of speculation? A big question! Why not solve it before going farther? On the one hand, from all that you tell me about it, this property could easily become the motherhouse of the entire institute, either by its territorial revenues or by the products of its workshops. On the other hand, the Holy Spirit inspires the Church to tell us: *Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotiis saecularibus*.[1] What kind of a religious, it will soon be said (if it has not already been), is one who is occupied only with the increase of his fortune, who bothers himself only about worldly matters, etc.? By this last reflection, I am far from blaming the moderate care of the goods which Providence might send, which it might evidently make use of for the support of the ministers of its works.

You had promised me, my dear son, to send Brother Gaussens back. Is it from forgetfulness that you are telling me nothing about it? It would be good for him to make the

[1] No one entering into the service of God bothers about worldly matters.

retreat usually held here. I have fixed the date of the opening this year for the eighteenth and nineteenth of October because of the grape harvest, which will be rather late.

Father Tharin's nomination as the bishop of Strasbourg will doubtless be a great boon on the part of Providence in favor of the Institute of Mary if we conduct ourselves religiously at the establishment of Saint Remy, if there is union in our views, if you give its heads wise and prudent procedures. I hope you also suggest to them a very simple way of proceeding—as for the time being, they cannot follow any other. If you want them to enter into your grand plans, you will render them powerless, they will become disgusted, you will have to be "always and continually on the job," etc. . . . May the establishment function in such a way as to do a little good, to support itself and, above all, to edify! May you always find it easy to disentangle yourself so as to be available for other
things. . . . Well, this is enough, even if it is a lot for the moment. Little by little, you can add other things as circumstances permit.

One more word. It seems that there were about 56 acres of fallow land on this property before the acquisition. Since you haven't found any cultivating tools there . . . might not Father Bardenet have removed them? What scandal can there be if you do as he did, especially on arriving? I embrace you, my dear son, with tenderness.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Here is a new letter, relative to the foundation at Condom.

253 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, October 7, 1823

Reverend Father, I have just heard of your visit to the community of Agen. The good Superioress must have told you that I had just written her on the same subject. I immediately asked Father Collineau, director of the school at Villeneuve, who is one of our religious, to meet you in Condom. I would be much obliged if you would show him the former hospital that is now for sale. You could also present him to the Director of Hospices if you judge it useful, and introduce him to M. and Mme Lachapelle, who want to arrange for the purchase of the building.

It would be necessary that you introduce him or at least refer him to those persons who can help the Daughters of Mary make necessary repairs or supply modest furnishings to the establishment. Perhaps the Lachapelle house might be able to do even more. Might the Ladies of Trenquelléon[1] find an apartment there? They might be able to follow their Rule and even

[1] There is question here of three aunts of the Foundress of the Daughters of Mary, former Dominican religious of the monastery of Provillan, not far from Condom. After the closing of the convents in 1792, they took refuge, first in the château de Trenquelléon, then, in 1820, they came back to Condom, where they opened, with the aid of some of their former companions, a boarding school for young girls. After the

perhaps wear their religious habit. You know that the oldest of the young ladies, in whose house Father Desterac lives, was to enter the first foundation of the Daughters of Mary. I presume that she and her sisters might take interest in this establishment.

There is an old friend of the superioress of Agen at Condom, who owns a certain property. We might give her a separate apartment. She has a disfiguring sore on her face, but she takes great interest in the Institute.

Finally, Rev. Father, I am leaving it to your zeal to discover the means of forming the establishment I spoke about in my first letter. It will also be necessary to see and weigh the inconveniences and learn if there is any way of possibly remedying them.

You may also acquaint Father Collineau with all that concerns the former convent of the Ursulines in the middle of the city. This second establishment would become of the highest importance to the city. I was thinking that, if a boarding school was a success in the first, this second would find the means of sustaining them both.

Father Collineau has no commission to settle things definitely. But he will look over everything and make his report to me. I hope that, with your help, he will allow me to promptly establish the Daughters of Mary in Condom.

I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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254 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 6, 1823

I received, my dear son, your short letter of October 18, in which Father Rothéa's was included. His brother Louis has also received the one you wrote him on the same date.

It is true that I received two of your letters without being able to answer them immediately. I was suffering a great deal from a tooth infection—and so I resolved to call Father Rothéa and ask him to answer both of them. I perhaps suffered more in having to read them to him than from my infection. I had advised him not to answer anything that might savor only of complaints and reproaches. You were certainly very much mistaken, my dear son, in believing that I had any intention of halting our correspondence or of withdrawing or in any way lessening the powers you have. You may have read the letter too fast. Neither he nor I had even thought of such a thing. Don't you recognize his style—severe and almost German?

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foundation of the boarding school of the Daughters of Mary, they lived together in their house on Rue St. Eulalie, continuing to observe their Rule and, in a way, giving new life to their former monastery.

In a letter I wrote Brother Clouzet,[1] I had enclosed a long article for Father Bardenet. I was waiting for Brother Clouzet to at least send me a verbal answer. Brother Clouzet speaks to me only about his goodness toward everybody—he thinks I would do well to thank him. I am choosing to write to him directly, and I shall also make a copy of my letter. You will not be caught offguard if he talks to you about it. You might even mention it first.

We made our retreat at the time I had indicated. We were fifty-six retreatants, as in previous years. The most important results are: 1. The exclusion of two subjects, Brothers Cizes and Pelletier, but the good God has made us compensation: 2. M. de Loncle and M. Boutoey were received as novices; 3. Father Serre[2] making the definite choice of entering the Institute. The combat must have begun with the bishop of Agen. Father de Loncle is the son of the president of the Tribunal of Cahors. He made his studies and had two years of law. For about ten years, he did little more than occupy himself with family properties. If you have the list of the archbishops of Besançon, you would be able to see if there isn't one who has come form this family. Father Boutoey is that young pastor from the diocese of Bayonne, today the Diocese of Aire, who had such trouble in obtaining permission to come to Bordeaux from the bishop of Bayonne.

All our Alsatians are very fervent, even little Charles, who made his First Communion on the last day of the retreat. He wanted to be received as an intern-postulant. Since the retreat, he himself wrote a short letter of thanks to Father Caillet, his confessor, which gives a good idea of his fine sentiments. Father Rothéa, without the boy's knowledge, sent it on to his father. Among the Alsatians who are at Saint Laurent, two are distinguished by their piety and upright character, Benoît Geiger and Troffer.[3] I sent this last one to Villeneuve. Father Collineau, leader of the Agen and Villeneuve Brothers, after the retreat pointed out specially this young Troffer. Their trip was made about like the one to Saint Remy. There were twelve traveling together.

It already seems that there will be a few more boarders this year on Rue des Menuts than last. Among them is one of the sons of M. Barsalou of Agen.

My pains ceased with the approach of the retreat. I had myself taken to the country, so as not to catch cold in this swelling I have. My head was quite clear all through the exercises. I have been feeling worse since. Courage and patience! I say it, my dear son, for both of us. Glory forever to the Lord and his holy Mother!

I am sorry not to have a word about the personal character of our devoted children, particularly about Dubarry and Pascal, whose conduct at the beginning was so little religious; and about Molinier, whose illness so alarmed his family, etc. I am embracing them all, one by one, but you the first, as not only their principal head, but also my first-born.

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[1] Letter 250.

[2] Fr. Jean-Félicien Serre (1797-1867) native of Agen, was ordained priest in 1821, took part on several occasions in the retreats at St. Laurent, there consecrated himself to Mary and was there received as a postulant of the Society. It seems he could not obtain permission from his bishop to quit the diocese of Agen, and he there fulfilled, from 1827 till 1831, the functions of chaplain of the Daughters of Mary.

[3] Théodore Troffer, born in 1804 at Sainte Marie-aux-Mines, after having made a start in Villeneuve, was sent to Besançon to direct the orphanage of the Hospital Saint-Jacques, 1827. He was also first director of the Schools of Salins, 1833, Castelsarrasin, 1839, and Puylaroque, 1845, where he left the Society.

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Here is the letter mentioned in the preceding one.

255 – TO FATHER BARDENET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 6, 1823

Rev. Father, I have learned several times from my children in Saint Remy, especially form the heads, Brother David and Brother Clouzet, that they consider you a second father. You continually come to help them in the necessities of life and in the needs of the establishment. I am as appreciative of this as if all your benefactions came directly to me. That is what I was expecting. I was even counting upon it, both because of your wholehearted and loyal way of doing good and because of the dire straits in which the needs of my establishments were placing me.

I want you, Your Reverence, to learn for yourself whether this establishment as presently developing, corresponds to your views. If you have the kindness to confide in me completely, I can give this institution a series of appointments and an overall direction possibly better adjusted to the designs you had in inviting us to Saint Remy. Whatever good subjects enter our two novitiates,[1] I hope I can furnish a few others in proportion as I get to know better the possibilities for good at Saint Remy. Up to now, I have been, as it were, just feeling my way.

It seems from my correspondence that these young religious are giving a good account of themselves. I would, nevertheless, be very glad to know what you think of them.

[1] St. Laurent and the Madeleine.

It is from a witness such as you that I seek details of their conduct and their manner of dealing with you. My solicitude will not surprise you if you have noticed that the entire Institute of Mary is but one big family to which I have given birth by grace.

My heart was much distressed when I learned that several of these young men would not be sufficiently clothed for the winter. Without delay, I saw to it that Saint Remy received a bill of exchange for 600 francs, which our correspondent of Ribeauvillé addressed to me. Surely, I thought, this sum would be insufficient. If I could have believed that this vast property was deprived of all instruments and means of cultivation, I would have taken precautions, so that, at the opportune time, some parts of the land could have been prepared and seeded. Then the community would at least have been able to live off the land. Since divine Providence, Rev. Father, has chosen you as its representative for this budding establishment, I would be much obliged to you if you came to its assistance in such a way that it may not be in need of necessities such as food and clothing, whose absence would be harmful to health. I would be equally obliged if you take note, or designate someone else to, of all that you do for them only by inconveniencing yourself. These notes will indicate to me what will be considered only advance payments you have made, and I promise that these funds will be repaid to you. It would be the same if these advance payments were to utilize some locality or to have some acres of the land cultivated. It is certain that, if they have no furniture, they will not be able to receive anyone—and if they don't sow, how can they possibly reap?

You must see, Rev. Father, how very necessary it is that we keep up our correspondence. You can choose for yourself a secretary among these young religious who will write as you dictate or as you designate. I can guarantee that he will loyally keep to himself everything we might say to each other, even with regard to his confrères. It is sufficient to tell him this once and for all time. I am, etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade continues his negotiations for the foundation in Condom.

256 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, November 13, 1823

Rev. Father, before finally deciding upon an establishment at Piétat, I am sending Mme Belloc to Condom, with a request for the information I still need and for the first steps to be taken in the event of acceptance. It is not that Father Collineau has not given me valuable information, but that he was not there long enough to gather everything I need to know.

I would be very grateful to you, Reverend Father, if you would help Mme Belloc all you can in the commission I have given her. I hope that the Director of Hospitals will not look unkindly on the precautions I am taking and the delays which are the inevitable result. I have understood that this administration, always prudent, wishes not only to increase the revenues of the hospital by the sale of the property, but also to favor an establishment that would be really useful to the city. I have the firm trust that it will not be frustrated in its expectations.

I have not yet answered Father Lachapelle, but you may assure him that he will have ample reason to be satisfied. I shall surely write him before making any definitive move. I beg of you to introduce Mme Belloc to him and to give him at the same time the assurance of my respectful and entire devotedness.

I am also with a very respectful affection, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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257 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 18, 1823

The retreat of the men's sodality had just begun, my dear son, when I got your letter, dated the seventh of the current month.

I read with interest and satisfaction what you say about your trip to Besançon and of its success. I relish this mission to the school masters, in the sense in which you first spoke to me about it. All the more because, if it succeeds, it could, little by little, have general application throughout France, and then . . . !

The first time that you spoke to me of it, I understood that the missionaries would give retreats, and we would conduct a normal school. Do you think that we would have to do both? This would be no sight difficulty, considering our small number of priests. Tell me how things stand. Perhaps, at the time of the first meeting, I could arrange for a visit. The present moment is not too soon to make the suitable preparations. I foresee the possibility of sending one of several good helpers.

As regards the establishment at Murat,[1] I have nothing to say until you let me know your views.

You have answered for Colmar, and you have made the arrangements. You are right to ignore the pastor's remarks. I promised teachers for the first of January, and has he accepted? He hasn't even answered, etc. . . .

I am surprised that M. Bernhardt did not reserve 616 francs for you and still more surprised that, before your departure from Saint Remy, he did not send you a bill of exchange in Paris for a like sum. He sent me this bill of exchange in a letter which he was writing to M. Rothéa. As he was finishing his letter, he received one from you, in which you asked him for the funds he was to reserve for me. Then he did not enclose the bill of exchange, as he said he would do at the beginning. He told M. Rothéa that he was awaiting further orders. I had someone write him immediately, telling him to send you the bill of exchange.

Father Romain's[2] belongings are not worth bothering much about. As regards the daughter of the holder of these, we would have to be assured that she has a sufficient

[1] There is question of Marast near St. Remy. In this little place, there was a former Priory of Canons of St. Augustin, which was suppressed by the Revolution and acquired by M. Lieffroy. This party ceded it to the archbishop of Besançon, who there established a little seminary, transferred in 1822 to Luxeuil, and later gave it to the Society of Mary to make of it a house of education (1826). The Society of Mary had the place improved by farmers, then by its religious, and finally opened a boarding school, 1826, which functioned until 1903.

dowry, unless she is an extraordinary subject. The convent of Agen has received a great number of subjects who brought nothing. Mlle Durrenbach[3] and Mlle Waller[4] are two excellent subjects, and so is Geneviève Prêtre, except for her interior troubles. Agen has fifteen good novices.

Mother Thérèse died on November 3, the death of the saints. Before her death, I had sent Mother Sacred Heart to Tonneins, to console the much afflicted community, to arrange things for the funeral of the saintly superioress, and in the meantime, to exercise the functions of superioress. Things are still at that point.

Mother Louis de Gonzague is exercising the functions of novice mistress at Agen with much wisdom and zeal.

The schools of Agen are crowded. I am sending a fifth Brother there for the school of "repeaters."[1] Since the end of last year, the prejudices of the majority of respectable parents have disappeared. This year they are sending their children . . . Brother Mémain is the director.[2]

The schools of Villeneuve must have opened yesterday. A grand reception was being prepared for the sixteenth, the day of the Brother's arrival. Brother Laugeay is their director.

I have just sent Mme Belloc to Condom with very precise instructions to secure final information for me about the establishment of a boarding school for girls.

The return of the boarders on Rue des Menuts is progressing very advantageously. There are now more than eighty boarders or half boarders.

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[2] Father J. B. Romain (1789-1853) born in Fouchy, Alsace, had exercised the ministry in several parishes of the diocese of Strasbourg, "there giving the finest examples of priestly virtues and there fulfilling all the duties of a good shepherd," when he decided to enter the Society of Mary. He was employed in St. Hippolyte, at Bordeaux and at Cordes, where he died, leaving the remembrance of a very pious priest, friend of retirement, making of Holy Scripture his daily sustenance and source of inspiration.

[3] In religion, Mother Gabrielle, who became superioress of the convent of Acey.

[4] In religion, Mother St. Joseph, who became mistress of novices at Arbois.

[1] The class of "repeaters" is made up of pupils who can't follow the exercises in the other classes, either because of too frequent absences, or because of the lack of means or as the result of incorrigible defects of character or as regards morals, and country children, with the exception of some subjects who might deserve some favor. The maximum number of pupils would be from 50 to 60.

[2] Jean Marie Mémain, born in 1797 at St. Loubès, near Bordeaux, entered the Society at the end of 1818 and in 1820, was one of the founders of the school at Agen. In 1823, he became its director and, with the exception of some momentary absences, remained there until 1833. At this time, he was appointed économe at the boarding school Ste. Marie, where Father Lalanne had just come to replace Bro. Auguste and contributed to the transfer of the boarding school of Bordeaux to Layrac, 1835. At this same time, he succeeded Bro. Auguste as general Chef de Travail of the Society. Following financial difficulties, he left Layrac in 1836, retook the direction of the schools at Agen and in 1837, left the Society. J. M. Mémain had a brother, Antoine, who spent only a few years in the Society.

Everything is going passably well in our three establishments in Bordeaux, apart from the financial resources. We are getting along, but always in want and financially embarrassed. We are far from murmuring about it, however. We are constantly rendering thanks to God for the unfailing help he gives us, so that these works which we have undertaken may continue and flourish.

You will possibly notice, in some paper, something about the Institute of Mary. That is what I was told the other day at the Archbishop's Secretariate. The Minister wishes to know all the religious institutions. Father Barrès inserted the name of the Institute of Mary.

I asked to see the notice. It says only this: *This Institute is for teaching in secondary and primary schools, the arts and crafts. In Bordeaux, there are two novitiates and an establishment*.

You never mention, my dear son, about the authorization you were expected to seek, which is so important a part of your mission. I take it for granted that you are concerning yourself with the matter, but why don't you acquaint me with your ideas in a matter of such great interest?

In all your letters, my dear son, I notice your soul agitated by sensitiveness and, as it were, plunged in bitterness. The causes, which I know well enough, do not seem to me worthy such a great calamity. I know neither what to say nor what to think when I notice you in such a habitual state of torment. You experience contradictions, but who in the world doesn't? Especially in great enterprises? I experience them on all sides and I feel most keenly the kind of irascibility which yours has lodged in your soul. May the Lord deign to grant you his peace!

I am now going to the exercise of the retreat, and I shall pray God to realize in you this wish of my heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

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258 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 25, 1823

Prior to this letter, my dear son, you received two others from me since the shipment of the two deeds. I have just received yours of the fourteenth of November. It seems that letters take more time to get to Saint Remy than to come from there. I receive your usually on the ninth day after their date.

In the second last one, I enclosed a copy of a letter I wrote to Father Bardenet. Both letters had left before your second last one, in which you gave me ideas about your relations with Father Bardenet and about the letter Brother Clouzet had written me concerning Father Bardenet a long time before. In spite of this, I do not regret writing him, for our mutual silence is an evil which must be avoided if possible. If it is not possible, I shall try to find out what is to be done in such a circumstance. If I had received your last reflections sooner, my letter to Father Bardenet would have taken another turn. No matter! If he speaks to you of it, tell him to answer me or else have someone else do it. This political silence is worth nothing to us.

It is you, my dear son, whom I expected to choose as the person authorized to act in my name. I have not had any other idea. In the deed under private seal you are named, and that was necessary. The deed, made by the notary public, was in blank, because any other hand might have added your name. You know that better than I. I have already told you of my state of suffering at the time, and also of my surcharge of occupations. That's why I did not add a letter to either of the deeds.

I feel keenly your difficult position, my dear son. I think I would much rather endure it alone than to represent it to myself without sharing it. I sometimes fear having consented to an establishment so far beyond our resources, which conforms hardly at all to the initial offer. I noticed this discrepancy in the letter you wrote from Belfort. But the thing is done, and I adore the designs of God. It is for him and not for ourselves that we are working. I am quieting myself, I am encouraging myself, and I hope that the good God will lead us to everything that will be necessary. Two considerations help me to calm myself: one, that I had reasons, at least apparently, to believe that this establishment would be self-supporting and aided by who had instigated it, at least in the early stages; second, that the establishments which are destined to do the greatest good are ordinarily those whose beginning is the most painful and stormy. May God be praised in all things! as you conclude so well certain articles in your last letters.

I am awaiting an answer from Father Bardenet. If he does not respond in another two or three weeks, I may write him a second letter, which might well be my last.

In the meantime, let me know in detail and without moodiness, if possible, all your views and the means for realizing them. At present, I admit to you that I would be much embarrassed to give myself an account of the establishment at Saint Remy. I would be much more embarrassed to give an account of it to others. When I am asked about it, I give answers that I can see are little understood, and how could they be? When we are definitely and fully informed, we shall do what we can. What we can't—and surely, there will be much that we can't do—we shall wait for, we shall be patient.

Concerning the normal school, I would be much pleased if the idea were realized. A kind of secondary or boarding school where the elements of the arts and crafts would be taught, writing, the French language, etc., could first be started without too much trouble.

In proportion as the boarding school developed and attracted students, we could find the resources to live and have the land cultivated and gradually start the other works to which such a big place lends itself.

I am having someone write Father Weber to pay these 200 francs to M. Bernhard, who will immediately give them to you. I cannot get rid of the thought that Father Bardenet will not associate himself with us, even by corresponding with me. Again, patience!

I feel I would still have a lot more things to tell you, but I am stopping so that this letter may soon be on its way. Today is the last day of the men's retreat, the twenty-fifth of November. We have it last ten days. I embrace you tenderly, and I also embrace all my children at Saint Remy, even the new postulants.[1]

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I received Brother Pascal's letter. I shall answer it very soon.

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On the same date is inserted a letter from Father Chaminade to his family.

259 – TO MME SOPHIE LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, November 25, 1823

Oh yes, my dear niece, I am tenderly attached to you, as well as to your good husband. My silence has no other explanation than the impossibility of writing to you sufficiently. My reports are increasing every day. I cannot answer all the letter I receive, even the most pressing. Many persons complain that their letters remain unanswered. Instead of complaining, what more can I do than never to lose an instant of time?

Your good husband, my dear child, thinks my arms are very long when he believes I could procure from the Minister the job he desires and that he deserves. He is very much mistaken. If I seem to be able to do any good, it is not by way of great protectors, but by God who blesses what I undertake.

Firmin will be conscripted next year. It will be necessary to see if you can't find any way of exempting him from it, if, at Sarlat, or in the department of the sub-prefecture, there is not an office where young men deposit a certain sum for the purchase of substitutes, if

[1] On September 4, the first two postulants presented themselves, Jean Rosette and Antoine Guyot, who became excellent religious and whose recollection is in great veneration in the Society. Bro. Guyot was, later, one of the providential agents for the vocations of Fr. de Lagarde.

they happen to be chosen by lot. This is possible here and I believe in most of the departments.

I shall be much obliged to you, my dear child, if you excuse me to M. Veyssière. I shall always take the greatest interest whenever I find occasion for his mediation, but have you any need of it yourself?

I shall be at your service, as well as your husband's and Firmin's, but use this service only in things that concern me directly. Believe in my affectionate sentiments towards you.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. My sister also embraces both you and Firmin and offers your husband and Mlle Mondesse her tokens of sincere regard.

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Here is the first of several letters addressed by the Founder to a group of religious. They are noteworthy for their spirit of faith and tenderness of heart.

260 – TO THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 2, 1823

TO MY DEAR CHILDREN, THE HEADS, AND OTHER RELIGIOUS RESIDING IN THE CHÂTEAU OF SAINT REMY.

I have wanted to write to you for a long time, my dear children. My heart inclines me to speak to each of you an individual expression of paternal tenderness, but I am so overloaded with work and the postal rates are so high that I though it more suitable to address you all together.

I wish to console you, my dear children, because I have just learned that you are enduring great privations. I understand that severe cold weather has surprised you, deprived as you are of the barest necessities, overwhelming you with its rigors. My first sentiment is one of compassion for my children at Saint Remy. I would have less pain in taking upon myself all your sufferings than to know you are in such straits and cannot offer you any relief. However, raising myself by faith to the arbiter of our destiny, I have adored the designs of his ever paternal Providence. I said to myself: The Lord is taking his winnowing fan in his hand. He wants to try this community of privileged ones. He wants to discern those that are fit to establish the foundations of a house which is to yield such choice fruits in these faraway provinces. Young men of only half-hearted virtue would not be worthy of such an enterprise. I hope, my dear children, that not a single one of you will succumb under the trial of the Lord, that there will be no cowardly one among you, no

murmurer, no one deserving to be cast aside. All the great works, all the great enterprises undertaken for the glory of God and the Blessed Virgin, are hindered in various unexpected ways in spite of the precautions human wisdom ordinarily takes.

Be courageous, be inviolably faithful! Penetrate yourself more and more with the spirit of the religious state! Whatever trouble, whatever contradictions you have to suffer, you will have peace of mind and contentment of heart, you will be really happy.

I have learned with pleasure, my dear children, that you already have in your midst several postulants who may soon become fervent novices. They will succeed if you give them only examples of exactitude and fervor. This duty of yours is a blessed obligation. Tell them that they have a place in my heart, that I long to know their sentiments and dispositions more thoroughly, so as to recognize and adopt them as my children. I desire, my dear children, that from now they share in the fatherly blessing which I am giving you in the effusion of my heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I wrote this letter myself, and I wanted you to receive it as such when a little accident obliged me to have it copied. It is young Brother Tissier who will do the copying. I took him as copyist and have been keeping him with me since the end of summer.

Mother Thérèse, Superioress of the convent of the Daughters of Mary, died in the odor of sanctity on the third of last November. Since her death, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary has felt the very appreciable effects of her protection.

The schools of Agen and Villeneuve are getting along fine. The greatest fervor reigns among the Brothers.

Brother Mémain is the director at Agen. Brother Moulinié[1] is his consolation by his humble and penitential spirit and also by his altogether religious wisdom. The number of pupils there has become so great that I was obliged to send a fifth Brother, Brother Cros, who is only a postulant but a very clever and good religious.

At Villeneuve, Brother Laugeay is Director. And Brother Troffer is distinguished by his great modesty and tender piety.

William Joseph Chaminade

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261 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

[1] Brother Jean Moulinié entered St. Laurent in 1820, later exercised the functions of director in Moissac (1827-1834) and left the Society in 1836.

Bordeaux, December 4, 1823

From your last two messages, my dear son, I see that your soul is always agitated and weighed down with bitterness, and because of this, I have a very real sorrow. Hasten, I beg of you, to indicate to me what may bring you peace and consolation. I am determined to do all that lies in my power to procure this peace of mind for you.

You must by now have received my letter in which I tell you very explicitly that the blank authorization must be filled out in your name; I never imagined anything else. When the notary's clerk brought it to me, I asked him if he had not inserted your name, and he answered that you had to put it there yourself. I think that was the custom.

Mother Thérèse died. At the beginning of her illness, M. Lacaussade wrote me that it was necessary to have her make a will, on account of the vineyard bought for the convent under her name. I answered him that she had made one. He did not say anything further about the matter. I searched for it in your study. It is not there. And what is worse, there is no will, either on the part of the religious men or of the religious women. Could you, perhaps, have taken along the bundles containing these wills with the copy books of the Institute? What is to be done? Your papers have not been disturbed. Everything is as you left it.

If Father Bardenet grasps the real meaning of the letter I wrote to him—which, I hope, he will—if its contents are always insisted upon, we shall have the wherewith to advance. But if things do not work out, we shall try to borrow a fairly large sum, but not from M. Bernhard of Ribeauvillé. I am not at all for that, at least for the present. I would much prefer to address myself to M. Masson. I shall talk to you about it in case we have to.

You have not said anything, my dear son, about the authorization for the Institute that was to be requested of the government. With things as they are, I shall try to obtain a formal approbation from the archbishop.

My dear son, try to possess your soul in peace and to remain patient. Our Lord, in predicting to his apostles the numerous and violent contradictions they were to encounter in the mission he was confiding to them, said to them: *Possidebitis animas vestras in patientia vestra*.[1]

I am writing Brother Clouzet. Included in the envelope are: 1) a letter for the entire group; 2) a note for Brother Rothéa; 3) another note for Brother Pascal.

I am embracing you very tenderly.

[1] You will possess your souls in your patience. (Luke 21:19)

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Here are inserted the directions for the convent in Agen.

262 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 5, 1823

The short time, my dear child, that I have available for you leads me to answer your letter of November 25.

Don't be surprised or disturbed about the clamor that is sure to arise as the result of the wise measures you decided to adopt. You did well to try Sister Brigitte. I think that after this trial, you have given her proof of your satisfaction and that you have encouraged her not only to tread under foot all vain human considerations, but also to desire further occasions to do so.

Concerning the Tertiaries, Mother Emmanuel will have to, with her customary goodness and energy, make them understand and feel the injustice of their proposals right away. Should there be anyone among them who wishes to be bound by her own wisdom, Mother Emmanuel could talk with her in private, and if she did not give into the new remarks made to her, then there should be no worry about excluding her from the Third Order.

Why do you add to the title of Companion that of going out? Why not simply say Companions, as the rule calls for? The Companions, by rule, are to be ready to go out when they receive an order to do so, to meet the needs of the communities receiving them, as well as the demands of their regularly assigned functions. All those wearing the habit of Companions may not have to go out, but will be ready to do so should some urgent case require it. Sister Geneviève, for example, will possibly never have to go out to exercise her functions as gardener, but . . . It seems to me I had well explained these slight differences necessary in the development of the Institute, which nevertheless leave the Institute in the integrity of its organization. But I shall return to this subject in case further embarrassment should arise.

There would be some inconvenience, my dear child, if the Companions going to the market, for example, wore a veil. There would not be any if they went to accompany the parish children. The most essential veil, the veil which all must wear, is the veil of genuine modesty. The Companions who accept the task of going out must edify by their good manners, by their modesty, by their discretion, etc. It is important that their mother entrusts and really forms them to virtue and that they be capable of receiving this instruction in the style in which it is given. Supple and docile characters are needed. Do not be in any hurry to increase their numbers. Do not fear to send away those who do not seem to you fit for the work of the Lord. Ordinarily, this can be seen after the first month of postulate. The restless, capricious, self-willed subjects that you keep, for whatever reason, corrupt by their bad example others who would have succeeded had they known only edifying subjects.

I shall keep on considering the descriptions you have sent me. Be a mother, a good mother, the most tender of mothers if you wish, but only of your daughters. You have not yet adopted, still less conceived in the bosom of your charity, the postulants. Neither you nor the Novice Mistress, nor the Mother of Companions, are the Mother of the Postulants. You are only their mistress, their superioress, etc.

I agree, with pleasure, that Sister Gabrielle, Sister St. Joseph, and Sister Geneviève take the holy habit of religion and of the Institute of the Conception of the Blessed Virgin. The brother of Sister St. Joseph, as well as her cousin Bernard Bernhard, will take the cassock at the same time. Tell Mother St. Vincent, I beg of you, not to give them the bill for their habits and still less to send it to their parents. I shall speak to her about it when I write. In the meantime, let her be patient.

I am obliged to stop here. May the Lord shower his blessings upon you and your entire community.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I was sorry that no one thought to consult His Lordship to learn whether it was necessary to give a veil to the Companions.

I am surprised not to have any news from Mme Belloc.

The letter continues.

I am coming back to you, my dear child, for a few moments. To diminish somewhat my correspondence with the convent, could you not decide, along with the local superioress, a great number of questions that may be called common, such as, for example, entrance into the postulate, novitiate, etc.? There are rules for judging the aptitude of subjects. You have acquired a certain amount of experience, you know the spirit of the Institute. You and the Council could really take many things upon yourselves, not, however, without the advice of the local superioress, who is to be a sort of watchful sentinel, assuring that neither the spirit of the world nor mere nature may insinuate itself into the convent. This is especially true of the motherhouse, where the primitive spirit of the Institute of Mary, perfection, and fervor ought to reign. From time to time, you will inform me about all that has happened. You will also submit to me all the matters that cannot be settled by the constitutions or regulations, all those calling for expenses or permission which might be long-lasting or have serious consequences. In this way, the flavor of your administration need never be stopped.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Brother David's state of mind continued to disturb the Founder more and more. But he still was ignorant of the shenanigans which absorbed Brother David's attention during the months of October and November. These involvements had been, one might say, miraculously checked by the refusal of consent on the part of the Marquis Voyer d'Argenson. Had they succeeded, they would certainly have brought the Society of Mary to its ruin. The Society would, in fact, have been again in debt for the sum of over 100,000 francs.

On November 28, Brother David wrote brusquely to the Good Father: "Here I am, thanks be to God, freed from all matters which might have detained me here longer. To tell you how, and by what stroke of fortune, would take too long. It is only necessary that I send a trunk to the carter and that I follow it in the near future."

To which Father Chaminade made the following answer.

263 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 9, 1823

I am so astonished, my dear son, at your effective determination to abandon Saint Remy that I hardly know what to say and think. Besides, all the reflections I could make would be absolutely useless and perhaps even dangerous, since you have placed yourself, so to say, in the hands of your own council. Wiser men than you have been victims of their pretended lights. May God preserve you from such an unhappy end!

You say you will excuse what you clearly understand—the unsuccessful outcome of Saint Remy. It is unsuccessful only because you are leaving, and in announcing the fact, you expose the establishment to complete failure. Who is the wise man who would have ever foretold that, because this establishment could not be formed in four months, it was not destined to succeed?

To believe, nevertheless, that success is despaired of at Saint Remy and then to excuse the attempt is justice. You can do so without inculpating anyone, as you know, although that will be pretty difficult. There is nothing reprehensible in this affair but you and me, and it is certainly not you . . .

You wished to free yourself from all difficulties, and you have softened the blow to this budding foundation by giving as pretext a pressing need, calling for your return to Paris.

Father Tharin is doubtless very worthy of your confidence, and in every other instance I would have been the first to invite you to see him, to console yourself in his company, etc. I have occasion, once in a while, to talk about him to Father Carbon,

Superior of our Grand Seminary, with whom he is very intimate.[1] But, in the present case, is it prudent to go to him for the balm to be applied to your wounded heart? Your wound will only partially heal, to be opened up anew, and with more pain, when you learn, I don't know when, of the vexing consequence of your confidences. I take it for granted that you are always sincerely attached to the Institute, and I also know that you are sincerely attached to my person. Hence, it would even seem possible that all your torments have their principal cause in these attachments of your heart.

The annoyances which Providence permits make you look upon everything as lost, etc. . . . And yet, these annoyances are more essentially the result of your views than of the work the Lord has confided to you. These annoyances are, in the designs of God, the means of sanctification for you, for the children in Saint Remy and also for me. I admit, that, for my part, I have already experienced very good effects, for my soul, of the anxieties which your letters have been causing me these last several months. Since your anxieties are caused, at least in great part, by my letters, it is to be presumed that, reading them in the spirit of religion, you will also find that it is good to have borne patiently up to the point of the abnegation of your own ideas. In this abnegation you will find peace of soul and new lights that repay abundantly the sacrifice we have made of your own.

You were going to enter into retreat when you wrote your letter. If you have, do so with the spirit of humility, the most essential disposition. I presume that you will have given up the idea of trips to Vesoul and to Besançon and that this letter will find you quietly in Saint Remy.

Today is the fifth day since I wrote you my last letter in which I begged you to inform me promptly about what has become of all the wills of the men and women religious that are not to be found in your desk. You will please me also if you give me the address of Father Tharin in Paris. If I had not been in such a hurry, I would have written him in Besançon several days ago.

Yesterday, a half-hour after the reading of your letter, I received the authorization of the Institute from the Archbishop that I had spoken to you about. I immediately had a copy made for you, which I am including in this letter. I shall make no observation to Father Barrès, the author of the document, appointed by the Archbishop, until you have made your own observations.

Here is a copy of Father Barrès' letter which came along with the authorization.

> One of the feasts of our Good Mother and the feast days par excellence of our Sodalities! . . . The occasion is just right for sending the approbation of the Institute of Mary. Her it is, finally, accompanied by my excuses and my regrets about its delay. But, all signed and sealed as it is, I beg of Father Chaminade not to look

[1] Fathers Tharin and Carbon had lived together in the community of St. Sulpice, in Paris.

upon it as finished. If there is anything to be added, modified, or omitted, please return it to me with all the corrections. I renew, in your regard, my respectable confrere, all the devoted and respectful sentiments of your very humble and obedient servant.

December 8, 1823 Barrès, Vicar General

I will have you note, my dear son, that the original copy contains several erasures and that it is not countersigned by the Archbishop's secretary.

Since yesterday, I am praying and having others pray continually for you. Let it stand, without any further explanation on my part. May the Blessed Virgin deign to continue her maternal protection!

William Joseph Chaminade

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Perhaps some will enjoy reading the text referred to in the preceding letter.

DIOCESE OF BORDEAUX

WE, CHARLES-FRANCES d'AVIAU du BOIS de SANZAY, BY THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY APOSTOLIC SEE, ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX, PEER OF FRANCE, COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

According the communication given us by Reverend William Joseph Chaminade, Canon of our Metropolitan Church, with the intention of soliciting from the goodness of the King legal and sovereign authorization of the Institute of Mary, in order to facilitate, extend, and improve primary education;

The said Reverend Chaminade, asking us to examine the object, the end, the spirit, and the rules of said institute, in order to give it our approbation if there is good reason;

Considering the statutes of the said association, in 49 articles, relative to its formation, management, and discipline; to its different branches of teaching and their operation;

Examination made with the greatest care, in regard to the project as a whole and in each of its parts, the advantageous results already obtained by the first trials; and of such as may be with reason expected from a perfect organization, advancing under the aegis of religion and the authority of the King;

Considering that the institute proposed, first looked upon as a religious association, presents all the desirable guarantees and those most dear to religion, by the character, the principles, the proven fidelity, and useful works of the estimable priest who is its author; by the successes that his sodalities and other holy establishments have already attained, and by the general confidence which these establishments enjoy in our diocese and neighboring dioceses;

That, considered a benevolent association in its relations with the State, the Institute of Mary:

1. In its formation is in perfect harmony with our laws regarding the use and enjoyment of goods in society;

2. In regard to teaching, having in the motherhouse and other houses of the same kind, to establish, if necessary, a preliminary course in theory and exact application from which the uniformity so desirable should result in all the schools;

3. That, making use of a method similar to that, already so advantageously known, of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine; perfected still more by experience, and accompanying all the schools of holy congregations, it should necessarily attain the end of an education—Christian, solid, and monarchical.

4. That, by the union of arts and crafts schools to those of primary education, union which facilitates everywhere the establishment of schools suited to local needs and customs, this institute procures, above all, a benefit almost unknown until now. It is all the more necessary to youth, exposed in entering the various shops to an almost certain loss of faith. It was particularly necessary to start houses of Saint Joseph in Paris to prevent or partly diminish, the great evils resulting from this abandonment by the young people;

Considering that the Institute of Mary embraces in its solicitude and charity all ages, states, and classes of society who have need of help, in furnishing missionaries in the country places, teachers in the secondary schools, and teachers distinguished in rural economy and in different branches of industry;

Considering, finally, that successful experiences in all the provisional establishments favor it in the most consoling manner;

For these reasons, we look upon the said Institute of Mary as very advantageous to religion, useful, and necessary to the State;

We approve its statutes in all that concerns us. We solicit in its favor the royal sanction and express very sincere wishes so that the Institute ,born and formed in our metropolitan city, be at all times one of the city's ornaments; and that this city remain the center of the riches which the Institute is to spread throughout the kingdom.

Made and agreed upon in Bordeaux, October 6, 1823.

Ch. Fr. Archbishop of Bordeaux

By mandate:
Gignoux, Ch. Hon. Secr.

On this same date, Father Chaminade addressed the following note to Mlle de Lachapelle, who had become Mother Mary of the Incarnation.

264 – TO MOTHER MARY OF THE INCARNATION

Bordeaux, December 9, 1823

Tell Mme Belloc, will you, that I have not yet received the decision of the municipal council which she spoke about, from the Mayor of Condom. I have no other news besides which she sent me. I expect to write only after learning of this decision. She will try to introduce this subject into her correspondence with Father Castex.

Our feast of the Conception is getting along quite well. Be a good Daughter of Mary.

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265 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 16, 1823

I am answering your last letter immediately my dear son. You dated it November 3rd by mistake. You must indeed be sorely tried, since you believe me guilty of so great an injustice. My dear son, you believe me guilty of an enormous sin: of having broken a solemn promise. But can you not see from the totality of my letters, both before and after the said promise, that you have understood it in too broad a sense and that you are allowing too short a time for its accomplishment? I am so convinced of this that, although I have a copy of all the letters I have written you, I don't think I have reread them, so great is my assurance of never having intended such a promise. But you will tell me I did, for you have the letter written in my own hand. Well, I cannot respond to such a grave accusation except to ask you to send me an exact copy of this entire letter with its date. It must be very short, and I must have written it in a moment of inattention. I do not have a copy of any letter which makes so clear and precise a promise, a promise which goes contrary to my habitual dispositions and to the presuppositions of a whole multitude of other letters. Whatever the case, I must have made the promise while dreaming. The non-accomplishment of a promise, although in a serious matter, is at most only a material sin when the one involved

is entirely in good faith and when the totality of circumstances leaves him in invincible ignorance.

Instead of so many lamentations, why could you not have sent a copy of my alleged promise pointing out that I was not acting in accord with it?

I feel, my dear son, that the more my excuses or proofs are just, the less you would be consoled, and it is your consolation that I desire. You yourself have made promises and you are not able to keep them. Well, which are these promises? Whatever they are, I shall make every effort to help you keep them. Besides that, it seems to me, you are much preoccupied. At what time has a delay of several months in doing in an establishment, things previously promised been considered an injustice? But I see that in taking comfort for myself in these reflections, I should be suggesting that you make some of your own and that, in the end, we would be getting nowhere. Which promises have you made? What do you expect to do in Saint Remy? How many times, directly or indirectly, have I asked you this question? If we don't burn our correspondence, I don't know what those will think who happen to come upon it.

I am returning, my dear son, to what you call an injustice, my enormous sin. You have a mortal wound over this, and it is even greater than David's, whose words you quote. By the act of sale of the château have we or the Institute been enriched? I say that we, personally considered, have on the contrary been made poorer. This truth is so evident that it has no need of proofs. I am saying boldly: It has not been enriched! Not by any tacit or verbal conditions that may be present! From those I know, I would again answer no, at least concerning actual riches. There remains only the possibility of riches, a possibility so burdensome that nobody would want it, to examine things only humanly and from the temporal point of view. I am so convinced of this that I dare speak of this transaction only in the order of religion.

I admit that a rich and powerful party could have exacted a great profit with a view to greater advantage. But someone who is a novice and poor to begin with is bound to become still poorer. If the latter does not use great wisdom, if he knows neither how to suffer nor how to wait, he must succumb. Father Bardenet and those whose counsel he sought must have considered us in a vastly different condition from what we actually are. Now they must be either laughing at us or pitying us when they see we are without any kind of means to sustain an enterprise which called for such great advance payment. It would have been otherwise if we had presented ourselves with the modesty that becomes us so well and had allowed only our zeal for right living to be seen along with some good sense in the formation of establishments.

But suppose, my dear son, we had not played the part of the rich and the powerful and had held to what I wrote to Father Tharin for Father Bardenet's information?[1] Have we

[1] Letter 219.

not already done much more than was expected in the first place? We want to do a lot more good, in making use of this magnificent place, this immense domain, according to the views of the Institute. Our desire should please his zeal; and if he could, it would be worth his while to help us. But, if he doesn't help us, if he limits himself to what he has already given, how would it be an injustice on our part to delay a good that is only motivated by zeal and which we have not committed ourselves to do, at least for the time being? As far as gratitude is concerned, should it not be reciprocal? Father Bardenet wants to do a certain good. For this, he cedes a vast domain, truly fallow land, without the slightest means to make use of the smallest part. He cedes a magnificent property, but one damaged and unfurnished. We take over this property, and we wear ourselves out to correspond with his designs. Who deserves more gratitude? Father Bardenet has given of his abundance a property that provided nothing for him, while we have given and are still giving of our necessity. We are not giving ourselves reciprocally, but we are both giving to God and religion.

My dear son, a real peace of soul and solid consolation you will find only in taking things according to their truth. The works of God are not to be treated merely humanly. . . .

Will you adopt my reflections? I fear that you will not. You are considering me only as a man under illusion who is capable of going back on a promise. With such a prejudice, how can we remedy the evil? Nevertheless, I thought it my duty to tell you these things. I hope they will be useful to you. I must do my duty.

I hope that this letter will still find you at Saint Remy and that you will there receive the news and the most abundant blessings that I wish for you.

I embrace all our dear children.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade, sufficiently informed, accepts in principle the foundation in Condom.

266 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, December 19, 1823

Rev. Father: I have received the most advantageous report about the excellent dispositions of the recommended persons of your city, but especially about the mayor and the hospital administrators.

Mme Belloc remarked to me that the deliberations of the administrators lacked one or two signatures and that, as soon as this formality was completed, the mayor would send them over to you. Since the, Mme Belloc had someone tell me to write you, so that the administration would be able to take action with the government.

I very willingly accept the establishment of the Daughters of Mary in the hospital formerly called Piétat, and I shall take the proper measures to see that it measures up to the views and expectations of all interested persons.

I have not yet answered M. de Lachapelle, but I shall do so very soon. Before answering him definitely, I thought it my duty to take all suitable precautions to assure the complete success of the establishment. I would be obliged if you would, in the meantime, offer him the assurance of my respectful devotedness. In order to give the contract for the purchase of the Piétat all possible simplicity and to avoid as much as possible all future anxieties, it seems to me that Mlle Lachapelle should but it herself, under her private name and not as a religious for the payment of 1,000 francs a year rent. She could offer the administration, 1) the rent of 800 francs, which her father would give her as a present; 2) 200 francs that she herself would pay her heirs. Then would follow acceptance by M. de Lachapelle and the administrators.

I believed, Rev. Father, that I should put down these first ideas so that, if they are found acceptable, nothing would further hinder the realization of the enterprise.

I shall write to the archbishop of Auch[1] if you think that there is no longer any major difficulty. I can say there will no longer be any delay on my part.

Because of the interest you take in the Daughters of Mary, I wanted to let you know that I am almost on the point of concluding the arrangements for an establishment in Bordeaux, which will very much resemble the one at Condom. It looks as if the group of sisters destined form Bordeaux will leave before the Condom group.[2] Mother Thérèse's death draws abundant blessings from heaven upon the Institute of Mary. One would have to be very blind not to be aware of this fact.

I am with sincere and respectful attachment, etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Archbishop André de Morlhon (1753-1828), first archbishop of Auch, after the reestablishment of the See (1817) which had been suppressed by the Concordat of 1801.
[2] See the following letter.

Father Chaminade's last letter to Saint Remy did not receive too bad a reception. Brother David had become calmer, and on New Year's Day, he wrote to Father Chaminade in less disquieting terms. This is the way he began his letter:

My Good Father, a happy year for you and for all those that interest you, help from on high, lights for the mind, abundant consolations for the heart! Here are my wishes, which I presented to God during Mass and which I now repeat to you in the manner of a good son. May the good God receive them, and may he join to them the other gifts of grace and the fruits which he will think good for you! I am keeping the restrictions and the limitations that you gave me, without any feeling of displeasure, and without any desire on my part of going contrary to them.

And he continued in this tone, in such a way that Father Chaminade thought he could profit by some words of counsel. This counsel, we shall soon see, was not destined to be any more successful than the previous one.

267 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 9, 1824

Your letter of December 26, my dear son, cast a little balm on my soul. All will be repaired, all will be properly ordered at Saint Remy, provided we get along with one another. We have not sinned against justice, as you seemed to think we had, by the delays that have occurred until now. If, in your anxieties, you have been able to communicate a like sentiment to some persons, you have enough intelligence and the means to justify everything. Why? Because those you consult always repeat what I thought I should recommend to you, that is to say, be master of yourself. Try then to do so! Mistrust your imagination! It is your imagination, my dear son, which furnishes your mind with these subtleties which get the better of your reason and also fool those to whom you make known your griefs. The latter don't know enough of these circumstances to be able to discover what is genuine and what is merely exaggeration.

Your yourself will have a lot of trouble guarding yourself against this unless, by a wise mistrust of your own ideas, you do not so promptly dispel the illusions of others, that you rather try to discover their end, their motives, their intentions, etc. Although I am five to six hundred miles away from you, it is nonetheless true that in the principles that guide us, I must have a grace of direction. This grace must be in proportion to the difficulty of directing at this distance, and it will always be where God wants establishments. The work of the establishment at Saint Remy would have already made progress if you had not, almost entirely and from the very start, cast aside several requests, several reflections that I had sometimes ventured to make.

In your last letter, my dear son, you seem in greater possession of yourself. It is for this reason that I thought I could offer you these reflections. If they don't appear fair to you, just consider them as nonexistent, for I dispense you from resisting them. Let us occupy ourselves with our affairs.

I am going to write to M. Masson in Lorraine though M. Rothéa to ask him to lend you a considerable sum, 10,000 francs, for example. I shall have a copy of this letter made and include it here along with a note from M. Rothéa to M. Masson. You might be the carrier if you don't find it too inconvenient. If you decide on making the trip, you would do well to greet, in Nancy, the new bishop, on your own behalf as well as on mine. It is His Lordship Bishop de Janson, former Missionary of France.[1] He will recall, I think the director of the

[1] Bishop de Forbin-Janson (1785-1844) one of the most ardent helpers of Fr. Rauzan, founder of the Missionaries of France, was elevated, in spite of himself, in 1823, to the See of Nancy. His activity for the missions and his attachment to the Restoration exposed him to the bad will of the government of Louis-Philippe, who forbade him, in 1830, to enter into his diocese. He profited by his leisure to continue his mission visits in Europe and America and to start there the beautiful work of the Holy Childhood, of which he was the real founder.

Madeleine sodality, etc. You will give him an idea of the Institute of Mary and of the establishment at Saint Remy. You will ask for his protection.

M. Xavier Rothéa has just proposed several subjects as postulants to the Society. I asked of his brother an extract or notes about them. He has just given me a letter instead of an extract, which I shall include with this one.

I also hope to include a copy, in due form, of the authorization of the Institute of Mary granted by the archbishop. It bears the suppression of the two words *entire and more complete*[1] and Father Barrès wrote: *From a perfect organization* . . . and the change which you have pointed out.[2] As regards the article so confusedly expressed, Father Barrès told me immediately that he had repeated the word *union* on account of the length of the sentence. I retouched it, as you will see.[3] Father Barrès, not having received any remark about this matter had had it transcribed in the registers of the archbishop's palace hardly eight or nine days later. My young copyist will give Father Barrès' secretary a copy of the authorization along with the changes, so that he can indicate them in the margins.

I have hopes of forming an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Bordeaux. First, there is question of taking on the boarding school of the Gramagnac Young Ladies, which is interesting. The Jesuits are doing what they can to attract boarders and teachers to the new community of the Sacred Heart, of which they are the protectors and, as it were, the instructors. Having thought over what should be done in this circumstance, I thought that instead of fighting, it was better policy to yield to the Jesuits and to the Sacred Heart the boarders and the teachers and all that may belong to them and to limit myself to the house in question. I will transfer the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary there. I thought it my duty to inform Father Barrès of my decision, that is to say, to inform the archbishop, and to ask if this new establishment might not be looked upon with favor. Father Barrès answered me: "The Institute of Mary is authorized, etc. . . " The little that I can tell you about this matter and its numerous circumstances is only to acquaint you with something of great import and also to show you our consideration for obtaining the authorization.

Although I disapproved of your departure for Paris, my dear son, I always have the same desire that you will keep on seeking the authorization of the Institute. Settle, if

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He always showed himself attached to the Society. He had just arranged with Father Chaminade the foundation of a normal school in the Nancy diocese when the Revolution of 1830 broke out. Later, he even thought of his retirement in the Society. Shortly before his death, in the fall of 1843, he presided, with Bishops Donnet and Gignoux, at the transfer of the body of St. Urbain, martyr, to the novitiate of St. Anne in Bordeaux.

[1] In the first draft, at the fourth paragraph, one reads: "Concerning the results that may, with right, be expected from an organization, entire and more complete. . . . " Brother David proposed the suppression of these last words.

[2] The project referred to Note 3: "Making use of the methods already so advantageously known, of the Brothers of St. Yon." Bro. David corrected: "Making use of a method similar to the one so advantageously known of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine . . . "

[3] There is question of the paragraph relative to the school of arts and crafts, of which Fr. Chaminade had made the wording more precise and improved the style.

possible, upon a method of elementary but practical teaching of the arts and crafts, especially of the arts. Remain in complete agreement with the university. In several of my letters, I sought to remind you that after your beginning at Saint Remy, you would leave for Paris to carry out your plans there, without, however, abandoning Saint Remy. I wanted to be always solicitous about using, little by little, this vast property, leaving Paris to return to Saint Remy at the first sign of any pressing need, leaving Saint Remy to go back to Paris to continue your other business there, etc. . . .

What made me very sorry, what I disapproved of, and what in good conscience I had to disapprove of is this departure for Paris on your own responsibility, which amounted to an abandonment of Saint Remy. The embarrassment was in your motives. It became necessary to send someone quickly to dissipate the mischievous impressions created by our departure, your excuses, and even your lack of success. It was necessary to take hold of the real state of things, to etc. . . .

Let us come together, my dear son, let us come together! You about know what your real position is everywhere. During the long time we have been together, the numerous reflections I have been able to make about all that has happened may show you what I have in mind, what I desire concerning even the very slowness of our enterprises—slowness and delays in the manner of bringing them to their desired end, by reason of the poverty of our means and resources. If our views are not the same or if you find that my views are not extensive enough, that they are too timid and uncertain, write to me with moderation and with sufficient details and explanations. In a word, let us work together. Wisdom calls for it, faith and religion ask for it, our union for the work of God demands it. The distance of four to five hundred miles is really a difficulty, it is not a reason that we should not agree. The good we are after may sometimes advance more slowly, but what can we do? If the order of Providence permits it, why should we not suffer these delays?

I am stopping now, not because I am at the end of my third page, but only to profit by tomorrow morning's mail. Yesterday's paper said that the bishops of Strasbourg and of Nancy are going to be consecrated in Paris. What, then, does M. Xavier think? *Pax tecum, Fili mi!*

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am embracing all my dear children of Saint Remy tenderly. The common letter which they wrote in answer to mine, to wish me a happy New Year, filled me with consolation. It indicates excellent dispositions and is full of kind sentiments. It has seventeen signatures.

I recall, my dear son, that you told me that the Reverend Missionaries had built a superb edifice in Vesoul, where they had to furnish 125 rooms for as many school teachers. Would the Reverend Missionaries lend us the 125 beds? Who could ask them about it? I am

ready to do this myself, but it would be more suitable, it seems to me, if the request were made by you.

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268 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 20, 1824

My dear son, I have received the letter you wrote in the name of all which seventeen have signed. I have already expressed to you my satisfaction when writing Brother David. I read with interest and feeling what you wrote to Brother Auguste. I sent both letters to Agen, to a rich heiress with whom I am to work towards an establishment of the Miséricorde dependent upon the Daughters of Mary. I hope that she may put at my disposal a considerable sum which will help me to come to your assistance, at least in part. I am negotiating a cash sale of the house of the Canton de la Rode.[1] If we can, we shall sell Brother Auguste's house to the Chartons . . . I am seeking other ways of obtaining money. The good God, my dear son, will come to our help in these ways or in any other which his mercy alone understands.

Last week I sent Brother David some letters for M. Masson in Nancy. I hope the latter will be able to lend Brother David a considerable sum. Most of all we must be patient and then do whatever we reasonably can so as not to tempt Providence.

I have been and continue to be amazed at your great tranquility at Saint Remy. For the last six months you have not made any attempt to procure what is urgently needed. Had you spoken confidentially to Father Bardenet, he would have introduced you to persons interested in good works in Besançon, the Missionaries, the Grand Seminary, the Archbishop's Palace, etc. . . .

Why leave the lands entirely uncultivated? You have neither farm implements, nor oxen, nor horses, but aren't there persons who have some and who work for others for reasonable pay (whether in money or in kind) during the regular season or at the end of the year? I could cite several persons I know both in the Midi and in the north of France who work their farms in this way. Father Bardenet has reserved for himself a little farm. Doubtless, he has what is needed to cultivate it. After having attracted you to Saint Remy, why does he then become your enemy so that you can reach no accommodation with him or with anyone he might recommend?

I am losing myself in all these considerations and in others like them. They are only natural—any reasonable person would make them. Surely you could foresee that. I would. If they cannot be done for some reason, why not save me the worry by telling me about it? I have heard nothing at all for six months. If I hazard some reflections, I almost get as an answer that at a distance of 450 miles, it is impossible for me to understand things. What government, what administration would be satisfied with such an answer?

[1] Little property, acquired in 1818 by Fr. Chaminade in Bordeaux, No. 6 Rue Croix de Sequey.

You will tell me, perhaps, that you were not put in charge of such things, that you were only to see to it that higher orders were carried out. Agreed! But you could surely come to an agreement with Brother David. You could suggest to him, with respect and simplicity, that if everything wouldn't be done at the same time, that is no reason for doing nothing at all, that there is often more than one road to get to the same place, etc. . . . You could at least write to me of your thoughts, your reasons, etc. . . .

It seems to me, my dear son, that I am making complaints to you or that I am making them indirectly to Brother David. But no! From whatever side the wrong comes, from you or from Brother David or from myself, it might well be that all three of us have our part in it. As for me, I reproach myself for not having exacted details on your real position, even though I have always asked for them. I should have insisted on sterner measures, since what was being proposed wasn't possible.

I am writing Brother David to act as if we were just making a start and to move ahead. There you are, I am saying to him newly arrived at Saint Remy. What can be suitably done in your position? I am saying the same thing to you. But you want to procure for us sums of money big enough to put us in an advantageous position. It is true, my dear son. But it is possible that I may not succeed. It is possible that I may have some success but that the sums will be insufficient to accomplish the intended result. It is possible, and very much so, that there will be very annoying delays, especially if you are counting on them.

You tell Brother Auguste that you should have had 300 boarders this year. It is a great blunder, it seems to me, not to have received them. Without knowing anything about it, I proposed to Brother David opening a boarding school, but not a word of reply!

There is question of the work of the mission for the school teachers after Easter, but what about the beds, what about advance payments to make the place suitable to receive them? The Reverend Missionaries have 125 beds which have been prepared for this work. Why would they not lend them to you if you ask them in the proper way? It is they who are to give the mission. It is very possible, and I look upon it as beyond a doubt, that they would make or procure the advance payments necessary. Perhaps the Department, which is to pay the expenses of this mission, will advance the sums agreed upon.

Let's go, my dear son, courage! Come to as perfect an understanding as possible with Brother David, but don't remain thus inactive any longer. Write to me about things as clearly as possible, that I may be correctly informed about whatever goes on.

I have not received any answer from Father Bardenet, and am not surprised about this, for he must have noticed that we were not in perfect agreement. But why don't you tell me anything about this? There must be some little mystery here.

I wished to write a letter to all my dear children in common at Saint Remy, but I am obliged to postpone it to a later date, so as not to miss this mail. I hope that in spite of the

great distance, the fatherly blessing I am giving them in the outpouring of my affection for them will fall on them all with abundance. I desire, and I ask it of the Lord, that you have a very considerable part of this blessing.

My letter is finished and recopied. I have received one from Brother David, dated January 11. If I were not so certain about the uprightness of his intentions, I would imagine that he was giving over this establishment to complete destruction and the he . . . Let us stop . . . For 43 or 46 children of farmers, he tells me he has to pay a bill for books to the amount of 500 francs and that the teachers' manuals require the greatest part of this sum. Then, at Besançon, 1030 francs, at the fifth presentation of bills. He promised to write me again about all—that is to say, he really believes that he actually writes to me at each presentation. You know our situation, my dear son. View everything before God. Pray and ask your Brothers to pray. Speak to Brother David and see if he doesn't want to take measures dictated by wisdom. With the efforts alone that Providence permits us to make, along with your efforts and the resources you can procure, the establishment may be able to maintain itself and make the progress which it is capable of. I do not know if your vexations and worries allow you to get an idea of the excess of grief that Saint Remy causes me. No matter. Write to me all that is on your mind, so we can come to a final decision.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Father Chaminade did not hesitate to make this decision. Not satisfied with putting himself in search of the capital necessary, he decided on a radical measure: he decided to recall Brother David, whose head definitely had more need of rest than of reasons, and he confided to Father Caillet the mission of drawing the establishment out of its lethargy.

He informed Brother Clouzet of this measure in the following letter.

269 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 27, 1824

I have just revoked, my dear son, what Brother David calls his orders at Saint Remy. I am giving him a new assignment, that of going to Paris.

I received your letter of January 16. You will have received, before this one, a lengthy one I wrote you not quite a week ago. I ask Brother David, before his departure, to leave with you all the papers, letters, business notes relative to the establishment of Saint Remy or any in which Saint Remy became the center, except for whatever will require his further attention in Paris. It would then suffice that he leave with you notification of the papers he is taking along and of the business he will have to look after.

I shall send you someone, towards the twentieth or twenty-fifth of February, to help you develop the establishment of Saint Remy. I presume that it will be Father Caillet who will have this assignment. I have been preparing him for several days, and the good God seems to be preparing him himself by the dispositions he is inspiring. If Brother David is in Paris at this time, Father Caillet will stay there a while to see and talk with him. From Paris, he will go (at least I am presuming so) straight to Besançon. All those who at Besançon may have some interest in Saint Remy have been notified of these changes by the same mail that will bring this letter. It is possible that there may be some change between now and then, but I shall keep you informed.

Profit by the intervening time to form yourself to virtue and likewise to form all your Brothers.

I was pleased to receive Brother Rothéa's short letter. He is working to acquire silence of the imagination, but with prudence. It is not by force or by constraint that the imagination is mastered. I presume Father Caillet will often make use of him in this mission, and I have confidence that Brother Rothéa will be in complete agreement in following out the directions which Father Caillet will bring.

Make as few expenses as possible. But take good care of your brother's health as well as of your own. If Brother David is not cured, it would be necessary to oblige him to await his complete restoration to health.

I spoke seriously to M. Molinier's brother. He said to me: "If there is hope for my brother's getting better or if his infirmity may permit him to be of some use to the Institute, or even if his infirmity were to lead to an early death, it would be better not to have him return." In the contrary case, he would have to be returned to his family. Arrange the matter with the doctor and the patient himself. Tell him, in particular, how much I am attached to him, that I am exhorting him to make of his infirmities and suffering sources of spiritual profit.

I shall take notes on each one of our Brothers and even, as much as I can, on each of the postulants. In the meantime, mark down for me anything that might give me a correct and complete evaluation of each one. I shall give Father Caillet (assuming it is he who is sent) rather considerable powers, as much in regard to things as to persons, even the power of admitting to the novitiate and to religious profession . . . He is charged with making our establishment, which we regard as one of the works of God, succeed with all the means that Providence may help him to find. You may notify Father Bardenet of this, while assuring him of my sincere and respectful attachment. You may also tell him that I believe I have understood him in spite of his rigorous silence, or rather that I have heard him by his very silence. . . .

I am embracing you, my dear son. Embrace each one of your Brothers for me. They are all my children whom I carry in my heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Brother David was in no hurry about leaving Saint Remy. He was awaiting Father Caillet's arrival and it was even necessary, as we shall see, for Father Chaminade to intervene again, to help him make up his mind to depart.

But from this moment on, Brother Clouzet took the direction of the work in hand.

In the midst of these difficulties, the religious led a most edifying life. "Union is very close among all of us," Brother Clouzet could write. "Long life the Lord, who has given us such a great favor!" (January 16, 1824)

And the blessing of God was evident in the numerous postulants who offered themselves to increase the community.

270 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 23, 1824

My dear son, I have just received your letter and just at the right time. I was going to write Father Bardenet. In fact, I am writing to him by this very mail. Include a copy of this letter, which he will receive when you get this one.[1] You notice some details about Father Caillet's journey and about ways of dealing with Father Bardenet.

Brother David does not give me any reason for prolonging his stay at Saint Remy other than lack of money for traveling. He tells me the thousand francs he has just received and the 881 francs I am sending him to take to Ribeauvillé will be more than used up. Try to have him find some way of making his trip to Paris. How could we have managed at Saint Remy if we had not received the 1881 francs we were not expecting? On the other hand, this trip is so sudden and so short . . . Brother David speaks to me about a bill required in Besançon, amounting to 1030 francs. If I had known the where and the why of it, I could have had it paid. In any case, send the said account to Father Caillet in Besançon.

You certainly understand that if there is some serious observation to be made to Father Caillet before his arrival at Saint Remy, you must write him right away, either in Paris or in Besançon. I doubt that you will be on time to reach him in Paris, but he should be able to find your letter, as well as Father Bardenet's, on his arrival in Besançon.

I am not writing Brother David, because I imagine that, after reflection, he must have salvaged something from the 881 francs and must have left for Paris.

Well, my dear son, I am not answering any of the other points of your letter, since Father Caillet is leaving supplied with notes of all kinds. There are few matters concerning the establishment at Saint Remy that we have not spoken about.

[1] This letter has not been preserved.

Father Caillet has told Father Breuillot[1] he is coming to Besançon. There he will begin to speak to him about the Marast affair and will be able to discuss it before his arrival in Saint Remy. Brother David asked me for my procuration without telling me the name of the person he was doing business with. I, nevertheless, sent it to him. Names are sometimes of use in the management of affairs.

Take good care of your Brothers in all that concerns the spiritual and the temporal. The good Lord will bless your solicitude, as his unworthy minister blesses it, to whom he has nevertheless given the feelings of a father.

William Joseph Chaminade

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X

THE FIRST WORKS OF SAINT REMY

(1824-1825)

The directions given to Father Caillet, on the occasion of his first mission in the north, are among the most remarkable documents written by Father Chaminade's hand.

271 – TO FATHER CAILLET, SAINT REMY

[1] Father Breuillot (1758-1837) director and procurator of the Grand Seminary of Besançon, affiliate of the Society of Mary, was a priest when the Revolution broke out. He refused to take the schismatic oath, was thrown into prison, and after his liberation, devoted himself with indefatigable zeal to the exercise of his ministry during the worst days of the Terror. From this time, foreseeing the future needs of the Church, he devoted his efforts to the training of priests and to the opening of seminaries. "In mentioning to you this venerable priest," wrote the Archbishop of Besançon the day after his death, "I recall to you the founder of all our ecclesiastical establishments, the one to whom we owe the present condition of the diocese, who has contributed, more than anyone else, to have it rise from its ruins. A man of faith, he understood and completed, with the help of God, what the boldest genius would have hardly dared to think of. I have seen only the last rays of this torch of the just man, which the Lord had lit in this diocese, to shed in it life and heat." Father Breuillot was, with Fr. Bardenet, the instrument of which God made use to introduce the Society in Franche-Comté, in particular, St. Remy and Marast. (See Letter 296.)

Bordeaux, February 26, 1824

OBEDIENCE FOR MY VERY DEAR SON, GEORGES M. CAILLET, PRIEST, PROFESSED RELIGIOUS OF THE INSTITUTE OF MARY.

You desire, my dear son, handwritten directions regarding the important mission you are going to fill at Saint Remy. Your desires are praiseworthy. They prove, at the same time, both your good will and your obedience. I willingly undertake to give them. Your obedience will take the form of a letter.

What is the most essential object of your mission? In what manner and in what spirit are you to work at it? Here you have, my dear son, what I believe you expect from the tenderness of the Father and Superior that God has given you here upon earth.

1. *The object of your mission*. To point it out to you more clearly, I shall speak about what is material and what concerns the personnel of the establishment.

Concerning what is material, I understand (1) the debts that your brothers have been obliged to contract; (2) the most essential and the most urgent needs to live, to grow, to develop, and to cultivate the land at Saint Remy; (3) most of the repairs, whether needed in the framework and roofs or in the walls of the enclosure.

I am not giving you any money, my dear son, but I am giving you what is better than this—it is the order of God. I have accepted the establishment of Saint Remy, as you know, only because we have believed it to be according to the blessed and merciful views of providence. You also know the sacrifices I have made until now to sustain it. Your faith and your confidence in God will see to it that you meet those persons whom God will accord the signal favor of coming to your help. Happy the persons chosen by God to aid in the development of his works!

Concerning the personnel, I understand this to refer to what is spiritual in the community and to whatever has any connection with it, either directly or indirectly. You know that the primary end of the Institute of Mary is the sanctification of its own members. Each person, even the heads of Departments of whatever grade or rank, is to render you an account of his interior. Besides, the heads just referred to, will show you their registers.

If you should encounter any abuses, you may, you are to correct them. If you should discover in the new establishment some obstacle to the progress in virtue and to the perfection to which all are called, you have the duty to remove it, etc., etc., etc.

I clothe you with my authority. Do everything that you feel I myself would, or rather that I should do in your place. You have the power to admit to the postulate, to the novitiate, to annual, triennial, and perpetual profession.

Surround yourself, in all difficult situations, with the knowledge and experience of the various Heads of the establishment. Hold frequent councils, etc., etc. To your authority over spiritual order of the persons, I am placing no limits except for the single case that you would run up against: a unanimous opposition of the various Heads. In such an emergency you would suspend your orders and get in touch with me.

2. *In what manner and in what spirit are you to work?* Observe, my dear son, your starting point. Consider where you are going and the persons who will receive the exercise of your mission. It will then be easy for you to conclude in what spirit you are to work.

You are coming from a place of retreat, from a place where you believed the world dead and crucified to you, just as you believe yourself dead and crucified to the world. From a place where your heart has so often repeated the beautiful words of St. Paul to the Galatians: *Mihi absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domini nostril Jesu Christi: per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est, et ego mundo.*

St. Gregory the Great warns us, my dear son, that in the most holy profession in which we believe to have uprooted from our heart forever all taste for vanities, for the infidelities and the corruption of the world, it is still true that we find some roots of these evils in the relations which the religious are obliged to have with persons of the outside world. We are no more of the world, says the same Church Father, but the world still holds on to us by almost imperceptible links. Oh, my dear son, take care during your long journey that you and the world are reciprocally dead and crucified. Frequently enter into yourself and take account of the slightest impressions.

Here I am ending my reflections on the first two points. The third, towards whom you are specially to exercise your mission, is well known to you. The religious of Saint Remy are your brothers, and like you, they have the honor and the glory of bearing the name of Children of Mary. Could I give you wiser and more religious counsels than those which St. Paul gives to the Galatians in the first five verses of the sixth chapter already cited? Make yourself, my dear son, as it were, familiar with this apostolic doctrine, and make of it the rule of your conduct.

I shall close this already long letter, my dear son, in the same way that St. Paul closes his Epistle of the Galatians. If you conduct yourself according to this rule, if you *put* your glory and your hope, not in human wisdom, but *in* the views of faith in Jesus Christ, our divine master, his peace and mercy will rest with us. *Quicumque hanc regulam secuti fuerint, pax super illos et misericordia, etc.*

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, my dear son, be ever with your spirit. Amen.

G. Joseph Chaminade
Superior of the Institute of Mary

Bordeaux, February 26, 1824

* * * *

Before leaving, Father Caillet wrote to Mother de Trenquelléon on behalf of the Good Father.

Rev. Mother Superior

Our Good Father gives me the pleasure of speaking a moment with you before my departure, which is to take place tomorrow, March 1, at five in the morning. He asks me to write you concerning Lent, for yourself and for the community.

As regards the community, his intention is: 1) That you make use of the sufficient authorization he gives you to provide meat for those of your daughters who might have a real need of it. 2) That you equally dispense from the fast those who could not observe it without seriously compromising their health. 3) That, in order to settle the matter and do away with all scruple, you consult and follow the advice of the doctor. 4) That, finally, in case of doubt and uncertainty, you follow the course most favorable from the viewpoint of health. As regards those who are well, they will remember that it is in the religious orders that pure Christianity is to be found this exact observance of the laws of holy Church. They will make it a source of pleasure for themselves, I am sure, to conform to them.

Concerning yourself, my Good Mother Superior, his orders are: that you follow in everything the program which the doctor prescribes for you, worked out in consultation with the Mother in charge of work. To this effect, let good Sister St. Vincent be charged with interpretation of the doctor's instruction, to prepare for you what he will prescribe. In case of doubt, the matter is to be referred to the Council of the Mothers. Our Good Father has no doubt whatsoever as regards your docility on this point, as on all others, He hopes that you will be well as a result and that it will be a real joy for you to be able to obey and to renounce yourself in this matter. It is well understood this program will equally concern both the conferences and catechism instructions that would tire you too much, fasting and abstinence that might prove prejudicial to your health, etc. . . .

Let us love the good God, my Good mother! Oh that it were given to us to love him and cause him to be loved by all creatures susceptible of love, solely for himself and because of his infinite perfections! I would like to love him, but my self-love is always in the way. Give me spiritual alms, you and your dear daughters, in according me your fervent prayers, so that I may correct myself and no longer spoil the works of God. I am nevertheless in peace, as I am ready to leave, and I hope in the Lord, who will sustain me in his infinite goodness.

I shall not forget, during my absence of six weeks, the beloved Agen community. I love it in our Lord Jesus Christ, and I ardently desire to see all of its members rise to sanctity. This is

the wish of my soul, and for you in particular, my Good Mother. It is in this disposition that I have the honor of remaining in Jesus and Mary your very humble servant and Brother.

Father Chaminade added with his own hand:

272 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, February 29, 1824

In a postscript, my dear child, added to the letter that Father Caillet wrote to Mother St. Vincent, I am including his commission in your regard. The cares needed for the recovery and preservation of your health are under the law of obedience, and consequently, you will conform to all that will be prescribed for you under the same law. Whatever be the needs of the community and of the sodalities, do only what accords with the views of God as they are manifested to you. I desire to be able in a few days to remove the obstacle that I am placing to the exercise of your zeal.

William Joseph Chaminade

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A few days later the Good Father completed his instructions.

273 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, March 11, 1824

. . . My dear child, follow with simplicity the program prescribed for you. I understood that rest was what you needed the most. Your body and your soul will profit by it, I hope. Speak very little. Have others do it for you, etc. . . .

I can't as yet tell you anything about your establishment in Bordeaux. In a few days, however, we shall know things more clearly, for or against.

I am returning, my dear child, to the subject of your health. You seem to have troubles of conscience concerning some of the cares being given you. My dear child, you ought to have many more for showing dislike for these cares, whether it be a question of a meat diet or the contrary. Even should there be a mistake in giving you more than is needed for your health, there would never be any mistake in your obeying. But be careful, one must obey with joy and in the spirit of those who command. You no longer belong to yourself but to God, to the Blessed Virgin, to religion. Follow without fear, follow with joy what such masters ask of you!

I have no illusions, my dear child, concerning the fears you have reason to experience on the side of nature and on the side of self-love. Sensuality may be aroused by the good treatment we give out bodies. Self-love is flattered by the interest we have in them and by the cares we give them. What is to be done? Nothing but to obey. We wish neither glory nor pleasure, but only what God wants and as he wants it. Self-love finds it more to its interest to show regret in not being able to observe the holy laws of fasting and abstinence. It is then far better not to say anything, to take with gratitude what is given, and to be edified at the charity of others . . . I am led to hope that in two weeks you will be passably restored to health, if you do what is asked of you. May the will of God be done in all things! May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

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A first echo of Father Caillet's trip comes to us from Paris.

Some weeks before, a businessman of this city, M. O'Lombel, had addressed the following letter to Father Chaminade.

Rev. Father: Knowing for a long time all the fruit being produced by the sodality which you direct in so edifying a manner, I seek today to offer your zeal the consoling hope of seeing the same seeds come to fruition in this capital. Then the capital will be as Bordeaux with so many and such beautiful conquests for our holy religion.

You know that associations of fervent men who make an open profession of Christianity have been formed in several parishes of Paris as a result of the pastoral visit of two years ago. They are directed by the Rev. Pastors of the parishes where they are found. For a long time, I thought they would grow very much. I am convinced today that the good that they will accomplish will be far from being what could be obtained from a sodality organized here in a manner conformable to the one you so admirably direct in Bordeaux.

In consequence, I am taking the liberty of addressing myself to you, with the confidence that only Christian fellowship can inspire, to ask you very sincerely to have the extreme kindness to send me a copy of the regulations wick govern your sodality, in view of presenting them to His Excellency, the Archbishop. We will have then observed in the Capital if he adopts them, as I have every reason to hope he will.[1]

[1] M. O'Lombel, whom we shall see during many years in intimate relations with Father Chaminade, and his main correspondent in Paris, is not otherwise known to us. His family of Irish origin, as his name indicates, had perhaps located in Spain where, by his wife, Dolores Rizo, an Andalusian, he had honorable connections. He must have received, in France, a careful education if we are to judge by his correspondence with Father Chaminade, and he had established himself in Paris at No. 7 Rue de Sèvres, near the Foreign Missions, where Father Caillet made his acquaintance. A businessman, very honest, but little clever, it seems he was mixed up with the religious and monarchial movement of the time. He had

Father Caillet, during his stay in Paris, visited M. O'Lombel and through him was introduced to the Paris sodality. There was an exchange of views, objections were raised, and Father Chaminade wrote the following interesting letter to his new correspondent.

274 – TO M. O'LOMBEL, PARIS

Bordeaux, March 22, 1824

Dear Sir: Thank you for all your kind attentions to Father Caillet. His courage and good will seem to have increased in the presence of you and the sodality leaders. While stopping in Dijon, he saw Father Rauzan, the founder of the Missionaries of France, but he was able to confer with him only a short time. This is all he tells me in his first letter, written on his arrival in Besançon.

The religious association gives us great reasons for hope, if it is well organized, as there is every reason to expect it will be.

I have the honor of sending you a copy of the Institute of the Sodality of young people. This is the plan that must be followed in the formation of a sodality for men in general. Here we make a distinction between the sodality of young men and that of the fathers of families, but in other cities, we unite them under the same leader and under the same direction. The men's sodality, then, is divided into two sections, one for youth and the other for those of mature age. Each section has two classes, the first and the second. In the second, we put all good workmen, while in the first we put all those who are above this class in society. Each section is divided into groups, more or less according to the number of sodalists. These groups bring together individuals who are most similar in age, tastes, and occupation. For example, in the second section—the young workers—the first group would be made up of all workshop bosses, their sons or teachers, and the second group of simple workmen, etc. . . . If in a section there happen to be many of the same positions in society, they can be divided into several groups. In the first, for example, law students, medical students, etc. . . ; in the second, tailors, shoemakers, etc. . . . Tact and skill are needed in arranging these groups so as not to wound self-love or arouse any kind of jealousy. Father Caillet tells me he had the Council of Paris Sodality read the notes he had taken about the Institute of Sodalities, and that, having been questioned by M. Ponton d'Amécourt[1] about whether the Prefect of the Sodality was elected by the Sodality, he had answered that the sodalists themselves chose and named by vote the Prefect they

several daughters who, in 1837, made profession among the Daughters of Mary. At this time, he had to quit France as a result of incidents unknown to us. He was living in Puerto-Real, near Cadiz, and from here we lose trace of him in 1839.

[1] Antoine d'Amécourt, one of the oldest members of the Paris Sodality, whose prefect he was at the beginning of the Restoration Period, 1816, was at this time one of the most active and zealous men of the Capital.

preferred, in the view of and with the sanction of the Director, without whose consent nothing happens in the Council and meetings of the Sodality. He had answered, furthermore, that M. Ponton d'Amécourt thought this a concession to the worldly spirit; that it smacked of a charter, somewhat constitutional; that it established a government, monarchical and constitutional. On this subject here are a few short observations.

1. You will notice by an attentive reading of the chapter on elections that Father Caillet's answer is not entirely exact. 2. I drew up this little Institute of the Sodality of young men many years before anyone heard of the charter and of an obsolete or constitutional monarchy. I laid its foundations and guiding principles twenty years ago.
3. In the oldest regulations of the sodalities, were the sodalists influenced by votes in the choice of the Prefect? 4. Throughout the more than three centuries that the sodalities have existed, has there ever been a legitimate one in which the Ecclesiastical Head took any title other than that of Director? Is it by instinct, imitation, or by pure reasoning that we thought we should more or less approximate this ancient practice? As for me, it seemed to me more in conformity with the nature of men, especially of today's youth, and more apt to sustain interest. Furthermore, by a careful reading of the chapter on elections, it is easy to see that there can be no other prefect than the one whom the director wants without his having the inconvenience of seeming to name him by the force of authority. These preparatory consultations, these votes given by written and secret ballots, these white and black ballot sheets are, in truth, only toys, but they please nonetheless. Most of the sodalists know this but are still glad that both the older members and the newer have been consulted.

It should be noted, however, that there is here no question of bringing together simply pious and monarchical Christians, but rather of attracting the greatest number of possible of adult men, of young men, and even of adolescents in order to continue to increase this too small number. The sodalities are, so to say, perpetual missions, etc. . . . I shall have to return to these views, my dear sir, because they are, so to speak, the principles from which we draw all our methods and their many happy consequences.

Concerning what Father Caillet tells you about the general meetings of our sodalities, which are held in the evening and which we call public, it seems to me that you have not understood their real spirit. If our purposes and methods were well followed, the idea of the Protestant sermons would never have cropped up. I have never heard this difficulty brought up here. If it had occurred, I would certainly have answered it. Nevertheless, the most outstanding the best educated persons, including bishops, have at one or another time, been present at our meetings, but never have such remarks been made, for the simple reason that there was no occasion or cause for making them. No layman speaks there in the name of religion. They read, they give speeches relating, of course, to religion and morality. Often there are dialogues, songs, etc. . . . However, 1) all these discourses of whatever kind have been seen beforehand and approved by the director, who remains responsible for the teaching of the Church, whose representative and minister he is; 2) the Director is always present at the meetings, where he has his desk

and where he seems to preside; 3) no one speaks at any length but the Director. It is he alone who makes the reflections he deems appropriate on the speeches given. It is he who answers the difficulties that present themselves and that he himself often raises, without seeming to, to arouse discussion and to create more interest in what is being said. It is he alone who actually teaches, and everybody takes note of this. Generally, it is the young people who speak at these meetings. It is they who fill the functions of officers for the maintenance of order at the meetings and of officers of honor, who look after strangers who may have come. In directing the totality, the Director really runs everything. I have the sodalists understand that in principle they form a body, but one which should be full of life. And there are none who do not look upon the Director as the soul of that body regarding the functions he has to accomplish, but always as a tender father in the midst of a numerous family.

The Rev. Pastors who want to be the Directors of the sodalities and who believe their jurisdiction lessened if they are not, have a very meager idea of the sodalities, of their true ends, and of the protective relations they should have with them. If this prejudice continues and works against the establishment of sodalities in Paris, I could make some reflections which could help to dissipate it. For example, what an honored place the Rev. pastor of Saint Roch would have if he became the sodality's zealous protector, the one who approves all that is said and done in its meetings, the father of all, etc.! He would secure for himself the love and respect of all the sodalists and even of strangers. When he would speak, he would be listened to as an oracle. The fact, furthermore, often stops him from speaking—he speaks rarely and then as one not in charge of the details of the sodality. If he always wants to speak, he will repeat himself, speak badly, bore and disgust everybody, and the unattractive meetings that result will be avoided, etc. . . .

Perhaps I myself am boring you, dear sir, by my lengthy speaking, but explanation seemed to be needed. I want so much to see this work spread to the Capital! You can judge the truth of this by my noticeable temerity whenever the question comes up of forming, in Paris, a little establishment of the Institute of Mary, which would have for its principal object this work of predilection. I call this *temerity* because we are so small and there are so few even among this small number who are fully prepared to undertake it!

Whatever the case may be, dear sir, try to get a true idea of these sodalities for yourself. If His Excellency the Archbishop of Paris came to the point of thoroughly understanding the plan, he would support it by his protection, and the reform of Paris would make solid progress. But if the establishments that might be made there should be lacking in the basic essentials, then failure would be the result. It then would be all the more difficult to reestablish them as they should be than to form them correctly in the first place.

I am finally coming to a close. I repeat for you the assurance of my sincere attachment and the high consideration I have for you.

P.S. As I was finishing my letter, I thought of the idea that as a conciliatory measure we could possibly imagine naming the Rev. Pastors Directors of the Sodalities, and they could delegate one of their assistants to do the work required. This means would do but little to diminish the evil. The Director must have another mission to be true to his office.

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Father Caillet was soon to arrive in Saint Remy: Father Chaminade prepared him for it by a supplement of diverse instructions.

275 – TO FATHER CAILLET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 25, 1824

It is the feast of the Annunciation, my dear son, and before the office of the evening, I am going to write you by the hand of our young Brother Tissier.

I received your letters, three from Paris and one from Besançon. I noted with pleasure but without surprise that the blessing of the Lord accompanied you. Put all your confidence in his grace and in the protection of our august mother. All is possible to those of real faith. Besides, we wish only what God himself wishes. Let us only take care that we put no obstacle to the execution of his merciful designs.

According to the information you have given me about the Paris sodalities, I wrote a long letter to M. O'Lombel and sent him a copy of the Institute of the Sodality for young men. When you are ready to continue to busy yourself with these sodalities, I shall inform you about what I have written and about what has happened since. His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux had, as of yesterday, not yet finished reading the little copy books that I had given him some time before your departure.[1] I am addressing this letter to Saint Remy, where you will still find Brother David, who will undoubtedly have awaited your coming, to inform you about all that concerns this establishment. Get well acquainted, in fact, with everything that has happened, especially with the titles to the property and with Brother David's correspondence with all those who have dealings with the Institute in general and with the establishment of Saint Remy in particular. Take copious notes about everything. Brother David wrote me that the old titles or papers for the domain were being carelessly scattered. If carelessly is the right word, stop it and try to remedy the losses. Without losing time in looking for old papers, consult Father Bardenet about what is to be done with them and which ones are to be kept. If there is no time to do this, then let them all be deposited in a room under key until a time when they can be looked into.[2]

[1] There is doubtless question of writings, relative to the Sodality.
[2] Thanks to this recommendation, the old titles to the domain, since the fourteenth century, have been kept in the Archives of the Society of Mary.

It seems that the retreat to be given to the school teachers of the Department of Doubs might nevertheless be destined for Saint Remy. You know that I have some hope for the 125 beds that I believe the Missionaries had put in for this purpose. I have learned since that these 125 beds belonged to Father Bardenet, who himself had been obliged to sell them to the seminary to make money. Here is a means for remedying the great inconvenience of not having beds. Father Bardenet might buy back the 125 beds that he sold. It is presumed that he would get them back at the same price and that he would receive credit for a certain time. This loan would be paid: 1. by the gifts and benefactions you will receive for a good work of such great importance; 2. from the salary for this good work; 3. if, to conclude this affairs a little cash were absolutely necessary and it could in no way be found, you could take advantage of me for a small enough sum, say 1000 francs, or I would make a draft for a similar sum payable in Lyons upon receiving suitable advice.

Father Bardenet will not doubt the importance of this work and of all this interest needed to see it to realization. We have spoken of this several times, and so I shall not repeat for you reflections we have already made. The Rev. Missionaries have promised to conduct the retreat at Saint Remy for the school teachers if we brought them together there. If the first retreat could take place a short time after Easter, perhaps it would be good if Brother David delayed leaving for Paris until it was finished, because then he would be carrying out his normal school project. In spite of the reflections I am making to you, I leave you entirely free to change this work as you see it, or rather as you are able. There are so many circumstances that I know nothing about that it is impossible for me to trace out for you a line of action without exposing the work itself to harm of some kind or other. Consult Father Bardenet, the Rev. Missionaries, the Rev. Directors of the Seminary of Besançon, even the Archbishop if necessary for it is in the interest of religion. It is to be presumed that all will interest themselves in it, and that, if all are interested, this work will succeed. There are great difficulties only for the first retreat. . . .

Brother David had at first delayed his departure for Paris for lack of money, as he said; it seems that now he is delaying it only to wait for you. Lately, he received 6250 francs from M. Weber. If the first retreat of the school teachers were to be scheduled after Easter and if he were disposed to leave for Paris, we'd have let him go and even urge him to do it. You should give him enough money to make the trip and to stay some time in Paris, until I can give him some myself.

You ask me, my dear son, what you would have to tell him concerning what God has reserved for us to obtain from the Government; the authorization for the Institute of Mary. I believe that at first you should speak to him about it nobly in a very general way: as, for example, if he foresees too many difficulties, if he fears for his success, he might write to me from Paris. I should suggest various solutions to him, that it is even possible, according to the turn other affairs might make, I could decide upon going to Paris myself; that he write to me always with simplicity and in the minutest detail; that, moreover, in arriving in Paris,

he use with wisdom and prudence, whatever means he thinks proper and which he feels confident of .

In writing to Father Farine,[1] urging him to break his bonds by all the motives and means authorized by religion and virtue—you might let him know that until we have provided for our already existing establishments and secured as recruits some other good subjects, we cannot arrange for any establishment in Switzerland, however much we would desire to do so. Assure him of my real interest in the idea, however, seeing as how some of my ancestors are even in Berne; but that, in the works of God, the order of providence must be followed.

I am not repeating for you any of the considerations we have made on the course to be followed with regard to the vast establishment of Saint Remy, nor the excursions you can make, according to the periods of free time you may be able to find. Just keep in mind that Saint Remy is your great work, that all the others are, so to say, only accessory. Pray, pray much! Act with confidence!

You ask for my paternal blessing. I give it to you, my dear son, with all the effusion of my heart. I am going to expose the Blessed Sacrament. You will not be forgotten at the holy altar.

I embrace Brother David, Brother Clouzet, Brother Rothéa, and all our other good brothers.

Give Father Bardenet the special tokens of my confidence and entire devotedness.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I shall soon write Brother David and Brother Clouzet: to Brother David unless I have reason to believe, by some other letter, that he has left for Paris. Take note, for me, of the date of your reception of this letter.

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From the first letter received from Father Caillet after his arrival at Saint Remy, Father Chaminade understood that Brother David's recall was demanded by the urgent need to assure the new representative liberty of action. About this the following letters.

276 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 28, 1824

[1] Swiss priest and friend of Father Caillet.

My dear son, I gladly enter into all your troubles—I can well imagine that you have many. I sent Father Caillet to you to relieve you, and yet it is precisely his appearance that increases your difficulties. Well, I surely hope it will only last a little while.

I am sending you a letter and an obedience for Brother David. You will seal the letter, and after having allowed the sealing wax to harden, give it to him along with the obedience. The obedience is not to be put in the letter but to be handed to him without any comment. If Brother David still alleges a lack of money and if you are certain that he hasn't any, you should try to procure what is necessary for him to get to Bordeaux.

As soon as I received Father Caillet's dispatches, I sent the notary the instructions needed for drawing up a new procuration, which will revoke any previously given at any time. This new procuration will be filled in under your name. I cannot send it to you with this mail, because it is not yet ready.

I am at the same time writing separately to Father Bardenet, and I am informing him of the letter I am writing to you, of the obedience for Brother David, and also of the procuration which will be mailed shortly. This is out of fear that the letter addressed to you could be intercepted, in spite of all your precautions. In sending you this procuration, I shall write Father Caillet everything I can. I also shall write him at Ribeauvillé if I foresee that he can interpret my letter at the time of this stopover in this city.

Tell all my children at Saint Remy how much I love them and that I am disposed to do whatever I can to make them happy and to ensure their entire faithfulness to God and to the Institute. I have been very much touched by the good wishes you expressed to me for the feast of Saint Joseph. Your letter containing all your requests was put on the altar during the celebration of the holy mysteries. I embrace you all very tenderly and wish you constancy and peace in the Lord!

William Joseph Chaminade

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277 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 28, 1824

When I recently wrote to Saint Remy, my dear son, I did not include a letter for you out of fear or in the hope that you had left for Paris. A few days later, I learned that you wanted to await the arrival of Father Caillet. Father Caillet himself tells me both about his arrival at Saint Remy and his relationship with you.

I do not know exactly what to say about what has transpired between you two. Any reflections I might offer would be useless anyway, since there is an urgent need for you to

come to Bordeaux. As you like to obey and prefer a positive command to a simple invitation, however pressing it may be, I am sending you an obedience. I would have done the same for the mission in Paris that I had confided to you if I had not thought your taste for obeying sufficiently satisfied. Ditto for what I was calling your new mission to Paris and for my procuration to solicit government authorization for the Institute.

Concerning this authorization for the Institute, we shall busy ourselves with it from the time of your arrival in Bordeaux. This matter has major consequences. Some friends, back in Paris and elsewhere, seem to blame us for not making good use of the opportune time to obtain it.

While you are traveling, my dear son, take care of your health. I long to see you arrive here. I am even counting the days. My tender friendship for you is always the same. The small complaints that I sometimes thought it good to bring to your attention do not mean my affection is any less.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. in writing to you, I am making use of young Brother Tissier, but it is all under dictation—not a word is from him.

* * * *

OBEDIENCE FOR BROTHER DAVID MONIER, RELIGIOUS OF THE INSTITUTE OF MARY

My dear son Brother David Monier is finally discharged, by these present letters, of all the commissions that holy obedience gave him whether at Saint Remy itself, in the dioceses of Besançon, Strasbourg, or others, and finally in Paris.

Thus entirely freed from all solicitude, he will leave as soon as possible for Bordeaux, where his presence is needed. There is no intention, however, of freeing him from the obligation of telling Father Caillet, or in his absence Brother Clouzet, whatever may be of interest to the Institute of Mary in this region or of returning to them in proper order all the paper that concern them.

May the Angel of the Lord deign to take under his protection my dear son, Brother David, during the long travel route that lies ahead of him!

Given in Bordeaux, March 28, 1824, under our seal and the counterseal of our sub-secretary and sealed with the seal of the Institute.

G. Joseph Chaminade, Superior

By order of the Reverend Superior in the absence of the Secretary,

Tissier, sub-secretary

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A few days later, the Founder wrote to Father Caillet, a letter which gives us information on the kind of difficulties raised by his arrival at Saint Remy in the presence of Brother David: it is addressed to Ribeauvillé in Alsace where Father Caillet had to go passing through Besançon.

278 – TO FATHER CAILLET, RIBEAUVILLÉ

Bordeaux, March 31, 1824

My dear son, Your stay at Saint Remy was very short. Without going into whether you could have overcome the difficulties of Brother David's presence, here is the attitude I took when I received your remarks.

Yesterday morning, the thirtieth of the current month, I wrote Brother Clouzet.[1] I sent him, unsealed, a letter for Brother David along with an obedience for him. I am sending you a copy of both or at least of the obedience, if there is not enough time for copying the letter before the mail's departure. I told Brother Clouzet I was going to send a duly notarized procuration in proper form, including the revocation of all previous procurations, etc., etc. The notary worked at it until the day before yesterday. It may still leave with this mail, but if not, then surely with the next. I also wrote Father Bardenet yesterday morning and told him specifically that I was sending Brother Clouzet the documents I have just referred to. I requested that he be sure to ask Brother Clouzet for them. As a result, if the letters should be intercepted despite Brother Clouzet's precautions, we would soon know of it. It is to be presumed that Brother David will make up his mind to leave when he receives his obedience or that he will at least choose to remove himself from the scene, that he will give over the procuration he already has in blank form to Brother Clouzet, and that the latter will not have to ask for the procuration I am sending him. If, however, Brother David shows still further obstinacy, Brother Clouzet should notify him that he was provided with a new procuration that revokes all others. But we should only point all these things out to him as a last resort.

While addressing you in Ribeauvillé, I shall also send everything I am saying here to Saint Remy in case the present letter doesn't reach you. I shall leave the letter unsealed, inside Brother Clouzet's envelope, so that each can take from it whatever concerns him. I presume you will write him, and Father Bardenet as well, to encourage him and to communicate all your ideas and reflections. That way you can send on everything more promptly once you have returned to Paris.

[1] There is question of the preceding letter, dated on the twenty-eighth.

I am suggesting to Father Bardenet in another letter, that he act in such a way that the delay of the school teachers' retreat, which was to be given after Easter, may be as little evident as possible.

Your stay in Besançon seemed very short to me. You were no doubt thinking of returning very soon. You could hardly have taken sufficient information to obtain the help you will need for Saint Remy. Perhaps, with Fathers Brouillot and Bardenet helping, you can determine how to overcome the difficulties, or at least you can see what you are lacking.

I will not commit on your round of visits. Just be careful to do only what seems useful. Your entire concern must be the Saint Remy establishment. Take exact notes about everything, including names of places and persons so that I am completely informed. I also need guidance about Ribeauvillé.

Convey my kindest regards to M. Bernhard and his interesting family and also to all the parents of our young seminarians.[1] A very special prudence and circumspection are needed in M. Hoffman's case. His son is good no doubt, but his desire to go see his parents, that his father has unwisely encouraged, could be very harmful to the young man. You would do well to see the mother privately to find out her real sentiments.

You seem surprised, my dear son, at the first answer—I wouldn't call it *the first reason*—that Brother David gave you to prove the nullity of the promises he has made. He is claiming that since I was never myself a member of the Institute of Mary, I cannot validly receive the vows or the promises of those who make them. My dear son, why did you not ask him, since he is so clever, about the authority that obliges founders to contract the same obligations as the orders they found? And, in the second place, do they not contract a very close link with the Institute from the time they receive the promises in their capacity as superiors? For example, does not the vow of obedience establish a reciprocal tie between the subject and the superior? As much can be said of the other vows and of the constitutions of the Institute. It would be otherwise if the founder or first author were not to declare himself Superior: in designating another to receive the vows and the promises of his confreres, the real Founder and first Superior had reasons, even in the interests of the Institute, not to give any exterior indications of the ties he contracts with the Institute except little by little and only as circumstances might require?

Brother David did not make his vows by chance. He concerned himself with these things for several years. The first time he wanted to make them, I prevented it. I wanted to stop it just as much a year later at the end of a retreat, but he begged me so strongly to admit him that I believed I had to consent, although I did so with some reluctance. How is it

[1] The Bernhard family of Ribeauvillé, which had sent three of its children to Bordeaux, and the families of the other postulants and novices of the Madeleine, among others, the young Joseph Hoffman.

that he only finds difficulty several years later when the yoke of obedience begins to press? Why does he now seek only to direct himself and obstinately follow all his ideas?

This is the first time I have heard of this difficulty. If it would occur in a sane and settled head, it would not be hard to eliminate it by proofs of reason, or by celebrated examples from the past.

As to his claiming that he is as much the author of the Institute as I am, why not ask him what he means? Did God inspire him? Did he instruct and prepare the subjects? Did they seek to band together around him? Is it perhaps that he has written and worked hard at editing the constitutions and regulations? If this were so, then all department heads, all the private and general secretaries should take the title of their employers, because they often do most of the work. It must be admitted that these are very weak reasons to be coming from a man of intelligence and experience.

What he calls the second reason, that I am acting directly against the ends of the Institute, that I have other views, that I am secretive, that I am starting a kind of Jesuitian—to all this I think the best answer is not to make any. His conscience will not be less obligated because he has no factual proof to allege, while he has a great amount to prove the contrary. For more than twenty years, I have warned him that he was allowing himself to be dominated by his imagination and attachment to his ideas, which goes as far as headstrong obstinacy. My dear son, you yourself have proofs of this, enough to scandalize you, but undoubtedly your charity interprets them as favorably as possible.

I am stopping now to give my young secretary time to copy Brother David's obedience for you as well as the letter I am writing him. I give you my paternal blessing with all the effusion of my heart!

Father Chaminade adds with his own hand.

For some time, I have been dictating all my letters, whether to relieve my head or to have them sent more promptly, but my young scribe thus has twice as much work.

William Joseph Chaminade

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Brother Clouzet also nourished some prejudices against Father Caillet and his mission. Father Chaminade tried hard to dispel them, as well shall see later on.

At Condom, unforeseen difficulties arose in relation to the act of sale of Piétat and delayed the foundation of the convent. The building had been ceded for the price of 20,000 francs, guaranteed to the seller by titles bearing 1,000 interest. The first six annuities were abandoned to the buyer, as compensation for the necessary repairs. The sale was made to

Mlle de Lachapelle in her quality as religious, with a clause of revertibility obliging the Daughters of Mary in case they abandoned the work, to give it back to the seller.

Father Chaminade made the objections which follow.

279 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, March 30, 1824

Rev. and dear Confrère: I have just received Father Lacoste's answer. His opinion is always the opposite of ours and that of the Prefect of Lot-et-Garonne, whose counsels in affairs of administration I esteem a great deal and who has always seemed to me to be very interested in the Institute of Mary. I am having this letter from Father Lacoste copied for you, because it isn't clear to me that he sent a copy. With it we shall more speedily come to the conclusion of this affair, for if the first step is badly taken, we shall be paying the penalty all along the line.

I admit to you, Rev. Father, that I have always had a great aversion for the revertibility clause that the Administrative Commission's resolution contains. So as not to delay its execution, and also because you told me that the resolution had already been sent for governmental sanction, I said nothing about this feeling of aversion, but I admit to you that it continues unchanged. Doesn't this clause of revertibility in fact (although it is not the intention of the Commission) throw a kind of defiance, or at least a suspicion, on the stability of the Daughters of Mary? And does it not discourage the Institute from taking both measures to augment the structures on the property according to the blessings it pleases God to give to the labors of the sisters? Will it not always be said: *Sic vos non vobis nidificatis, aves?* Won't this clause always supply grounds for ill will and complaints against the Institution? It is even possible that the more god this Institution does, the more the complaints will increase! Have not the men's sodalities in Agen been attacked precisely because they have nearly emptied the cafes, the gaming rooms, and the dance halls and because some young ladies complained that they could no longer find dancing partners? Thus is the mystery of iniquity suddenly unmasked. So far, all establishments of the Institute, whether of men or women, have been undertaken in buildings belonging personally to members of the Institute, and it is not without very good reasons that we are acting this way.

The Administrative Commission of the Hospital of Condom, which is very well intentioned, wishes to assure the greater good of the city in this way. However, you can make the observation that the Institute is very far from building only to destroy later and that, if we were ever to abandon the Piétat, we would prefer to lose money rather than sell it to someone who sought to destroy it? When I say the Institute, I mean every one of its members, even those scattered all over. If the commission still has the least concern about all this, I am prepared to sign a contract obliging us to act in the way I have said.

If the revertibility clause is suppressed, no doubt it will be necessary to send a new resolution to the Prefect of Gers so that he may again authorize the sale, but I promise that we shall insist on this authorization and that the act of sale will be allowed immediately. At the same time, the Prefect of Gers could be asked to designate the notary to give this permission, since it seems from Father Lacoste's letters that this formality is required.

I also promise that the six years time span will be counted from the date of the Commission's resolution of the Prefect's authorization so that these new delays may not seem to harm the hospital.

Rev. Father, pardon this letter's length when I have so many reasons for being brief. These reflections, sent to M. de Lachapelle and to several others of the commission, might I dare hope, cause all members to reconsider this clause and perhaps to annul it. Your influence, and your deep seated love for the good will lend weight to my position. Zeal and patience!

I am with respectful attachment, Rev. Father and Confrère, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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280 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, April 5, 1824

Rev. and Respectable Confrère: I have the honor of responding to your letter of March 30, which seems to have crossed my answer to your preceding one in transit. In the same mail, I received a letter from Mlle de Lachapelle in which, among other things, she tells me that Father Lacoste told her about the insurance policy you sent him. She said she finds it very burdensome for the sisters.

You may perhaps have learned from Mme Belloc that they all say: 1) That there must not be any mention of Mlle de Lachapelle as a religious. As far as the acquisition of the house is concerned, she must remain a private person who wants, with the help of friends, to direct free schools; 2) We want to be free to pay the sum of 20,000 francs when we are able to do so; 3) We want to be free to use the six years of interest accorded for repairs without giving any account of it and without supervision, according to the needs of the Institute. Undoubtedly this sum will not suffice to improve the work within this time span; 4) We want to be free to sell all the other effects that form the title portion to provide money for making repairs.

I have just copied Mlle de Lachapelle's letter, Reverend Father. In general, her observations are similar to the first ones I had the honor of making to you, that is to say, that the acquisition should be made in her private name, with her father as security. We would like to have the liberty of paying the 20,000 francs, without making an express condition to that effect, in the even that it should prove displeasing. In the long run, this condition might have an advantage for the administration of the hospital. I hope we will not

have to account for the 6,000 francs used for repairs, because a part can be used provisionally on building projects according to the particular needs of the Institute, saving the rest for the most necessary repairs on the building as a whole. Besides these repairs are already judged to cost up to the sum of 6,000 francs.

The administrative offices seem to have confidence in these ladies, and they have good reason to. Why then put an additional burden on this act of sale? Why not sell to Mlle de Lachapelle, as one would make any other sale, pure and simple? . . .

I come now to the second portion of your letter, which presents real difficulties. 1) Spiritual needs. If our good sisters were to be deprived of spiritual aid, if despite your help or whatever might be given by the Archbishop of Auch, they found themselves deprived of the Mass, I don't see how the establishment could be formed until this great need can be provided for.

I have no priest available to send; and even if I had, I could not send him, according to our custom. Our priests, as a matter of custom, are to live in community and not in isolation as would a simple chaplain. This could not happen unless some establishment of men is formed, e.g., a college, a little seminary or primary school of the brothers. I have in mind sending a priest to Agen for the confessions of the school children, but he will live in community with the brothers if my project works out as I see it now.

2) Temporal needs. I noted these essential matters to Mme Belloc when I sent her to Condom. Her detailed answer was satisfactory. I can return to these things and see if they are in the same condition as when she left. I thank you for the wise remarks that you had the kindness to make to me. Mlle de Lachapelle says much the same thing but in greater detail.

All things considered, it seems that we can make a beginning soon if 1) the administrators have enough confidence to grant an act of sale pure and simple to Mlle de Lachapelle in her private name; 2) you or some priest of the city with the faculty of binating under the authority of the Archbishop can serve them as chaplain until simpler arrangements can be made; 3) the ladies who want to lodge there and pay rent have not changed. The boarding pupils will bring in some resources once they begin to arrive and we are ready to receive them.

I am with sincere and respectful devotedness, my Reverend Confrère, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The correspondence with Saint Remy continued, though hindered by the distance involved. Two weeks were required for the exchange of letters, and often the letters would cross each other on the way, still further complicating the difficulties.

281 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 5, 1824

My dear son, however disagreeable the news you have for me, never hesitate out of fear of causing me pain.

I received your last letter dated March 26. I have also heard of one you wrote Brother Auguste. When the letter arrives, you will have received another of my letters, dated March 28, which left only on the morning of the thirtieth. To this was joined an unsealed letter for Brother David with an obedience for him. In the same one I made mention of a procuration in your name. It is only today that I can send it to you in due form. I am joining to it a copy of the letter that I wrote on the thirtieth to Father Caillet in Ribeauvillé. You will give it to him on his return to Saint Remy. You may read it and see for yourself what prudence and discretion you have to use with Brother David.

I am amazed that Father Caillet told you I had advised him not to bother about discretion in dealing with Brother David. That is not even according to my usual way, as you know first hand. It is true, there must be no sign of weakness. But the necessary strength, firmness, constancy must be without prejudice to discretion, gentle hints, etc. Brother David has all the more need to be handled with discretion, because as a result of his unsettled head, he is far from being in a condition to see things as they are. Doesn't he want to give up Saint Remy even without having notified me? Didn't he send on his personal effect to Paris? His belongings were actually on the way when he received a letter from me, which told him of my disapproval of his rash conduct. I was far from condemning the trip to Paris itself, since, more than six months ago, I was ceaselessly recommending it to him; but I was against it at this time, on account of the way he was undertaking it and the cause of his doing it.

I had not lost sight of the fact that he was so disposed to go to Paris on the one hand and that, on the other, he had given up all hope of succeeding at Saint Remy. To save the situation and to save the reputation he enjoys in the country, I wrote him (I was sending other letters too, especially to Besançon) that I was giving him an assignment in Paris, which obliged me to send someone else to Saint Remy, presumably Father Caillet. Before definitively settling the choice on the latter, I waited for answers from everyone. I examined; I consulted. Everything seemed favorable to my design. Even Brother David's answer was not against it. I announced Father Caillet's departure to everyone. He was to stop a week in Paris and treat of very difficult matters with much prudence, as well as contact several highly recommended persons whose confidence he was expected to win. His stay in Besançon left only good impressions, as far as I could make out. How is it that upon arriving at Saint Remy, he would become totally different from his continued manner in Bordeaux, from what he has been in Paris and in Besançon? Father Caillet does not enjoy great intellectual gifts, nor does he have any great knowledge of the world; but he is a true

religious, full of the spirit of faith and of zeal. It seemed the right thing to do to send him to replace Brother David.

If possible, make Brother David understand that it is not because of a matter of preference that I have sent Father Caillet, but rather because Brother David despaired of the establishment of Saint Remy to the point of wanting to abandon it. Tell him I had only Father Caillet to send. Tell him Father Caillet possesses what is really necessary to give the first signs of life to this establishment, except the authority to send those whom providence will deign to put at my disposition. If Father Caillet's obedience states that I am giving him full powers over both persons and affairs of all kinds and of every degree of accomplishment, does this concern Brother David? I really presumed and continue to presume that he has left for Paris. In truth, what do all the delays mean? What do they say to a religious who fears God, who has made a total abnegation of himself? If father Caillet did not know how to answer Brother David's sophisms at their first meeting, should he not have charitably raised the issue again? Couldn't Brother David see that Father Caillet was doing no more than carrying out orders that had been given to him and that nothing of his own had been introduced into this mission?

Make use of these reflections, my dear son, with all suitable prudence and discretion. Confer with Father Bardenet about them. Read him this letter wholly or in part. He will know better than anyone how to appease Brother David's excited imagination and how to convince him that we seek only to conduct ourselves according to the principles of Christian simplicity, of uprightness, and of charity.

As a result of Brother David's delays, conditions seem to have changed in the capital. Besides, the prejudices he seems to have toward me have obliged me to send him an obedience to return to Bordeaux. There he will have occasion to see that I have in no way changed in his regard and that I pity him much more than I blame him. I shall do what I can for our affairs in Paris. In fact, they might change of themselves. I might even go there myself.

With all the discretion that I urge upon you, take care that there be no hesitation in carrying out my orders and that Father Caillet be really free in the fulfillment of his mission, as I would be myself if it were possible for me to be there. I hope that the spirit of God will not permit him to do anything imprudent. Furthermore, both of you have a good counselor in Father Bardenet. You also have such in Besançon. I presume that Brother David has been to Vesoul to consult the Prefect of the Department. Father Bardenet might be able to go and see him and have a little conversation with him. In everything that is done, Brother David should be compromised as little as possible. If he had not compromised himself, he could never have been compromised at all.

In the midst of all the troubles this establishment is causing me, I have a secret hope that there will be as much success for the glory of God and the good of religion as there have been causes for chagrin and worry. It is already a great consolation to see that

you are twenty-four and soon to be twenty-seven, hardened to all sorts of pains and privations.[1] Nothing, my dear son, will be lost before God. I can well imagine that Father Bardenet sees things the same way. Take courage, the moment of the final solution is no longer far distant. Continue to take your precautions so that none of this may become known in the community.

Receive for yourself and all my dear children of Saint Remy the blessing of the father whom God has given you upon this earth and who, all unworthy as he is, participates in the love which the heavenly Father has for you.

William Joseph Chaminade

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282 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 13, 1824

It would be difficult for me, my dear son, to tell you how much I share in your affliction. Your position is truly sad. The good God has wanted to reserve this new trial for you before the happy solution we are awaiting from his goodness and mercy. No doubt the apostles had great success in fulfilling the mission that our Lord had given them, but what sorrow, what labors, what privations, what persecutions they had to undergo! The greater the real good which religious institutions are called upon to do, the more they have to undergo contradictions. The spirit of the good God sometimes communicated these ideas to you, and he has inspired you with corresponding sentiments. Why then, my dear son, do you allow yourself to be cast down?

At the same moment I received your last letter of April 2, I also received one from Father Caillet dated April 2, but from Porrentruy. Things are very satisfactory. I imagine he has also written you. It is only in this lasts letter that he tells me about the arrangements for the retreat of the sixty teachers of the department of the Doubs. It is to start on April 27, as Father Bardenet must have told you.

Here are the details that Father Caillet adds:

> That lessons in perfecting the method of teaching between the exercises of the retreat would be given; that it would last two weeks; that a thousand francs for food would be paid us and another thousand would be given as encouragement for the

[1] The number of postulants, in the midst of this fervent community, had not ceased to increase, and from the beginning of the year, Father Chaminade had permitted Brother Rothéa to open there a regular novitiate.

work of the seminary of school teachers, and scholarships for the best pupils. Father Bardenet, who is still very devoted to us, took it upon himself to procure all the equipment; beds, tables, chairs, etc. I remarked to Brother Clouzet that he had the kindness to prepare himself, with Brother Gaussens, to give the lessons and to have an understanding with Father Bardenet about everything. He must also have asked Father Rothéa to prepare himself to help in preparing these instructions and meditations. I shall try to be there myself, to help in preparing these school teachers during the first week, at the major exercises of the retreat. The Missionaries of Beaupré,[1] will give the last eight days only. That way, the first eight days will be specially devoted to the work of improving the method of teaching and the last eight more particularly given over to spiritual exercises.

Although Father Caillet is not always very clear, especially when he desires the use of the two sums of a thousand francs each, this work must nevertheless be zealously taken up. First, there is an absolute need of it. Also, there are many supporters of this work who will come to the aid of the establishments now. The Marast property is currently being appropriated for the support of this kind of seminary or work. And we must not forget the great good that may result for the department of the Doubs and the neighboring departments, or at least for Haute-Saône. I have a secret confidence that this work will be realized throughout all France. Work, then, my dear son, with courage and with prudence. Of course, feed the teachers simply but also suitably, for there is such a thing as real necessity.

In buying from the little village dealers, who are not necessarily the third ones in line in handling goods, you would have a far greater expense. Consequently, Father Rothéa is writing to his brother Xavier to have him open an account for you. You can then buy more provisions wholesale. I told Father Rothéa to give you a little resume of what he is writing to his brother. You will find it included here.

Let us come back to Brother David. I take it for granted that you know how to answer all his complaints and reproaches, especially what comes to the point of ingratitude. What could I do for him that I did not do? To be sure, he had a substitute at Saint Remy and a Swiss at that. But, 1. Is it not Brother David himself that provoked this change by leaving for Paris on his own accord and despairing of success at Saint Remy? Could I have replaced him in a more honorable manner than by giving him a beautiful assignment in Paris and making it known to everyone that I had great need of sending him to the capital? 2. If the substitute is Swiss and hasn't the talents he himself has, of what importance are his birth and the place he comes from if he is a man full of faith, if he has right judgment, if he is gifted with a supple and firm character for the execution of all the orders of obedience? Between the two of us, I must say that I cannot reproach myself for having sent Father Caillet. It is evident, by all that he has already done, that he is directed by the spirit of God

[1] Name of the residence of the Missionaries of Besançon.

and that he has already inspired life and interest wherever he went. On the other hand, it is the good God who has given him to me for this assignment. He has not given me any other.

By the obedience I gave Father Caillet, I am not proving that I have sent to Saint Remy men of no capacity at all for culture, for the arts, for teaching, etc. I wanted to clothe him with all powers necessary for his mission, even though the group was made up of the most learned and spiritual men. I made this assignment known here both before and after his departure to men of many different kinds of attainment. All were edified by it—no one found my grant of authority excessive. On arriving in Besançon, Father Caillet made it known to the Archbishop, who read it through and was perfectly satisfied. How then does this obedience formally go, even in the slightest degree, against the article of the constitutions that refers to the preservation of a good reputation? I would not have made so much of this if it had not seemed to make such an impression on you.

Nevertheless, my dear son, I do not intend to blame Brother David. I pity him with all my heart. It is easy to see his head is in a kind of delirium. Can it not be presumed that sometimes this very delirium has the intention of rousing and upsetting you and of forming a sort of party spirit? Give him all the care that fraternal charity may suggest or require, but keep in mind that he no longer has any kind of authority as long as he stays in Saint Remy. If it becomes necessary to make his situation known to any one of your brothers, you will do it with all suitable prudence and discretion. If he is still in Saint Remy when the teachers assemble for the retreat, you will have to take renewed precautions to prevent their coming into contact with him. At the same time, there should be no evidence that any such precaution is being taken, as much as this is possible. If anyone asks questions, you say, for example, that he is sick and that his malady does not permit him to be visited. And you insist that he not be spoken to about affairs, etc.

Father Lacoste, who has some understanding of his mental condition, wants to have him in his house. He thinks he might be able to bring him back to normal health. If he comes to Bordeaux, it is possible that I shall consider this proposition. How is it possible that Brother David can so disregard my sentiment of esteem and my very sincere friendship towards him? Have these ever changed for more than twenty years? But, where is one to find reason when the imagination is sorely wounded? I wanted to write still more to him, as also to Father Caillet by this mail, but it is impossible. Easter adds much to other matters that are already too many times multiplied.[1]

May the Lord deign to clothe you with zeal, with strength and prudence! Embrace for me all my dear children of Saint Remy, as they are the object of a great solicitude for me. Embrace Brother David also for me, if you can find him in a mood suitable for these tokens of friendship and of tenderness that have never changed in my heart.

[1] Allusion is here made to confessions at the Madeleine at the time of Easter. This day happened to be Tuesday of Holy Week.

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The horizon becomes clear in the Letter of April 21.

283 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 21, 1824

I was trembling, my dear son, when I opened your letter of April 13. I blessed the Savior for the good disposition Brother David showed in receiving my letter and in his obedience. I have made known his imminent arrival at the Rue des Menuts and elsewhere. If he keeps his promise, he should be leaving as I write this. . . . I am writing Father Caillet about the retreat—I told you about this in my last letter.

I wished to speak to Father Caillet about the special need to procure sufficient funds for the establishment at Saint Remy whether to pay off the debts entirely, secure clothing, linen, furniture or food or make urgent repairs, etc. As is said in his obedience, the good God will provide everything he has destined for you, and we should not want anything more. Father Caillet has only to do what is necessary and suitable before God and before men as we said so often in my room before his departure. He has much to do in as short a time as possible.

I will try to write Dubarry by the next courier. I'm sorry to hear about Rose, the carpenter.[2] I pray you, tell Father Caillet not to admit M. . . [3] to perpetual vows: it would be a great deal, it seems to me, to allow him to renew his vows for a year.

I just received a long letter from Father Caillet, dated the thirteenth of this month from Strasbourg. Perusing it has used up the little time remaining. I will respond some other time. There is little pressing for the moment.

Everything is going well at the Madeleine, at Saint Laurent, and the Rue des Menuts, as usual.

With a very good heart, my dear son, I extend my paternal blessing to the entire community. Give Father Bardenet the most affectionate greetings from me. I am very sincerely devoted to him.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[2] A postulant who had left.
[3] The name has disappeared from the original

284 – TO FATHER CAILLET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 21, 1824

My dear son, I have received your last two letters, the one from Porrentruy dated April second and the other from Landser, dated the ninth.

As soon as I received the April second letter, I wrote Brother Clouzet to encourage him with the school teachers' retreat. He seemed a bit disconcerted and especially found the sum of 1,000 francs for food quite insufficient. He was surprised that you had not written anything to him directly. . . .

I have just reread what you wrote about the affair at Marast. The uniting of this property with the Saint Remy estate is quite well seen. But it is a pity that the buildings and the church cannot be utilized according to the first information which Brother David gave me. That seems to me to have grave consequences. I don't recall at all the teacher training school you say we talked about in my room. A primary boarding school and a boarding school for Latin studies are very likely to fit in at Saint Remy. Our arrangements will be completed little by little and in proportion as we can secure students and teachers. It is important, my dear son, that as we shape these works, we don't start out without any faulty or incoherent principle. We certainly may develop and perfect them but without changing their nature.

I still have nothing to answer you concerning the project of the seminary of Saint Claude.

For the third time, I am rereading your letter from Landser with its news about the persecutions of the protestants against the Catholics.[1] I have heard of other outbursts, no less alarming, from the same Canton, which I believe have been made public in the press. The contrary seems to be the case with governments outside of Switzerland, where Catholics seem to be favored more and more.

Let the former Ursuline sister write if she really believes the Lord is calling her to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. Have her write with sufficient detail so as to inform me completely, in view of a final decision.

The Daughters of Mary have, and should continue to have, a real devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. You know that they neither begin nor conclude an exercise without invoking this adorable heart, and that from time to time, efforts are made to increase this devotion by exhortations and meditations. They celebrate the feast in a very special manner, and I would be the first to help them in this. However, as far as the ordinary practices are concerned, it would not be suitable to make any changes.

[1] Doubtless in the Canton de Berne, from which Father Caillet had come.

I very much approve, my dear son, all the projects for good that you have in mind for your country. When we are strong enough to undertake them and to have the government intervene, we will really have to start working there. We may perhaps not be so far removed from the time when we can make the attempt. Even without the intervention of the government, might we not realize our dream by forming a diocesan seminary?

I shall not say anything about your trip to Porrentruy,[1] but I must express my surprise at the length of your stay at Landser,[2] where one day seemed more than enough for the transaction of the business you had. After all, you are pressed by so many other things which are the more direct object of your mission.

Regarding the young priest confided to Father Juif,[3] if as you say, he resembles Father Romain only in science, we could get along, presuming of course he is not like him in manners or in imagination. It would not be very difficult to make the Archbishop of Strasbourg understand what we are able to do without diminishing the consideration proper to the Institute.

Concerning the twelve-year-old child from Porrentruy, for whose tuition his uncle would pay 400 francs, nothing would stand in the way of taking him at Saint Remy first. If he is found to be well disposed for studies and for piety, if he is of excellent character, then we could have him come to Bordeaux, etc.

About the little fifteen or sixteen-year-old niece. Why could we not wait until the formation of an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in that region? *Non est periculum in mora*.

The illegitimacy of a subject would not be an absolute cause for exclusion, if the subject would otherwise make up for this defect by outstanding qualities.

I have answered, I believe, the questions in your last two letters. I am returning to the long letter written in Vesoul at the time of your departure from Saint Remy. You spoke about Father Breuillot's intention of forming in Besançon the little communities, as it were, within the same establishment for the instruction and education of the deaf and dumb of the two sexes. Joining communities of two different sexes in the same establishment is a very delicate matter. I imagine that the portioning would not be so perfect that inside communications are impossible. The thing in itself, however, might very well be possible. The sisters could learn the sign language from the actual teachers who habitually use it. If necessary, a deaf and dumb young lady could be sent here, as is often done with young people, and in a short time we would succeed in perfecting this type of education and

[1] Native country of Father Caillet.
[2] Little town in Alsace, not far from the Swiss frontier, from whence came the Rothéa brothers. Father Caillet must surely have visited M. Xavier Rothéa, the businessman of the family.
[3] About Father Juif, pastor of Ferrette, see the Letter of May 2, 1826.

instruction. Father Goudelin's[1] advice would be to send a deaf and dumb girl with the sisters. I could also board here at the Deaf-Mute Institute, for some months, the young lady who is headmistress of the school at Langoiran. She has been asking for some time to join the Daughters of Mary. We could easily give her charge of the instruction of the children at Saint Jacques Hospital in Besançon and put two more brothers into the community of deaf-mutes. These would take care of the schools at Saint Jacques Hospital.

I am stopping here. I am going to write a few words to Brother Clouzet and also a few to M. Fleury in Paris, even if I don't know where I am going to find the necessary time.

Imagine, my dear son, all that my heart could say if I had the advantage of embracing you. Place before yourself in the Lord's presence, the counsels that your Good Father would give you for your spiritual conduct if he were close enough to speak with his living voice. He is asking the most abundant blessings for you.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The school teacher's retreat was successful beyond all expectation. But even without knowing all the details, Father Chaminade thought about the extension of the work.

285 – TO FATHER CAILLET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 26, 1824

My dear son, I have just received your letter from Ribeauvillé, dated April 18. I foresee that my own letter is going to be short considering the little time I have before the next mail. I prefer to write you twice rather than delay too much in writing you . . .

I am sending you a letter for Brother Dubarry. You may give it to him after having read it thoroughly, if you think it suitable, or you may wait until after the retreat of the teachers or even until after Brother David's departure, should some new incident or even the retreat itself keep him at Saint Remy. In general, bad affairs should be attended to only one at a time. I leave all to your wisdom and discretion!

For some time I have thought that the establishment at Saint Remy will require your presence for a long time, whether for the establishment itself or for procuring necessary funds and other aids. Since it is you who have provided the rush, Brothers Clouzet and Rothéa would find it difficult to continue in the same manner; wherever they would go, it would mean new faces, new conditions, etc. but a priest who is formerly attached to the Institute is needed in Bordeaux. What then is to be done? Father Rothéa, although he could

[1] See Letter 119.

not replace you here in every way, could at least do something. He desires to be near me for a while, and I believe this would be to his advantage. If you think the same way, you could send him here, but before doing so, you would have to come to an understanding with Father Bardenet so that the establishment is never wanting in spiritual helps. It would be necessary that, whenever you are absent from Saint Remy, Father Bardenet would be present there until your return.

There is no doubt that you will have to make little trips, from time to time, to insure water for the mill. You are very poor, but have no fear. Go to providence with entire confidence and in a true spirit of faith. Encourage and sustain Father Bardenet. If he should put himself in want for the establishment, you understand that he should be the first to receive the help provided by providence.

You ask me for the thousand francs that I had offered for the retreat. A short time after my letter was written, and before you could have received it, I had already received notice that the retreat would take place on the twenty-seventh of the current month and that Father Bardenet had taken charge of all the arrangements. As a result, I immediately disposed of all the funds I could get hold of. However, I do not refuse to add other funds, or at least to try to do so, if this sum is absolutely necessary to you and if you were not able to procure it in spite of all the precautions you took to do so.

Around here people often ask for news about you, and everyone enjoys hearing about what is happening to you. You cannot take too much care to keep me always well informed about how things are going.

You tell me you obtained the exeat for Brother Dominique, Brothers Antoine and Bernard.[1] I suppose you must have received them by mail, before your departure from Strasbourg.

I am now obliged to stop, but I am embracing you with fatherly tenderness.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The difficulties relative to the acquisition of Piétat seem on the point of disappearing, and Father Chaminade solicits authorization fro the foundation from the Archbishop of Auch.

[1] Dominique Weissemburger, Antoine and Bernard Bernhardt, seminarians of the Madeleine.

286 – TO ARCHBISHOP DE MORLHON,
ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH

Bordeaux, April 26, 1824

Your Excellency: I would have had the honor of submitting sooner to Your Excellency the project of an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Condom if I had not met with many difficulties on the way to its execution. Today all these seem to be overcome. If you deign to give your consent and to accord your protection to these good religious, the contract of sale of the former hospital called Piétat will be drawn up. At the same time, I shall take all the precautions necessary to have the little group forming the core of the establishment transferred there.

Your Excellency, I have another favor to ask of you. Through my correspondence with Condom I have learned that Father Lagutère was the only priest the Daughters of Mary could count on for the celebration of Mass. I am taking the liberty of asking you for permission that he may do so. There could be no establishment if the sisters are to be deprived of spiritual helps. You know, Your Excellency, that Father Lagutère is already sixty-four or sixty-five years old, that he extremely dislikes being in charge of a parish, and that he is even not too suited for that kind of work, finding himself troubled by the least difficulty because of the extreme delicacy of his conscience, etc. . . .

I am, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

* * * *

Since the Archbishop had asked for information regarding the projected establishment, Father Chaminade addressed the following letter to him, which is an interesting resume of his thought about the Daughters of Mary.

287 – TO ARCHBISHOP DE MORLHON,
ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH

Bordeaux, May 18, 1824

Your Excellency, A letter written by Your Excellency's order which Father Belloc[1] addressed to me serves me as an answer to the one I had the honor of writing you last April 26.

[1] Vicar General of Auch.

I wanted to receive a small part of your benevolence for the religious house of the Order of Mary which we are planning to start in the city of Condom. This is one of the cities which providence has placed under your apostolic direction. Father Belloc was kind enough to tell me that Your Excellency did not know of any establishments of this order and that it was desirable that I should give you some details on the project I am planning for the said city of Condom. I consider myself very fortunate that you should deign to listen to my explanation. I am sorry only for not having measured up to your desires. I shall try to make up for that, without abusing the authorization that is being granted me.

The Daughters of Mary, as their name indicates, have placed themselves under the special protection of the most holy virgin. They have adopted, in great part, statutes drawn from the Rule of Saint Benedict. The most striking modifications are those that have seemed needed to defend these holy souls from the contagion of the world. It is well enough known that this dangerous contact is never far away from religious institutions, but it threatens them at much closer range, when the religious body business itself partly in teaching. The Daughters of Mary are in this situation everywhere, it is alongside of this world and its needs that they are to work out their sanctification, to lead many others to sanctity, and at the same time, to protect themselves against all the dangers involved.[1]

They are under the direction of a Mother Superior who is aided in her functions by three principal heads having the titles of Mother of Zeal, Mother of Instruction, and Mother of Work.

Silence, recollection, obedience, the bearing of mortifications are part of their ordinary effort. Humility, modesty, abnegation of self, complete renunciation of the world are the virtues which are most recommended to them to attain.[2]

They are, furthermore, to combat everything in the interior of the community that might be an obstacle to progress in these virtues.

They observe a strict enclosure.

The works of each house consist in conducting free schools for the children of their sex who are not in easy circumstances. They are also prepared to conduct separately boarding schools for young ladies of a higher social level. There all the useful and agreeable lessons are given. But the most essential object of this work among these two classes is that the pupils who are to profit by it become seeds of virtue, whether for the world or for religion.[3]

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[1] In these few words, will be noticed, the object proposed to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and to the Society of Mary from the beginning.
[2] In these two paragraphs is summarized the method of the Institute relative to the virtues of preparation and of consummation. See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 864.
[3] The powerful thought of the founder on *the most essential object* of the works of education in the Institute is to be noted.

The Daughters of Mary also instruct in sodalities, on certain days, various groups of their sex whom the spirit of religion may bring together.

That is, as far as I can see, a summary of all that the Daughters of Mary propose to themselves in their various establishments.

They have produced salutary fruits in the city of Agen an in Tonnein-sur-Garonne, which happens to be close the city of Condom.

Having become their instructor and their immediate superior by the will and order of providence, I do what I can to develop among them everywhere the same spirit and to maintain them in the observance of the rule, under the authority of the Ordinary.

The same providence which has thus arranged things has kindly disposed of circumstances, so as to bring about the foundation of a new house in this Institute in the city of Condom. While this matter is being taken care of, it is my duty to secure for it the approbation of the Archbishop following the blessings which your Excellency will deign to bestow.

It seemed to me that the local authorities as well as the more esteemed families, and I might say, the entire population of this region would welcome this establishment with genuine and profound satisfaction. Even the King will not refuse it the necessary authorization.

There now remains for me nothing more than to place at Your Excellency's feet the homage of my respect and veneration. I remain your very humble an obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I have just heard that Your Excellency has deigned to permit Father Lagutère to say Mass for our religious. Thus one difficulty is out of the way. It was not the least.

* * * *

In the letter just read, the Archbishop of Auch gave the following answer:

I am very well satisfied, Reverend Father, with the report you have given me of the order of the Daughters of Mary. Very willingly I grant you my benevolence for the establishment you desire to found in the city of Condom. This enterprise appears very praiseworthy and cannot but turn to the good of religion and society. The guarantee of this is to be found in the fruits that these Daughters of Mary have already produced in different cities. This is sufficient to assure them my constant protection.

I have the honor of being etc. . . .

* * * *

The following letter gives us the first news about the retreat for school teachers. The details and the circular letter of the Inspector of the Academy mentioned by Father Chaminade may be read in the Apôtre de Marie XVI, p. 137.

288 – TO FATHER CAILLET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 17, 1824

Well, my dear son, there has been a long period of silence on your part as well as on my own. I received your last letter from Saint Remy on April 28 and the one from Colmar on April 24.

Brother David arrived, feeling well, on the afternoon of May 1. He visited me in the evening in the sacristy. He had been traveling twelve days—three at Vesoul, three in Paris, and six in the coaches. He stopped in Paris, for he was short of money. He borrowed some, but he did not tell me how much and from whom. Neither did I ask him about it. You tell me that Father Bardenet and Brother Clouzet think that Brother David brought with him 1600 to 2000 francs. On what basis is this reckoning being made, and how much did he have to borrow to continue his journey? Since his arrival, we get to see each other every day. He is feeling well and is calm, so we talk business. He has again taken me as his confessor. We speak little enough about Saint Remy. Some days after his arrival, I asked him for notes and papers relating to Saint Remy. I am sending you by Brother Romain a copy of the notes he gave me. He had no papers at all, because he left them all with Brother Clouzet. Before departing, he gave Brother Clouzet some notes and all the papers relating to the establishment. See if everything is in order. Compare my notes with Brother Clouzet's, in such a way that I may be up-to-date on everything, that I may see and understand as though I were actually present.

See also if all the old titles of the château and of the domain are in a safe and dry place. Brother David wrote me five or six months ago, more or less, that our young brothers were squandering these titles. I immediately wrote that they should be transferred to one place and kept under lock and key. Was this done?

Brother Clouzet wrote me during the retreat given at Saint Remy to the school teachers, and he tells me that the eight-day retreat was coming off perfectly. I hope that the end results will be as good. You will have to give me a very detailed account of the entire retreat, of the preparations by the teachers, by the community, by the missionaries, and by Father Bardenet. I am also interested in the fruits of the retreat on the spiritual life as well as on the improvement of teaching. This last point must be very detailed. I take it for

granted that you took notes about each of the fifty-five teachers who took part in the retreat. These notes must be carefully kept along with the registry.

I read the circular letter of the Inspector of the Academy of Besançon attentively. It shows a good attitude throughout. I think you must have given him information about the success of the retreat, etc. . . .

I cannot yet make any observation about this important establishment, for I need new information. Perhaps this is already on the way. You must still make a little more progress in your relationship with the Academy Inspector and the Prefect before we can be completely satisfied with this first attempt.

I will say the same thing with regard to what we call the small training school for teachers. Three months are completely insufficient to train them, if, in fact, there were none who did not stay longer. You would never get to the point of instilling regularity in these young men. The very possibility of getting out at the end of three months would cause them to be lacking in submission with little interest in learning. The twenty-five francs they would pay each month would, moreover, be very insufficient, just as must have been the francs given each day of the retreat by each school teacher. Nevertheless, you have done well not to create any difficulty. I am talking about it now so that you will take your time as regards the Inspector of the Academy and the Prefect.

These retreats for the school teachers, my dear son, are an excellent work as is the small training school for the young men who want to devote themselves to teaching. I had understood that all the teachers of the Department of the Doubs would present themselves each year for the retreat, one-fourth of them at a time, or one hundred twenty-five. That would not be too many, but they would all have to present themselves within two years. If everything is settled once and for all concerning the teachers of the Department of the Doubs, there will be few difficulties in extending invitations to teachers in the Department of the Haute-Saône. There are six hundred teachers in the latter.

Brother Clouzet remarked to me that several of the retreatants asked to enter the Institute. You know that I had really hoped that a certain number would actually take this step. What efficient means we have, my dear son, in this work of purifying even before our death a great portion of the present generation of French people! But much wisdom and firmness are necessary.

You are worried about money matters. I think I said in my last letter that providence would come to your assistance, and I am firmly convinced that it will, provided you conduct yourself with wisdom and in a spirit of faith. After all, is this not the work of God? For my part, I want to work and I want you to work only at what can really be called works of God. Do you remember the saying that is, so to say, put in the mouth of providence: *Help yourself and I shall help you!* When your presence is no longer strictly needed at Saint

Remy, you will have to go in search of resources, as I told you in my last letter or in the preceding one.

Although I am often at a loss to get my hands even on fifty francs, I thought I ought to profit by the chance of buying a large building and to transfer to it the boarding school on Rue des Menuts. It is a matter of more than a hundred thousand francs,[1] and it is providence, and only providence that allowed me to find without delay a way of borrowing all I needed to pay the whole thing in cash.

Brother Romain is determined to leave on the morning of the twentieth. I believe this is imprudent, even if he apparently has a good excuse in the weakening of his head and stomach. Several times I have offered him a chance to come to the Madeleine with me, to recover his health if possible. He did not think he should. Two causes seem to me to be the basis of his leaving. The first is the one you point out to me on the loose slip of paper enclosed in your last letter. The second, more serious, is that he is not considered capable of giving sustained instructions—I wanted him to limit himself to catechism explanations and then to be sent to Agen . . . Nevertheless, he has never alleged these two reasons—he speaks only of his health. You will see if anything can be done for him at Saint Remy.[1]

I am ending here so that this letter may leave with the next mail. I prefer to mail it than to send it by Brother Romain. But I will give him the notes mentioned above.

Take heart, instruct and fortify our youth. Take good care of your health. Without scruple, take all the nourishment you need for sustaining yourself in your labors. Also take sufficient rest. Long vigils would cause you to be ill-fitted for prayer. And you have great need of prayer, considering all the worries you have to bother about.

Try to send me Father Rothéa, if you haven't done so yet.

Be the interpreter of all my sentiments among all my children. I can assure you they are all very dear to me. Embrace them all for me, *corde et animo*. I am making special mention of Brother Clouzet and Brother Gaussens.

Receive, here, my dear son, my paternal blessing.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Including accessory expenses.

[1] Bro. Romain, as will be seen in Letter 292, did not carry out his idea. He remained faithful to his vocation, served as secretary to the Good Father from 1840 until 1844 and died in Cordes in 1853.

The preceding letter makes allusion to the acquisition of the Razac House on Rue du Mirail, Bordeaux, where Brother Auguste's boarding school was to be transferred because it had outgrown its present quarters. To this purpose, the Baron de Razac wrote the following to Brother Auguste on April 23.

I have spoken to Rev. Father Chaminade with a frankness and a confidence that I thought worthy of his character. If he gets to the point of thinking it proper to accept my offer, may God be blessed! If not, may he still be blessed and for all time, and all be accomplished for his greater glory! I had received the counsel, several times repeated, to hold to a hundred thousand francs as the price of my house. I am limiting myself to eighty thousand francs, wanting to participate in the blessings which this excellent work will bring. I then ask that my family and I be strongly recommended to the prayers of those who will live there and not that I be considered as benefactor but rather as friend.

M. de Razac later consented to another lowering of the price, but it was the occasion of a misunderstanding, which the following letters refer to.

289 – TO THE BARON DE RAZAC, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, May 11, 1824

Dear Sir: I shall be at your disposal between nine and ten this morning. I believe you are acting wisely in agreeing to the second lowering of the price of the house. The total price will then be eighty-five thousand francs. You will receive eighty thousand in cash, the rest in ten years. We shall possibly try to free ourselves sooner, little by little, a minimum of ten thousand francs.

I am going to the altar. I shall not forget you. I shall recommend the matter we are concluding to the Lord. We are seeking, each one of us in his own way, only the interests of his glory. May he be blessed forever.

William Joseph Chaminade

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290 – TO THE BARON DE RAZAC, BORDEAUX,

Bordeaux, May 11, 1824

Dear Sir: It is true that you do not mention the value of the reduction that you want to make, but was it not clearly indicated, both by our differences of opinion and by the designation of the first reduction, which you call the suppression of ten thousand francs? After the holy sacrifice of the Mass, I sent your letter and a copy of my answer to those who take the greatest interest in this operation. All have read and understood what I had read

and understood, and no one even thought of an intervention of the devil. I was so far from imagining it that I saw only a stroke of wisdom in this second reduction or suppression of five thousand francs.

Whatever the case may be, dear sir, I shall actually sign whatever you want me to sign. I have said that the matter is practically ended, for I have never liked backtracking on anything. Nevertheless, I still hope you will make the reduction requested or at least that of sharing the difference, for the fair motives I have suggested and actually on the natural meaning of your letter.

I am waiting for you, dear sir, at my house. Or I shall go wherever you wish to conclude our transaction.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The act of acquisition was concluded the next day May 12, by Father Chaminade, for the price of ninety-thousand francs. The transfer of Brother Auguste's boarding school now creates Institution Sainte Marie. However, it actually took place only in 1825. On this first educational establishment of the Society of Mary, see the Apôtre de Marie XVII, p. 239.

291 – TO MOTHER LOUISE GONZAGUE,
NOVICE MISTRESS, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 21, 1824

My dear daughter: I am enclosing a letter for Sister Trinity. I am in no way oppose to the reception of the postulant Sister Victoire. You tell me she has been seeking admission for eight months. And why such a long postulate? Doubtless because her conduct did not easily suggest she would become a true Daughter of Mary. But are you really following out our principles? 1. Girls who have been in the service of anyone or such as are of low birth or who have had a childhood without education must not be received. 2. There may be exceptions to this rule, and, in consequence, a dispensation may be obtained, but only when the girls join great virtue to some extraordinary quality. It is the excellence of their piety and their more than ordinary natural qualities which must be for us the signs of their vocation, but it is evident that with such indications they would not remain postulants for any length of time. If we content ourselves with mediocre virtue, these girls will always be a problem, always capricious, with little strength to repress the sallies of their nature that have never been subdued by education, etc. . . .

There is nothing really pressing in Agen, so I think it more prudent to postpone my trip there until Pentecost—it will be more useful then. If the establishment in Bordeaux could more promptly make up its mind, we would take steps to have the good Mother come

to sign the contract, etc. . . . I shall bring her back. Perhaps we could come back together at the head of the group, etc. . . . Let us follow the order of providence in peace, and all will go well.

It seems that one of our young priests, Father Lalanne, has fallen into a state of exhaustion, as serious as the good Mother's, and this from overwork.

It is very right to take care of Father Larribeau.[1] Tell Mother Saint Vincent to do what she told me for him. He may be permitted to enter the enclosure to see the Good Mother, and even all his former daughters, especially Sister of the Blessed Sacrament. Let the good Mother use her discretionary power to this effect without any inconvenience every time it is useful either for herself or for the community, and I hope this will be for the entire time that he stays in Agen.

Also tell Mother Saint Vincent to confide in Father Mouran and to follow his counsels. If Marie[2] has not answered, it is more likely the fault of his secretary than hers. . . . Marie will be glad to receive the beans and to follow her directions in cooking them.

May the Lord, my dear daughter, grant you his peace and his blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade

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More complete and more consoling news came about the retreat of Saint Remy. Immediately Father Chaminade returned to his plans and made them more precise. In his letter, the Founder's competence in matters of temporal administration will be noticed.

TO FATHER CAILLET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 29, 1824

My dear son: Yesterday I dictated quite a long letter to my secretary. I was very tired and was often interrupted. After some reflection, I took the copy and without rereading what had been written, I took up my own pen.

Your last letter of the thirteenth consoled me, especially the details you gave me about the retreat at Saint Remy and the happy fruits it has produced. I think you have also given an account of them to the Reverend Rector and the Reverend Inspector. I would have

[1] The former director of Mother de Trenquelléon and of her association.
[2] Marie Dubourg, housekeeper of Father Chaminade. See Letter 241.

been pleased to know that you had told all the retreatants that you intended to write to the Rector about the great satisfaction they have given you, etc. . . . You may know at present everything that is needed for such retreats, how the teachers are to be treated, what the costs of food will probably be . . . what must be taken into consideration with regard to the Reverend Missionaries of Besançon, what particular occasions or circumstances seem to have assured the success of the retreat or was it simply the general effect?

I read with pleasure that you were all going to spend the recreation periods with the retreatants. Each one of you four—you, Brother Rothéa, Brother Clouzet, and Brother Gaussens—could write up your own history of the retreat, according to how it has affected you, bringing out any gaps in the program you may have noted, etc. It is thus that experience is acquired and thus that the Missionaries of France have acted from the start, each mission calling for an immense copy book for the detailed report. . . .

I shall not yet say anything about the school for teachers. Seventy-five francs is sufficient for three months. Three months is also sufficient for training this kind of teacher in what concerns both teaching skills and virtue. There are many other kinds of inconvenience which you will soon recognize, but go ahead anyway. Try for the best!

These works are excellent in themselves, but I hope we can improve on them and succeed in coming to an understanding with the Academy or with the Prefecture about this. I had always understood that all the teachers would make the retreat each year only one-fourth or one-fifth at one time, as I thought Brother David had suggested. It seems to me all of them should make the retreat at least once every two years.

Why, my dear son, could we not procure the same advantage for the Department of the Haute-Saône? I am told there are six hundred teachers there. It is the same academy, the same archdiocese, the same mission. The prefecture is good and well intentioned. But what about the resources? At least the thousand francs?[1] Well, my dear son, let us move forward! Procure suitable resources for yourself either through the charity of the faithful or through prudent loans. I hope I can give you—or rather give the establishment of Saint Remy—much more than a thousand and two thousand francs. I have almost decided to accept the schools of Colmar and the Pilgrimage of the Trois-Epis.[1] These two establishments will come, and perhaps strongly, to the assistance of the one in Saint Remy. And since the property at Marast is to be joined to Saint Remy, why shouldn't the cession and the resultant joy begin right away, as long as we fulfill our obligations—of course, subject to the necessary government approval at the proper time? I don't see why this foundation should be delayed. When we discussed it, there was no difficulty other than sending in my procuration, which I immediately did.

[1] See Letters 275 and 285.
[1] In Alsace, above Colmar. See the end of the letter.

I believe as you do, my dear son, that the domain of Saint Remy is generally made up of rather poor soil, the kind usually classified as third grade, and is hardly worthy cultivating. We must find out, with the help of people who understand such matters, which parts can be cultivated with profit and leave things at that. In this way, you will have but minor expenses for the purchase of farming tools.

Concerning cattle, you will have little to add to what Father Bardenet offered you. You can surely see, by Brother David's letters, the idea he wanted to give me about this matter. The same with regard to his verbal explanations. There was no question of less than twelve teams of horses, of oxen and of cows, with all that goes along with such animals. The whole domain was to give us in crops from twelve thousand to eighteen thousand francs in clear gain. We must thank the Lord for the interior resistance with which he has always inspired me about seconding such views.

Something must be done to preserve the park, to keep it clean and to protect the little trees. Next year, when the second pruning takes place, care must be taken not to harm the past year's growth, etc.

The former community, occupying all this living space[2] and cultivating one or two farms, must have been more useful than this château with all its magnificence, and still, what a difference in everything! Without doubt, the good God must have secret views, and so let us not be discouraged. Let us do all the good we can, let us get all the profit we can from the property, and let that be the end of our worrying.

The cost of the repairs on the enclosure walls will be greater than that of cultivation. Perhaps, you might obtain the greater part of it through working a lime kiln. You would have enough with half of what the furnace can contain, and the rest might be sold. Combine everything wisely. Seek good counsels, and always have a complete understanding with Father Bardenet. What is certain is the suitability of making the repairs you spoke of last summer. Nothing must be neglected, so that this needed work moves forward. You haven't as yet told me anything about the church or the large chapel. It should be easily within reach of all the buildings on the property, and to some extent, even of the general public. Above all, it is necessary that the religious be able to enter it easily, so as not to have to mingle with the lay people apart from some special function. May the Lord deign to communicate to you at least a part of the intelligence and the wisdom that He gave so abundantly to Beseleel![1] Modesty and simplicity are needed everywhere, even in the church, but there should be no shabbiness. Each single part must be planned with the entire undertaking in views.

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[2] That is to say, an old convent of sufficient proportions.

[1] The allusion is to the text in Exodus, XXXI, 1: *And the Lord said to Moses: Here is Beseleel . . . of the tribe of Juda, whom I have filled with the spirit of God, of wisdom, of intelligence, and of science, for every work of gold, of silver, of marble, of gems, and of all kinds of wood . . . so that he may make what I have commanded you, the tabernacle of the alliance, the ark of evidence, the propitiatory, etc.*

For now this is enough about the material side of Saint Remy. Let us speak a little of Colmar.

You may, my dear son, accept the direction of the schools of Colmar in my name, provided Saint Remy can provide two teachers for the French language. I shall send the two German teachers I have here—Brothers Rothéa and Troffer. Father Maimbourg seemed at one time to want Brother Rothéa. I spoke of this several days ago to Brother Rothéa, and he will gladly go, since he can accommodate himself much more easily to Father Maimbourg's character than to Father Mertian's. To put everything in working order, I would think that it would be good that, in a few weeks, Brother Gaussens be one of those from Saint Remy.

Tell Father Maimbourg I have all confidence in him, that in writing to Paris, to the Mayor of Colmar, I could invite him to confer in Paris with M. Vassal, Mayor and Deputy of Villeneuve. I should like the schools in Villeneuve to be run by the Institute of Mary and the Collège of Villeneuve to have a principal belonging to the Institute of Mary, etc. If Father Maimbourg wants it, we can make a start this very summer. Let him tell me when the brothers will have to be there. As regards the authorization, Father Maimbourg can easily obtain what they actually need to carry on. I have in front of me the royal ordinance, dated last April eighth,[2] to which he rightly asks us to conform ourselves, but the authorization of the government is not required. You may tell him that the Institute of Mary is regularly authorized by the ecclesiastical authority, that it is known to the ministry, that all the brothers' establishments in Agen and Villeneuve have enjoyed the favor of the General Council of the Department of the Lot-et-Garonne since their origin, that we are known to the Archbishop of Strasbourg,[3] since it is he, in a way, who has drawn us into the diocese of Besançon.

I read the article, or rather the copy of the proposition to cede the former convent of the Trois-Epis. You could say to Father Maimbourg that I would be quite disposed to accept the parochial duties of this pilgrimage and to procure for the people of the region all possible religious services, but that I should need his advice and even his consent. Furthermore, at present I don't have a priest available, but that I have reason to believe I shall have one in the near future, etc. . . .

The mail carrier just brought me your messages from Besançon. I went over only the first page of your letter, that which concerns Father Bardenet. I cannot read what he himself has written without again missing this mail carrier. The matter is getting difficult. Perhaps the good God has seen that we are leaning a little too heavily on Father Bardenet. He wants to be our sole support. It seems to me that I feel some pleasure at this disposition of his providence. *Regi saeculorum immortali et invisibili, etc.* When I say that God is our sole support, you understand very well that I exclude only men, and not the help of our august patroness, the most holy virgin.

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[2] Concerning the collèges, institutions, boarding school, and primary schools.
[3] Archbishop Tharin, who has just taken possession of the See of Strasbourg.

Assure Father Bardenet of my respect. Tell him that, at the departure of this letter, I received his without being able to read it, and that I shall answer him soon. In the meantime, I beg him to believe all my thoughts are in the interest of religion, that I have always believed that he, on his part, was not seeking anything else, that we can triumph over real difficulties only in being together in our views and sentiments, in seeking, so to say, only God in privations and sacrifices.

I embrace you tenderly, my dear son, as well as all my children at Saint Remy.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Father Romain is much more satisfied, since he made the prudent choice of remaining. His place had already been reserved on the coach.

Often recall, my dear son, this passage of the Gospel: *Messis quidem multa, operarii antem pauci: rogate ergo Dominum messis ut mittat operios in messem suam!* If only we had laborers, and laborers full of faith!

* * * * * * * *

As we have just read, Father Bardenet had decided to break the ice, and his letter justified Father Chaminade's long patience. Here is the beginning of it:

Reverend and very venerable Superior:

I am really ashamed of not having answered several of your letters and for not having followed up a correspondence so honorable and flattering to me. I did have reasons, and I beg you to excuse me.[1] Be kind enough to believe that I am still full of veneration for you and with attachment and devotedness to the Institute of Mary. I am sorry I did not let you know of my great satisfaction with your little community, which has always conducted itself perfectly and with edification to all those privileged to see it in action. It inspires the greatest confidence, and I hope that the Lord, in his mercy, will have everything at Saint Remy redound to his glory and to the honor of the Blessed Virgin. For a while I thought we should furnish the establishment in grand style. In the different meetings of the region, there was talk of extremely vast projects, inexhaustible resources were discussed even while the house was lacking the most basic necessities. A certain embarrassment took hold. In this way the great reputation of the last several months vanished into thin air.

It was time that something be done to bolster it. The retreat given to the school teachers did exactly this. I shall not repeat what Father Caillet and Brother Clouzet must have told you. It is certain that even our fondest hopes were surpassed. The young teachers the Reverend Rector sent will continue the precious fruits of this exercise. They will speak about the advantages of the Institute and of your good religious. They will send subjects, talk to their reverend pastors with satisfaction, and these in their turn will surely esteem your society and promote its works.

* * * *

Father Bardenet then touched upon the financial question, stating the situation clearly, and tactfully expressing the complaints he had brought up against certain activities of Brother David. Father Chaminade hastened to answer him.

[1] Father Bardenet had just been having a hard time. "Father Bardenet is embarrassed," Bro. Clouzet had confided to Fr. Chaminade. "He still owes twenty thousand francs on the purchase of the château. To pay this sum, he was counting on twenty-five to thirty thousand francs he had in reserve that he thought very safe. He now expect nothing from them . . ." (Letter of January 16)

293 – TO FATHER BARDENET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 31, 1824

Reverend Father and very dear Cooperator: I have been very much consoled and full of joy at finally receiving a long letter from you, in spite of the weight of the bill that was annexed to it.[1]

I never had the intention of going immediately and in grand style to Saint Remy. Our resources, in truth, are inexhaustible, and we find them in providence, which protects the Institute of Mary in a truly admirable manner. However, I never permit myself to have recourse to these resources but in proportion, as this same divine providence seems to invite me to do so. To follow step by step the views of God in doing the work to which he deigns to delegate to me, here you have my entire system. For some time I have been almost constantly in want, and nevertheless, I sometimes have a kind of abundance that astonishes me. Just last week, for example, I was very embarrassed to pay even some insignificant accounts. In this embarrassment I believed I saw the designs of providence in a vast project that was offered me. I asked for a little time to think things over. In just twenty-four hours, I was able to offer eighty thousand francs in cash. Then I went back to my ordinary condition of want.

I read with sorrow, Reverend Father and respected Cooperator, the notes which Brother David left for Brother Clouzet at the time of his departure. I am strongly against this whole discussion. I was preparing to write to Father Caillet or to Brother Clouzet when your letter came. I held back only because I did not see clearly, in these notes, what I suspected precisely to be the very reasons you allege.

As far as the poplars are concerned, Brother David had always written to, and even said verbally, that even though there was no mention of the fact in the deed of sale, you were supposed to give them up. But I understood, from his way of expressing himself, that you were surrendering them only with reluctance. These poplars have always seemed to

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[1] The secretary, Bro. Tissier, had written “which was too high,” which called for a protest from Father Bardenet. The following is Fr. Chaminade’s explanation.

“I hasten to correct a mistake made by my young letter copyist in the letter I had the honor of writing to you, on the sixth of the present month. You complain, and with right, about the expression, ‘what was too high,’ in the half sentence ‘in spite of the amount of the bill which was too high.’ The mistake comes from the fact that my copyist, who often writes my letters under direction, had understood ‘too high’ instead of ‘annexed.’ I signed the letter after having had him read it, but without my having read it myself. Here is the half sentence, such as I dictated it: ‘In spite of the amount of the bill, which was annexed to it.’

“You must understand, Reverend Father, that your bill, however exact and moderate I found it to be, did seem to me rather high, but not in a way to affect the consolation and the joy that I felt at the reception of the letter. I am surprised that Father Caillet and Brother Clouzet, who must know my feelings so accurately, as well as my habitual care of not in any way hurting anyone’s feelings, did not even suspect the mistake of the copyist.” (Letter of June 25).

me to be a necessary ornament to the property, otherwise so devoid of anything of the kind. Your wisdom and your generosity helped you to find a way of arranging everything, that of having them form part of the account, with all the advance payments you had the kindness to make, I am thinking especially of the one for the retreat given to the school teachers. When I say "all the advance payments," I mean only those that are more apparent, because I know you have made others that are not indicated on your bill. We are both working at the same task. Each one of us may look upon it as his own. Without you, I would not have thought it my duty to undertake it. For this I am thankful to you in my own name, as well as in the name of the master whom we both serve.

Let us come to the last issue. You offer me a release from every account up to now in consideration of six thousand francs counted as cash, payable in six months, or else for six hundred francs well assured as life annuity. Either one is agreeable to me, but since a choice has to be made, I prefer that a sum of six thousand francs be counted out for you. I have reason to think that you will give me the whole year to pay this and that you will be kind enough to accept, by anticipation, the total sum in payments of a thousand francs each. I authorize Brother Clouzet to make this arrangement with you, with the promise of never recalling the past, as you yourself will be kind enough to grant every reserve, etc.

I am accepting, as you see, your propositions purely and simply, so as not to put anything in the way of this final arrangement. I am very sorry that the notes written by Brother David have been made known to you, and although I had no part in the annoyance that you were made to suffer, I am here doing my best to excuse him. Assured of your good heart, I shall not neglect to propose a new benefaction to you, that of stocking the pond with fish. Brother David wrote me during the last vacation that you had in mind doing it during the month of November. Why would you not carry out this project which will become so advantageous to this budding community and which, as it were infallibly, will always keep on increasing? I understand that the large breaks in the walls of the enclosure have made you fear much waste. But there is very little to be feared during the first year, since the fish are so small! Besides, in the second place, I hope that in the course of a year all the breaks will be repaired.

The work of the retreats for the school teachers has always seemed to me most precious. If, at some time, we can bring together at Saint Remy the school teachers of the three departments which make up the Rectorate of Besançon, and if we can improve all primary education within the jurisdiction of the Academy, it is to be presumed that the university and the government will be interested in introducing this work in the other academies. And you, Reverend Father, will have a share, before God, in all the good that will result, both for religion and for our unhappy country. Let us work with courage and in perfect harmony. The good God will bless our solicitude, because it will have no other motive for existence but his glory.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

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If, on Father Bardenet's side, Father Chaminade was henceforth quiet, he was not without worry with regard to the lack of understand on the part of his coworkers: the inflexibility of Father Caillet's character and the touchiness of Brother Clouzet sometimes clashed and thus obstructed the progr3ess of the work. To this evil Father Chaminade tries to find a remedy but with his ordinary charity and delicacy.

294 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, June 4, 1824

I have already told you, my dear son, about the reception of your messages from Besançon. I am answering them today. . . .

It seems to me you interpret too rigorously the intentions and conduct of Father Bardenet. Doubtless, the poplars and a little stretch of woodland might have been ceded more generously. We might, perhaps, have been able to deduct something on the account of advance payments it secured for us. Whatever the case may be, the section of poplar trees, the part that was burned and the alley of trees—all a part of the forty acres—the advance money payments, the material requirements for the retreat, everything costing well over twelve thousand francs, is there not generosity in being satisfied with six thousand? And still, for these six thousand, he offers two ways of liquidation: either paying the sum in six months or of reducing it to a life annuity. You will see by the letter that I am writing him that I prefer the total liquidation in the space of one year and that I authorize Brother Clouzet to take upon himself the payment of this sum insofar as both sides promise to release and liquidate everything from the past. It is necessary that these promises be sufficiently detailed, etc. . . . I have no idea of what it would cost to supply the pond with fish, but Brother Clouzet must be given, in a friendly way, the task of securing the funds and that as soon as possible. You will understand, my dear son, the wisdom and the circumspection with which you are to avail yourself in his services and benevolence. I am sending you the note written in his own hand.

Already three days have passed since Father Bardenet's letter. I may say the same with regard to this one. Work around here is forever piling up, and the preparations for Pentecost practically deprive me of all time for writing. I am continuing this letter by myself, while Brother Tissier is copying another.

I agree, my dear son, that Brother Clouzet should join the title of Director to that of Superior, because Brother David needed the three distinct names for the three great offices he had. I do not think this would render Father Rothéa's zeal powerless, nor do I think he would get in the way of the functions of the superiorship. However, at the same time, I

rejoiced at the thought of the increase in Brother Clouzet's zeal. Father Rothéa is to be praised for his modest conduct, since it is necessary for the preservation of peace, but one of them should have informed me about this apparent incompatibility, for the question would not have been difficult to solve.

Are the priests to be subject to the laymen? When the regulation determining the ranks of the members of the group was read in the chapel, I noticed that some had been of the opinion that at Saint Remy Father Rothéa would be subject to Brother Clouzet. I hastened to explain to everyone the meaning of Brother Clouzet's superiorship and his relationship to Father Rothéa. Father Rothéa, having only the quality of director, was really superior of the spiritual life of the brothers and of the entire establishment, above even the Head of Zeal and of the Superior in spiritual matters. In the communities where it is suitable to appoint a lay Superior, the priest is essentially the Head of Zeal, unless on some special occasion something else is prescribed. But this would only be by rare exception. May it be that Brother Clouzet was absent when I gave quite detailed explanations on this important subject? I don't recall if he was. Furthermore, I don't think Brother Clouzet is a prey to the spirit of domination. I am not giving over much importance to theses reflections, because I am very pressed but you can appreciate them and explain them to others.[1] Brothers Dubarry and Pascal must have been, at least, free to address themselves to Father Rothéa. In this, Brother Clouzet's superiorship would have had advantages, etc. . . .

Let us say another word about your present relations with Brother Clouzet. If your obedience, my dear son, is in opposition to the constitutions of the Institute, there would be a great mistake in the constitutions, and, if the oath that every Superior of an establishment takes at the hands of the first Superior dispensed him from the obedience which he owes him by a formal vow, this oath would be entirely injurious to God. But, only one Superior is needed in a house. What a bad way of reasoning in the present circumstance! When providence does me the favor to found a new establishment and when I give it a Superior, from this very moment, do I lose my jurisdiction over the establishment and over its new Superior? The orders I give, should they only be but counsels, and will they be subject to the judgment of the new Superior? Have I even lost my right to visit the establishment? Because, what would this right be if I had no authority above that of the head of the establishment? I may not pay a personal visit, and so I name a visitor whom I clothe in my own authority. Should not this visitor be obeyed as I myself would be obeyed? If the authority of the visitor were explained by the regulations, it would

[1] The thought of the Founder on this point is made precise in his autographic notes on the constitutions: "The priests will never be subject to the laymen as far as their persons are concerned; but they may be in regard to their functions. For example, in an establishment where all the religious are laymen and where the functions they have to accomplish would not require the sacerdotal character, the superior could be a layman and one or two priests in charge of zeal as confessors, chaplains, etc." What the constitutions declare in analogous terms: "The priests who happen to be in houses directed by a lay member depend on the Provincial as to their particular conduct in what does not concern the order or general regulations of the house. In such communities, the priest, or one of the priests, is appointed Head of Zeal and presides at the exercises of piety."

be necessary that the extension of authority eventually delegated to him be clearly pointed out in his letter of obedience, and then he would be an "extraordinary" visitor.

I cannot see in Brother Clouzet's conduct towards you, my dear son, anything but an illusion that has come about as a consequence of the proposals of Brother David during his last days at Saint Remy. These proposals were quite contrary to what he himself had previously written and taught everywhere and always. Moreover, Brother Clouzet has acted and still acts contrary to the false principles that he has just expressed, which clearly shows that there is illusion involved rather than a spirit of rebellion. Again, if he holds so strongly to the constitutions, let him carefully examine what the first Superior has to do at the time of his visits, etc. . . .

What is to be the thought behind what Brother Clouzet said in open council, "that to make known to you my interior sentiments is not an order, but a counsel, just a sheer counsel." I think, my dear son, that Brother Clouzet thought that his authority would be weakened if he modestly took his place alongside his brothers, to carry out an order given to all. He was in illusion again on this point, for he will never enjoy real authority but in proportion as he himself gives the example of real submission, according to the occasions furnished him by providence. After all, making known to a Superior one's interior is not necessarily going to confession.[1] If he has no confidence in you, it is permitted to him not to make his exceptional confession to you, but if you have the charity to offer the brothers your ministry, to listen to them exceptionally in confession, he must present himself at the tribunal of penance like all the others, in order that it be impossible to point out those who present themselves by actual need, etc.

I shall not add other reflections, as I think they would be superfluous for Brother Clouzet. I am convinced of his uprightness, and so his illusion will not last long. But it is annoying nevertheless, because on its account, you are always thwarted in your dispatches. As you know, we were not counting upon your being away so long.

I am having your prospectus returned to you.[1] I note only the following: 1) You must come to an understanding with Brother Clouzet. It seems from the letter he has just written me that he would have something to say about this prospectus; 2) Would it not be in place to announce by this same prospectus that the boarding school would be divided into a primary and secondary school, that the pupils of the secondary school would pay a tuition of four hundred francs a year; and that, as soon as it would begin to increase, the public would be notified by a second prospectus, under the authorization of the rector, about how it is run?

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[1] The revealing of one's interior was at the time, as we know, a point of rule in a number of religious communities. "Every month, we read, for example in the Rules of the Visitation, written by St. Francis de Sales, "the sisters will open their heart summarily and briefly to the Superioress in all simplicity and complete confidence letting her know its innermost recesses, etc." Nowadays, this practice is optional.
[1] About this prospectus, see the *Spirit of Our Foundation, III, No. 72.*

Let me have, my dear son, the three *exeats* of Brothers Dominique, Antoine, and Bernard.[2] I propose to have them receive tonsure very shortly. Have they or have you their baptismal certificates? I cannot say for sure, before ending this letter. Brother Phillippe Schneider is to take the cassock after tomorrow on the holy day of Pentecost. Brother Joseph Hoffman left for Ribeauvillé, following an unexpected order from his father. I shall answer Father Breuillot right after the feast. I shall also write a few words to Brother Clouzet.

My dear son, take courage, *Certa bonum certamen etc.* . . . and believe in my fatherly tenderness.

William Joseph Chaminade

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295 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, June 6, 1824

I shall tell you only a few words, my dear son, because I have just written Father Bardenet and Father Caillet at some length and because today is the Friday before Pentecost. It is evening, and the bell for Benediction has rung.

I was glad to receive your letter of May twenty-fifth. I hope that, with time and patience, the establishment at Saint Remy will improve in every way. Nevertheless, take great care that what is purely temporal may not be harmful to the spiritual. If I have sent Father Caillet to come to the assistance of the former, I have surely not lost sight of the latter, as regards the community, whether in my verbal instructions or in his letter of obedience. Alas, my dear son, what would be temporal prosperity, if, in reaching it, you were to neglect progress in the practice of the Christian and religious virtues?

Since Father Caillet is to represent me, I gave him very extensive powers. This was all the more necessary, because the sphere of his activity is at such a great distance from me and correspondence from there is less active. You should have encouraged him and brought all your subordinates to the recognition of his authority. Actually you have done the opposite—imbued with the false principles that Brother David gave out to you in his delirium, you have grieved Father Caillet and almost disheartened him in your first interviews.

[2] See Letter 285.

You speak about Constitutions and Regulations. I am glad to note that you insist upon them, and you should do so inviolably, both on account of your vows and your oath of office. But you must do so with intelligence and not easily believe that, by a few words, you can render powerless the words of a first superior. How can we remedy Saint Remy's most desperate situation if I limit the authority of the one I sent to provide the needed assistance? After announcing his visit both to Saint Remy and Besançon, I awaited replies from each before allowing him to leave. I overburdened myself with work here so that he could go. I was hoping that his journey would be far less prolonged. Brother David, by his obstinacy, started by making him lose two months. And when he came to believe he could operate in peace, you didn't seem to recognize his authority or at least all the authority of his mission. . . . I am replying to Father Caillet about the principal difficulties that you put in his way, and I do so very briefly, because there is no question here of writing any kind of memorandum. That would even be inconvenient.

On the other hand, my dear son, I believe you have good dispositions, and I do not attribute these digressions to your heart. I shall add only, 1) If you seemed to see some oversight or error on my part, you might have told me so immediately. You risked nothing, in the meantime, in receiving Father Caillet in the capacity I was giving him. 2) If Father Caillet used the powers I had thought it my duty to give him imprudently or with haughtiness, again you should have told me.

If there is the least misunderstanding between the two of you, the work of God will suffer by just that much. If at Saint Remy, there is subordination, charity, the spirit of faith, Saint Remy will triumph, and the blessings of God will reign there.

I am stopping here. I am leaving this letter unsealed, that I may include one for Father Caillet. If he doesn't read it before giving it to you, let him know its contents, just the same as he can let you know what I am writing him. I shall never have more satisfaction than when I can see you all as one of heart and soul. Oh! What a beautiful Society, in which all the members, and especially all the heads, have but one heart, one soul, and among whom everything is held in common! Such will be, I fondly hope, the Society of Mary.

One more word, my dear son. I now recall that you or Father Caillet remarked to me that Brother David carped a great deal at Saint Remy about the expressions and style of my letters, etc. . . . Guard yourself against such a mania, as it is altogether against religious simplicity. A father who writes to his children seeks no other end than understanding of his views and desires. If, to increase their force, he makes use of the method of obediences, these acts are not to be discussed like the letter of the law, after the manner of civil tribunals, etc. . . .

It was during the time of the High Mass on the feast of Pentecost that I continued this letter, begun yesterday. What can a Good Father wish to one of his older sons on this solemnity than the most abundant gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit?

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The econome of the seminary of Besançon showed himself very kind in regard to the religious of Mary. Father Chaminade encouraged him to interest himself in their works, as well as in recruitment to their ranks.

296 – TO FATHER BREUILLOT
DIRECTOR OF THE SEMINARY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, June 11, 1824

Rev. Father: I received with great pleasure your little letter of last May twenty-first. It seems that the good God is blessing the holy intentions he inspires us with, as well as the labors of my children at Saint Remy. I distinguish among them Father Caillet very specially, although he is there only on a special mission. The Institute of Mary has several subjects who have more ability and natural talents than he, but who haven't as much faith and virtue. This is the only reason why he has been chosen by me to go to the assistance of the establishment at Saint Remy.

I favor very much the work for the teachers, both the retreats and their training at the seminary. This above all will make the Institute of Mary take great steps forward, provided it can become general. It will especially help the Institute realize the end with which God has inspired it, the regeneration of our unhappy country. The philosophic spirit is being introduced even into the tiny villages, corrupting young and old of all conditions and of both sexes, and this by the clever use of every kind of means. This is why we undertake different kinds of works and train or help to train subjects fully capable of sustaining and developing them.

Another of our works, which goes directly toward the same end, is the establishment of sodalities. Father Caillet will be able to give you a good idea about these.

Oh, Rev. Father, how abundant the harvest, but how few the laborers, especially laborers who know how to gather it in! You might be able to help us recruit them. You might find good subjects in your seminary to whom the Lord may have given similar dispositions. Perhaps you could facilitate the conditions for joining us. That would not in any way be a serious loss for the diocese of Besançon. We would put back into the diocese both the capital and the interest, but in better currency. Father Caillet might be suspect if he did the recruiting himself.

I may have said too much, Rev. Father, when I said that Father Caillet's faith and virtues were my only reasons for choosing him. I recall now that he often spoke to me of the confidence he had in you and of the many opportunities you had for going good, etc. . . .

Everything he told me about you, at different times, figured much in my choice of him. I am pretty much a stranger in your vast diocese. I can do no good there except with the help of those whom Providence deigns to send me. It is this same loving providence that has chosen you to help in the formation of the large establishment of Saint Remy. It is evidently impossible that it can develop sufficiently by itself. Help us, Rev. Father, or rather continue to help us. In a year, I hope this establishment will be, so to say, able to stand on its own feet. But, we cannot reach this point without urgent expenses.

You have very well seen, Rev. Father, that it was preferable to unite the little property of Marast with that of Saint Remy than to make of it an institution by itself. However, would it not be necessary to draw up a deed of surrender, at least under a private seal, reserving to ourselves the duty of seeking confirmation by the Government? I have the intention of asking the king for the very authorization of the Institute as soon as a favorable moment presents itself.

The project for the establishment of the institution for deaf-mutes seems to me well planned, at least as far as the basic intention is concerned. You and His Excellency, the Archbishop, seek to reform the morals of the people of this part of the city, where the institution will be located.[1] If the archbishop really wanted, the project could be carried out quite easily. First he should ask for help or aid from both the Municipal Council and the General Council of the Department. It is beyond doubt that the Minister would approve the articles of the budget presented for this purpose by either council. Direct requests would be made to the Government only after the establishment were an established fact. I am afraid that, if this simple but painful step is not taken (even though it will be expensive), you are going to run up against many difficulties and even contradictions on the part of the Government . . . You might have trouble from the Royal Commission of Deaf-Mutes, which is made up in Paris of great personages, or from the independent Commission of the University, which has direct relations with the Minister of the Interior. It is possible that the most influential members of the Commission would not like to see this work go into the hands of religious. If this work were thus carried out in grand style, all its parts would sustain one another in far better fashion, the lay religious and the Sisters would have superiors and confessors of their own Order, they would help one another in forming and sustaining the Sodalities, the parish would be served with dignity and edification, and the other parishes of the city would not be long in following the salutary example of this one.

But Rev. Father, I am afraid of repeating myself to the point of wearying. Try to procure for us ready-made priests or priests-to-be-made. Try to procure for Saint Remy the means to pay its debts. We must make at least the most necessary repairs and cultivate that part of the farmland where the ground is of better quality.

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[1] See Letter 284. One here sees the breadth of the views of the Founder, who, besides the deaf-mute institution confided to the Brothers and Sisters of the Institute already foresaw the organizing of sodalities, the direction of the parish, etc.

I might have to recall Father Caillet, but I will be very sorry to do it if he has completely fulfilled his mission.

I am returning to the deaf-mutes. If the last project were adopted and carried out with a certain enthusiasm, it would be better, it seems to me, to leave things pretty much as they are than to begin the institution as Father Caillet had first indicated to me. Whatever the case may be, you will always find me disposed to second your zealous views with al my strength.

I am etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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The difficult negotiations for the foundation in Condom continue and are at the point of succeeding.

297 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, June 7, 1824

Rev. Father: For several days, I have thought of writing M. de Lachapelle to share the sorrow and anxiety the incidents connected with the acquisition of the Hospice de Piétat must be causing him.

I sent him the new insurance policy I had my council draw up for him. Everything the administrators wanted, even the most difficult, is included, without harming the firmness of the acquisition or leaving the Sisters any cause for anxiety or worry. As I did for you, I showed him that I would prefer to pay for the repairs on these buildings and for the expenses of the first establishment rather than enter into all sorts of discussions. The observations I have made come in no way from any distrust on the part of the actual administrators. Like you, I saw that they were only seeking to help the establishment. However, I did not believe and I don't believe even now that prudence could permit an action above all as a start, like the one that had been projected.

Let us not be discouraged. Let us do all we can and adore the designs of God in the obstacles which he permits to stand in the way. Most certainly some great advantage will be the result, even for this establishment.

I offer you, Rev. Father, a new token of my respectful attachment.

William Joseph Chaminade

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298 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, June 15, 1824

Rev. Father: Only two or three days before, I had received from the archbishop of Auch authorization of the establishment of the Daughters of Mary at Condom, his promise of benevolence, etc. . . .

I consent, and even with pleasure, that there be a sale, pure and simple, of the old Hospice of Piétat to Mlle de Lachapelle, with the authorization and security of her father, as has already been agreed upon, and according to the order of the king. Let there be, I beg of you, no other clause and condition than those that refer to the method of payment of the perpetual yearly income and of its security. In one word, let the sale be made to Mlle de Lachapelle just as it would be to any other buyer. I renounce in her name and with a good heart all favors, and by that I mean the six annuities which have caused us so many worries, not to say more. This is not denying that I always have in my heart a deep sense of

gratitude toward the mayor and the administrators. I have never had any illusion as regards the purity of their sentiments. If there had been question only of a transitory act, I would not have offered any kind of resistance. But, in a simple and perpetual act, prudence could not permit me to adopt conditions of that kind. If any one of these gentlemen does not yet see this, I hope that he will not delay in doing me justice, and M. de Lachapelle will himself bless God that his daughter has entered into an organization that knows how to respect itself and which has superiors and directors who are able, in all cases and circumstances, to make up for the lack of experience on the part of these religious ladies.

On the other hand, the administrators do not have to fear that our religious will exercise less interest and less zeal in the teaching of the indigent little girls. True zeal has motives that are more powerful than those inspired by human interests. Our religious women will do good in Condom, but they will do it freely and willingly. You may, Rev. Father, handle this affair as speedily as M. and Mme de Lachapelle may desire. By this mail I am writing to their daughter that she may send you her procuration and that you may sign it in her name.

I am thinking of going to Agen during the first days of July. There, I shall make the first choice of the little group that is to go to Condom. I shall also make the choice of the young lady who is to come to Bordeaux, for I settled everything for this last establishment last Wednesday. If everything is finished at this time, I shall go myself to Condom with Mlle de Trenquelléon to install the new community. We shall not stay long so that we can return to Bordeaux for a similar ceremony.

I had and I still have the intention that these Ladies accept boarders at Condom. That is why the school's younger girls will have to be entirely separated from the boarding school. There should be no communication at all between the boarders and the younger girls.

Concerning the other establishment in the interior of the city, if I go to Condom for the installation, we shall look over the city at bit and make up our minds about the other affair.

I am so pressed by this mail that I cannot write directly to M. de Lachapelle. I beg of you to let him read this letter. You can interpret my respectful devotedness toward him and Mme de Lachapelle. As for yourself, be pleased to accept the renewed assurance of my tender and respectful attachment.

William Joseph Chaminade

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We are coming back to Father Caillet and to Saint Remy.

299 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, June 16, 1824

I have received, my dear son, your last two letters, dated from Saint Remy on May 28 and June 4. I had already answered you in regard to Colmar and the pilgrimage of the Trois-Epis. What you tell me—that all the Brothers were employed in the cultivation of the land or in rather hard labors—makes me fear that Saint Remy will not be able to furnish two Brothers to Colmar for the French language, chosen either from the older ones or among our new recruits. Coustou and Constant, had they been trained, would have been in a condition to be sent. As things stand, I can give you only Brother Rothéa and Brother Troffer. The latter is doing very well in Villeneuve. I have been obliged to withdraw Brother Revet from Villeneuve. He was replaced by a certain Armenaud and this last in Agen by Brother Weber. In a pinch I could let you have Brother Tissier, but 1) his small stature; 2) the feebleness of his complexion; 3) the little services he renders me. . . . Work on the priests in whom you may see some signs of a vocation to the religious state, such as Father Juif, etc., and among the Brothers, try to find out those who would be good for the schools but who are otherwise not masters in any profession. They can easily be put to the test in the schools of Saint Remy. . . .

All is finished with regard to the Mlles Gramagnac.[1] It appears that at Condom, the deed will also be drawn up for the new establishment of the Daughters of Mary that has been planned for a long time. I am thinking of leaving for Agen during the first days of July to make the choice of subjects for the two establishments, for etc. . . .

This is the land surveying that you are especially in need of (at Saint Remy); I don't find any better and faster way than to have Brother Louis Rothéa learn this mathematical science and at the same time Jules[2] and Brother Thiriet. I am looking for a good teacher that this may be done. Brother Rothéa, I hope, will soon know all about it, and even in an exceptional way. It might even be prudent to take Colmar only for the reopening of classes. But I shall then send you Brother Rothéa, who will be able to teach.

I am surprised, my dear son, that you have not yet received anything in benefactions or in advance payments. . . . *Scit Pater vester coelestis quia his indigetis*.[3]

To act, to undertake and conclude affairs, my dear son, you don't need any special authorization if the works have already been agreed upon between us or if they are of the kind and purpose we commonly undertake. If each Head has, as part of his office, a discretionary power, there is all the more reason that you should have it, especially since you are some four to five hundred miles away from here. If I ask for circumstantial details

[1] See Letter 267.
[2] Jules Chaminade. See Letter 135.
[3] Your Father in heaven knows that you have need of all these things.

about persons and things, you don't have to wait for answers to act on your own initiative. It would be otherwise if there were questions of a new establishment of some great and new undertaking, of some matter directly affecting the whole Institute. Even then, in case speedy action is called for, you could go ahead in view of a later approbation.

It is not I, my dear son, who am prolonging your stay in any way. All I am doing is giving in to the circumstances and needs of the establishment, or rather, giving in to the dispositions of Providence. But take careful notice that I am giving in only to the urgent and indispensable needs. You will have to come back to Bordeaux as soon as you have adequately fulfilled your mission, as soon as Saint Remy can dispense with your most important services. It is for this reason that you must not undertake any employment which presupposes the *animus permanendi*. If I asked Father Rothéa, it is because I foresaw the need there would be for your remaining still some months, and in fact, already a month and a half has passed since my first observation. As soon as you can foresee a convenient time for leaving, let me know immediately.

If the prefect and the sub-prefect of Vesoul come to Saint Remy to visit the establishment, they must be received in Father Bardenet's office. I take it for granted that you have arranged that with him and that he was pleased. If Father Bardenet were not what he is, if he were not your cousin, he would not refuse such an arrangement, for he knows what is proper in such matters. It would be the same if even the archbishop were to come on a visit.

On all occasions, preserve a great presence of mind. Say the same to Father Rothéa and to Brother Clouzet. Beautiful and noble simplicity in all proceedings, frankness, loyalty, prudence—there you have our complement of action in our relations with men. Doesn't it seem as if our Lord had made of it a kind of summary of his doctrine: *Estote ergo simplices sicut columbae et prudentes sicut serpentes?*[1]

You seem affected, my dear son, by debts which we contract every day to multiply our establishments or to sustain or extend the old ones. Pray and pray earnestly so that the evils you have in mind may never occur, so that I may never forestall the order of Providence in the works that we believe to be according to its views. I was thinking this morning about this extraordinary path we are following, and I was, in a way, frightened and a little disconcerted when I understood that God acted thus to increase our confidence in him and to make us live in entire dependence on his grace. This realization somewhat comforted and strengthened me. What surprises me and sometimes causes me trouble is what Saint Paul says: *Nemo militans deo, implicat se negotiis saecularibus ut ei placeat cui se probavit*.[2] In my position, and in this struggle that I must undergo for God, I often have to enter into negotiations with the world. Might this obligation of mixing in *negotiis*

[1] Be therefore as simple as doves and prudent as serpents.
[2] No man, being a soldier of God, entangleth himself with secular business; that he may please him to whom he hath engaged himself.

saecularibus be a proof that the struggle is not in the designs of God? Herein lies the difficulty. For many long years, I have mulled over it. I find a little interior peace only in being careful when entering into these negotiations to do so: 1) only as a result of affairs that I believe that God is asking for; 2) as little as possible; 3) not to cease elevating myself to God so that my mind and heart may not be really implicated in these negotiations. If you know of anything, my dear son, to be added to the list or of anything better to tell me, don't hesitate to speak.

All is going passably well in Bordeaux, at the Madeleine, on Rue des Menuts, and at Saint Laurent. Everyone is deeply moved at the tokens of your kind remembrance.

I shall close this long letter in quoting for you the verse preceding the one that I have just considered: *Labora sicut bonus miles Christi Jesu*. [1] *Pax Dei sit simper tecum*. May the Lord also shower his most abundant blessings on your labors and upon those of all our children at Saint Remy!

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am not yet saying anything to you about Brother David. He is always quiet, or rather, he is feeling calmer. To lead him is no easy matter.

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Brother Clouzet showed himself very much grieved at the reprimand of the good Father. The latter explains to him the reasons for it and its meaning.

300 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, June 27, 1824

I have just read, my dear son, the copy of the letter which I wrote you on the holy day of Pentecost, which seems to have worried you too much. I was surprised that, in the very peace and joy of the Holy Spirit, I should be writing to you a letter so bitter and so contrary to the fatherly tenderness I have for you especially. But, my dear son, I have not discovered things to be as your sensitiveness interpreted them. Never, my dear son, has my confidence in you, no more than my affection for you, been altered for an instant. Through the letters of Father Caillet I discovered you were under the influence of evil principles. What was I to do? Should I not enlighten you without delay, helping you recognize the evil and its vexing consequences?

I note with pleasure that there was no evil but an error on Father Caillet's part, that he interpreted as resistance to authority the remarks you were making to him. And you had

[1] Labor as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.

not only the right, but the duty to make them, and you could do so with even greater reason because I have the habit of consulting before commanding and of consulting especially those who are to carry out the command. You were surely permitted to believe that it would be thus with Father Caillet, who for the time being is representing me in Saint Remy.

Nevertheless, both of you deserve reproach. I am saying both of you, because I suppose that Father Caillet lets you see the letters he writes me. Why would you not have told him he was mistaken in what he wrote about you? Why wouldn't Father Caillet, on his part, have asked you if he was correctly expressing your sentiments? I excuse both of you for your want of experience in such circumstances. What consoles me is your good dispositions.

It seems useless to me, my dear son, to enter into further details after the honest statement of your dispositions. May your humble submission nevertheless not lead you into another extreme. You say, for example, you will no longer meddle with spiritual affairs. There would be here, my dear son, something of an extreme attitude. A superior is, at the same time, Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Work. It is up to him to see to it that the immediate heads of these three Offices do their work well. He must even adequately supervise those who are the beneficiaries of these Offices, so as to give an account of them to God and to the major superiors of the Institute. He must be ready and easily able to give a description of them in regard to zeal, instruction, and work. During the first month after your arrival at Saint Remy, I often wrote Brother David to show you how to arrange your administration copybooks according the this threefold report. I was to obtain, so it seems, little more than vain promises. There is no annoyance, my dear son, in the exercise of the diverse Offices, but there is a great deal—I don't like to say it—when there is question of all the precautions that must be taken to guard against relaxation. I don't think that Father Caillet is entirely up-to-date on all these points. I have often spoken to him about it, but I would have given him more exact notes if I had thought you less advanced on the same matters. Patience! In the meantime, adopt a sterner rating of the Offices, and do whatever he tells you, because, my dear son, we must always begin by showing deference to authority, except here, where a more profound examination of the observations you may have thought it your duty to make, would be first recommended.

If Father Rothéa is named principal of the boarding school, he will have to have the power to exercise, and with dignity, all the functions of the principalship. You, nevertheless, will remain superior of the establishment of Saint Remy. If the boarding school increases and there should be any difficulty arising from a clash of authority on either side, I shall clearly specify your respective duties in such a way that all future mistakes of the kind may be avoided. Remember it is always better that things go on, even less smoothly, just so there is no evidence of disagreement on the part of the Heads. I am sorry that the complaints that I made in one or two of my last letters have become known among several of your Brothers.

I am surprised, my dear son, that Father Caillet should have made it possible for you to resist him in the points you enumerate for me. Without seeming to resist, you might have been able to ask him permission not to make the changes he wanted, at least until he would have received an answer from me about the difficulties. There is hardly a doubt, for example, that I would have been of your opinion and of Father Bardenet's in regard to the wine to be given to the schoolteachers.

I hope that this normal school will give some good subjects to the Institute, but much prudence is needed, for there should be no evidence that such is a cherished hope.

I am thinking of going to Agen on July 5, as there is question of the almost simultaneous foundation of two establishments of the Daughters of Mary. I think I have already spoken to you about them. Your letters will eventually reach me, even if I happen to be absent at the time of their arrival.

Let us take courage, my dear son, for the crown is promised only to the conquerors. Tear out self-love, down to its last shreds, and you will have peace, the peace of God himself. Your good, I dare also say tender, Father embraces you with all the effusion of his heart.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I received Brother Pascal's letter. For lack of time, I am not answering him directly. I am inserting in this packet a note for Mlle Bolle, which is an answer to a letter she also received from him. Let Brother Pascal remain quiet. If he honestly undertakes to wage war against his self love, he will be permitted to renew his vows for another year.

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Father Chaminade had understood that Father Caillet was still ignorant of many of the secrets in the art of commanding and that it was necessary to train him about this. In the following letter, he gives him the most useful counsels concerning the manner of exercising authority.

301 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, June 29, 1824

My dear son:

I am writing Father Bardenet by this mail, and I am herewith including a rough copy of this letter for you. I am also writing Brother Clouzet in answer to the letter that you speak about. His letter expresses a great sensitiveness to the reproaches, albeit paternal, that you had me address to him. One must be very careful, my dear son, 1) not to confound the

remarks an Office Head may make with formal resistance to authority, for it is most of the time only zeal which inspires him to make them, even when they are made with vivacity; 2) in general, one must but rarely make use of formal commands in affairs which are, most of the time, only matters of good order and purely artitrary[1]; 3) it would be only in the most urgent cases that one would have to give orders against others' observations, for it is rare that, in these observations, there isn't some point of view that you can't make use of to soften, change, or even abandon disciplinary commands you wanted to give. Do you really have anything to fear, for example, in serving only water to the teachers especially in the beginning?

I know of an Order in which Visitors give commands only at the time of their departure. I know of another in which they do no more than listen to each religious in private, taking exact notes, and then return to the Motherhouse and issue the necessary commands. Authority is weakened by hasty acts or acts that appear to be such. A local superior is one thing, while an overall superior is quite another. A local superior—for example, Brother Clouzet—must rarely listen to observations, for if he did, he would be badly forming his religious.[1] Any overall superior, on the contrary, should as a rule, especially if there is question of his administration, listen to the remarks, weigh them, etc. . . . because of the responsibility of his office. He must not easily dispense himself from this responsibility.[2] The religious would be obeying only with sighs, should they have the idea of conforming to arbitrary and ill-considered orders.

You are right, my dear son, in believing that certain defects may harm the work of God at which you are laboring. Thus, in general, you don't give your subordinates any reason for believing that you have a good opinion of them. Sometimes, you find fault with them on matters which must seem trifling to them, by reason of the little virtue or instruction they may have. In all cases, you must be really humble; but you must not, in all cases, humiliate yourself. Yes, you must, no doubt speak and act with simplicity, uprightness, and honesty. Nevertheless, there is such a thing as a prudence and a self-control which must direct the exercise of these good qualities according to the character of persons in keeping, so to say, with their various dispositions.

I have said before, my dear son, that a local superior—such as Brother Clouzet—must rarely listen to the observations of his subordinates. It was not my intention then of

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[1] Matters which can most of the time be settled in different ways, according to differing appreciations of the circumstances.

[1] The superior must not let himself be directed by those which he is charged to direct, whose first duty is to obey in the spirit of faith. However, this point of view does not exclude family spirit, in virtue of which the religious may respectfully make to their superior whatever remarks they deem useful for the common good.

To the same Brother Clouzet, Father Chaminade wrote on the preceding September 9: "Listen with kindness to all your Brothers and never grow tired of receiving all the suggestions they might want to make to you, etc. (See again the preceding letter.)

[2] To release the religious from the duty of making to the overall heads the observations they would consider useful.

speaking of the three first Heads, who are, as it were, his constant council and still less of Brother Rothéa, who, in addition to his role as Head of Zeal, adds so many others. It might, in general, be said that the best superior is the one who makes his superiorship the least felt. Is it very easy to recognize the keystone? Let a superior support all the parts of an establishment, so that not a single one of them be shaky, but doubtless by an influence that is so mellow and at the same time so active that he will seem to be going beyond the mere fulfillment of duty.

I would be of the opinion that the retreats given to the teachers should be repeated every three or four years, but that it would not be suitable to give them all in the same year. It would be difficult for them to accept this. And we simply do not have the means. Two missionary priests and one or two teachers would be needed. If these retreats are held at a convenient time and if the establishment can continue to function normally, they will cause no disruption. They will in no way harm the spirit of recollection of the Brothers, who will be called from their labors to serve the retreatants only by rare exception. For the moment we lack nearly everything we need.

Patience! Let us hold up! But let us take note of whatever will be necessary for this work to bear fruit later on. This work is of great importance. It will not be long before we can extend it. If it goes well at Saint Remy for the three departments of the Rectorate of Besançon, it will propagate itself. There is already talk about it here in the archbishop's palace. Could you not engage the Missionaries of Besançon to continue to help us until we have enough priests of our own to conduct these retreats? You must have seen what I wrote to Father Breuillot in order to attract subjects. On your part, do all that you prudently can toward the same end.

In other respects, I am doing all I can to have Brother Louis Rothéa learn land surveying and bring this knowledge to bear at Saint Remy. Perhaps tomorrow I shall send someone to seek out a former boarding school master, one who knows all about teaching the grades, and I shall see if there is a possibility of sending him to your secondary school. If the Rev. Pastor's nephew that you mentioned is really a good subject, you can bring him along with you to Bordeaux. Studies are getting along well enough at the Madeleine. Brother Descubes is very attentive to his duties as Head of Instruction and as teacher, etc.

I see, my dear son, that you are moving forward with your mission. Try to get a clear idea of the dispositions of each one of the members of the Institute. Give a description of each one, as regards zeal., instruction, and work. Have each Head give a description of his department. Have Brother Clouzet also give a description of every one. You should bring along all the notes you have made, but without communicating them to anyone. You should also bring along a copy of the descriptions that the Heads give you . . .

The answer of Brother Clouzet about the Constitutions seemed to me quite wise and quite exact. I am surprised at the answer you gave him. However, if it is exact, here it is: "He told me that, as regards the Constitutions, I was not to follow them, that he had talked

long enough about them to you (that is to say, with me), that you had told him everything and that they should be changed. . . . and that I should thus obey, even when he should order something entirely contrary to the Constitutions." Under oath, Brother Clouzet adds: "Thus," said I to him, "I swore to have a Rule observed that does not exist, to have it observed without having the authority to ask this, and much more, I had the obligation to break it myself."

If these things are exact, my dear son, you seem to be mistaken on several points. 1) How have you brought Brother Clouzet to such serious contestations, almost from the very start? Most certainly, you could have and should have avoided them, even if you had been clothed with papal authority. 2) If you thought, because I told you the Constitutions were to be recopied, the style being in need of some corrections, that I also told you to lessen their observance, to tone them down, etc. . . . I must have told Brother Clouzet himself these same things. In fact I say them openly to anyone who speaks about them, but no one has drawn from my remarks the inference that the Constitutions were not to be observed. I would be contradicting myself in giving an authority which would demand obedience to things entirely contrary to the constitutions. I am sure both of you are clever enough not to confound certain regulations with the constitutions. The Regulations are only consequences of the Constitutions, which, in a budding institution, can readily undergo certain changes. 3) How can it be supposed that, for the head of an establishment, his oath is without object or purpose?

I am stopping here and still I am afraid that this letter won't leave with this mail. I am constantly diverted to other things. I am closing now, much like Saint Peter closes his first Epistle, in Chapter 5: today is his feast, and at this moment his Mass is being sung in the Madeleine. *Seniores ergo qui in vobis sunt obsecro, consenior . . . pascite . . . providentes non coacte, sed spontanee secundum Deum, sed voluntarie, neque ut dominantes in cleris, sed forma facti gregis ex animo . . . Saluate invicem in osculo sancto. Gratia vobis omnibus qui estis in Christo Jesu. Amen.*

William Joseph Chaminade

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Everything being ready for the foundation in Condom, Father Chaminade makes the last arrangements with Father Castex.

302 – TO FATHER CASTEX, CONDOM

Bordeaux, July 2, 1824

Reverend Father:

There is no possibility of profiting from the favors of the Government regarding registration: 1) because the Daughters of Mary are not legally approved; 2) because, since

the Piétat is the first establishment of the Daughters of Mary in the Department of the Gers, these ladies would be very glad to have it as their own property. It is for this reason that Mlle de Lachapelle did not acquire it under her title as religious.

M. de Lachapelle need not fear to go ahead with the registration as well as with the purchase. It is not only one daughter that he will recover, but as many other daughters as there will be religious. All will be as well disposed as his own daughter to give him and Mme de Lachapelle all the tokens of filial love, of profound respect, and active interest that well-bred children accord their fathers and mothers.

Our custom is to name a "temporal father" for each community. At Tonneins, for example, M. Lacaussade had this title and he accomplishes its functions perfectly. I need not look for anyone in Condom to entrust with this happy office. Providence itself has designated M. and Mme de Lachapelle. I believe that God wants to recompense them in this world for the sacrifices they have made in consenting that their daughter embrace the religious state. . . .

I have about made up my mind to leave for Agen next Monday, the fifth of the current month. I shall stop at Tonneins for at least 24 hours. I shall be in Agen on the seventh or at the latest on the eighth. If everything could be ready in Condom, I think that our holy group could leave on the thirteenth or fourteenth, or possibly even on the twelfth. Then I would follow. If there is some delay, I hope that your traveling companion will take it in stride, considering how necessary it is for you to be present on the first two or three days of our arrival. Would you kindly keep me informed about everything and address your letters to the Convent of the Daughters of Mary in Agen.

I am with respectful attachment, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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In reality, it was only on the sixteenth and seventeenth of July that Father Chaminade brought the small founding colony of Daughters of Mary to Condom. Everything transpired to his complete satisfaction, according to the report he addressed to the archbishop of Auch.

303 – TO ARCHBISHOP DE MORLHON,
ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH

Condom, July 19, 1824

Your Excellency:

I have just happily finished bringing the Daughters of Mary to Condom. The ceremony took place without display of any kind. As soon as it was over, the superioress-general and the superioress of Condom[1] got into a carriage and went to visit the first authorities of the city. They also went to visit the Ursuline Sisters. All these religious Sisters mutually gave one another marks of a religious friendship. In place of an unedifying rivalry, which could have manifested itself, there will surely be only a holy emulation between the two convents.

I obtained from Father de Cadignan the permission to designate him to Your Excellency as superior of the new convent and also as extraordinary confessor. Father Castex will be the ordinary confessor, if this is agreeable to you, and when he is away, Father de Cadignan will replace him. Father Lagutère will be their chaplain, and if you will kindly permit it, the religious, in the absence of their confessors and with the permission of their superioress, will address themselves to him in some circumstances.

I thought that Your Excellency would also permit the Sister sacristan to touch the sacred vessels, according to custom.

For many years Father Castex was director of a small section of the Ladies Sodality of Agen. I shall confer on him, according to your good pleasure, the title of director of the Ladies Sodality of Condom.

I have the honor, Your Excellency, of sending you a verbal account of the installation ceremony and also a copy of the blessings accorded by His Lordship the Bishop of Agen to the two communities which are in his diocese. . . .

Yesterday, the city of Condom gave proof of its satisfaction over the foundation of this convent by the crowd that was present at this ceremony.

Pardon, Your Lordship, any inaccuracies that may be in this letter. I am to leave in a moment.

The enclosure is beginning strictly only today.

I am very sorry I cannot go to Auch to pay you my humble respects, but I beg you to believe in my sincerity. It is from the heart, Your Excellency, that I am signing myself, your very humble and very obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Mlle de Lachapelle, as Mother Mary of the Incarnation.

After completing the foundation in Condom, Father Chaminad,e accompanied by Mother de Trenquelléon, proceeded to transfer the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary from Agen to Bordeaux, in the house acquired for this purpose, No. 1 (at present, No. 2) on Rue Mazarin, where it remained until 1830.

The following letter shows us Father Chaminade working at the recruitment of his two religious families and giving useful counsels to Father Caillet on this subject.

304 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, August 9, 1824

Eight or nine days ago, my dear son, I returned to Bordeaux. Today, the sixth of the current month, is the close of the priests' retreat. I received all your letters in due time, either in Bordeaux or in Agen, by reason of the arrangements I had made with some of the postal employees. I have not answered them because I saw nothing in them that called for a prompt reply and because I was doing my best to be away for as short a time as possible. And today I am writing you without having reread your letters, the sooner to give you news and to talk to you about those Saint Remy affairs which seem most urgent.

The Daughters of Mary now have two more establishments, one at Condom and the other in Bordeaux. The first will be a boarding school for young ladies and the second a novitiate for the Mothers and their assistants. The novitiate for the Sister-companions will be made at Agen for a time. Your good sister is its Mistress and Mother. You must know that she had made her profession. The Bordeaux Novitiate has twelve novices. The Superioress is Mother Marie-Joseph, the novice mistress Sister Louis de Gonzague. In addition, there are two Sister-companions for the service of the house, sixteen persons in all.

I had reason to be satisfied, in Condom, with the welcome and interest the city has shown. Things have gone equally well in Agen, whether at the bishop's palace, at the Prefecture, or even at the general Council of the Mayor's Office. In Bordeaux, the new establishment is well seen by the main authorities of the city. I am not going into detail. Doubtless you know the reason.

Try, my dear son, to bring your mission at Saint Remy to a close this month, or at least during the early part of September. I have great need of you here, even to occupy myself still more with Saint Remy. I will be pleased if you bring with you several priests who are surely called by God. It goes without saying that you may bring other subjects that you believe destined by Providence to labor at the works of the Institute.

I just received your letter from Besançon dated July twenty-ninth. The young priest, Father Perrey, would do well to go into retreat and to train himself in the priestly and religious virtues for some time. His project of going to Dijon to study civil law seems to me extraordinary and hazardous. It is to be presumed that he will succeed very little in gaining the law students to the practice of religion—and still less the city lawyers—since he, being only a student, would have no other means of supporting himself than his Mass stipends and whatever fees he could charge from giving Latin lessons. Furthermore, how could whatever good he could do this way last? I shall answer him in a few days, under cover of the letter I shall write to Father Breuillot, and send you a copy of both letters.

As regards the seven women who already live together and who want to embrace the religious life, it would seem to me more suitable: 1) To find out their respective talents and tastes so as to send them to communities best fitted for them. If there were one or the other whom God seemed to have formed for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, we would take them. We might even take them all if it were sufficiently evident that all had a vocation; 2) If there are some without sufficient indication of a vocation to the religious life who would nevertheless want to separate themselves from the world, why could they not remain living and working together? Are there not many examples of this among the members of both sexes?

It is evident, after these reflections, that the trip to the Rev. Capuchin Father would seem worse than useless. If Father Perrey is of a humble and submissive character, however hotheaded, it would be possible to employ him in important works. Always supposing these dispositions, I would be glad to see him come. . . . Without judging of the fact in itself—i.e., the things you said to me—he does not displease me, especially considering his age at this time. These very things presuppose a highly sensitive soul, one blessed with, as one would say, a capacity to rebound.

You may bring along the young philosopher of the diocese of Bâle if he has sufficiently succeeded in his studies, but he would need an *exeat*. The bishop of Bâle could allow it conditionally, as he would be staying in the Institute, as with the three *exeats* given by His Lordship the Bishop of Strasbourg. Besides, Father Perrey could definitely inform you of his ability and his dispositions. Also, bring along Father Thuet's young nephew if you think that we can make a good subject out of him. I think his uncle will be able to get an *exeat* for him without difficulty. As regards the nineteen-year-old man, let things remain as they are until we see later what progress he has made. We will then be in a better position to judge whether he would be suitable for us. At nineteen years of age, it is starting rather late, especially after not having been previously instructed. Might he possibly succeed better among the schoolteachers? In rereading your letter, I see that this young man is to go to Saint Remy to undergo a period of probation of one or two months. But you will not be there, as you have to leave in the month of September, as you led me to hope you would.

I did nothing with the president of the University as regards the nomination of Brother Rothéa for the principalship of a school in Saint Remy. It is not up to me to initiate such a matter. Brother Rothéa must ask the rector of the Besançon Academy to obtain a diploma for him so that he can exercise the functions of principal. If the title of Principal creates any difficulty, he can simply be called Master of the Boarding School—whatever the rector would determine. If the rector has the kindness to explain to His Excellency the President what Saint Remy actually is, who Brother Rothéa is, and the great usefulness of the establishment of a secondary school, there is no doubt he will obtain it. If any difficulty should arise in the offices of the president, or should there be too long a delay, I would do what I did for Father Collineau, I would write him. However, until there is an agreement between us and the University, I think we must leave things about as they are. The protection of the inspector general, who was consulted and who knows Saint Remy, might

be invoked if the rector judges it suitable. Once the rector has promised to ask for the diploma, you will not have to wait for the answer. Everything will be taken care of between him and Father Rothéa. I would be very much flattered to correspond with the rector if Father Rothéa thought it of any use.

If your former school fellow is of a character that is congenial to the spirit and the practices of Saint Remy, I would be pleased to see him go there to make use of his talents by teaching. It would be right to come to the help of his mother. It would be a useful agreement for all concerned if the establishment would take care of her and of Father Farine's sister. With wisdom and energy, study the best way of arranging everything.

Then Father Farine would find himself free to act on his own.[1] Why wouldn't he himself make a new effort to come with you? Brother David told me the counsels he had given him, which all bore on the fact of his staying where he is. These counsels sound sensible, but I don't like them. I always say to myself, whatever God inspires must be done. One must always be faithful to his vocation. Who knows if God is not calling him to France, precisely to procure from the deputy sheriff of Porrentruy and from the canton of Berne aid which will cause the Catholic religion to flourish? As for himself, why does he not bolster up the bishop's courage? Is it not a great deal to have truth on one's side? I understand that if there is question of bringing along Fathers Farine and Perrey, the young philosopher, etc., your return may be delayed. You must then act as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

I am sending Father Breuillot the proposal for Marast. I think we must let the matter stand as it is. I think that what M. Brézard is doing is touching. I shall pray to the Blessed Virgin that she may reward him for his goodness toward her children.

I am stopping now so that this letter may leave by today's mail. I shall, however, continue it very soon. Tell all our good Brothers at Saint Remy that I carry them all in my heart and that I love them all tenderly as my children. May the fatherly blessing I am now giving you, my dear son, in all the effusion of my heart, also come upon Brother Clouzet, Brother Rothéa, Brother Gaussens, and upon all the others in abundance!

William Joseph Chaminade

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Having returned to Bordeaux and assailed, as usual, by the everincreasing number and importance of his affairs, Father Chaminade had received from Brother Auguste and Father Lalanne, his two firstborn sons, a disquieting letter about the progress of the Institute.

[1] See Letter 275.

"No working together, no concerted action" they said, "no deliberations in common, everything resting on one man (however capable he might be), embarrassed by a thousand cares, tired out by his labors, slowed down by the weight of years. . . . This man has been chosen by God, it is true, to establish the Institute; but Moses had also been chosen, and God did not fail to warn him that he needed aids and counselors. . . ." And the letter concluded with the necessity of "giving the Superior General an administrative Council which he would be obliged to consult in all common affairs, changes, regulations, nominations, expenses, etc."

Reflections, entirely just in appearance, but which did not take sufficiently into account the difficulties inherent in all foundations and did not consider the rights of a founder.

Father Chaminade esteemed, even more than anyone else, the benefit of a Council. He had, perhaps even too much, deferred to the advice of certain of his ordinary counselors. Had he wanted to enter into detailed cases, it would have been easy for him to show how unreliable the suggestion of Brother Auguste and Father Lalanne was at this time.

He contented himself to answer by the following letter.

305 – BROTHER AUGUSTE AND
FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, August 3, 1824

On the whole, my dear children, your letter pleased me, both because it was dictated by a good spirit and because it was a new proof of attachment to the state to which God has called you. My answer will be short.

It seems to me, my dear children, that you confound the prerogatives of a founder or schoolmaster with those of a Superior General who might succeed him. From this observation, I am in no way concluding that I have no need of counsel or that I should do everything myself. No, my dear children, I sincerely desire and very ardently want you to come to my assistance, but to what a degree can you do so?

A council that would be made up of only you two? 1) Could it embrace in their entirety all the affairs of the Institute? They are perhaps a lot more numerous and difficult than you think. 2) How would you and I find all the time necessary to study and discuss them? Which one of the three of us would draw up the report?

Would you want Brother David to join us? There is no doubt that Brother David, in a big council made up of a certain number of judicious and experienced members, would be of great help. But he, third in the supposed council, would constantly domineer it. Shall I take him as a

private counselor? A still greater difficulty! I have made known to Brother Auguste the absurd pretensions he has as a counselor.

Here you have, my dear children, what I thought before receiving your letter:

1. To bring you both together as soon as possible so that we could all examine the establishment you are forming. I especially would want you to understand your relationship to all the other establishments, including those yet to be formed.

2. To bring together several priests in the house which is next to mine and to delegate all possible details.

3. To make use of Brother David in whatever capacity he may wan to serve.

If, my dear children, you see anything for me to do, I shall receive with avidity any advice or counsels you may want to give me.

In all things, let us seek but the greatest glory of God and of the Most Holy Virgin.

I embrace you tenderly.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. Have I told you that we were well received by the prefect and that I saw to it that he became acquainted with the boarding school on Rue des Menuts?

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Brother Auguste and Father Lalanne did not insist but declared themselves always ready to obey. However, they thought it their duty to recall to their Father the serious obligations of justice which fell to Brother Auguste as a result of the management of the boarding school on Rue des Menuts. Father Chaminade answered as follows:

306 – TO BROTHER AUGUSTE AND
FATHER LALANNE

Bordeaux, August 12, 1824

My dear children:

The observations which you have made would not only be conformable to the obedience which you have vowed, but they would make you live more according to its spirit. You are the firstborn sons of the Institute by your vows. You are two of the first foundation stones on which the Institute is being built, at least as far as men are concerned. How then imagine that the interest which you must be taking in your family, in your very home, would not permit you to

make observations that you think correct and useful and even to consider it a duty on your part to do so? Especially in regard to a Father who esteems and loves you so much?

Yes, my children, make all the observations that you think useful. Without fear or hesitation, give me your advice and counsels. Obedience asks of you only that you no longer adhere to your own opinion once a resolutions has been taken.

What you add at the end of your short letter concerning the position of your house, I have been crying out, and more strongly, about the same things to Brother Auguste for a long time, but my cries have done little to remedy the evil. I am glad, however, that both of you are alarmed. We can, with the grace of God and the help of our august Mother, draw ourselves out of this scrape sooner.

My dear children, I began this letter on the ninth of the present month. I wasn't any farther along when I had an interview with one of you two. We agreed that it was more suitable and more expeditious to stay in touch with one another by word of mouth, either one at a time or all together, but with honesty, sincerity, and cordiality. This is my desire and the need of my heart.

At this time, I am treating a matter which may have serious consequences for the Institute of Mary, both men and women. Although secrecy was requested, I should want to tell you about it, and I think I must do so, as to my firstborn children.[1]

I am obliged to stop. Let us keep moving toward our end, fulfilling the designs of God. But let us not be dupes of the tempter, the implacable enemy of the glory of our august Mother. You know that Satan at times transforms himself into an angel of light.

William Joseph Chaminade

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307 – TO FATHER PERREY, BESANÇON[2]

Bordeaux, August 12, 1824

Reverend Father:

I have read with attention, while elevating my soul to God, your entire letter and everything Father Caillet told me about you in the one he wrote. I seemed to understand that God was destining you to work for the glory of his name and, perhaps, even for the glory of the august Mary.

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[1] We do not know exactly what Father Chaminade is referring to. Might it refer to the entry of the Institute into Alsace or of its authorization by the government?

[2] See Letters 304, 308, 319. We do not otherwise know this young priest.

In the account you give me of the project you have in mind of going to Dijon to study civil law, I easily see the workings of the Holy Spirit; but, for the moment at least, I cannot see in it a will of God that calls for its execution. You know that among the inspirations and attractions that the Holy Spirit gives us, certain ones are meant to form our souls to good and to virtue, while others are meant to be indications of his will. . . .

I find it very hard to believe that the good God wants you to go to Dijon to study civil law, and I don't think that, if you went, you would have much success alongside the jurists of this city. However, I believe: 1) that God wants to make use of you to do the good works that are in the designs of His mercy; 2) that you would do well to dispose yourself for this mission by the practice of mental prayer and of the evangelical counsels; 3) that your ardent and hot-headed character, as you call it, would require that you put yourself under the yoke of obedience, so as not to be exposed to follow your own views instead of those of God.

It is only in the religious state that you would find the preparation that you need and the spiritual direction that your character seems to call for. The three reasons that make you doubt whether you should carry out your Dijon project would lose their force by your entry into the religious state. The first, lack of money—you won't need any. The second, the ardor of your character—obedience will restrain and direct it without suppressing it. The third, the needs of the diocese and the opposition of the superiors. This reason, strong in itself, would infallibly fall away, especially if you enter the Institute of Mary, because 1) We expect to continue the good begun in the diocese of Besançon; we desire to give it the greatest development possible, but we need subjects, laborers. Most certainly, the diocese will not miss the few subjects who will want to share our labors, since we shall even send it some new ones or surely train many more than it could ever send us. 2) Whatever need a bishop or archbishop may have of his subjects, he cannot oppose a well-decided vocation. Furthermore, we are asking only for a conditional *exeat*. If the subject, well examined and well tested, is not admitted to religious profession, he is simply obliged to go back to his diocese. I cannot think, that, according to the knowledge which your superiors must have of your views and character, you will find any obstacles to your conditional leaving of the diocese of Besançon, and I would not at all be surprised to learn that you are coming with Father Caillet.

The good which you have begun to do by your retreats will not be lost. You may come to an agreement with Father Caillet regarding the precautions to be taken.

Meditate before God upon this little letter. If it is the Spirit of God that has inspired me to write it, I hope he will deign to make you find in yourself all that I wanted to make known to you. I am so overcharged with things to do that I cannot give further development to the views I have placed before you, but the good God will make up the difference if you go to him with uprightness and simplicity, as I am happy to believe you will.

May the peace of the Lord we ever with you!

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. I am sure you won't mind my having sent this letter unsealed to Father Breuillot. I advise you to go and see him, after having read it carefully, and to receive his counsels.

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308 – TO FATHER BREUILLOT, DIRECTOR OF THE SEMINARY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, August 16, 1824

Reverend Father:

My thanks to you for your note. All that comes to me from you or through you is very agreeable to me, in whatever form it may come.

I do not believe that the surrender of the landed property of Marast could be handled better, considering the present condition of things.

If His Lordship deigns to engage the reverend pastors of his vast diocese to give so and so much to sustain, etc., it is to be presumed that the establishment at Saint Remy will acquire considerable resources in this way. In order to dispel, or at least to weaken prudently, the opinion that Father Bardenet is doing everything for this establishment, could not a wise and well-intentioned collector be chosen by the Department? All these collectors would be visited and instructed in quite a short time. This way of doing things, or any better one you may think of, would give to the invitation of His Lordship all the force it should naturally have, without wounding Father Bardenet, at least not seriously. Brother David seems to have had it in mind.

It is possible that if Brother David had had a clearer view of things, I would not have consented to this establishment. In fact, I had such strong doubts about it that, before its acquisition, I allowed Brother David to take upon himself the responsibility for making or refusing to make this acquisition. Brother David answered by complaining that I did not want to commit myself and that I was leaving everything to his own responsibility before God. Besides, Brother David, forewarned by his ideas, did not think that he should let my letters be known, although they were expressly written to be
known. . . . Providence permitted it. The same Providence inspired you with all the interest that is needed to get us out of this mess and to have us arrive at the accomplishment of its ever merciful designs. May it be forever praised!

I hope, Reverend Father, to be able to give you religious Sisters and Brothers to teach the deaf-mutes of the two sexes. Even today I conferred about it with Father Goudelin. He is willing enough to help along and this becomes easier, since today I have made the transfer of the greatest part of the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary from Agen to Bordeaux.

I take the liberty of sending you unsealed the answer I am giving Father Perrey. I would be obliged to you if you gave it to him without delay. If you think that I have come to understand him rightly, have the kindness to back up my observations and help him obtain his *exeat*. This

young priest does not seem to me too well educated. Possibly he was in too great a hurry when he wrote to me. Whatever the case may be, I think he will be able to do much good. His soul seems energetic, he has keen sensitivities and is gifted with genuine honesty and simplicity. We have great need of subjects. On all sides good things commend themselves to us but laborers are woefully lacking.

I am going to draw up your certificate of affiliation to the Institute of Mary, and I shall send it very soon to Father Caillet, to give him the satisfaction of giving it to you himself. The labors you have undertaken call for the continuation of your care and zeal. I would be loath to turn you away from them, but as the establishment of Saint Remy and the Institute of Mary in general enters into your overall plans for sustaining religion and spreading the spirit of Christianity, you will not turn away from the sentiments with which God has inspired you if you favor our works and help us gain subjects. We must hasten to set up the most powerful barriers against the torrent of philosophism that threatens to flood our unhappy country.

I am with respectful affection, etc.

William Joseph Chaminade

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About the time of the feast of the Assumption, we see the Founder entirely penetrated with hope in the protection of Mary. This is what we see in the following note to Father Caillet.

309 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, August 17, 1824

I am sending, my dear son, the two letters by the same mail and am enclosing copies to you.[1]

I have just received your two letters, of the eighth and ninth of the current month. I shall pay special attention to several matters, following your notes on them. I shall not delay writing to you, to Brother Clouzet and Father Rothéa, and also to Dubarry.

In omnibus labor a ministerium tuum imple.[2] If fear, timidity, or even defiance come close to your heart, think of the special protection of the august Mary, which entirely surrounds you. If we act alone or according to our human views, we should tremble, but. . . . Receive, once more, my dear son, the paternal blessing you asked for. In seeking the success of your labors for the establishment of Saint Remy, I desire still more for you the blessing of heaven on your personal sanctification.

William Joseph Chaminade

[1] The preceding Letters 307 and 308.
[2] Labor in all things, fulfill thy ministry (II Tim. IV, 5).

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310 – TO FATHER BREUILLOT, DIRECTOR OF THE SEMINARY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, August 18, 1824

CERTIFICATE OF AFFILIATION

We, William Joseph Chaminade, priest, Missionary Apostolic and Superior of the Institute of Mary,

Having, by the grace of the divine mercy, formed a religious establishment at Saint Remy, in the castle of the same name, Diocese of Besançon; having sent there on mission our dear Father Caillet, priest of the Institute, to consider means of developing this establishment, and putting it into the proper condition for accomplishing the good we had proposed to do there; considering the hearty welcome that Father Breuillot, Director of the Seminary of Besançon, has given to him; informed by various reports that, since last March, Father Breuillot has not ceased to show the most active interest for the increase of the Institute of Mary and the development and stability of Saint Remy; and on the good and sufficient tokens given us of his charity and zeal for the support of religion as well as his discretion and prudence in all things; we have, by these presents, signed by our hand, affiliated and do affiliate by the fact our highly honored Father Breuillot both to the Sodality established in Bordeaux under the title of the Immaculate Conception, of which we are the Director, and to the Institute of Mary, of which we are the unworthy Founder and Superior. May the above-named be a sharer in the good works, prayers, and merits of the aforesaid Institute and the Sodalities which are affiliated to it or will be in the future and, in consequence, enjoy the prerogatives suffrages, privileges, and indulgences attached to the said title of affiliation. May he, on the strength of the same title, devoutly ask God for the treasures of his grace in one of his Masses each month, on a day of his own choice, since he is dispensed of all other prayers because of his breviary and his priesthood, all in conformity with the Bulls issued by Popes Pius V, Gregory XIII, and Pius VII.

Given in Bordeaux, August 18, 1824, under the countersignature of our Secretary.

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Father Chaminade sends counsels and directions to the superioress of the new foundation in Condom.

311 – TO MOTHER OF THE INCARNATION, CONDOM

Bordeaux, August 22, 1824

I have received, my dear daughter, your letter of August seventeenth, and I am glad to share the solicitude which your new charge calls for. I shall aid you all I can in bearing the weight. . . .

The classes will be better beside the garden because of the accessibility of the children's toilets and the chapel. Besides, they will be closer to the city. Have no fear about making the necessary expense to keep these places in good condition and well adapted for the supervision of the children. They also should be located to facilitate the entry and dismissal of classes, etc. . . . It is to be presumed that the classes will be there a long time, perhaps always, because it seems to me rather difficult to put them somewhere else. I don't see very clearly what you say regarding the connecting passages from the toilets to the two classrooms. Look into the matter.

Although your 1500 francs are not sufficient for suitable repairs, do not neglect to make them. It is to be presumed that several workmen will be looking forward to the job. If at the times agreed upon, payments are due and you find no means to pay with, you might borrow what you need. Have no fear. Do just what is suitable, and Providence will come to your aid. It is not your work that you are doing. It is God's. . . .

I have wanted to write you all, especially Mother Emmanuel and Mother of the Visitation. It is even for this reason that I am writing you on a simple sheet of paper. But writing to you all is not possible for the moment.

Recommend to everyone the fraternal union that inspires charity. Let no one be so wedded to his own opinion as to trouble this union. You will prosper and God will bless your establishment if your union of hearts and souls is never altered.

Confidence, we might say, does not come at will. It is true, in general, that confidence cannot be taught; but the good God does not fail to inspire it in humble and docile souls regarding the superiors he deigns to give them. The administration of communities would become impossible if the superiors were obliged to consult the tastes and inclinations of each religious. We believe that the office heads have a particular grace for the good performance of their duties. If they render themselves unworthy of this grace by some infidelity or if the administration had chosen incapable subjects, the subordinates should judge neither of their lack of dignity nor of their incapacity, but obey with simplicity in a spirit of faith. Saint Thérèse gained much by consulting and obeying her first confessors in spite of the fact that they were ignorant.

My dear daughter, do not be anxious. Never has any superioress had more assurance of her election by order of God, but this assurance does not dispense you from acquiring the qualities that you lack and from correcting the defects that would hamper the exercise of your duties. Be the good and tender Mother of all your daughters. Watch unceasingly, not only over their well-being and their advancements in virtues, but also over whatever concerns their health. May your firmness and your exactitude in having the Rule observed be always tempered by mildness, patience, and charity. Often read the chapter in the Constitutions which relates to the superioress. You might, in particular, cooperate with the Mother of Zeal as if you were a simple religious, but, nevertheless, not in a way that would indicate that she was running the community

through you. In her regard, there should hardly be question of anything but what is personal to you in the spiritual order.

I hope, my dear daughter, that you will soon have reason to give me the consolation of learning that peace, order, union of minds and hearts, and humble charity reign at Piétat. I ask the Lord to bless you, to bless our dear Daughters at Condom and all the works that you and they undertake for his glory and that of his august Mother.

William Joseph Chaminade

P.S. It must not be forgotten that the patronal feast of the Institute of Mary is the feast of the Most Holy Name of Mary, which falls on the Sunday within the octave of the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.

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New letters to Saint Remy. In the letter of August 26 are found precious counsels about spiritual direction.

312 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 26, 1824

You have reason to believe, my dear son, that the multitude of my occupations, constantly pressing and never ending, is the only reason for my long delay in writing to Saint Remy.

I put in only twenty-one days in my round of visits to the Haut-pays, but the good God has deigned to bestow blessings on all my efforts. The four establishments of the Daughters of Mary are doing quite well: they are in Agen, Tonneins, Condom, and Bordeaux.

I also render thanks to God for the blessings he is bestowing upon your labors. You seem to tell me that you are unable to find any cause for them. I believe I see reasons in Father Caillet’s submission and spirit of faith. I see them also in the patience, the resignation, and the confidence that you have maintained in the obstacles and privations you have encountered ever since your arrival at Saint Remy.

I surely want you to be prudent, for prudence, is as it were, the first requisite in a superior; but I desire that your prudence direct itself in the torch of faith even as it also makes use of the lights of reason. “Human views,” says the Holy Spirit, “are timid and uncertain.”

Do everything that depends on you to gain complete peace, and sustain yourself by this. In everything, seek only God and his good pleasure. The more you are occupied, the more you have need of entering into yourself. Do it at least at the time of the principal actions of the morning and afternoon. And, so that this practice may produce its full effect recollect yourself

profoundly at each principal action, setting aside for one, two, or even three minutes every other thought or sentiment. Moderate your natural activity and hope that everything will go well.

Have a great openness of soul with Father Caillet. If he doesn't happen to have all the qualities you might desire to see in him, remember that the good God has sent him to you. He certainly has the grace of his state. I am not making this a matter of obligation for you. I am simply holding to the old saying that confidence is not a thing to be bought. However, my dear son, reason enlightened by the lights of faith must, in certain circumstances, make us triumph over certain natural repugnances and even place us above several inconveniences that we believe we see. It would be regrettable for you, in the order of your sanctification, if your position were to prevent you from enjoying the divine favor accorded to everyone else. But no, things are not this way. The spirit of submission and humility will diminish your authority if your subordinates have in you a model of the same sentiments that should enliven them. If there were minds so badly disposed as to draw from this some embarrassing consequence, the harm would be all on their side. You would in no way be responsible.

Furthermore, I notice that you can do without Father Caillet in a few days. You must seriously think of letting him go. I am very hopeful I can send you some other priest, but Father Caillet is in Saint Remy only on a particular mission. I sent him there only to set in place the works this establishment is capable of, to procure friends and protectors for it, to arrange for needed repairs, etc., for the cultivation of the arable land, etc., and especially to reinvigorate the sprit of the Institute in everyone there. If, to wait there for some subjects he could bring along or to close some important deal, he may need a few more days, I have no objection, but let the delay not go beyond the month of September. He must be induced, and helped if you can do so, to leave as soon as possible. I cannot write him by this mail, but then you might let him know the message contained in this letter. I am going to continue it on the other sheet, because there is only a half-hour until mailing time. Besides, as usual, it must be inscribed in the secretariat.

The continuation of the letter.

M. Laborde, the uncle, fifty-eight years old but still strong enough and in fairly good health, has accepted the direction of the classes in the secondary school. He can teach the highest classes and could honorably occupy the post of disciplinarian. He knows mathematics and in particular all about the theoretic side of land surveying. I have hired him to go and practice it on the property with a good surveyor, etc. Besides, you know his piety and virtue. He will easily conform himself to the religious exercises of the community. I have let him know he has somewhat tested himself in the establishment. He must go to Paris to have his books printed. The first two parts are entirely finished. It is the complete word-for-word translation of Virgil in the unique style of the French language. He wants to have printed the Bucoliques and the Georgiques first. The Enéide is not yet finished. He will leave Paris for Saint Remy around the fifteenth or twentieth of October. I shall come back upon M. Laborde as we get closer to the time of his departure from Bordeaux.

You will not forget, my dear son, to have the feast of the Institute of Mary duly celebrated this year. It falls on the twelfth of September this year and is always set down for the Sunday within the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. I think that you have had

permission from His Excellency the Archbishop of Besançon to celebrate it once last year. I sent the regulation about it to Brother David. He must have communicated it to you, although I have never heard another word about the matter. It will be celebrated in our other establishments of men and of women.

I am stopping now, but I shall continue with another letter for the next mail. I embrace you tenderly as well as all the other members of my dear family at Saint Remy.

William Joseph Chaminade

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313 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 28, 1824

I am now continuing, my dear son, my letter of the twenty-sixth of the present month, as I promised you I would.

I understand that your normal school has done well these past three months, and I am grateful to God for it. This is all the more interesting because it bears close connection with the retreats. Give Father Caillet all the notes that you can about primary teaching. As soon as our Brothers of Agen and Villeneuve have arrived, we shall have conferences, however occupied I may be, on the method we have adopted from the beginning. Each one will take part, relating his experience, and Father Caillet will give everyone the benefit of his notes.[1] I take it for granted that he will have read them well and that you will have helped him along from the practical side. In these conferences, it is necessary that he represent you and Brother Gaussens. We shall re-edit the Method the best way we can. In this manner, it will secure some measure of improvement and become the one to be followed at the time of the reopening of the classes. I shall see to it that you get an extract of it. Perhaps I shall send it to you with Brother Tissier because I feel that you still need some trustworthy person either for the normal school or for the primary boarding school. His health is holding out fairly well, and he conducts himself tolerably well. Still I am but little satisfied with the progress he is making in virtue, especially in religious humility. It is possibly my fault, finding myself more frequently with him and so in a better position to observe and instruct. In any case, I shall have him assist at the conferences. I understood by Method not only the eleven points that Brother Gaussens has treated during the teachers' retreat, but also the manner of keeping the registers, of exciting emulation, of controlling the beginning and ending of classes, the beginning and end of the school year, etc. . . .

It seems to me, my dear son, that the roof of the château ought to be included among the most urgent repairs, especially where falling rain drips into the inside of the building. I was told last year that there was only one damaged spot. Perhaps this wasn't even in the château but in the warehouse. I'm sure you haven't received any money from here, but I shall continue, directly or indirectly, through Father Caillet or with him when he is here, to have some sent to Saint Remy. Without fear and in a spirit of faith, make all the expenses necessary for the maintenance of the

[1] See *The Spirit of Our Foundation, III, No. 251*.

works Providence has confided to you. The most urgent repairs on the buildings and on the enclosure walls are to be included as also the cultivation of the parts of the property that are likely to produce revenue. I am not complaining, but my position here is a lot worse than yours . . . What surprises me is that neither you nor Father Caillet mention clothing, and by this I mean the clothing for the entire community. I had expressly recommended to Father Caillet articles of clothing and linen. Surely I want you to practice poverty, to keep nothing for individual use except, of course, for what is understood to be for common use. But let there be at least enough in winter for protection against the severe cold and also for the maintenance of neatness.

I was at this point in my letter when the Alsatian weaver arrived. He is quite obliging by his modesty. He admitted that he should not have left incognito without having made you an acknowledgement. He boarded the coach a day after it had left Lyons. Brother Auguste paid the fare.

I am writing a few lines to Brother Dubarry. I am including the note in your letter. You will tell me of its effect upon him. Although he seems more guilty than Brother Pascal, I nevertheless have a little more confidence in him as far as correction is concerned. It seems to me that he has a little less self-sufficiency.

I am concluding this letter in the sacristy. I prefer to have it leave after it is half finished than to be endlessly delayed in reaching the conclusion.

Let Father Caillet know whatever may be of interest to him. Let there be complete union between you two! Do whatever is possible that he may leave in September at the latest. I shall write him shortly to tell him what he is to do en route. Whatever need there might be for his passing through Paris, I think I shall decide on having him come by way of Lyons.

I cordially embrace all of your community at Saint Remy.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following letters bring us back to Alsace where the foundation in Colmar is to take place. The letter of September fifteenth is the official acceptance of the direction of the schools of this city.

314 – TO BARON DE MULLER,
MAYOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, September 15, 1824

Honorable Mayor: I have received your letter dated the second of the current month in which you say that your municipal Council has unanimously adhered to your wish to substitute Brothers of the Institute of Mary for the former teachers of your city. I understand the Council settled upon the salary to be paid to the four Brothers as well as upon the sum necessary for the first reopening of classes.

I accept, Your Honor, the offer which you have the kindness to make me. I shall send the Brothers once I am sure the quarters are ready for them. I think that ought to be around All Saints Day.

You would like me to send Brother Louis Rothéa to speed up the arrangements. I think, Honorable Mayor, I can cooperate more closely with your views by asking the head of our establishment at Saint Remy to go himself or to send someone else to judge the arrangements to be made. This way things will move faster, and Brother Rothéa will not have to be separated from the Brothers who are to leave from here.

For a long time now, Honorable Mayor, I have heard of your personal merit as well as of the wisdom of your administration. This is what has induced me to accept the establishment at Colmar, so far from here. I have no fear of sending my four young religious if you deign to take them under your protection. My solicitude for them will not surprise you once you understand that the Institute of Mary is only one large family, of which I am the father much more than the superior.

I am with respectful consideration, Honorable Mayor, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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315 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 20, 1824

My dear son,

I received both your letter and Father Caillet's dated September 11.

You know of the official request presented by the mayor of Colmar and Father Maimbourg, pastor also of Colmar. Each want Brother Rothéa to be head of the schools. They also want me to send him ahead to make the arrangements necessary for the coming reopening of classes. In answering the mayor and accepting the establishment on the conditions proposed by the municipal Council, I told him that I believed I could enter more thoroughly into his views by requesting the head of the establishment at Saint Remy either to go himself or to send someone else to look after all the arrangements needed by the schools of Colmar. Consequently, I asked Brother Rothéa to make some notes. I am sending them to you with this letter. These notes seem to me to include a certain number of things that the Brothers of the little group can procure for themselves on their arrival. I believe that if you can go there yourself, that would be better than sending Brother Gaussens. Since the establishment must depend upon Saint Remy in very many respects, it seems suitable that you should see the necessary personnel as well as the location. You may wish to give some advice, etc.

Brother Rothéa will leave from here only after the retreat, which is to begin October 17th. This presumes, however, that you can inform me adequately about the necessary preparations for the opening of the Colmar schools after All Saints Day. I think it is very prudent not to send the young Brothers alone on such a long journey. Brother Rothéa has, I think, already begun his charts for German. He showed them to be yesterday.

The schools of Agen and Villeneuve have done very well this year. The Brothers are now all together in Villeneuve to take their notes on the Method. We shall compare these with what you gave to Father Caillet. We shall give several conferences, as I have already remarked, for, etc. . . . They will all be here by the end of the week.

If there is still time, my dear son, I would like a copy of the titles for the Saint Remy property, such for example as the sales contract. It think I have already asked you for a copy of the verbal report of your installation, with the accompanying reports, what is copied in the register, etc. . . .

I shall do what I can, my dear son, to make up as much as possible for Father Caillet's absence. I understand your need for several priests, especially after the winter season. I have always said that Father Caillet was there only for a special mission. It is very possible that I shall send him back to you if I cannot send other priests in time for the schoolteachers' retreats.

Possess your soul, my dear son, and you will be master in your patience, said our Lord to his Apostles. . . .

While writing Father Caillet and sending him my notes for Lyons and Saint Etienne, I forgot a letter of recommendation for M. Duplay. I am including it in this one. If there is still time, give it to him.

My dear son, my heart would like to tell you many things, but there is no time. It is already half past ten in the evening and there still remains many other things to do. Keep up the spirit of your Brothers young and old, whom I love as my children. I shall try to write Father Rothéa very shortly. I commend to his zeal as well as to yours the advancement of everyone in virtue.

May the Lord deign to grant to you all his abundant blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following notes mentioned in the letter we have just read are interesting. They refer to the material conditions of a primary school at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

NOTES RELATING TO THE PRIMARY SCHOOL TO BE STARTED IN COLMAR.

The pupils of this school numbering from 400 to 500, the following is necessary:

1. A place for the classes and playground space;

2. A dwelling place for the Brothers and their help;

3. Furniture and equipment for the said classes;

4. Furniture for the teachers.

The pupils' quarters: It is desirable that these be made up of four or five classrooms, separated by a hallway.

1. The big classrooms 50 feet long by 20 wide; large enough to contain 100 to 120 pupils, their benches, writing tables, suitable aisles at both ends, and the teacher's platform and desk.

2. The second classroom 40 feet long by 20 wide; the third classroom also 40 feet long by 20 wide; the fourth 20 feet long by 20 wide; the fifth, divided into two, 25 feet long by 20 wide.

3. A parlor on the ground floor.

4. Toilets, divided by stalls and ease of surveillance.

Note. It is desirable that the doors of the classrooms be glass double-doors and open in such a way that a teacher may, from his own room, see the teacher who is facing or alongside him; the windows as large as possible and in two movable parts; the yard as large as possible so as to provide room for assembling all the pupils, and in direct contact with the classrooms.

The house for the Brothers and their help:

1. An oratory;

2. A room to receive visitors;

3. A room for work and study;

4. A dormitory with place for at least six beds;

5. A little kitchen;

6. A refectory;

7. An attic and some sheds for firewood and the storing of wine and other provisions;

8. A little garden. It would be desirable that the quarters destined either for the classes or for the teachers be adjoining so as to be of easy access and forming one complete whole.

Furniture for the classes: 20 writing tables, each one about eight feet long with the larger part slightly inclined in the form of a desk to facilitate writing, the upper and smaller part level, every second one equipped with lead inkwells, sunk so as to be level with the table top, all of them painted in a dark color.

The benches are to hold 10 children, to be solid and comfortable, of varying heights and sufficient in number; 20 ordinary stools, furnished with straw; a sufficient number of little kneeling stools for use at Holy Mass, each affording five or six places, their positions in the church to arranged with the Rev. Pastor.

A platform with a suitable step and a writing table for only the teachers of the big class. For the other classes, only a chair five or six feet high. A long, low bench in front of the blackboard for use by the smaller children and proportionate to their size. The first class’s should be at least four feet long by five wide.

Twenty charts—10 for French and 10 for German, mostly out of very thin and light wood, on which the teachers can pin or paste letters, syllables, and words, made or painted in large size. These charts, or would-be bulletin boards, could be three feet, four inches long and two feet four inches wide, with a long, low stool in front of them in each small class.

A clay stove for each class, preferably of cast iron. Four silver crosses as awards, with their chains, one for each class.

Six crucifixes, either in wood or plaster; book-size pictures, colored with a brush; rosaries.

Sprinkling cans, brooms, hot-water bottles, tin cups. Some diocesan catechisms; bibles; Psalms of David; Imitations of Christ; Epistles and Gospels; French and German grammars; half of these books in French and the other half in German; pictures and little books to be distributed among the pupils.

Furniture for the teachers: Bed boards, mattresses, bolsters, woolen blankets, straw mattresses, and curtains necessary for every bed. Tables, cupboards, chairs, water containers, kitchen equipment, table accessories. Sixteen bed sheets, 24 napkins, 24 towels, 6 tablecloths, 24 aprons.

The city will provide, according to the various customs of the region, certain articles of furniture. The name, shape, and purpose escape at present, but it would be in place to mention them here.

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Only one or two other business notes remain from the last months of 1824 along with the two following obediences.

316 – TO BROTHER TROFFER,
VILLENEUVE-SUR-LOT

Bordeaux, October 20, 1824

OBEDIENCE

Our dear son Brother Theodore Troffer is chosen to form part of the little group of Brothers that I promised to the mayor and to the Rev. Pastor of Colmar, after having assured ourselves of the consent of His Lordship the Bishop of Strasbourg.

We are putting him under obedience to Brother Louis Rothéa, already named director of the Brothers who are in or who will be sent to this capital of the Upper Rhine. All matters concerning his travel will be subject to the orders and supervision of his new director. We hope that he will conduct himself as a true religious and worthy child of the Institute of Mary.

Given at Bordeaux, October 20, 1824, written and signed by our hand.

William Joseph Chaminade

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317 – TO BROTHER TISSIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 24, 1824

OBEDIENCE

Ad majorem Dei gloriam Virginisque Deiparae.

My dear son Brother Tissier will go immediately to Agen, where several of his colleagues have fallen ill. He will put himself at the disposal of Brother Moulinié, head of the schools of this city.[1]

The latter, having an understanding with Father Collineau, principal of the Collège of Villeneuve-sur-Lot, and Brother Armenaud the Younger, head of the schools of this city, will be able to exchange him for one of the Brothers of Villeneuve, according to the report of his needs.

Given at Bordeaux, November 24, 1824

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Brother Tissier went to Agen but remained there only a short time, for by the month of March he had resumed his functions as secretary of Father Chaminade.

[1] Bro. Moulinié was director of the schools of Agen during the years 1824-25.

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The year 1825 opens with a very important letter to the bishop of Strasbourg, relative to a fusion between the Brothers of Father Mertian and the Society of Mary. (See Letter 212).

318 – TO BISHOP THARIN,
BISHOP OF STRASBOURG

Bordeaux, January 4, 1825

YOUR LORDSHIP

I had hardly received the letter with which you deigned to honor me, dated last November 15th, when I hastened to look over my correspondence with Father Mertian.

What is essential in this correspondence is a long letter from Father Mertian in which he proposes to me a union of his Congregation of Brothers with the Institute of Mary. Although at first it seemed that the projected union was to be, so to say, just a fusion of one into the other, with the charge upon us of running the schools of all Alsace, he nevertheless proposed to me 23 conditions.

I was quite astonished, Your Lordship, not to find my answer joined to this letter of Father Mertian's. In vain I looked for it in all the files of my secretariat. At the present moment, I find myself without a secretary, without even a subsecretary. It has pleased Providence to afflict most of our establishments of the South with serious illnesses so that I just had to send help. Father Caillet saw a copy of this letter in Saint Remy. If it became necessary, we might find it there.

To make up for the lack of it I shall, Your Lordship, make a short analysis of its contents from memory so as to put no obstacle in the way of the projected and desired union.

I am placing all the observations I made under three principal headings. They refer as much to the Statutes of Father Mertian's Brothers as to the 23 conditions for union. One of these related to the nomination of superiors by the bishops, a second to the sending of one or two Brothers to the small communities, the third referred to the Brother sacristans, organists, etc.

As to the main head, I observed to him that the General Administration would be handicapped if the superiors were not named or chosen by the Institute. Named if the Institute could dispose of one of its priests. Chosen if it were obliged to make use of some secular priest, which would but rarely occur. I added that both kinds of appointments would always be presented to the diocesan bishop for approbation if he judged the candidates worthy, etc., that furthermore, the bishops were the first superiors of all our establishments, both by their office and by the Constitutions of the Institute of Mary. I begged Father Mertian to be kind enough, in spite of the union, to continue to exercise the functions of superior during his entire lifetime. How could the bishop of a diocese know the religious of the Institute who might be qualified and in every way fitted to exercise this kind of function? How could the secular priest he might name

direct the religious? With what confidence would he inspire them unless he happened to find someone like Father Mertian, etc.

On the second article, Your Lordship, I feel that I must have expressed myself rather strongly. To send to the little communities a single religious, sometimes two, but who are ordinarily very young men . . . I cannot imagine how love for the good can give rise to an illusion to the point of believing that it is possible, without inconvenience of any kind, to send one or two very young religious alone into the smallest territorial districts. To do a good of some days duration, is it not evidently endangering these young men? Is it not endangering the entire group of Brothers, without speaking of the scandals that might result?

What would it be, Your Lordship, if this young Brother was a sacristan, an organist, a singer, etc.? Would it not be adding to all the inconveniences already foreseen and bringing discredit upon the religious and upon the entire body to which he belongs? Who are the young men of honorable families, those with some education, who would then embrace the religious state? And then, of what would the entire organization of the Brother teachers be composed?

Last summer, before the holding of the general Councils of the Departments, a counselor of the Prefecture of Lot-et-Garonne wrote to me that some prospectuses of another institute of Brothers had just been received, and one that follows the same principles as Father Mertian's, and that he was fearing it would be preferred to the Institute of Mary because it seemed more advantageous. I immediately made a little note of it, to be given to the prefect of the Department. No one dared to speak any more of it.[1]

The views of Father de Lamennais, of Father Mertian, and of several other persons distinguished by several kinds of merits, are at first fascinating, but they are without solidity, just as the foundations and establishments that are founded upon them. I have been assured that Father Mertian considered an establishment simply the sending of a Brother or even of a Sister to a parish. I have seen here some letters of a Sister of Providence of your diocese, but not of the congregation of Father Mertian, who was lodged and taught school in an inn. What idea do we want the present generation to adopt, as regards the religious state, after all that philosophy has uttered against it, before and after the Revolution?

As Father Mertian was leaving to us the interior organization of the houses and the formation of the subjects, I did not think I should push my observations any further, in order not to hinder in any way a union from which there could result so much good for your vast diocese. I have no illusion about the uprightness of Father Mertian's views. He wants to bring about immediately the reform of all the country villages by the Christian education of children of the people. Another Instructor, a very serious person told me, is going still further. The Brothers will be able to watch over the pastors,[1] lodging with them and rendering them all kinds of services in return for the food they will receive.

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[1] See Letter 238.

[1] The copy we are reproducing must be in error, and the text of Father Chaminade was doubtless intended to read "will be able to be watched over by the pastors."

These plans are admirable in theory, but I cannot see how they can be put into practice without the most serious inconveniences. If God deigns to continue to shower his blessings on the Institute of Mary, shall we not have as happy results without any fear for the particular society of the Brothers destined for the schools? The institutions of the normal schools for the young teachers and the retreats for the older ones, established for one or several Departments in agreement with all the authorities—would not these doings, which are being done at Saint Remy be hastening an earlier regeneration of the people? Would they not be more solid? Is it not to be hoped that the Government would come to the point of adopting and sustaining such simple institutions, based on principles that assure their stability?

I desire, Your Lordship, these institutions, these kinds of establishments for the Institute of Mary, but solely according to the grace and the lights which God is pleased to give me. I must admit that from the natural point of view, I fear them. And so I do not anticipate. I found no change in my soul when I learned of Father Mertian's refusal, but I was surprised that he did not answer me.

I have the honor of being with profound respect, etc. . . .

William Joseph Chaminade

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A new letter to Father Perrey. (See Letter 307).

319 – TO FATHER PERREY, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, January 5, 1825

Since the reception of your last letter, my dear son, there were few days on which I did not think of answering you. Providence has allowed that I never found the necessary time until this moment.

Your little establishments for girls in the country places would please me much if they were better organized, if they had deeper foundations, if they were, in some way, connected with other establishments capable of sustaining them, etc. . . . Yesterday, for example, I adopted one that is being formed in Montfort in the diocese of Auch, but only on condition that a community of the Third Order regular of the Institute of Mary would be organized there, which would always be subordinated to its superiors and dependent upon the Daughters of Mary, etc. . . . For want of these precautions, suggested by wisdom, you are running the risk of doing nothing solid or worthwhile. You might even see some of these establishments really doing more harm than good. It could also happen that these little establishments would harm others, better organized and more suited to the reformation of the country districts.

I bless the Lord for having inspired you with still more zeal for the meetings of the men who would be working both at their own sanctification and at that of their fellow men, but this part is still more difficult than the first, at least if it is to be done on a big scale. Although I

believe that it is the spirit of God that inspires you with these works of zeal, I find it hard to believe that his inspiration has all the necessary characteristics of a vocation, at least for the present, to the state you might have in mind.

Thus, my dear son, I am confirming the answer I gave you in your first consultation. This second conversation makes me see a lot better your need of doing apostolic work, only under competent direction. Even the prophets were submissive to other prophets.

I must have indicated to you in my first letter that the first meetings you were conducting should not be abandoned, but that you should take counsel with Father Caillet about the means of supporting them. Later, we could think about how to develop and consolidate them. I still cannot see the matter in any other light.

You seemed to me to think the same way, if I am to judge from your letter and from what Father Breuillot had the kindness to write about you. How could both of us have been mistaken? How would the chance of forming a little gathering of four persons in a parish by breaking up a gathering of eleven—I say, how would that prove that you were not called to the Institute of Mary? If you don't have any other motives than those which you mention in your last letter, it will be easy for you to see, but in the presence of God, that those motives which you allege against this vocation are but new proofs of this vocation.

I wish, my dear son, that the superiors of the diocese had not had the occasion of noticing your vacillation. Everything could have been kept simpler between us had you been prudent enough to say nothing about it to anybody.

Before God, my dear son, see if you still persevere in believing your vocation to the Institute of Mary divine. Supposing the answer to be affirmative, as I hope it will be, write to tell me so definitely. In the meantime, continue to acquit yourself well of the functions confided to you at the school.[1] Declare yourself at the archbishop's palace and ask for your *exeat*. I shall write myself to help your cause.

You know that at Saint Remy we are to give a retreat to the teachers sometime after Easter. Since I propose to visit this establishment this year, I would pass by Besançon at the suitable time. I would take you along with me. You could help me in giving this retreat, etc. . . .

If in the meantime, my dear son, you find subjects worthy of entering into the privileged family of the august Mary, I shall be glad to see them at the time of my stop in Besançon. Perhaps, I might take them along if they were free. Your brother, for example, although still in the seminary, and the priest you were planning to train for apostolic work, etc. . . .

May the spirit of the Lord, my dear son, deign to enlighten and enliven you!

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] At École, no doubt, a little place near Besançon, seat of the Diocesan Missionaries.

Father Perrey did not decide to enter the Institute, and we are ignorant of what happened to his projects.

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At the end of the business notes that Father Chaminade exchanged with Brother David daily, he added on January 9 the following lines, a token of the goodness of his heart toward his disciple, who was always uneasy.

320 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER,
BESANÇON

Bordeaux, January 9, 1825

I have had, my dear son, quite extensive interviews with Father Lalanne about you, and I am certainly very glad about your good dispositions. Nothing would be easier than for us to come to an agreement and to work together for the glory of the Lord and that of his august Mother. May that one of us who finds something wrong in the other pardon him with a good heart and henceforth reject even the slightest remembrance of it as a harassing temptation. Let us busy ourselves only with the future.

If you think you have need of some kind of pardon, I grant it to you most sincerely. If I have crossed you inopportunely, if I have used my authority unwisely, pardon me as sincerely as I am pardoning you.

Mainly two great motives must lead us to this reciprocal pardon: the uprightness of our views and intentions (that we must take for granted as having always existed on both sides) and the serious inconveniences which result form our lack of agreement and from your almost complete lack of cooperation in the work of God. If you do not agree to this, I shall complain of it to God and make you responsible for all the evils that will result from your refusal as well as for all the sorrows you will be bringing upon your Good Father.

I would have believed, my dear son, that with a good and honest will to help me in my labors, you would have done well to come and live with me.[1]

May the Holy Spirit deign to communicate to you the ideas and sentiments you need for the happy ending of this difficulty.

William Joseph Chaminade

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[1] Bro. David was always living in Bro. Auguste's boarding school. Father Chaminade had invited him to come and stay rather at the Madeleine. He did come there later on and remained there until his death.

Another interesting note addressed to Saint Remy after the return of Father Caillet to Bordeaux.

321 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 18, 1825

You have found, my dear son, a good lawyer in Father Caillet for your Saint Remy. I see with pleasure that he has entered into everything, just as you have done. It is now up to me to take care not to allow myself to be drawn along too far by my tender affection for this establishment and more particularly for the one who has so completely devoted himself to its prosperous development.

I was happy to receive the tokens of affection expressed by the entire community as well as the many good wishes offered me at the beginning of the New Year. It is you, my dear son, and Father Rothéa who have inspired, at least in the new members, these tender sentiments and who make of them just that many adopted children. If they have the desire to see their Good Father, tell them that this same Good Father just as ardently desires to go and see them, that he has no fear of the dangers and fatigues of the journey in spite of his gray hairs and the weight of years, that he is withheld only by the order of Providence, whose designs he must always consult. . . .

I have not forgotten that I owe Brother Galliot an answer. [2] If there had been urgency he would have already received it. Let him take courage and keep on going forward. I hope not to delay too much in writing him. I also owe a letter to my dear son Brother Rothéa. Oh! what creditors in the matter of letters and answers! I am, as it were, an insolvent debtor! Happily, Father Caillet defends and takes my place as much as he can.

May the Lord shower upon all my children of Saint Remy and upon their head his most abundant blessings!

William Joseph Chaminade

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[2] Brother Pierre Galliot (1798-1872) born in Chemaudin, Doubs, was one of the first postulants who entered in St. Remy, 1823. in his long religious career, he was employed as professor, director, and especially as econome in the houses of Franche-Comté and Alsace, principally in St. Hippolyte, Courtefontaine, and Marast. He was the founder and organizer of Marast, where he died. He left behind the memory of a religious of the old stock—good, honest, faithful, devoted heart and soul to the Society, never frightened or troubled in the face of difficulties, firm in his principles, of a profound spirit of faith and of great confidence, above all in the most holy Virgin. God put the seal of his holiness in trying him, during his last years, by a long and painful illness, in the midst of which there was never heard from his lips the slightest complaint. He sought all his strength in prayer and offered himself to God as sacrifice for the salvation of souls.

Here are the instructions given by Father Chaminade to his two societies on the occasion of the Lent of 1825. They are the first Circular of the Founder to his children.

322 – TO THE INSTITUTE OF MARY

Bordeaux, February 6, 1825

DIRECTIONS CONCERNING THE FAST AND ABSTINENCE, PARTICULARY FOR THE HOLY TIME OF LENT, IN THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES OF THE INSTITUTE OF MARY.

1. The religious communities being vowed by their state to the practice of penance, the laws of the Church on this point must be more exactly observed than anywhere else. If, on the one hand, people of the world relegate penance to the cloister, and if, on the other, in the cloister penance is neglected, what will become of the observance of this important precept? To whom would holy religion turn to appease the anger of God and turn aside the scourges of his justice from the guilty?

2. Only two reasons can dispense from this law: physical impossibility and moral impossibility. The respective superiors of each house will judge with prudence and charity concerning the men and women religious whose personal conduct is confided to them. In case of doubt, they will consult a doctor whose religious principles and convictions are well known to them.

3. If the case should remain doubtful, it would be according to the spirit of the Institute that the superior in his final decision incline to the side most favorable to health. The Spirit of God, which must animate all superiors, will help them find this wise compromise, this golden mean, which must be maintained between a guilty relaxation and a no less pernicious rigorism.

4. If anyone cannot fully observe the law, or if he is obliged to make use of a dispensation for a part of it, he must observe all the more exactly the other part and do all he can, conscientiously, with simplicity, peace, and submission to the decisions of the superiors.

5. In the houses of the Institute, the members do not benefit by the general permissions given to the faithful by the bishops of the dioceses to eat meat or to use meat or meat products as seasoning on certain days of the week. The observance of abstinence begins already on Quinquagesima Sunday and is observed also on the Monday and Tuesday following it. It is a pious compensation offered to our adorable Master for so many outrages that he receives during these days of dissolution. The abstinence alone is anticipated. The fast begins only on Ash Wednesday.

6. The laws of the Church must come before special devotions. In consequence, if it should come about that a member of the Institute feared, and with good reason, he could not observe the abstinence during Lent if he began to do it sooner, he could be dispensed from what the Rule prescribes for the three days preceding.

Given in Bordeaux, February 6, 1825

William Joseph Chaminade,
Superior Of the Institute of Mary

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This letter shows us the delicacy of Father Chaminade's approaches to the authorities.

323 – TO THE BARON DE MULLER,
MAYOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, February 18, 1825

Honorable Mayor:

I was notified by the Rev. Pastor of Colmar that you have in mind asking me for a fifth Brother for your elementary schools. I had written the principal of the Collège of Villeneuve-sur-Lot that I would send very shortly a substitute for one of our Brothers, who are teaching in this city. The same mail that brought me your letter also brought one from the head of the establishment at Saint Remy telling me that he had a young Brother who knows German and who would be suitable for Colmar. I have just accepted the offer. He will get there sooner than the one I had intended sending and the traveling expense will be much less.

I am always most eager, Honorable Mayor, to second the pure and just views that guide your administration. I have wanted to sound the praises of the Honorable Baron de Muller for a long time.

As regards the Brothers' salaries, I did not even have any thought of making a request, as I leave that matter entirely to your sense of loyalty and justice. What you have already done for us surely dispenses you from any solicitude for the fifth Brother I will send you. Despite your already great generosity, you are planning on giving to the motherhouse, from time to time, what you delicately call "marks of grateful remembrance." The motherhouse, in fact, must meet some heavy financial obligations before the Brothers can be available for teaching. She must also pay for traveling. But, in truth, I should add that the Rev. Pastor of Colmar promised to repay what the motherhouse advanced for the journey for the first Brothers I sent you.

I am with profound respect, Honorable Mayor, your very humble and obedient servant.

William Joseph Chaminade

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The following two business letters show us Father Chaminade's character. He was always eager for mutual understanding and agreement and the enemy of all lawsuits.

The first relates to difficulties concerning the payment for the house on No. 3 Rue Lalande. Father Chaminade submits to Brother David the draft of a letter he intends to send to his lawyer, M. Bardinet.

The second treats the house of the Daughters of Mary in Tonneins.

324 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, February 18, 1825

I am going to write, my dear son, to M. Bardinet as follows:

"In vain do I examine M. Biernès' lawsuit, for I am abandoning all hope of terminating with any form of conciliation. I really wanted to spare him the enormous expenses connected with courts of justice if the collocation of order[1] is called for, but he doesn't seem to want my mediation. It follows that we have to have recourse to the only remaining means. I shall not be bringing a lawsuit, but a court decision that I shall wait for, to pay the money to the one to whom it is due. Was I able to show my good will in any better way than to give him two thousand francs in this difficult situation? He tells me to consult. All my counsels have been taken. Let him take his if he believes mine at

[1] Inscription of a creditor on the list of the Tribunal following the order that the law assigns to his credit.

fault. I am not able to think that an enlightened council will not blame him for not wanting to conciliate.

I shall be very much obliged to you, my dear sir, if you will have the kindness to communicate my last resolution to M. Biernès. I am going to write to Brother David, in case he presents himself at his house instead of at yours."

I shall not send this letter to M. Bardinet, my dear son, until you have made some important observation as to its form.

I think that you agree with Brother Auguste on the repairs to be made on the Razac Hotel and that, if it were otherwise, you would tell me. After dinner, I shall go there to decide upon what will have to be done.

The petition that I am to present to the mayor for the Commune gardens[1] is awaited with much impatience. It is feared that spring, which will make them more beautiful, will render the concession just that much more difficult.

Tender and friendly greetings.

William Joseph Chaminade

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325 – TO M. LACAUSSADE, TONNEINS

Bordeaux, March 4, 1825

Dear Sir:

I immediately sent your letter of March second to Brother David Monier. He feels that the most practical thing to do is to buy the wall for 300 francs, and I think so myself. To avoid the lawsuit some want to draw us into, the 300 francs would soon be doubled . . . and then the long chapter of moral considerations!

Brother David has been indisposed for several days. If the repurchase should meet with some difficulty and you could put it off—have it over with until my next visit—that would still be a little solution. Brother David believes, on the whole, that his trip to Tonneins would give too much importance to this matter. See to all the arrangements while the purchase is being made. I presume that there is passion, irritation, grudge, etc., in the whole business. That's where a beginning should be made to moderate things a bit, at least to come eventually to a real conclusion. . . .

[1] See Letter 333.

I have not yet attended to your errand concerning the clouds of glory.[1] There were at least eight large sheets in the Madeleine. It is painted on cardboard.

Sincere and respectful devotedness.

William Joseph Chaminade

[1] The Daughters of Mary had asked that there by painted for them a "cloud of glory," similar to the one used at the Madeleine for the repository of Holy Week.

THE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

March 1825—January 1826

In March 1825, Father Chaminade decided to confide to Father Caillet a second mission in the north. He was to preside at the new retreat of the schoolteachers at St. Remy, and negotiate, in Paris, the legal recognition of the Society of Mary. The Founder announced it thus to Brother Clouzet.

326 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 29, 1825

I am announcing Father Caillet to you, my dear son. He will tell you himself, as the result of this letter, all that specially concerns his voyage to St. Remy.

When there is question, my dear son, of some business matter, you must make an effort to place it clearly before me, so that I may be definitely and fully informed. As regards the promise you made to the banker in Vesoul, for 6,000 francs, to be paid on the first of June, you told me nothing about the form of this promise. Is it in the form of a promissory note that the banker keeps on file? Or is it of the kind that may be put into circulation? What have you given as your address? Is it in Vesoul that the said note is to be paid, or are you to

wait until it is presented to you for payment? I have asked Father Caillet several questions about the matter, but he was not able to give me any answer.

In your last letter, you say that Mr. Courselle had asked you for 3,000 francs. Had you given him any hope that they would be given him before June first? If this was the case, why did you not tell me about it? I might have been able to give them to him, and you yourself would have done well to divide the capital sum of 6,000 francs into two or three notes, one, for example, of 2,000 francs, payable in ten months, the other, in a year, and the third, in fourteen months. The interest would have been the same. In your next letter, give me all the necessary information about this promissory note of 6,000
francs. . . .

I would be of the opinion, not only that Brother Laugeay is in St. Remy for good, but rather that he was there during the retreats, to help Brother Gaussens with his conferences, in which case, he would have to be carefully replaced. I shall write about it to the Reverend Pastor of Colmar.

I cannot, my dear son, send you any money, especially since you have done nothing to withdraw your promise for 6,000 francs, and still less to diminish it. Had I been able at the time, I would not have let you borrow 3,000 francs to supply the needed materials for the retreats. The little I shall give Father Caillet for his journey will be like a sacrifice. How will the matter stand, if we have to send a fifth Brother to Colmar, or when shall I find myself able to send someone for the secondary school? Figure it out! Economize! and all this, in a spirit of faith. Have confidence in Providence! I hope that nothing essential will be lacking to you.

I have understood, my dear son, that the pond I heard so much praised, is, after all, just an old hole, and that, in consequence, the poplars that border it are not much more than a very negligible ornament to the park. Arrange then, with Father Caillet, for a prudent way of selling them. Several times, they were said to be worth, as they stood there, 6,000 francs. It seems to me, it would be better to sell them all at once, rather than one after the other. You will have to repay me my 6,000 francs, which I shall try to use in withdrawing your promise. If you only knew what accounts I have to settle!

I would have been glad to talk to you about your interior, just as I would have wanted to acknowledge the tokens of filial love, that my dear children in St. Remy gave me for my feast day, as a sort of precious bouquet, but my eyes are heavy with sleep and tomorrow morning Father Caillet will hardly have time to write anything where I am leaving off, before the departure of the mail. Anyhow, he will be charged with being the interpreter of my sentiments toward you all and to each one in particular.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you, my dear son!

At ten o’clock in the evening before the collation, March 29, 1825.

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Here is a new obedience given to Father Caillet by the Founder. It referred directly only to the visit to St. Remy.

327 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, April 7, 1825

Obedience for my dear and respectable son, Father Caillet, priest, professed religious of the Institute of Mary.

You know, my dear and respectable son, how much I sigh over the small number of laborers I have to gather in the abundant harvest that has resulted from the blessings which the Lord has deigned to shower upon the works of the Institute of Mary, and particularly, upon the establishment of St. Remy.

Among the works which are being carried on by this large and numerous community, I have two particularly at heart: the annual retreats to be given to the schoolteachers of the Departments of the Doubs and the Haute-Saône, and also to the normal school of both Departments.

For the retreats to be given at this time, the priests who live in the establishment of St. Remy, can take only a small part in them, because the other works already take up all their time and energy. You know that all the other priests of the Institute are very much occupied in the various posts where they happen to be placed and so, you are the only one I can send there. You will be able to get help from someone among the Reverend Missionaries of Beaupre[1] and perhaps also from someone among the priests, who seemed to desire to enter the Institute.

I would have desired to go myself. Just the two of us alone could have done this difficult but consoling work. If His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, welcomes you and favorably receives the petitions that you will present to him in my name, according to the procuration that I am giving you, dated as is this obedience, it will be possible for me to go and make the visit of this establishment and that of Colmar, as well as several others that are being offered to us.

You will then leave, my dear and respectable son, as soon as possible for this new mission. I am not explaining to you its importance, for you have already realized it several times. The two hundred schoolteachers to whom you are going to preach will carry into two hundred parishes the spirit of religion which they will have drawn from their retreat, and in

[1] The Missionaries of the diocese of Besançon.

their turn, they will transmit it to their pupils. I can never think of the happy results of this enterprise without being profoundly moved and without blessing the Lord for having inspired it to you. It is one of the simplest means, one of the most direct and powerful, of cooperating in the regeneration of France, so perverted, both in its principles and in its morals.

You will not stay in Paris more than seven or eight days, unless His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and His Excellency, the Archbishop of Besançon, judge otherwise.

Listen with a profound respect to the counsels that the venerable prelate of Besançon will deign to give you in regard to the mission that you are going to accomplish in his vast diocese. In whatever place it will please Providence to call you to work, never lose sight of the great principle: *Posuit Episcopos regere Ecclesiam Dei*.[2] Whatever may be the direct object of your mission, my dear and respectable son, be it to give the two retreats consecutively, each one of two weeks, to the schoolteachers, I nevertheless understand that your presence in St. Remy will be useful to this establishment, be it in the temporal or spiritual order. You will prudently exercise the functions of Visitor. May all the members of the Community, old and new, understand that in the manner of conducting yourself and in the choice I have made of you, they have in Bordeaux a Good Father who bears them all, as dear children, in the bosom of his tenderness.

May the Lord, my dear son, deign to shower upon you and your labors his most abundant benedictions!

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Nevertheless, the same day, Father Chaminade rewrote his petition to the king, as also his letter to the Minister of Public Instruction and Ecclesiastical Affairs, Bishop Frayssinous, with whom he was closely enough connected for speaking as we shall see in the following letter.

328 – PETITION TO KING CHARLES X

Bordeaux, April 7, 1825

Your Royal Highness: William Joseph Chaminade, priest, Honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux, having formed a religious society for primary instruction, humbly requests of Your Majesty, to grant him the final authorization that is indispensable for the carrying out of his project.

[2] God has appointed the bishops to govern the Church of God.

Before placing his request at the feet of Your Majesty, the suppliant has wanted to make a trial of his methods, and so, today, he is able to present something quite different from projects of doubtful value.

Since the year 1820, when his schools were established in the capitol city of the Department of Lot-et-Garonne, they have developed rapidly. One was formed in Villaneuve in the same Department, in Colmar in the Upper Rhine, and several cities in France have asked for some, with most advantageous offers.

Everywhere, the schools have produced very great good. In and about them, childhood, instructed in its duties, brought back to better morals, subjected to a more exact discipline by the best methods of persuasion, has become the consolation of families, edified all ages, while the happiest changes in the morality of the people have won for the schools the protection of the magistrates and the esteem of all classes of society. The General Councils of the Departments have voted funds and the rectors of the academies have approved the methods of teaching. The suppliant joins to his requests the documents which will confirm all the facts that he announces to Your Majesty.

At the present moment, more than a thousand children of the working classes are receiving an education sufficient for their needs and, what is of far greater importance, one that is eminently Christian.

Our methods differ little from those of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Like the Brothers, we are opposed to imprudent innovations and blind routine, we have put to profit the notions acquired by modern educators, while, at the same time, not setting aside the best principles, consecrated by experience.

However, what distinguishes our schools, are the accessory institutions by which we try to have them accompanied everywhere in order to sustain in the children who leave the school, the good habits and religious sentiments which they have received during the years of their training. These institutions consist of schools for the arts and trades and of pious sodalities.

Today there is no longer anything lacking to your very humble servant, Your Majesty, than your royal sanction. He is bold enough to ask for it and he places before your eyes the Statutes of the Society which he has founded.

The good of your subjects and of religion is the sole motive which animates him and his most powerful recommendation. No others are needed for a wise and religious monarch who lives only for the welfare and happiness of his people.

I am with the most profound respect, Your Majesty's most humble and most obedient servant and faithful subject. . . .

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329 – TO BISHOP FRAYSSINOUS, BISHOP OF HERMOPOLIS,
MINISTER OF ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS

Bordeaux, April 7, 1825

Your Excellency: Heaven continues to shower its blessings upon the Institute of Mary, with which it has deigned to inspire me, in order to cooperate in the regeneration of our beautiful fatherland, which seemed lost by the triumphs of modern philosophy[1]. Various establishments have been formed during these past years, as experiments, under the protection of the Church and civil authorities, but especially for two years, the civil authorities have been asking me to have it authorized by the Government. I have just learned that His Excellency, the Minister of the Interior, had refused to sanction an article in the budget of the Council General of the Department of the Haute-Saône, which granted this year to the establishment of St. Remy, 3,000 francs, be it for the retreat of the schoolteachers or for the normal school of this Department. The only motive for this refusal is that the establishment in Saint Remy is not authorized by the Government.

When I saw you raised to the dignity of Minister, I rejoiced several times at the thought of my delays in asking for your royal sanctions. However, today, full of confidence, I made up my mind to petition the kfor the approbation of the Institute of Mary, under your powerful protection.

Not being able to transport myself to Paris, to this effect I gave my procuration to Father Caillet, one of the priests of this society. He is to stay in Paris only seven or eight days, unless Your Excellency determines otherwise. I provided him with all the documents that seemed to me necessary. I beg of you to receive him with your usual kindness. I beg your kind indulgence for the lack of experience he has in the handling of temporal affairs.

I am receiving at this time the copy of a letter of the rector of the Academy of Besançon to the Superior of the establishment in St. Remy. I am passing it over to Father Caillet to be communicated to Your Excellency. I have reason to think that you will not regret the time you will have put into reading it for yourself.

You will also be spoken to, about a secondary school, greatly desired in that vast and beautiful establishment of St. Remy. Possibly, you have already been spoken to about the matter of the heads of an establishment in Bordeaux known under the name of Boarding School of Brother Auguste. I am taking the liberty of recommending these two institutions to your kind benevolence.

[1]This was the name given to the philosophism of the 18th century.

Help us, Your Excellency, in doing good. Our efforts will prove to you that we have found the means for doing it, but we have need of a high protection.

I am with the most profound respect, Your Excellency's most humble and most obedient servant.

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Father Chaminade also gave Father Caillet a letter of recommendation for the Duke of Montmorency, his former sodalist.

330 – TO THE DUKE OF MONTMORENCY, PARIS

Bordeaux, April 11, 1825

Honorable Duke: It is to save precious moments of time, all consecrated to the service of God and of the king, that I express so rarely the sentiments of respectful affection for you, with which you have inspired me.

Today, whilst addressing Father Caillet to you, and asking of you to help him with your influence and protection, according to the need he may have of both, I am not changing the usual object of your solicitude. Father Caillet has the mission of treating with His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, of works which seriously concern religion and the Government. You will soon see that it is not a man of the Court that I am sending, but a good religious, filled with the apostolic zeal, that must animate all the children of Mary.

You are, Honorable Duke, the only one to whom I am recommending him. I have inspired him with all the confidence I have in you. If you judged necessary the intervention of some good sodalists, be it of such, to whom I am particularly known, like the Count Alexis of Noailles, etc., or of all others who put zeal into the regeneration of our beautiful but unhappy fatherland, deign, I beg you, to make use of them according to the great prudence that characterizes you.

It may be, Honorable Duke, that I have too long delayed to present my humble request to the king, and I know that several prefects of Departments are much astonished, even if they don't blame me, at my long delays. I have, as principle, not to risk anything when there is question of attempts of this kind. Possibly, I might have still longer delayed, if I did not feel assured of the good dispositions of the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs.

Father Caillet, furthermore, will be in Paris, so to say, only in passing. He is going to fill, in the diocese of Besançon, a mission of great importance, and one which is closely linked with the authorization of the Institute of Mary which he is to ask of the Government. When he will be able to have a few moments of interview with you, he will inform you, for

your edification, of the blessings which heaven is bestowing on the labors of this budding society. You will not be surprised at this, knowing that we never go into combat, except under the banner of the august Mother of God.

I am, Honorable Duke, yours with a very respectful and a very real attachment, etc.

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The letter of April 11th to the Baron de Razac lets us see one of the many works of charity which were added, during the life of Father Chaminade, to the general solicitude of his Marian sodalities and to his religious institutes.

The difficulties to which there is allusion at the end of the letter and to which one of the later letters will return (Number 334) have reference to the acquisition of the hotel on Mirail Street. (See Letters 289 and 290)

331 – TO THE BARON DE RAZAC, PARIS

Bordeaux, April 11, 1825

Honorable Baron: Mr. Frederic is one of those paupers on whom may particularly fall the charities which His Majesty grants through the agency of His Serene Highness, the Grand Almoner. I am taking the liberty of passing to you his petition in accordance with the permission you have given me to do so, be it for him or for others.

Mr. Frederic is little known in Bordeaux. He is a stranger who has lost everything in his business. It is already almost two years since he was referred to me. He was a Protestant. I instructed him, and he made his abjuration. He edifies by his conduct and his patience. His infirmities, which grow worse with each day, prevent his being placed anywhere.

The Chevalier de Gombaud, on the sixth of the current month, had Brother Auguste and myself called before the Judge of the Peace of the Fifth Department. The hearing is taking place at the time when I have the honor of writing you. I did a lot more than I was supposed to do, to avoid the scandal of this trial. It is vexing that you have given so little attention to this affair, however unimportant it may seem to be. You must know the character of your cousin.

All this unpleasantness does not prevent me from recommending Father Caillet to you, as I am sending him to Paris, to treat of major affairs which he will deem it an honor to make known to you, should you judge it apropos.

I am with respectful consideration, Honorable Baron, etc.

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Here is interposed a family letter which will not be without some interest.

332 – TO MR. FRANÇOIS LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, April 19, 1825

My dear Nephew, I am finally relieving myself of the painful memory that you were kind enough to write two letters to me, but to which I have not given answer. On account of the overload of occupations that constantly harass me, I lose sight of certain letters, but that has not been the case with yours, for, already, a few days ago, if even that many, I wanted to answer you. You will not believe it, but it is nonetheless true. I just could not make it, without neglecting other really pressing affairs, and how many others are still waiting to be settled!

I received with thankfulness, my dear nephew, the stuffed turkey you had the goodness to send me. It reached me on the Monday before Lent, toward noon. In all the houses of the Institute of Mary, the carnival is celebrated on the Thursday before Ash Wednesday, after which no more meat appears on the tables until Easter.[1]

I am somewhat acquainted, my dear nephew, with the Receiver-General of the Department of the Gironde, and I would have been glad to risk asking him a place for you as tax gatherer, if you were of this Department. But you belong to the one of the Dordogne, where I know no one of any influence. The establishments that I am starting in several places with some success somehow lead several persons to believe that I myself enjoy great influence with the Government or with such persons as frequent it. They are mistaken, for as they say, I undertake nothing by myself. All I do is to follow the directions of Providence, when these become clear to me. Nevertheless, I would be very happy were I able to oblige you.

Receive, I beg of you, my dear nephew, my apologies along with the token of my tender and sincere friendship. Express the same to Sophie; I embrace Fermin very affectionately. My respects to Miss Mondesse.

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[1]This “Fat Thursday” is the Thursday before Quinquagesima Sunday. The Friday and Saturday following it were days of abstinence, according to the discipline of the time. Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday of Quinquagesima week, usually the days of the Forty Hours, were days of abstinence in the Institute, and abstinence was the rule throughout Lent, including the Sundays, according to the discipline of the time. The turkey stuffed with truffles was a famous specialty of the Perigord region. It was doubtless sent to the pupils of the boarding school of Brother Auguste or given to the poor.

The following letter is a petition, with the intention of obtaining from the city of Bordeaux, an increase of the property of the boarding school Ste. Marie, for its new location on Mirail Street.

333 – TO THE VISCOUNT DE HAMEL,
MAYOR OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, April 20, 1825

Honorable Mayor: I would like to make a bid for certain lands belonging to the city, located behind the Hotel Razac. This hotel is destined to become a boarding school directed by Brother Auguste Perrier, established a long time ago on Menuts Street. The merit of this house of education, the importance it may have for the city, as well as the favorable conditions that I am proposing, have encouraged me, Honorable Mayor, to present a request to you, which may well turn to the interest of the general public.

The establishment of Brother Auguste Perriere is, today, led by the confidence of the families, to a measure of consideration, which makes of it one of the most distinguished houses of its kind. The zeal and ability of its teachers, the good spirit and the good morals of its pupils, leave nothing to be desired, be it in regard to the teaching and studies or to the still more interesting subject of religion, discipline and the monarchical principles in which every Frenchman should be reared.

These are just so many titles, Honorable Mayor, which call upon this house your paternal benevolence and which inspire in all lovers of what is good and orderly, hearty wishes for its further development.

I shall add that this establishment is recommended still more particularly to the city of Bordeaux by a branch of teaching there cultivated and which is generally excluded from houses where complete studies are made. It is an education preparatory to business practice. It is given to children whose parents destine them to this profession. This is a considerable advantage which gives to the establishment of Brother Auguste a high degree of utility and renders it all the more worthy of interest on the part of an Administration as wise as it is well-intentioned.

The addition which I am requesting, a part of the property of the City Hall for the garden of the Hotel de Razac, would be of great advantage to this latter establishment and would give it all the expansion needed to contribute powerfully to public utility.

From another point of view, as far as I may be permitted to presume it, the city would not be depriving itself of any advantage in ceding this land to our establishment.

Finally, persuaded that an Administration which seeks only the public good, can but favor those that seek it, I am disposed, Honorable Mayor, to receive the conditions which

you and your Council will be pleased to offer us. If it were desired that I propose them myself, it would seem to me advantageous to the establishment, and even for the city, that the founding of a certain number of grants, for at least a part of the interest, would be a good idea. In any case, I would ask that the Administration kindly divide the payments that I would have to make over a certain number of years, with interest payable at the legal rate.

I am bold enough to believe, Honorable Mayor, that the favorable reception you will give my request will be one of the many good deeds for which the city already congratulates itself under your wise administration and in this fond hope, I am with profound respect, Honorable Mayor, your very humble and very obedient servant. . . .

* * * *

Father Caillet has arrived in Paris. The first letter Father Chaminade writes to him, again treats of the Razac affair. His true and energetic way of proceeding in such instances will be noted. The lawsuit, to which illusion has already been made in Letter 331, had for motive, a claim, on the part of M. de Gombaud, a cousin of Mr. De Razac, and his tenant in the Hotel on Miraile Street at the time of the sale relating to certain movables in the Hotel, to which he claimed to have rights.

334 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, April 24, 1825

I have received, my dear son, your first two letters from Paris. The second came on the 23rd of the present month, your feast day, and on which I prayed for you with a good heart. You begin it with the story of your interview with Mr. de Razac.

Mr. De Razac finds the lawsuit which Mr. de Gombaud is bringing up against me scandalous, and he is right. I would reproach myself with the scandal if I had not done all I could to avoid it. Thanks be to God, I have not forgotten what our Divine Master has said: "And to him that strikes you on the one cheek, offer also the other; and him that takes away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also." When I saw that Mr. de Razac avoided answering me directly as regards what he intended to do about the claims of his cousin, Mr. de Gombaud, which I believed just and which Mr. de Razac could see for himself since there was an insurance contract between them, following what Mr. de Gombaud had told me, I then said I had him offered two things: the first, that we were convincing an honest and educated man; the second, that he could cause and that I would abide by all that he would decide; to be taken from the hotel, all that he thought belonged to him, and that he would not meet with any opposition. The next day, as my only answer, I got a summons to appear before the Justice of the Peace. He asks for 550 francs, for a sale, so he said, made to Brother Auguste. As this sale was not made, that there wasn't even any idea of buying,

there was no conciliation before the Justice of the Peace. There was a new call before a lower court. Things are that far at the present time. I believe that, as Mr. de Razac says, it would be better to talk the matter over together, rather than use an intermediary, whom I would not refuse. I am refusing nothing. I have once tried this means. He did not tell me what he wanted to do. He let me do the talking. Anyhow, when we separated, there at least seemed to be a spirit of peace, etc. . . .

You tell me, my dear son, that Mr. de Razac is deeply discontented with me, as with all I have done in the whole affair. That may be. I have always acted according to my firm conviction that the only thing to do, was to give him notice of the claims of his cousin, and that he would ratify them forthwith. He has left me in this persuasion. Is Mr. De Razac discontented with all those who have recourse to his uprightness and justice? And then, could he not answer Brother Auguste or myself, by explaining himself, for or against, in a manner clear and precise?

You add, my dear son, that he told you, that no one understood temporal matters as badly as the priests, that is to say, myself. If he thinks me so deficient in intelligence as regards temporal matters, how is it that his charity did not lead him to give me advice in my dealings with him? I had believed, and I am still led to believe, even contrary to my advisor in temporal matters, that there is an essential difference to be noted in the manner of dealing with Christian gentlemen and with other persons. With the former, one always presupposes loyalty and honesty, the spirit of the thing, rather than the letter which kills. I shall not carry this answer further, as there would be matter for a lengthy report, but it would serve no purpose. If you have occasion to pass in the quarter of Mr. de Razac, you might read this letter to him, or if you are too busy for that, you might send him a copy. Furthermore, Mr. de Gombaud has arranged nothing with me. He told me he had accounts with his cousin, giving me a verbal summary of them, but I have forgotten most of it by now. Mr. de Razac would have done me a favor by giving me a note about them.

And now, my dear son, I have no other observation to make to you about the important matters that you have to treat. Put all your confidence in the Lord and always preserve your peace of soul. Here you are being prayed for and you, on your part, pray for me, that I myself may always be preserved in the path of faith that I always try to point out to others.

I need not tell you how much I am pressed for time. In spite of that I think I just have to find the time to take a physic this week. That is the intention of the doctor.

I embrace you tenderly and I give you, my dear son, from the effusion of my heart my fatherly blessing.

P. S. I am not telling you how deeply I appreciate your tokens of kind remembrances. . . .

* * * *

With the following letter, begins the thorny negotiations for the legal recognition of the Society of Mary. From the end of 1822, Father Chaminade had felt the need of getting away from the reserve in which the Society had remained during its first years and of taking the first steps to assure for it a legal existence.

Brother David had prepared a project of Statutes in 49 articles with this end in view, which had received the approbation of the archbishop of Bordeaux. (See Letter 263).

It is this project which Father Caillet was now charged to present to the competent authorities. We are reproducing it here in document form. Brother David's heavy style will be easily recognized, although Father Chaminade seems to have retouched the original text in several passages.

STATUTES OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

First Edition, April 7, 1825

Name and object of the Association

1. The Society will be known under the name of Society of Mary.

2. It has for object, the free education of all those who, otherwise, would not be able to get any.

3. The children, in the schools, are the principal objects of its labors.

4. It also forms sodalities for persons of all ages.

Concerning the Association

5. Admission, on the part of each Society member, includes all that he actually possesses at the time of his entry, the products to be derived from his work, and the use of his acquired immovable property or to be acquired. All will be according to the rules of the universal Society and of all the goods foreseen by the civil code.

6. Each one of the associates keeps the pure ownership of all his immovables, to dispose of them as he will be able to determine. He keeps an absolute right to all the personal property that may come to him by way of succession, gift, or testament.

7. However, all use of the personal property coming to him after his entry and, by that fact, relinquished to the General Administration of the Society, will not give the right to

a claim for the time of the surrender, but only after three months following the death of the person bequeathing the property or the act of dismissal from the Society.

8. It is well understood that, in the above-mentioned cases of decease or dismissal, only those parts of the personal property will be redeemable, which the subject himself has not disposed of.

9. To be admitted into the said Society, one must be sound in body and mind, and in the enjoyment of a stainless reputation, interested in education or at least capable to aid with the interior maintenance of the house, accustomed to mildness, humility, obedience and to a great confidence in God.

10. Before being admitted, one is subject to a period of probation lasting two years.

11. The first engagement taken, after the first probation, is for only three years and will not confer the title of full Society member.

12. The subject who is sent away or who withdraws before taking any definite engagement, must indemnify the house for his board, lodging and the education he has received during his stay. Unless some other arrangement has been made, the one leaving gives up the use of his goods or the part of them that is not indispensable to him.

13. There is cause for dismissal in the refusal of obedience to the orders of superiors and to established discipline, for any immoral acts and dissipated conduct, be it outside or in the interior of the house, for the neglect of the service in the post assigned and for all acts of provocation or disorder, be it in the definite action or in purpose.

14. The subject who might want to withdraw on his own accord will not be permitted to do so, except after a six months' advance notice given to the superior and in the one case where his departure would in no way hamper the general work of the school year.

15. The subject who would be sent away, no more than the one who would retire on his own accord in the cases herewith foreseen, has no right to any indemnity for anything: services rendered, work, property brought, nor for the use of his immovable property, all this having become part of the work undertaken, but he will retake his belongings for the future, at the end of the scholastic year or after the six months above mentioned.

Register for the States of Persons

16. In the Motherhouse a double register will be kept, both one and the other duly marked or signed, as may be ordered by the King. In this register will be inscribed, in order and without blanks, the entries on probation, the engagements for three years, the perpetual engagements, just as the acts of leaving in the case such should happen. These acts will include the names, Christian names, place of birth and age of the parties who will sign them with the superior, if they know how to sign, or they

will be required to sign in the presence of two witnesses, who will also sign. One of the doubles of the said register will be put each year in a place available to the public or as may be otherwise ordered.

Government

17. The government of the Society will be installed in a Motherhouse. It will be composed of an ecclesiastical superior, approved by the Ordinary, of three Assistants, named Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction and Head of Work, and of a fourth Assistant, who will be the Director of the schools adjoining the primary schools.

18. The entries on probation, the engagements for three years, the perpetual engagements and the withdrawals, be they dismissals or voluntary, will be registered only in the Motherhouse, unless, by reason of the distances or the number of the institutions, the Superior-General, with the advice of his Council, authorizes other houses of probation in which case the houses authorized must provide themselves with a register similar to the one prescribed in Article 16.

19. All the acts of the Society on the inside or outside are made in the name of the Superior. Those of the acts in which there is a question of sales, acquisition of properties, the exclusion of persons already admitted and other similar matters, will be done in the name of the Superior upon the advice of his Council, with the effect that decisions are arrived at as regards the acts above mentioned and accounted for in the register. When the Council opposes a motion, definite action is postponed.

20. In the Motherhouse and in such as would be authorized by virtue of Article 18, will be established a school of theory and of the exact application of the manner of teaching, as well as of the manner of maintaining discipline in the public schools. No one will be permitted to teach in the public schools who will not have completed his course of theory.

21. The Motherhouse can, moreover, have a college of priests and of young men destined for the priesthood, but all will take notice of the school of theory and exact application, independently of their ecclesiastical studies, so as later on, to be prepared to assume direction of different houses where their ministry might be required.

22. In the same school of theory and exact application, all the subjects will take notice of the manner in which the sodalities are to be conducted.

23. If the number of priests should become greater than the number of establishments to be served, the Society would destine them to the municipal colleges which might want their services.

24. The association is, moreover, governed by its rules of interior discipline.

Elections

25. The Superior General and the Assistants are elected in the Motherhouse, by all the Society members present or who will be able to get there. Those who would be prevented from being present, will be able to have themselves represented.

26. For the first time, M— . . . and the four Assistants by him designated, are named for life or until they voluntarily resign.

27. The Superiors of the Houses established by affiliation, the Head and Professors of the different schools, are always named or appointed by the Superior.

28. The elections and nominations are to be inscribed in the register for the status of persons (Article 16).

The Sodalities

29. The sodalities are established in order to sustain the good effects in the moral order obtained in the schools.

30. The sodalities will be public. They will hold their meetings on feast days and on Sundays at the hours not reserved for church services.

31. Only subjects of the moral order will be treated, the civil and religious virtues. The very thought of politics is to be banished.

32. The members making up the sodality in each place will choose a Head or lay Prefect and two Assistants who will maintain good order, and will look after either the setting or the agenda for the meetings.

33. The sodality heads will hold office only temporarily.

34. The ecclesiastical Director will be present at the meetings, he will contribute to make them interesting, and, if circumstances require it, he will bring back the speeches and conversations to the matter in hand.

Concerning the Schools

35. The schools will be of three degrees, according to the meaning of Article 11 of the royal Ordinance of February 29, 1816. The lowest degree will be established only in the places having a very small population.

36. To all the schools where the teaching will be of a higher level, schools of the arts and crafts will be joined.

37. The Society will establish the schools as much as possible at its own expense, and keep them free.

38. It will lend its service to foundations that the mayors, the commune councils or all other administrators or benefactors might want to make, providing them with teachers or training such for them, to start the schools and to keep them in full activity.

39. Until the second degree of teaching inclusively, the Method is the same as that of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine or of St. Yon. It will be submitted for the approbation of His Excellency, the Grand Master of the University, conformably to Article 36 of the Ordinance already quoted.

The Schools of Arts and Crafts

40. The combined schools of arts and crafts will be practical. They will be applied more particularly to farmwork in general and gardening in particular, to the various kinds of husbandry and the arts that can be called rural, because they refer to work in the fields and to the needs of those who do it.

41. In places where to judge by the nature of their products, conditions are more favorable for certain kinds of arts and crafts, the local facilities and indications will be studied without, however, hesitating to introduce a culture of industry either entirely unknown or at least but slightly developed.

42. As an effect of Article 40, an experimental farm will be established in the place deemed most favorable to be worked by one of the schools.

43. The King, his Minister of the Interior and the Royal Council of Agriculture will be asked for the favor of sharing the seeds, plants, and works of which the Government makes the distribution in order to encourage agriculture.

Spirit of the Institution

44. The principal object of the teachers, in the primary school and in the school joined to it, will be to render fit for agriculture, industry, or business the children they have received for the schools, taking care not to give them any pretensions and desires in any way above their social level.

45. To this effect, all the pupils will constantly be given as principle, what has been confirmed by long experience; namely, that it is better to excel in a trade practiced by their

parents, than painfully to follow a more elevated profession where one has not the same means to even get started, let alone to reach perfection.

46. Whatever be the works undertaken by the second section of the school of arts and crafts, the pupils will be busy with them only alternatively, and at certain hours or on certain days, in order that there may be for them a logical continuation of the instruction that strictly belongs to the primary schools.

47. The pupils who are kept busy with works of industry will not be confounded with those who are not yet in the arts and crafts.

48. At the time of the entry of the young men in the arts and crafts, an agreement of special apprenticeship in one of the trades could be made with their parents by the head of the school in the terms and for the ordinary period of time, conformable to usage in the country.

49. In the schools of arts and crafts, all available means will be used to bring the pupils to as high a degree of perfection as possible, with due regard to their dispositions and to the measure of their intelligence. The present Statutes will be presented to the King, at the same time as the request for the legal authorization of the Society.

* * * *

At Paris, these Statutes were, no doubt, found too long and too explicit in regard to the works, other than those connected with primary education. In fact we see Father Chaminade immediately reducing them to twenty-three.

335 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, April 28, 1825

My dear son: I have just reduced the Statutes of the Society of Mary. Of the 49, there will now be only 23, but which seem to me to include all 49. I brought in the normal Schools and the annual retreats of the schoolteachers.

Moreover, this work is so important, that it makes us feel all the more the need we have of priests and of capable subjects; and in consequence, of houses of formation and preparation, be it for students to the priesthood, who, while studying may already render great services even to the teaching, or be it for Brothers really capable of teaching in the primary schools, normal schools, and schools joined to the arts and crafts.

The same house is at the same time a house of probation and preparation, but the houses of the students for the priesthood and those of the subjects destined solely for primary teaching or of the arts and crafts are distinct, because neither the education nor

the order of the exercises are the same. The spirit is, nevertheless, the same. The union which must exist among members of the same Society is preserved in them. Just as the students for the priesthood must one day be the first superiors, the directors of consciences, the heads of zeal among the lay members, it is good that they not be trained together. You have examples of all these differences in the three houses of preparation, which Providence had us establish, St. Laurent, the Madeleine, and St. Remy: St. Laurent for the schoolteachers, with some workshops, the Madeleine for students to the priesthood, where they have a church, and accustom themselves to the sacred functions (you know that this church is already authorized by the Government); St. Remy, more especially for the artisans, although some schoolteachers are also prepared there, by reason of the great distance from Bordeaux.[1]

While writing or rather, while reediting our Statutes, my dear son, several times I got the idea of naming the establishments already existing, that they may be authorized at the same time as the Society of Mary. If His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, found it good, all you would have to do would be to insert a number in the Statutes or even without increasing the number of articles just name the establishments in submitting them to royal approval. If His Excellency doesn't find any inconvenience, without recopying the Statutes, you might add at the end of your request authorization for the schools of Agen, Villeneuve-sur-Lot, and of Colmar, for the establishment in St. Remy and for those of St. Laurent and the Madeleine. I need not tell you, that sufficient indications must be added so as to forestall any possibility of misunderstanding.

You need not fear, my dear son, that I shall be blamed for having formed these establishments before having had the authorization of the Government: 1. Because these are only trials, necessary before the finished products are presented. The Government would not have deigned to occupy itself with a simple written project. 2. Father Praire, Vicar General in Bordeaux, told the Minister of the Interior that I formed sodalities in Bordeaux, and the prefect of the Department of the Lot-et-Garonne, notified the Minister of the Interior that he was permitting the establishment of schools at Agen, etc. 3. I have never made any kind of establishment, without having had an understanding with the local competent authorities . . .

I have not dared, my dear son, to speak to you of some consequences to be foreseen that will follow the royal sanction, those, for example, 1. Concerning our relations with the University and the changes of the Brothers of the schools: I have been in this employment[2] for four years, without ever having experienced any contradiction, and sometimes these changes were urgent, even changes of principals and professors in the Latin schools, such as, for example that at Villeneuve-sur-Lot, St. Remy, Bordeaux. There could result a great good, both for the teaching in itself as for the subjects, and for the

[1] As is already known, the union to the novitiate of the diverse elements of the Society, which had existed from the first, was reestablished in 1865, following the 11th adverse criticism of the Constitutions.
[2] Of making the changes himself without the intervention of the University.

Society of Mary in being able to make these changes without being obliged to give the reasons for them to the University. A government, altogether paternal such as that of the Society of Mary should be, must not let family affairs properly so called, be known. What I am saying about them is not for the purpose of withdrawing any establishment from the inspection or jurisdiction of the University. I think there can result a great good from this subordination, since all can be arranged. Instead of having the diplomas fall on the heads of the Directors, it would suffice to have them fall on the head of the Superior of the Society, who in this way, would be the responsible party. The Boarding School of Brother Auguste, instead of being named after him, would be called Boarding School of Ste. Marie, etc. 2. What will, henceforth, have to be done for the Brothers, servants of the Institute, for the Brother artists, in proportion as they will reach the age of requisition?

I am dividing, my dear son, the two sheets of this letter, in order to have a copy made of the first. In the meantime, I shall continue speaking to you.

Look into the matter wisely to see if it is apropos to propose these questions before, during, or after the authorization, or not at all, or some of them, or to wait for another occasion. We must avoid the possibility of blaming ourselves for not having proposed everything at the same time, etc.

As regards the method of primary education or teaching, it is hardly to be presumed that we should want to read these minute details, into which the editor, Brother Laugeay, has entered. These are the first fruits of his experience and that of his confrères. The success of our schools, nevertheless, results from all these minute precautions. If we nevertheless want to read everything, so much the better. We shall then see the interest which the Society puts in the attainment of the grand object of its institutions. You would, then, do well to reread this Method and to cross out quite honestly what you might not like. You know that I was proposing to compare the same Method, edited by our Brothers of St. Remy, also to see what more their experience has taught them, and possibly to have the whole work reedited. It may be well to wait for the vacation time to add to it some chapters, on the normal schools and the schools joined to those of the arts and crafts. . . .

May the Lord, my dear son, shower upon you his most abundant benedictions! Prayers are being said for you on all sides. I embrace you tenderly.

* * * *

Here is the text of the second edition of the Statutes, in 23 articles, after the sketch written by the hand of Father Chaminade.

STATUTES OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

(Second Edition, April 28, 1825)

1. The Society of Mary is especially devoted to primary education.

2. The principal object of its labors is to spread and preserve in childhood and youth the principles of the Catholic faith, of evangelical morality and of a sincere attachment to the monarchy.

3. To be admitted into the said Society, one must be of sound mind and body, in the enjoyment of a stainless reputation, have interest in education or be capable of rendering service in the interior of the houses or of exercising some art or trade, accustomed to or disposed to mildness, humility, obedience, and a great confidence in God.

4. No engagement is taken in it before a year of probation.

5. Only the definitive engagement will give the privilege of full membership.

6. At the time of the definitive engagement, the act which shall have taken place between the receiver and the Society, will be according to the spirit and rules of the "universal Society and of all goods" foreseen by the Civil Code, Title 9, Chap. 2, Sec. 1.

7. The subject who would want to withdraw of his own accord, could do so only after the notification he will have given the Superior General six months in advance, and in the sole case that his withdrawal would not in any way harm the school year.

8. The subject who would withdraw of his own accord, could claim nothing for his service, industry, property brought in or for the use of his movable property, all this being acquired by the work undertaken. However, he will retake his belongings for the future, at the end of the school term or after the six months mentioned above.

9. A register will be kept in the Motherhouse, in which will be inscribed in order and without blank, those entering into probation, the temporary and definitive engagements, just as the withdrawals, should there be any. The said acts will contain the names, Christian names, the place of birth and age of the parties, who will sign with the Superior, if they know how to sign, or they will be required to sign in the presence of two witnesses, who will also sign. The register will serve as proof in court, if in some circumstance, it should there be asked for.

10. If, by reason of distance or of the number of institutions, the Superior General, upon the advice of his Council, authorizes other houses of probation, then these authorized houses will have to provide themselves with a register similar to the one mentioned in the above article 9.

11. The government of the society will be composed of an ecclesiastical Superior, approved by the Ordinary, of three Assistants, named Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Work.

12. All the acts of the Society, in it or outside it, are done in the name of the Superior, Those of the acts, in which there would be question of sales, acquisition of properties, exclusion of persons already admitted and like matters, will be done in the name of the Superior, upon the advice of his Council, with the result that decisions would be reached in regard to these last-mentioned acts. If the Council were opposed, definite action would be postponed.

13. The Association, furthermore, is governed by its rules of interior discipline.

14. The teaching in the schools, will be in the three degrees announced in Article 2 of the Royal Ordinance of February 29, 1816. The Methods will be submitted to the approbation of His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction.

15. The Society, the more promptly to attain the great object of its institution, will respond more particularly to the requests which will be made by their Lordships, the Bishops and Archbishops, by the Academies and by the Departments for the establishments of normal schools, near which will be given, each year, retreats for the schoolteachers, according as will have been arranged with the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. These retreats will be of at least two weeks duration. During the first week, work will be focused mainly on the manner of teaching and of controlling the pupils, and on the manner of instructing them in religion and its practice.

16. So as to be able to provide capable subjects, the Society has houses of training where it forms, according to its method, the subjects it destines for teaching.

17. It has, furthermore, a house of priests and of young men destined for the priesthood, to provide for the spiritual needs of the other establishments.

18. If the number of priests should become greater than that of the establishments needing their ministry, the Society would grant them to the requests made to it for secondary education, be it in the municipal colleges or in the particular boarding schools it may have organized.

19. To all the schools where the teaching will be of higher level, will be joined practical schools of the arts and crafts.

20. With the same views, sodalities will be formed, as much as possible, that is to say, free and public meetings held where, under the paternal direction of a priest director, subjects of morals and piety will be treated.

21. The Society recognizes as its Founder and present Superior, William Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux. He will name his Assistants. The Superiors who will succeed him, just as his Assistants, will be named by the Society through the plurality of votes.

22. The superiors of the houses established by affiliation, the heads and professors of the different schools, will always be named by the Superior.

23. The present Statutes will be put at the feet of His Majesty and he will be very humbly requested to have them examined and approved, if that is needed, for the good of religion and of his subjects.

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This second edition of the Statutes was followed almost immediately by a third, dated April 30th, as is announced and explained in the following letter to Father Caillet.

336 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, April 30, 1825

I have received, my dear son, all your letters up to the present, but you do well always to remember them. I received the one sent you with the archbishop's mail, only by sending for it to the Palace. You will receive, through the intermediary of His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, a third edition of the Statutes of the Society of Mary. It is leaving with the same mail as this letter of notification. The second edition left before yesterday, also to the address of His Excellency, as recommended by the postmaster.

The observations of Father de la Chapelle[1] seemed to be just. I immediately acted upon them. Always be the interpreter of my respectful gratitude, as much with His Excellency as with the gentlemen who have the honor of working with him.

Here is what Brother Louis Rothéa tells me, by the last mail from Colmar: "The Ordinary, the last Inspector of the Academy of Besançon, is actually the Rector of the Academy of this Province. Father Caillet would possibly do well to go and find him in Strasbourg . . . Father Mertian, Superior, wanted to take over the normal school in Strasbourg, but the Prefect was against it, as the schoolteachers and pupils of the Normal School do not like Father Mertian too much." Brother Bernard Geiger arrived in Colmar feeling pretty well . . .

[1] Father de la Chapelle, Director of Ecclesiastical Affairs under Archbishop Frayssinous, rendered the greatest services to the Society in the matter of its legal recognition.

I am receiving no news from Brother Clouzet, after the scare he gave me, with the fall of Father Rothéa. What you tell me about it, in your first letter from Paris, has quieted us a little.

Are we not too little for so high a protection as that of the Honorable Duke of Bordeaux?[2] *Noli altum sapere*: Be not highminded. If there were questions of making known my sentiments toward the royal family, you might say among other peculiarities, that it is I who gave the counsel of the assembly, which decided upon the entry of the Duke of Angouleme into Bordeaux, etc. But we must speak of these things only when there is a call for it. You were able to notice that I hardly speak of the interest, nevertheless lively enough, that I put into the entire Revolution, in aiding at least by my counsels, to prepare the events which gave us so much consolation at the same time as so many causes for solicitude. Let us do all the good we can, both to the monarchy and to religion, but let us not seek to be seen and to make ourselves known, any more than may be necessary for accomplishing the good we are after. Often renew to the Honorable Duke of Montmorency, the tender and respectful sentiments I entertain for his person.

Let Mr. Alegre[3] know from me all the pain that his misconduct is causing me, and tell him that he is wrong to avail himself of my tenderness for him, be it to seem to belong to the Institute or to give himself some importance. Without discrediting him with the mayor of Villeneuve, to whom I beg of you to present the tokens of my remembrance and respectful devotedness, we must quietly induce the latter to decline all action in common with him, lest we compromise ourselves.

The 1,000 francs which the Duchess D'Angouleme is giving for each boarder are not only for board, they are also for maintenance and any expense throughout the year.[4]

May the peace of the Lord, my dear son, be always with you!

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The third edition of the Statutes which accompanied this letter differed from the preceding one, only on the following points: it suppressed the parenthetical phrase in Article 3, relating to the arts and crafts; it replaced, in Articles 7 and 10, the term Superior General by that of Superior of the Society; it suppressed Articles 19 and 20 relating to schools joined to those of arts and crafts and to the sodalities. Finally, it inserted, between Articles 10 and 11, a new article, become Article 11, and reading as follows: 11. All the establishments of the Society recognize our Lords, the Bishops and Archbishops, in the

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[2] The Duke of Bordeaux, better known under the name of Count of Chambord (1820-83), grandson of Charles X, by his father, the Duke de Berry assassinated on February 13, 1820, and last heir of the older branch of the Bourbons. He died in exile, in the Castle of Frohsdorf in Austria, where he called the Society of Mary to direct a school which still exists.

[3] Former postulant of the Society.

[4] We do not know to which of the works of Father Chaminade this generosity on the part of the Duchess of Angouleme was to be applied.

diocese where they are formed as their first superiors, without prejudice, however, to the immediate action of the Superior of the Society and in following everywhere their rules and customs.

The Statutes were thus reduced to the number of 22.

337 - TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 2, 1825

I received, my dear son, your last letter of April 28th, and I reread your last three letters to see if I had forgotten something important in my answers.

You must stay in Paris, my dear son, until the final decision of the principal affair with which you are occupied: the royal Ordinance.

Before yesterday, April 30th, in the envelope of the bishop of Hermopolis, I sent you a third edition of the Statutes of the Society of Mary, in which I suppressed all mention, both of the sodalities and the arts and crafts, where I spoke of the normal schools and of the retreats for the schoolteachers, where I added, and with pleasure, a Statute about the obedience of the various establishments towards the Ordinaries of the places involved. I hope you will no longer find any difficulty.

As regards the Method of primary teaching, I am doubting more and more that it will be authorized, only after the careful reading of the big copy book of this Method that you brought. This Method has nothing essentially different from that of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Slight improvements in each part of the teaching, numerous means of emulation, the zeal of the teachers, their dependence upon their first superiors, and the active surveillance and inspections of these last, all these are the causes of their success. This Method may lead to the highest degree of perfection, by the union especially, of the normal schools and of the conferences to be given to the schoolteachers.

I am not speaking of another means, proper to the Society of Mary, that is to be seen in the meantime only in Bordeaux and in St. Remy, in the formation of the workshops. The Inspector of the Academy of Besançon seems to have taken notice of it himself, to judge from the circular letter he wrote last year to the schoolteachers of the Department of the Doubs. I say I was not speaking to you of this at present, since nothing is said about it in the Statutes. However, in the organization of the Society of Mary, everything announces a great devotedness to primary teaching, and that without it, it is, so to say, impossible for it to attain its essential object as designated in the second Statute.

My dear son, you must deeply penetrate yourself with these considerations that you may easily make use of them, when the occasion presents itself.

I wanted to make a little plan of this Method for you in order to avoid, for those who might be charged with the task by the bishop of Hermopolis, the making of the examination of it, when I recalled what he had thought of it, who had drawn up a report about our school in Agen for the Lot-et-Garonne paper. Although he does not say everything, nevertheless, his sharp eye enabled him to see the thing pretty much as it is in reality. I am having the various articles of this paper passed over to you, as they can take the place of the work I would like to do, but for which at least for the time being, I haven't the necessary leisure. You know, my dear son, I had this project in mind before your departure for Paris and that, in consequence, I had given to Father Lalanne the Method you had brought, but I let myself be influenced by the consideration, that, seeing the work itself edited by one of the Brothers of the schools, in which he included only what he was doing himself or what he was having his confreres do, the Method, with all its practical means, would be better distinguished, as well as the mind of those who were putting it into actual practice.

I don't believe, my dear son, that you have need of a particular approbation of a method for the time being. Every method of teaching by our very Statutes (no. 15) is and remains subject to the approval of the Minister of Public Instruction.

I am stopping here, my dear son, with this letter, to make use of this mail in sending you a copy of the articles that appeared in the Lot-et-Garonne paper, about the school of Agen.

I hope that the simplicity, the honesty and the zeal with which we present ourselves will have greater success than all the fine phrases which we would apply ourselves to use.

May the Lord deign to shower upon you more and more, my dear son, his blessings and on all your labors, since they have no other end than the glory of his Holy Name.

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In the following letter, Father Chaminade, for the first time, expresses his views about the religious costume of the members of the Society. He will come back to it later on, on several occasions.

338 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 3, 1825

I prefer to multiply my letters, my dear son, than to delay in writing to you, because I am not able to answer everything by return mail.

You know with what insistence our Brothers who are in the Northeast of France asked to be allowed to take a religious costume or habit. I have often thought of this matter, and especially about a month before your last voyage.

I am becoming more and more convinced that we have taken the right road of wisdom, in the modest costume adopted for the lay members, and the gold ring for the professed members. This great simplicity coincides perfectly with our way of presenting ourselves, be it to the Government or to the University. We have been able to notice that our Brothers of the schools edified much more, in general, by their manner of dressing and their modesty, than if they had a costume altogether religious, as it was understood before the Revolution. The old costumes appear to me very little suitable to such as are like ourselves, destined only to multiply Christians.

I would, nevertheless, be of the opinion that the members of the Society, lay or clerical, have in their respective costumes, some mark characteristic of their Society, that this mark be nothing bizarre, nothing striking. It would be better for youth, were it attractive without having anything worldly. What might this distinctive mark be? Consult! Would a permission be needed to wear it? Consult! Advise me, etc. . . .

I have to stop here, so that this letter may leave with this mail. May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

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From the letter of May 7th, which is all about temporal matters, we are transcribing the following passage.

339 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 7, 1825

My dear Son: Act with a holy liberty during your stay in Paris and all through your voyage. In all you meet with that you might find embarrassing to you, see what faith and the spirit of the Institute would order or permit you to do. See the application I would make of it were you in a position to consult me. Thus, the application you will make, will determine your line of action without any disquietude.

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340 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 9, 1825

I am beginning this letter, my dear son, with the proposition of a good work. Miss de Noaillan, having told me of the letter of Miss de Galard, I invited her to send me a copy of the article of this letter which had for object this good work and which I was going to send to you. If the two young unfortunate ones are such as they are described by Miss de Galard, you could perhaps arrange everything by sending both to Condom. The older one could be submistress, the younger one, a boarder. If you could find someone who could pay a part of the board money of the younger, with a part of this board money, their poor parents could be relieved, and the other part of this could serve to support them. The convent would be getting nothing for either, but it would find itself paid back by the labors of the older one and possibly by the acquisition of two good subjects.

The difficulty created for you, my dear son, by the shortness of the distance from the boarding school to the Royal College, cannot concern the boarding school of Brother Auguste, because as you know, day pupils are not received in this boarding school at whatever price, on account of the inconvenience of communications[1] that cannot be entirely avoided, whatever precautions may be taken.

[1] Regarding the communications between boarders and nonboarders. Father Caillet was negotiating, outside of the legal recognition of the Society, also for the authorization of Brother Auguste's Boarding School to receive pupils up to the class of Philosophy. Father Chaminade sets aside the objection

Imagine what would happen if we were not even more severe for Philosophers, since the danger would be still greater. The only exception there might be, would be in favor of some poor ecclesiastic, whose virtue and ability would be well known . . .

The Law[1] concerning the religious must now be printed and for sale. Get me a copy. If anything has been written for or against it, try to get that also, and besides, all that you can find out about it. I don't have to tell you that that has to be done prudently, just as if you have no interest in it whatsoever.

You will do well to take back the copybook about the Institute of the Sodalities of young people. This copybook has little meaning for such as have no clue to its purpose and mode of action.

The novitiate of the Daughters of Mary is doing quite well. They are very appreciative of the tokens of your remembrance and they are praying for you.

If you have the occasion to pass in the street of the Faubourg St. Jacques, you might see a deaf mute, named Petit, cook in a boarding house. Mr. Massiou is much interested in him. Is he a good cook? Is he pious? Has he good manners, discretion, thrift? Could we make a good cook out of him? Might he have great pretensions? This commission is such for you, so to say, only insofar as you will have time to bother about it. *Pax Domini, Fili me carissime, sit semper tecum*!

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An interesting letter about the conditions of the development of the religious orders and the importance of normal schools in the moral rescue of the country.

341 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 14, 1825

My dear son: Since you were not able to take upon yourself the changes desired by His Excellency, I have just made a fourth edition of the Statutes of the Society of Mary. I have not changed a syllable of all you tell me in your letters of the 7th and 9th of the current

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brought up against this authorization on the grounds that the boarding school, being close to the collège, would have taken away a part of the pupils of the quarter.

[1] Father Chaminade wants to say: The project of Law, because the Law was voted only on May 24th. The Founder was then thinking of the approbation of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, which was obtained only on May 23, 1828.

month. I am, nevertheless, having this fourth edition recopied with the entire suppression of Article 19.[2]

The desires, often manifested, of our holy archbishop, have been that we might be able to give several retreats and missions, when once we have members qualified to do so. This is sometimes even a necessity for the formation of the large sodalities or for their support, etc. His Excellency will readily understand that these functions, which ordinarily are only temporary, and undertaken by men of mature age, do not prevent that the Society members be, in general, employed in primary education. Furthermore, His Excellency had spoken to you of the suppression, pure and simple, of Article 19.

I imagine, my dear son, that every time you have the honor to approach His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, you remember offering him the tokens of my respect and gratitude. When once you have informed me that His Majesty has deigned to sanction our humble Society, said of Mary, in ordering prayers for the King in all of our establishments, I shall not forget to have some said also for his worthy Minister. The many kindnesses which Father de la Chapelle has shown you will always remain engraved in my heart, and I have in mind including them in the written report which will be the first item put in our new register, I mean the written report about your present mission and its success. I desire to have my gratitude pass into the heart of all those who will need or have occasion to read this register.

Thank also, Father de la Chapelle, I beg of you, my dear son, for the excellent advice that he gave you, or rather, that he gave us, to be on our guard against the desire of multiplying the establishments of the Society. Ordinarily speaking, multiplication weakens, and each establishment, becoming weaker than the one preceding it, not having sufficient or capable enough subjects to develop it, the body necessarily languishes, weakens, degenerates, becomes corrupted and finally fails completely. What examples we have of this! That is, doubtless, what the Reverend Pastor of the Foreign Missions[1] saw, in considering the matter under other points of view.

The Order of Citeaux, under St. Bernard, nevertheless, increased very rapidly and extensively. St. Bernard, without ceasing to be, as it were, the oracle of Europe, founded

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[2] Father Chaminade really signed two copies of this fourth edition, one with 22 articles, the other with 21 articles, with the suppression of Article 19, relating to the priests and their functions in the Society. He insisted on this Article 19, for reasons which he will indicate and develop in Letter 360, but he was resigned to suppress it, if it was necessary for the continuation of the negotiations, and consequently, instead of 22 Statutes, there were only 21.

[1] Father Desgenettes, later of Our Lady of Victories, where he established the celebrated Archconfraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Refuge of Sinners. He was entirely favorable to the establishment of sodalities of the type of those of Bordeaux and even offered his church for this purpose. “Father Desgenettes,” wrote Father O’Lombel to Father Chaminade, “had not limited his zeal to the seconding of your enterprise only with his counsels and good wishes; he offered me to put at your disposition the basement of his church, the actual crypt of the Church of the Foreign Missions, Rue de Bac, at the hours which are not already destined for pious exercises. April 2, 1824”

more than 150 monasteries. That is what I believe was called the filiation of Clairvaux, and, at the same time, three other heads of the same Order made three other very numerous filiations. The Order of Citeaux did not weaken itself by so great a multiplication of monasteries. But, St. Bernard had other principles than Dom Augustine, propagator of the Trappists, who are a reformed section of the Order of Citeaux. I shall explain myself better, by saying that Dom Augustine is far from following the principles of St. Bernard, even if he has about the same rule observed. The thing makes me sigh interiorly.[2]

Since Father de la Chapelle wants to honor you with his confidence, and to share with you his experience or his knowledge of so important an article, let him know of the necessity or at least of the great utility there would be of promptly multiplying the normal school establishments and the retreats for schoolteachers. I sincerely hope that, with the grace of God, without great inconvenience and without the degeneration of the Society, and a passable number of years, there will be as many establishments of this kind as there will be of Rectorates, or still better of Departments, but for that, the consent of the Government would be required and as such freely given.

My dear son, we must not cease to make the importance of this work of the regeneration of France felt and that as promptly as possible. If you haven't well understood the means that would have to be employed for obtaining this happy result, I could take up the matter by correspondence with Father de la Chapelle, and he, in his turn, could take it up with Bishop d'Hermopolis, because, I have so much confidence in His Excellency as I proved to you before your departure, that I would willingly share with him the inmost sentiments of my soul. If there were anyone whom he thought it his duty to correct or improve, I believe him incapable of ever wanting to compromise either me or the Society.

At present, my dear son, there is question of obtaining the royal sanction before the Anointing[1] and of leaving right away to prepare for the retreats in St. Remy, etc. as we said or as I told you in one of my letters. After the Anointing, and when Father de la Chapelle wants, I shall give him some explanations. I shall make known all that the good God has put in my heart, for the good of my unhappy country.

Do not neglect the two petitions, one for the boarding school in Bordeaux, and the other, for the one in St. Remy. I have to stop now. May the peace of the Lord be ever with you.

P. S. Although written in a great hurry, and that I am unceasingly disturbed in my writing, you might be able to read this letter to Father de la Chapelle. He will better see your honesty, and that we are doing our best under the circumstances. I haven't the time to

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[2] It will be remarked that this criticism of the work of Dom Augustine of Lestrange, which Father Chaminade had seen at close range in the La Trappe of St. Susanna in Spain, and of the principles, of an excessive severity, were far from being universally approved.

[1] Of the new King, Charles X

reread what I have written. You will easily be able to supply the words that I may have possibly forgotten, etc.

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The fourth edition of the Statutes, in 22 articles, announced in the preceding letter, and drawn up by Father Chaminade, as the result of the observations of Bishop Frayssinous, differed from the third (Letter 336) only in some modifications in articles 5, 8, 11, 18, and 19. The text will be found in Letter 360.

342 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 16, 1825

In spite of the little time that I am able to have, my dear son, I am coming back to you with this mail. The day before yesterday, I sent you a double copy of the fourth edition of the Statutes of the Society of Mary. . . .

I am sure, my dear son, that you are not forgetting that the time for the Anointing is approaching rapidly, and that you are in a hurry to get to St. Remy for your retreats. It would be very desirable that you have the ordinance of the King before his departure and that means before your own departure.

I am persisting in the views I have expressed to you, as regards the costume of the children of Mary, be they priests or lay members. I could even say that they are growing stronger be it by reflection or by prayer. Nevertheless, a distinctive mark seems necessary. Anyhow, to begin with, there must be a great uniformity in one and the other costume. Then, that distinctive mark.

This mark must have two characteristic features: it must make the costume modestly stand out and it must, by its very nature, nourish in oneself and in others, especially in youth, piety towards Mary. I am saying: It must make the costume modestly stand out, for it must attract and not repulse youth, for it is certainly youth that we want to win over to virtue. The ring was to have, in its very idea, some distinction according to the offices to be accomplished.

You must already be aware, my dear son, of what is being thought of our views as regards the costume, and if a permission from the King is needed for this distinctive mark. Supposing such to be the case, and that the Statutes have not yet been presented at the time of the reception of this letter, you might add as a postscript, a Statute in which the costume of the Society's members, be they ecclesiastical or lay, would have no other distinction than its uniformity and a mark that would be determined by His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, etc., and we would gain a little time in this way, to settle the matter definitely, after having come to an agreement with His Excellency.

I have to stop here. I shall not lose sight of your pecuniary needs. If some unforeseen necessities arise, be it for your person or for the affairs you have to take care of, and you are not sufficiently equipped to meet them, borrow to the extent of your needs. I shall meet your engagements without delay, as soon as you shall have told me about them.

May the Lord and his august Mother, our Patroness, be always with you!

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Here is a very beautiful letter, in which appears all the elevation and delicacy of the views of the Founder, on the relations that are to exist between the Institute and other religious societies.

343 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 19, 1825

I have received, my dear son, your letter of May 13th. I am ready to have an understanding with Mr. Ponton d'Amecourt and to enter as much as possible, in all the views with which the Spirit of God inspires him for the regeneration of our unhappy country. I have no doubts at all that the institution of the normal schools for primary teaching, joined to the retreats given each year to the schoolteachers, all conducted and directed in the manner we think proper, I don't doubt that this institution is a powerful means for working at this regeneration, which we are imploring from the Lord with so many fervent prayers.

Mr. d'Amecourt must recognize the finger of God in the connection and succession of the institutions of the Christian Schools and the schools of the Society of Mary. He will admire it much more when he knows by our correspondence and perhaps also by some interview, the secret ways of Providence. The good Brothers of the Christian Schools have nothing to fear for the honorable and important mission which they fulfill. I have contributed too much to their spread in France and to their support, to want to hamper their work in any way. The Spirit of God does not contradict itself. We shall never apply the sickle in anyone else's harvest and by that I mean the harvest of the Lord given to others to reap. But, my dear son, how very abundant is the harvest of the Lord, how extensive it is and what different sections it has!

What I am saying in regard to the schools, I can and must say for the sodalities. Never will there be any contest with the Jesuits, never any rivalry, and still less, never any of those underhand dealings inspired by a low jealousy! When I shall have explained myself to Mr. d'Amecourt, he will see that we have a different sickle than that of the Jesuits and of the Missionaries,[1] that we can also enter into the Lord's harvest without in any way interfering with the laborers who are already there. The Institute of Mary would not be of divine inspiration, if it could not produce such miserable effects, and it would have to be stifled in its cradle!

[1] Of the Missionaries of France of Father Rauzan, and then of Bishop de Forbin-Jonson.

The harvest of the Lord is made up of men and women, and you see at a glance, my dear son, the reason for the Daughters of Mary. The harvest which the mercies of the Lord have caused to grow, is so abundant and ready to gather in that the Lord is sending to it several orders of virgins. Are the Daughters of Mary also sent there and have their distinct sickles? We have thought so, and we still think so. I saw with sorrow, that two convents of two different orders sought to injure two establishments of the Daughters of Mary, one in Bordeaux and the other in Agen. We said absolutely nothing and made no kind of complaint. The Lord, by his Holy Mother, made the underhanded persecution started against them, to turn to the advantage of the Daughters of Mary . . .

The civil authorities themselves saw the need for working for the two sexes at the same time. The Prefect of the Lot-et-Garonne spoke to me about it several times and of his own accord. He gave excellent proofs of it, loved and esteemed the Brothers of the Society of Mary still more when he had seen the plan for the labors of the Daughters of Mary founded in Agen. The Lord who has sent us will know how, in time, to give evidence of the object and manner of our mission. Let us not, in any way, worry about it!

Pay a visit for me to Mr. Ponton d'Amecourt, offer him the homage of my respect and gratitude. Tell him that we still have all the weakness of childhood, but that our confidence in our august Mother is unshakable, that since our birth, she has helped us to gain astonishing victories, that we shall try to second her views in primary education, in reforming the countrysides, but that we are counting on him as well as on the Commission[1] to allow us entire liberty to conduct ourselves and to work in our own manner.

The normal school in Strasbourg, from what I have been told, has ceased to function. However little we might do, it could easily be turned over to us. All seems to lead that way. It is the Bishop of Strasbourg who made the first move in bringing us to these distant Provinces. M. Ordinaire who has taken such an interest in the Normal School of St. Remy is the Rector of the Academy of Strasbourg. The two establishments of St. Remy and of Strasbourg could be of assistance to one another. The success in the Departments of these two Rectorates would make an impression on other Departments or Rectorates; while awaiting new requests, we would be preparing new subjects, etc., etc.

If you read this entire letter to M. d'Amecourt, let him know, I beg of you, that it was written in a great hurry, in the midst of other affairs and especially during the preparations for the solemnity of Pentecost. From start to finish, it has proceeded from my heart, as I have not had as much as two minutes to think it over and reread it. . . . May the blessing of the Lord, my dear son, come upon you with abundance and upon all your labors! May the Holy Spirit enlighten you, sanctify you, and fill you with strength and courage!

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[1] The work of the Christian schoolteachers which Mr. Ponton d'Amecourt directed.

Let us interpolate an interesting letter of direction, intended for the convent in Agen.

344 – TO A DAUGHTER OF MARY,
MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 23, 1825

You have done a good work, my dear daughter, in letting me know of the indisposition of our Good Mother. I believe, as many others have thought, that her condition, always unsettled, would shortly improve if she consented to be taken care of with a certain consistency. She does little more than accept arrangements for a few days, and then grieves over the fact that she is not left the liberty of falling sick again. It is my intention to profit by the time of my visit to correct this abuse, for this is surely one, afflicting all those who are of the Institute, as well as those who have some dealings with it. Prayers for her have not been wanting, nor will they be wanting, but prayers must not be made ineffective by a conduct altogether opposed to the intention being prayed for. Take care not to offend her, until I get to order her more expressly, to hold to whatever regime the doctor may prescribe for her. This regimen is a matter of obedience for this Good Mother.

You yourself, my dear daughter, have asked of God counsel and peace of soul. I don't think it is suitable for you to have a less active life, still less, one that is entirely sedentary. You may be sure that your hope to find yourself better would not be realized. While holding to this active life, you need to know better how to possess yourself, and that is what will happen when once you are possessed of God. Only then will you be able to pass over to a sedentary life without great inconvenience. Learn to possess yourself in little things, in occupying yourself with them only in God, in doing them only for God. If you gain this point, at least for an hour each day and as a start, soon after you will gain all. Then you will be neither troublesome to others, as you think you are, nor boresome to yourself. As for the rest, I can no longer delay to console and to strengthen in good, my dear daughters and that, by my actual presence. May the consolations of God sustain them in their temporal afflictions, and may they all receive the blessings that I do not fail to ask for my dear daughters in Jesus and Mary!

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345 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 24, 1825

The gifts of the Holy Spirit, my dear son, were drawn by lot last evening.[1] Miss Seconde Lablancherie[2] drew for you. She drew the gift of counsel; its fruit, patience. I drew after everybody. I drew the gift of counsel, its fruit, patience. Mrs. Dubroca[3] asked for a slip for Brother Auguste. I drew and I read: gift of counsel, its fruit, patience.

Your letter of May 18th made me presume that our affair of authorization must have been shelved until after the coronation of the king. I have nothing further to say outside of gathering the fruit of patience enclosed in the gift of counsel that is being offered to us. In the meantime, would you be able to leave for St. Remy and to continue attending to this matter after your return? No, my dear son, await the return of the king to Paris, so as to make use of the first suitable moment.

I am not sending to you any other edition of the Statutes. The slight changes you were obliged to make are in no way harmful.

The observation made by Father de la Chapelle, that I would have done well not to speak of the 49 Statutes approved by the archbishop, is very wise. As far as possible nothing must be put in them that might give rise to discussion. Nevertheless, I had thought it in place to indicate it in all the editions, so that the approbation of the archbishop of Bordeaux would not seem to apply to some other kind of institute. However, seeing that it is Father de la Chapelle who is to prepare the report about it, it is quite sufficient that he announce the approbation in general, without speaking of the old or the new edition. This observation, as all the others he has made, is a tangible proof of the royal interest he is putting toward the success of this matter. The 19th Statute may be kept without great inconvenience, and, since it is useful for the acceptance of the 18th, it may as well be left to stand as it is.

If you have not already done so, make your addition, such as you indicate it to be in your letter of May 18th, and add your signature to it by way of procuration.

You will not forget the incident about the costume, which is serious enough and about the precaution to be taken as regards the requisition[4] of the Brothers who are not teachers. They form a necessary ensemble with their teaching confreres and work, in their own way, toward the same end in the Society.

I hope, my dear son, that you will have procured for yourself the royal Ordinance of February 29, 1816, which determined in Article 11, the three degrees of primary education. On the same occasion, you would have to make for yourself a double collection of all the

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[1] Monday of Pentecost week. About this pious custom, see *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 979.
[2] One of the oldest and most fervent sodalists of the Madeleine. She was part of the “State” from 1812. She was chosen head of the Sodality in 1819.
[3] Lady of the Retreat, nurse of the Auguste boarding school.
[4] Requisition for military service; the teaching Brothers were exempt from it and Father Chaminade thought that the Working Brothers should enjoy the same privilege.

laws, royal Ordinances or Decrees of the University that concern primary education. It would also seem good to have a similar collection for secondary education. Mr. de Luigne might be able to give you information on this point. Without wanting to do so, we may find ourselves in contradiction with some of the laws or regulations. I said a double collection: one would be for Bordeaux and the other for St. Remy.

At this moment, I am opening a letter from Brother Clouzet in which he tells me he has twenty-three candidates for the Normal School at their own expense, that he wrote to the Reverend Rector, in view of your delay, to bring them together and to advise the candidates of the Daubs to go to St. Remy, for the end of the month of June, and to postpone the retreat of the schoolteachers to the month of September, and that they will soon have sixty candidates in their Normal School. The haste of Brother Clouzet will have rendered, at least so it seems, all our calculations useless. If this is the case and if you are not able to give the retreats two weeks after you will have accomplished your Paris mission, then you must come back to Bordeaux, and we will be able to arrange for the September retreats.

Brother Clouzet is always asking for Brother Laugeay. I think he needs him, but he would have done well not to ask Brother Rothéa for him, for he has been the occasion of disagreeable relations with the pastor of Colmar. He cannot have him before the end of the school year, and then I shall leave him there for an indefinite time, as it is my intention to replace him in Colmar.

My dear son, do not speak, even confidentially, about the Daughters of Mary[1] to anyone who may have dealings with the ministry. One thing at a time! I now have to stop because the mail is about to leave. Courage, my dear son!

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The letter of May 30th goes into some detail about what might be the distinctive mark of the costume of the Society, a project which was but little followed up. It includes also some interesting views about recruitment in the Society.

346 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, May 30, 1825

My dear son: The Feasts and the occupations that precede and follow them prevent me from writing to you as much as I would like to . . .

[1] That is to say, about the legal recognition, which they will have to solicit.

Brother Moulinie, head of the Agen schools, is very dangerously ill. I am having Brother Mémain leave today to replace him. Brother Louis Hunolt[1] is pleased to accompany him to begin his own training as a teacher. Brother Tissier is going to St. Laurent, but just temporarily, in the place of Brother Mémain. Although that inconveniences me, I don't regret it, for such replacements will help to make him mature, and will have him acquire enough experience and virtue to be employed in distant posts. I am taking Nogues as secretary. If Brother Moulinie regains his health, I shall have him come to St. Laurent for the remainder of the year . . .

What might well be the distinctive mark of the Society of Mary? It is clearly understood that it must be common to the whole Society, to all grades and offices. A little collar given to the Brothers would not attain the end in view. A silver medal, on which would be engraved or in relief an image of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and suspended from the neck by a cord would seem to me to suffice. So that the cord and the medal would show better the habit of the Brothers, the upper part of their outer coat could be closed with large buttons or hooks, somewhat like our soutanes. We would soon come to the golden mean, between decency and modesty, such as is suitable to the Children of Mary. In the medals and cords, there could be some difference according to the classes of the Society members, at least as far as the main offices and principal heads are concerned.

The only inconvenience about this mark is that it would seem to be a little decoration. I saw the same inconvenience in prescribing the gold ring at the first profession. Nevertheless, some good came of it. It has been, several times, a certain motive for emulation in the novitiate. If some temptation to vanity happened to come along, it was combated, the real interior spirit became stronger, good was done inside and outside. I mean that some young men, already interns, went through their period of probation with greater ease, and others on the outside were induced to enter. The medal and the cord will produce still greater and still happier effects. It is up to us to know how to foresee little inconveniences that might arise, incompatible with the dispositions of youth. Human and natural things all have some danger for man since the day of his original fall.

If we want to succeed, let us be careful not to admit anything repulsive, but, on the contrary, let us have something that without wounding humility, decency and modesty, will be pleasing even to the eye of youth. Is it not suitable, for example, that the professors in

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[1] Louis Hunolt, born in 1805 in Soulzmatt, Alsace, was then a postulant. He made his novitiate at St. Laurent, 1825-26, and after some years of teaching in Colmar, Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, and St. Hippolyte, he was sent to St. Remy, where he spent forty years as professor of music and writing. "The entire existence of Brother Hunolt," wrote his director, Brother Guillegoz, the day after his death, "was a life of the most effective attachment to the Society of Mary. Benevolent to excess toward everybody, happy to find good wherever it might be, saddened at all evidences of evil he might meet, charitable, discreet, prudent, Brother Hunolt was, on many points, a man far above the ordinary, to whom I must pay a just but too feeble tribute of gratitude." Due to an excessive delicacy of conscience, he remained quite a long time without vows, as a simple affiliate of the Society of Mary.

the normal schools have something distinctive in their costume, so as to make it stand out more advantageously?

It is to be presumed that in the schools there will always be some subjects presenting themselves to enter the Society. There will be some also in the normal school, even more than in the schools for ordinary children. These will be nurseries, or rather, plenty of good plants will be found in them, with which to form nurseries.

It is easy to see that the more establishments the Society has, the more it will be in situation to form others. The multiplication of establishments, far from weakening the Society, will serve only to strengthen it. I suppose that the spirit of wisdom always presides in the General Administration of the Society, and so we hope for it from the grace of the Lord and from the protection of the Blessed Virgin, for whose glory we wish to labor unto extinction. *Ad majorem Dei Gloriam Dei Virginique Deiparae*!

Take courage, my dear son! Without importunity but with constancy, keep after the matter of the authorization. With mildness and humility, represent to Father de la Chapelle the need you will have of leaving Paris, etc., etc. I had wanted to write to him to ask him to hasten, as far as in him lies, the conclusion of this affair, but from all you told me, I see that he would not be able to proceed any faster without exposing himself to postponements which might have caused all the more time to be lost.

Now receive, my dear son, the blessing which your Good Father is giving you from the effusion of his heart.

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The letter we have just read no longer found Father Caillet in Paris, seeing that he could not conclude the affair of the authorization before the Anointing, May29th, and urged by Brother Clouzet to come to St. Remy to regulate the question of the retreats and to occupy himself with the projects of foundations in Vesoul, Father Caillet had left for Franche-Coute. It is there that Father Chaminade addressed him the letter, dated June seventh.

347 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, June 7, 1825

It is now towards noon, my dear son, and I have just received your letter of June first. I am interrupting all my other correspondence and taking up my pen to answer you, as I still have three quarters of an hour before the departure of today's mail.

With you, my dear son, I render thanks to Divine Providence for the blessings that it continues to shower upon St. Remy. Let us not forget the powerful Mediatrix who intercedes for us with so much goodness.

As regards the 6,000 francs paid to Vesoul, I am glad that you recognize how wrong you are to worry yourself and to bother me. You should have been able to settle this affair with me with more calm and simplicity.

It seems rather vexing to me that Brother Clouzet should have been in such a hurry to have the time of the retreats settled, all the more so because there was no need for haste, if it was to be put at the end of August. It seems he wanted it so. We should at least take care that both retreats are finished by the end of September, so that you and those who could leave with you[1] may easily arrive in Bordeaux some days before the October retreat . . . See if it is possible for you to find some good help in giving the retreats. I am saying good, because there is no question here of doing something just for the sake of having done it.

Assure Father Breuillot of my sincere and respectful devotedness. Tell him not to decide on anything else as regards the house in Vesoul.[2] I still have in mind establishing there the Daughters of Mary, especially since it is so easy to go from St. Remy to Vesoul, but it seems to me that the moment determined by Providence has not yet arrived.

However far apart the times for repaying the bills that make up the sum of 20,000 francs offered by Father Bardenet for the purchase of this house may be, it seems to me that Father Breuillot would have done well to receive the bills, since Father Bardenet wanted to give them over. I would have taken the means to indemnify the Seminary . . . If Father Bardenet wants to give them to you, I authorize you to accept them in my name, to be employed in the purchase of the said house.

Father Breuillot can personally dispose of 10,000 francs. It seems he wanted to do so in regard to the seminary, but the seminary of Besançon has no immediate need of it. Possibly, the offer he would make of it for the establishment in Vesoul would hasten the moment of Providence for its realization. Tell him to consult God before making up his mind one way or the other. The establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Vesoul is more interesting than one would at first think. I have the intention of making of it, in every way, the counterpart of St. Remy for the regeneration of the other sex.

I am stopping here. I shall write shortly to Brother Clouzet for Constant. Proceed without delay with the Paris affairs. I shall write to you there. May the Lord be always with you!

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[1] Postulants, boys and girls, going to the novitiate of the Society and of the Institute of Bordeaux.
[2] The seminary in Besançon possessed in Vesoul, not far from St. Remy, a house which it was disposed to cede to Father Chaminade, as a convent for the Daughters of Mary.

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Let us here insert two letters. The first, a simple note addressed to Brother David concerning an annoyance occasioned by a postulant who left the Madeleine; the second, a letter of direction and encouragement to the young superioress of the Daughters of Mary in Condom.

348 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 7, 1825

My dear son: Here is another bit of annoyance to bother me. Mr. Tournier, in coming to the Madeleine, brought a piano which he had in his father's house. The young man remained six months and some days at the Madeleine. His tuition and other little bills, for which his priest brother was to be responsible, were not and still are not paid.

At his going, the piano stayed at the Madeleine, as much to make up for what he still owes, as, more especially, to meet the double opposition of the father that this instrument be returned to him. Since then, the young man has several times asked me for this piano, offering me the boss of the inn where he is working as his guarantee. Just two hours ago I received a subpoena for this evening, but dated yesterday. I must go out after dinner. Would you send Brother Bidon to the Justice of the Peace and be sure to explain to him in writing or via voice what he is to say to him. If Brother Bidon really needs something in writing, I shall write before going out. Friendly greetings to you!

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349 – TO MOTHER OF THE INCARNATION,
SUPERIOR IN CONDOM

Bordeaux, June 10, 1825

My dear daughter: I received your last letter of May 27th and I am always taking a greater share in your worries.

What is it that in my last letters has led you to believe that I did not want to visit with you this year? I haven't the time to verify what I may have written to you on this subject. However, what is certain is that I always have the intention to do so. It would not have been too bad if Mother St. Vincent would have gone to see you in the meantime, if the necessary changes could have been made.

You might already have had Sister Stanislas and Sister Josephine if the latter had not been seriously ill. Her illness still continues, although she is a lot better than she was. It is a dispensation of Providence, the better to train little Mother Stanislas and especially, since today it seems we could more advantageously use her in Tonneins and give you Sister Seraphine in her place.

Your worries, my dear daughter, are great, especially at the beginning of a foundation and, as in your case, not having as yet exercised the functions of superiorship; but do not be troubled. The temporal side of things must not preoccupy you, as you have been trained for that already for years. You could thus very easily do without a Mother of Work. Whom would you want as Mother of Instruction? With the helpers we can send her, wouldn't Mother Emmanuel be able to handle the functions of this office in great style, should the boarding school and the community become more numerous? As regards zeal, could you have any mother more zealous, more intelligent and more conciliating than Mother Holy Faith? Would you prefer Mother Louis of Gonzaga, our good Mistress of Novices? This is the first time I am letting this idea out of my head, but I have not yet seriously examined whether this change would really be necessary. The Mother Superior, according to your Regulations, must be Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Work. Even at that, we do not require that she be qualified to exercise all the functions of zeal, instruction, and work, but rather that she have the prudence necessary to direct them well, according to the views of the Institute of Mary.

You have done well in not lending your Constitutions and Regulations to the Misses Silheres.[1] If these ladies of Montfort are strong enough to fit out their house as a religious community, why don't they write to me? etc. . . .

I have greater sorrow than your good Mother, over the anxiety that is being caused her. It will not be my fault if I do not find some means of making amends to her for it. Give her the assurance of my sincere and respectful attachment, as also to your good father.

May the Lord be with you and with all our dear daughters!

* * * *

Nevertheless, Father Caillet had returned to Paris and correspondence with him was resumed, rich in ideas of various kinds.

350 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, June 16, 1825

. . . This little letter has no other object than to inform you about the letter I wrote to you in Besançon, and to express to you all my satisfaction with whatever you told me about St. Remy and about your prompt return to Paris.

[1] Pious young ladies of the little city of Montfort, diocese of Auch, who desired to found a house for the education of young girls. They later entered into the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. See Letter 319.

I believe that the costume of the Society of Mary will be sufficiently distinctive, as you have indicated. As regards the ring, I think I have already spoken to you about it. It will also have its little and modest distinction, according to the ranks and offices.

I am having the teachers for the normal schools seriously prepared.

I am again taking up my pen, my dear son, to show you my satisfaction over the sacrifices you have made, be it in St. Remy or in Besançon or elsewhere in order to get to Paris as promptly as possible. Our labors have goodness and excellence only in their relations with the will of God. The will of God for you is that you be in Paris, to work there with prudence, without undue haste, but without negligence, to obtain the royal ordinance which will authorize the Society of Mary in the form it receives from its Statutes, to decide upon its costume, humble no doubt, modest and favoring modesty, without being in sharp contrast with the ideas and tastes of the century in which God has called us into existence. We are to attract people and especially youth. We are to attract them in every way: by our mild, amicable, patient manners, by our costume which announces, at a glance, who we are, what we are after, what we claim to be, in the name of whom, so to say, we are presenting ourselves, etc. . . . You are to settle the matter of requisition. You know the way of proceeding with regard to the Brothers teaching in the schools, but I don't remember if you said anything about the working Brothers. The Artisans[1] don't need to be mentioned, I believe, as they may be confounded with the first ones, in regard to the requisition. Perhaps, we should follow the same policy for all the Brothers, so as to conform more closely to the letter of the law. I don't think that the Brothers of the Christian Schools make any kind of distinction.

I am thinking of sending you, in Paris at the Foreign Missions, a man of a certain distinction, more by his talents and reputation than by his birth. He is rich and has some decorations. He wants to make a general confession. If he could lodge in the house of the Foreign Missions, it would be fine for him, and possibly also even for the house of the Foreign Missions. In any case, he can be made to pay a pretty high board. With the object he has in mind, he cannot be anything but a source of edification. Furthermore, his honesty, his education, and his natural wisdom are safe guarantees . . . Several times I got the idea that God wanted to make him my mediate or immediate successor. He is 48 years old. We must not speak of this thought, but we might well put some interest in the subject. I shall tell you more about it later, when the proper times comes. May the Lord, my dear son, pour upon you his abundant benedictions!

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The person announced to Father Caillet was Mr. Louis de Saget (1778-1840), one of the most distinguished members of the bar of Bordeaux, who in 1825 was named President

[1] The Brothers given to the arts and crafts.

of the Chamber of the Court of Bordeaux, resigned at the time of the revolution of 1830, and passed the rest of his life in retirement.

351 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, June 20, 1825

In my letter of the 16th, my dear son, I said that I was going to send you a distinguished personage who wanted to make a general confession and, preferably in the Foreign Missions, if he found the confessor suited to his needs. He would willingly accept you, if you were to stay long enough in Paris, to conclude what he has in mind.

This gentlemen is leaving today with the same messenger who is to take this letter. I did not give him any kind of note to identify himself. I simply told him that I had already notified you of his coming and that I was going to write to you again.

The desire for conversion does not seem doubtful to him, but for about two weeks, the method of carrying it out is undergoing great changes, occasioned by variations in his affairs, as well as in his condition of health. His desire for conversion goes back at last 18 months and is anterior to the annoying events, which have made of it a definite project. We have several times remarked, between the two of us, that the good God has so permitted things to happen, because he wanted to draw him from the world and from temporal matters.

First, he was to enter at St. Remy as a "frère donne."[1] There was, nevertheless, always one difficulty: the small number of priests and of educated persons. We had found the remedy for this great inconvenience, a library of books on religion, that I would have bought at his expense, and by our correspondence, etc., etc.

Today, an affair of honor, which was leading him to desire to disappear from the midst of the Society, is accommodated. In this accommodation, he showed a generosity, a refinement and a grandeur of soul, that touched me and made me say to him: "The good God has seen it and he will take care of you." His doctor told him that he needed to travel, to reestablish his health, shattered by his arduous labors and possibly also, in those later times, by his many worries. He advised him to travel two or three months in Switzerland. In this new state of things, we agreed that it was best to start by cleansing his soul, that a good confession had to be made and that, afterwards, we would be better able to see what was the next step to be taken. He has a brother in Paris whose son is sick at present. This brother lives a short distance from Paris, but has, nevertheless, a temporary lodging in Paris itself. His brother, so he believes, is in Paris for at least a month. He has close relations with him and he doesn't believe he could dispense himself from going to live with him. I don't think this is or should be a cause for delaying his confession. I think he has enough character to go right ahead, without failing in what decorum would require of him.

[1] There is no English equivalent for *frère donne*. It simply means someone who has given himself, as it were, to a religious community, offering it his services of work and prayer, in return for board and lodging. He lives in the community, practically a part of it, but has no religious obligations.

He would have wanted to profit by his stay in Paris, to instruct himself in a grand and profound way in religion. I was not quite of the same opinion. I told him that, at first, he should limit himself to the reading of a very small number of works that would place before him the ensemble of religion as well as the ties that unite its various parts, and then, have some talks with some truly educated ecclesiastic and study especially all that relates to confession, because all in him should serve to prepare him for the worthy reception of the sacrament of penance. After that, it would be time enough to see to which side grace would lead him, etc. . . . Whatever utility there might be in his study of religion, I think that under the present circumstances, there might be illusion in not following this course of action. Let him learn that one must pray and pray humbly, that one must do penance, etc. These are the first things he must learn.

His is a manly soul, a strong and penetrating mind, a prompt and penetrating judgment, he is a wise mathematician, he is deeply versed in civil law, a good orator, etc. He is looked upon in Bordeaux as one of the ablest lawyers. His office has brought him as much as 30-35,000 francs a year. The sacrifice of this income doesn't seem to present any hardship to him. Besides, his regular income goes up to 12,000 francs. His brother in Paris is very rich but has no regular employment.

As regards the talks I have referred to a moment ago, you might propose to him, Bishop d'Hermopolis, but it might not be prudent, considering the point his conversion has reached by this time. The Guardian of the Seals had proposed him to the Council of Ministers, for a place in the high magistrate. Bishop d'Hermopolis refused him his vote, by reason of some fact in Christian morals that goes back possibly twenty years. It is not he who spoke to me about it. I have it from another source.

If he comes to see you, as I think he will, you will let him know with candor and simplicity, that I instructed you as regards what he is to do first, that you are all for him, by the same devotedness by which I was all for him myself, etc., etc., that I had not told you his name, and that you would not even ask him for it, but that, nevertheless, you would be glad to have his address, etc.

I regret not to be able to speak to you about the good God, as the mail carrier is about to leave. I hardly had time to read your letter. I shall try to write to you by tomorrow's mail. Very truly yours.

I have just received your letter of the 15th, with the pamphlet and the law about the authorization of religious sisters . . .

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In the following letter, there is question of a legal recognition of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, and Father Chaminade therein gives Father Caillet precious directions for his interior life.

352 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, June 23, 1825

I wrote to you yesterday, my dear son, very much in a hurry. I wanted to continue today: moral impossibility.

I have just read, somewhat rapidly, to tell the truth, the law relating to the authorization of congregations and religious communities of women. Then I read all that Father de Lammenais[1] says about this project of law. It would seem to me possible to have the Daughters of Mary authorized without openly derogating from the letter of the law, and without falling into great inconveniences pointed out, sometimes too vigorously, by Father de Lammenais; but an understanding with the Minister would be necessary. What would be better, and perhaps easier, would be to make an abstraction of this law, which has important defects, and not to present the Daughters of Mary as a religious congregation, and their establishments, not as religious communities, but as something like the Statutes of the Society of Mary. It would even be possible to shorten the Statutes and to propose them as a civil and, so to say, a material organization. Nothing would be astonishing, if the Society of Mary were once authorized. I would not want to bring anything for the discussion of the Council of State, belonging solely to the Church.

Bishop d'Hermopolis seems to me to know the land on which he is treading, but he has not drawn the consequences that are analogous to the knowledge of his project. That is why he has had to put up with so many discussions, even to modify several articles, that is why the law is still so imperfect, be it from the temporal or from the spiritual point of view. Today, the Government hardly wants any other Catholic legislation but that of Bonaparte, and it might even be good to wait until the Government itself is Catholic in spirit, before offering for its consideration any law which only supposes it to be so. Would it be already doing a great deal to have it authorize the existence of the congregations whose object is to bring back the real spirit of Christianity? . . .

I am not making these reflections, my dear son, so that you share them, be it with the Minister, with those who surround him or with persons who are in the Government, but only with enlightened and judicious Christians, if you find any, so that you may have them ripen in your own mind and finally that you may have me share your own. If the authorization of the Society of Mary really takes place, we shall be able to pursue our objectives more easily. Anyhow, it does seem vexing that this law has been passed so soon.

I thought it could be of some use to you to make the acquaintance of Mr. de Portets.[2] That is what made me decide to ask his sister for a letter for you.

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[1] There is question here of the famous Felicité de Lammenais who, in fact, actively combated this project of law.
[2] Professor of law in the College of Paris and father of one of the Daughters of Mary.

Before going any farther, I shall read the last point of your letter in which you speak of your interior . . . . I have reread it and here, in short, are the ideas that come to my mind. You see, both by your voyages and often by certain occupations that have to be looked after, sometimes almost without interruption, how much the habit of interior silence is necessary. How to preserve recollection, the presence of God, the purity of intention, the attention to divine inspirations, if, in us, some faculty of power of the soul comes to break the silence? It is a very wise practice always to exercise one of the powers of the soul to keep this silence. Each time during the day we hear it speaking in its own way, may we silence it, by saying to it, for example: "*Audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus meus.*"[1] Let us permit our memory, for example, to recall for us only what is of God or for God. In the beginning of the spiritual life, this means an almost continual interior mortification, more difficult, ordinarily, than the exterior mortification of the senses. To soften it somewhat, and at the same time, to rid oneself more promptly of self-love, I see no better way than the almost continual exercise of the pure love of God. Oh, my dear son, when shall we so completely leave ourselves as to love only our God in himself and for himself? And, is it loving him with purity, to love him only in oneself and for oneself? Does not self-love thus soil the purity of divine love? We have to come back to business. May the holy name of God be glorified!

I have just received a letter from Father Rothéa, in which he gives me a rapid account of what he calls his round of visits. It makes me sigh to note how he lets himself be almost completely dominated by his imagination. Happily, he has the fear of God and an upright heart! I hardly know as yet, just how I shall answer him.

The young lady of St. Clotilde reminded me of two commissions of Miss de Noaillan that I had forgotten. I have just looked for the notes she had given me, and one is found outside its envelope and, doubtless, got mixed up with other papers. A new search would delay the departure of this letter. I am sending you the one referring to the Sister governess. Might it be to the taste of Father Mertian to have this charge duly filled?

The rector of the academy of Bordeaux seems well enough disposed. He is still remaining in the country, as he has left the running of the academy to one of the Inspectors, who, to bring out the request of Brother Auguste, would want to bring together the academic council. Several members of this council are absent. Several think that there having been a meeting a short time ago, it would hardly be worthwhile to have another just for the treatment of one affair. I advised Brother Auguste to go and see the Rector at his place in the country, about seven miles from Bordeaux, or at least, to write to him. I think he will go tomorrow, if he can find a place in a carriage. The professor of philosophy of the royal College, a member of the academic Council, is much in favor of the teaching of philosophy in the boarding school. He sees in it many advantages, that is, for the pupils of the boarding school and no inconvenience for the college. He is Father Toucas-Poyen,

[1] I shall listen to what the Lord says in me.

pastor of St. Pierre, and very much interested in all that concerns the University.[1] If the Statutes of the Society of Mary were once approved, there would be one more reason to give, for the need of teaching philosophy in the boarding school. The pupils of the Society[2] who would be in philosophy, could go there, as the boarding school is run in such a way that ecclesiastical students are not out of place in it. You know that I have a professor of philosophy at the Madeleine for just one novice. The pastor of St. Pierre was of the opinion that, in asking for the secondary school in St. Remy, you were asking by the very fact that philosophy be taught there, and that, as a result, there is or there will be greater need for it than even at Bordeaux. You will see to it, if there is still time, and if the rector of the academy of Besançon judges it apropos. . . .

May the Lord grant you, my dear son, his mercy and his peace!

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353 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, June 28, 1825

There you are, my dear son, busy in Paris during the time you will have to stay there.[3] Let us bless divine Providence without ceasing! God seems to make himself conspicuous to men by this attribute, to attract their hearts, but their ingratitude is inconceivable.

Try to find out what is the method of teaching of these good Sisters, to what degree of perfection it has reached, what are their constitutions, what is their particular end, their origin, the extent of their labors, etc. You might take notes, if there is occasion or reason for it.

Have you procured for yourself the royal Ordinance of February 29, 1816? Or do you perhaps think that it will form part of the double collection that you are making, or intend to make? I would be very glad to have it before me, the more so, if there had to be further delay in your procuring of those collections.

You may assure anyone in need of this assurance, that I shall train young men in the first degree of primary education, for we shall soon have some who will be able to run normal schools. I have joined to those of St. Laurent, some of the Madeleine for mathematics and especially for land-surveying, and all are seriously studying the French language. I got them two excellent teachers, one for mathematics and the other for French,

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[1] Father Toucas-Poyen (1755-1835), former pastor of St. Genes de Talence, had distinguished himself during the Revolution by his courageous refusal to take the oath of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy.
[2] The pupils of the Little Seminary of the Madeleine.
[3] We do not know just to what kind of occupation, allusion is here made, but from what follows, it seems that Father Caillet had to busy himself with the affairs of a Congregation of teaching sisters.

etc. Those of the Madeleine will be able to teach without any inconvenience in the normal schools, although clothed in ecclesiastical garb.

It is all right to give Mr. d'Amecourt all the satisfaction he may want about the formation of the Society of Mary, although, in general, the work of the normal schools and of the annual retreats is what should particularly interest him. Let him have a clear idea, especially, of what is the end we propose to ourselves, that of multiplying Christians, of propagating everywhere the true principles of religion, of virtues, of the monarchy, and of lawfulness. If he wants to take notice of it, he will see that this work of the normal schools is directly in opposition to the road traced out by d'Alembert, to introduce by means of schoolteachers, philosophism into places even the farthest away from the cities. Our teachers, no doubt, must be able to teach what we have just learned, but what can be made known about the method only by actual practice is the wise and enlightened zeal of the teachers in winning hearts to the practice of virtue and religion.

You would please me, my dear son, to see for yourself and also to consult others, for the purpose of drawing up an outline of two or three short courses of religion and Christian morals for our young novices or our lay teachers. We are not, as you yourself know, entirely in want as regards this important point, but we can always improve on what we already have. There may be works of which I know nothing interesting, either in the order of subject matter or in the manner of presentation and development. I said two or three courses. In fact, several are needed, since there are such differences in ages, previous education, aptitudes and what not! The youngest who have the means, can take them all successively, and that would really make them strong in the matter of the teaching of religion . . . .

I simply must stop now because of the mail which is about to leave. I shall write to you as much as I can. Do not neglect the principal matter. Receive here the paternal blessing.

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In the following letter, there is question of a normal school to be established in the diocese of Nancy, and of the spiritual direction to be given to Mr. de Saget in regard to his retirement.

354 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 5, 1825

I was going to write to you, my dear son, when I got your letter of June 28th. I shall try to answer it, in proportion as I reread its various articles.

You don't seem to find very clear, the letter I wrote to you in Besançon on June 7th. I now recognize that I attributed to Father Breuillot what you said about Father Bardenet,

namely, that he would employ to another good work the ten thousand francs that he wanted to give.

Since that time, there seems to be some means of getting funds in Alsace that could be applied to the house of Vesoul . . . Let us be patient! You know how much I am against making establishments for sisters in places where there is not the assurance of finding priests to direct them. Perhaps the good God wants to make the acceptance of the collège coincide with this establishment of the Daughters of Mary.[1] This concurrence would be all the more necessary, as this establishment would be more important and destined to serve all the surrounding regions . . . You can easily have Father Breuillot remain patient, and also see if it would not be suitable to write to Father Bardenet . . . You told me nothing about the establishments for the deaf and dumb. Several young men of the Society are learning sign language and succeeding really well in it.

When you shall have finished your work in Paris, will you go to St. Remy or are you coming back to Bordeaux? It is not through forgetfulness that I have not answered this question, but the answer seemed to me precocious. When will you have finished? If the matter of the authorization for the men religious ends happily, will there no longer be anything to do for our good Daughters of Mary? On the supposition that your presence in Paris will soon be no longer necessary, I have no uncertainty at all as regards your return to Bordeaux. Besides, I would have great need of making my round of visits in the Hauts-Pays, and I would want you to be here. It would be very useful, as you see, that the royal sanction were known before the holding of the general Councils of the Departments, and especially of that of the Lot-et-Garonne.

I am much inclined, my dear son, to affiliate Mr. O'Lambel to the Society of Mary, but it would be desirable that he write me a little letter, in which he would let me know of this desire on his part. As regards the lady who would like to be a sodalist, I shall also very willingly affiliate her with the Ladies Sodality, but it would be equally desirable on her part to ask me for the favor. It might possibly be preferable that she be affiliated to the Daughters of Mary. You will judge by her character, etc. You would take charge of one and the other, and send me under separate cover, etc. . . .

I do not doubt, my dear son, that if the bishop of Nancy[2] undertakes the establishment of normal school, he will easily make a success of it. It seems to me little suitable that I should be the first one to write to his Lordship, both after what he had already said of me to Mr. O'Lambel and after the desire he made known to you only on the occasion of a visit you paid him. Mr. O'Lambel could write to him in his own name and say to him, for example, that if he really wants a normal school for the aspirants of primary teaching, to which we would join an annual retreat for the older schoolteachers, he would advise him to write to me himself about the matter, to talk to me, at the same time, about

[1] Father Chaminade nourished the hope of seeing the Collège of Vesoul confided to the Society.
[2] Bishop de Forbin Janson, acquainted with Father Chaminade (see Letter 267).

the buildings he might have in mind to receive, be it the aspirants to primary teaching or the older teachers coming for the retreats, that, for the success of the reform he was thinking about for his entire diocese through this enterprise, he should have an understanding with the rector of the academy of the Department, in which his diocese is located, that, if then, he were not sufficiently informed concerning the nature of the academy and the real good it could do, to have it known to the rector of his academy, he could have him write about it to the rector of the Academy of Besançon, that, besides regarding the enterprise as such, it could be seen at the first glance that, in a short time, there would be a reform in all the schoolteachers, and if there might be some older teacher who was not susceptible to reform, one of the aspirants, capable and thoroughly Christian, would easily be found to replace him.

Would the establishment be diocesan? Doubtless, as a matter of propriety, if the diocese gave it. But, as regards the management, it would belong to the Society, and that is all that is needed for the accomplishment of the good. . . .

I am a little astonished at the variations and the kind of uncertainty harassing Mr. Saget, as shown by the manner in which his conversion is working out. Find him a good boarding place in which to stay, preferably near the Foreign Missions and see that in this place, there be no stumbling block. Perhaps he could pass the greater part of the day in the very house of the Foreign Missions, where he would find a library, a garden, and a church, because, in his state, he needs these three things. He needs a long retreat and he must not have need to go and find any one of them elsewhere. Besides, you and Father Busson[1] can have talks with him, speak the language of faith. Is religion true, really true? Then, is there an eternity of supreme happiness? Is there one of supreme unhappiness?
If . . . then . . . Sometimes, get down to proofs, give him some work in which these truths are well brought out, but if such works are dry, as is sometimes the case, then resort to particular interviews and have Father Busson spread the unction of the faith . . . Perhaps Father Busson will see the necessity of occupying him with writings, in keeping with his own particular tastes. When Brother David was converted, he was just three years younger than Mr. Saget. I made him work a lot, but not to absorb him overmuch. If he begins to feel freer and in proper shape, you might have him write to me about his dispositions since you have a way of passing your letters to me without expense, etc. Let us pray for him without ceasing. You may tell him that I have written to you, and that I am always recommending him to you, that I am much devoted to him. Surely you will want it so.

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[1] Father Claude Ignatius Busson (1785-1859) son of a teacher of Franche-Comte put to death on the guillotine in 1793, was ordained a priest in 1811, and in 1814 employed in teaching theology in the Seminary of Besançon. In 1818, he entered the novitiate of the Jesuits in Paris, from which after some months, he passed to the Seminary of the Foreign Missions. He there acquired a great reputation as catechist and confessor, and had steady relations with Châteaubriand, Montalembert, and Lamennais. In 1828, he was named Secretary General of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and became chaplain to Charles X, whom he followed into exile. Having returned to Besançon, he there founded the work of the Daughters of Service, the Association of Calvary , and the Confraternity of a Happy Death.

Since the matter regarding the secondary school of St. Remy is being delayed, my dear son, would there still be time to ask the rector of the Academy of Besançon if the diploma granted to Brother Rothéa carries the permission to teach philosophy? I am mentioning that here because of an observation made by the professor of philosophy here at the royal college. However, I don't think there is need to make a great fuss about it, if the thing cannot easily be done.

You tell me, my dear son, that all your papers have been sent to the Royal Council of Public Instruction. Doubtless, this is a necessary formality, in order to attain its advice, but it may not give any decision. Nevertheless, although the State Council has no need of conforming to the advice of the Council of Public Instruction, it would be vexing if this advice were against us. I think that you will have taken care of informing yourself as regards the formalities to be observed, if, for example, it were customary to go and see the Council members or only the head man, or the Reporter. I am not acquainted with the manner of proceeding. Take careful information and be sure not to miss anything. Find out especially how the State Council is made up. See if you have some member of this Council on your side., etc., etc. I had thought that Father de la Chapelle was to be the Reporter of this affair in one or the other council.

I was already this far with this long letter, my dear son, when I received one from Brother Clouzet, which I am also sending on to you. You conferred about it with the archbishop of Besançon. You know what I would have desired, as you are fairly well acquainted with the persons and things concerned. Do the best you can. I am also sending you a copy of the letter I am writing to Father Rothéa, and also his letter, that you may be better informed.

All that you tell me, my dear son, about Father Blanc interests me much. The association of secular priests which he proposes to found could do a great good, first for the priests themselves and then for the glory of God.[1] Ask him please to let me know his views, and all that the Lord may have inspired him to do, etc. . . . I shall answer him. His mind will then be sooner and more firmly made up, and he will be able more easily to influence the young priests, who might want to become members of this association. I am stopping now, as the mail-carrier is about to leave. I wish you the peace of the Lord.

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Here is the letter announced above.

[1] We don't have further information about Father Blanc, but the manuscript Statutes of the "Sacerdotal Administration," sent by him to Father Chaminade, have been preserved in the archives of the Society of Mary. These Statutes, quite developed and preceded by very edifying "General Considerations," are analogous to those of diverse associations, organized in the course of the nineteenth century, with the purpose of maintaining the secular priests in the spirit of the holiness of their state, by the means of association and direction.

355 – TO FATHER ROTHÉA, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, July 5, 1825

My dear son, I have just received your letter of June 24th, and I am answering it right away because of the importance of certain points it touched upon. I also have one in which you give me the details about your voyage in Alsace.

Regarding the first point, the one about the sixteen candidates offered by the rector, I see with pleasure that, in the discussion that took place as to whether they should be accepted or refused, the affirmative vote won the day. They will still be at St. Remy during the retreat. Are you afraid they will be any bother? But, why would they not be following the exercises of one retreat and even the conferences about teaching during the second, if there happens to be one? The only thing needed would be a little special supervision, when they would not be assisting at the spiritual exercises.

As regards the retreat itself, the one to be given to the schoolteachers of the Department of the Haute-Saône in the way decided upon for those of the Doubs, I gave no orders that it be given. In spite of the fact that we are not to get the 3,114 francs.[1] I simply manifested a desire that it should take place, and I indicated some means that could be taken to insure its success. Father Caillet, to whom I expressed the same desire, conferred about it with the archbishop of Besançon. I hope that, in one way or another, Providence will make provision for these retreats. I desire that they take place and I would be sorry if they didn't, under the pretext that the expenses connected with them were not forthcoming. I am surprised that Brother Clouzet did not come to any agreement with Father Caillet, during the short stay he made in St. Remy. I am going to send your letter and its answer to Father Caillet in Paris, and perhaps the one written to Brother Clouzet, in which there is question of the retreats. Father Caillet will finally decide upon what will be most suitable, write about it to Brother Clouzet, and give me an account of the entire matter.

My dear son, I am not trying to forget about the need St. Remy has of subjects capable of teaching, but St. Remy, just as myself, must patiently wait until the Lord sends us some. However, I am having some trained. Let us remain on the job, for the Lord has his own views about the penury in which we find ourselves for the moment.

I believe, my dear son, that frequent Communion is very salutary, but what is understood by frequent Communion? I have never permitted Communion every Sunday to young men who did not know their vocation in life, although in a state of fervor. First, every month, and after their virtue and piety have considerably increased, every two weeks. Then, when they have decided upon the ecclesiastical or the religious state, and if their parents

[1] Grant of money, voted by the General Council of the Haute-Saône and thrown out by the Minister of the Interior, because the Society was not yet authorized.

have consented to it, every week. If some great solemnity comes along, then let one of the Communions be advanced or postponed according to the first arrangement. When fervor has become great and the desire for Communion is ardent and sustained, then Communion on these extra occasions is permitted, without prejudice to the ordinary Communions already decided upon. This is the policy I have held to, almost all through my life.[2] Father Alegre must not have introduced anything of this kind in the boarding school, as he was not of the kind to inspire confidence.

Brother Langeay wrote all his thoughts to me at great length, and I answered him that I would take them into consideration. I am very glad that he, you, and everyone else confidently share with me all your views, improvements, etc., etc., but I think it little suitable that, among yourselves, you blame, you approve, you comment upon, etc., however good intentions may be.

I have no idea at all, my dear son, to have ever said or written that all the establishments of the Institute would be governed by religious laymen, that the priests would be subject to the religious laymen, etc. There will be, I presume, a great number of establishments in which the laymen will be doing the principal work, such as, for example, St. Remy. That one at the start seemed destined to be the first of its kind. The superiors are then to be chosen from among the laymen. Some priests are, nevertheless, needed as heads of zeal, spiritual directors, chaplains, etc. These priests are not subject to laymen in the same sense as are other lay religious. Their place is more honorable, even from the standpoint of reason, than that of the superior properly so called. They are, doubtless, subject to the Rule, but less, so to say, than the superior.[2] I have already had occasion, several times, to learn of the annoying interpretations which some minds had given to the nomination of superiors in St. Remy, which, two years ago, even obliged me, before leaving St. Laurent, to give a lengthy explanation, but this explanation was not put in writing, and several of those who were at the ceremony were not at the meeting. I shall supply the want, by a very clear and sufficiently developed article, when once there is question of interior regulations.

In your correspondence with Brother Laugeay, my dear son, you might well tell him, as softly as you like, that there was little prudence and humility in blaming along with you, the boarding school in Bordeaux, and the one which is being established in St. Remy, in making you part and parcel of his tastes, etc. . . .

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[2] This conduct was inspired by the rules commonly in use at this time. “If it is good,” declared the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, “to exhort the faithful to communicate frequently, those who would be inclined to practice it, should nevertheless be warned not to make it more than once a week.” And St. Francis de Sales requires for weekly Communion, the absence of all affection to venial sin. For the religious, Father Chaminade was more open-minded, as can be seen in the *Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 1057.

[2] The thought of the Founder seems to be the following: In the house directed by a lay member of the Society, the priests, as vested with the sacerdotal character and members of the hierarchy enjoy the privileges attached to the ecclesiastical state and depend on the Superior General or the Provincial for all that regards their personal conduct. See Letter 294.

I pity Brother Gaussens that he pities himself.[3] When Father Caillet returns to St. Remy, he will look into the needs of the work to be done, and into the matter of available subjects, that the Brother may have time to breathe and peacefully make his exercises of piety.

To blame austerities, penances, acts of humility, would be to blame the conduct of the saints, it would be almost blaming the Gospel . . . It must not be concluded that they must be resorted to indiscreetly and without counsel . . . You must not make your coulpe to Brother Bousquet. If you know how to do things, you will not miss occasions to blame yourself for your faults before others, without doing it as a matter of coulpe.

I cannot authorize you to receive members into the Confraternity of the Scapular, but I could obtain for you from the pope an authorization for the entire house. We shall come back to this again later. I shall come to a close, my dear son, in exhorting you to work, without, however, too intense application of mind, at the acquisition of the silence of the imagination. If your imagination had not spoken so much before your departure for Landser, you would have limited yourself to going to see your parents, you would have been the consolation of your mother, you would have done to her soul all the good possible, and perhaps through them, you might also have been able to do some for the Institute or for St. Remy. It doesn't seem that you have gained greater mastery over your imagination by your rapid round of visits. Did you come back to St. Remy better than when you left it? What good can we do in the places to which we go, when our mission is no more than a matter of imagination?

May the Lord deign to shower upon you, my dear son, and upon all my dear children in St. Remy his most abundant blessings!

* * * *

Brother Pierre Bousquet, of whom there is mention in the preceding letter, was born in Bordeaux in 1795. He was a cooper by trade. In 1817, he joined the Sodality of the Madeleine and placed himself under the direction of Father Chaminade.

He was the first novice of the Society on the day following its foundation and obtained from the Good Father, as a special favor at the time of his entry into the novitiate (1818), the permission to make private perpetual vows, which he changed the following year (1819) to the ordinary vows of religion. After having been employed in the boarding school of St. Marie in Bordeaux, he was part of the first group sent to St. Remy, where he fulfilled the functions of Head of Work. In 1830 he was named director of the Charity Orphanage of Besançon, then in 1835, he came back to St. Remy, where the Good Father

[3] Brother Gaussens, charged specially with the teaching in St. Remy, was complaining about the overload of work his functions imposed upon him.

confided to him the important charge of master of novice-workers, because, at this time, the novitiates of the various categories of religious were separated.

There is placed in the life of Brother Bousquet, an episode which deserves to be mentioned because of the lesson it contains. This good religious was assailed by a violent temptation, that of quitting the Society to become a Trappist. “He asked me,” wrote the Founder, “to reveal his good reasons to a counsel foreign to the Society. There is in this manner of acting a specious illusion, for what other reason might the Society have in keeping him, than that of having him fulfill all his duties toward God? Such ideas can only paralyze him in the accomplishment of the views of God in his regard and prevent him from zealously fulfilling the duties with which he is charged. He does not understand that, in admitting all these ideas and in cherishing them, he is acting contrary to his vow of stability. This state of mind is very dangerous for his salvation.” Brother Bousquet nevertheless left for the Trappist monastery, made there an eight-day retreat, and was disposing himself to take the habit when, on the eve of the feast of St. Joseph, he was seized with sorrows and worries such as he had never before experienced in his life. “I chose the part,” he later wrote to the Founder, “of putting the whole matter into the hands of the good St. Joseph, while praying him to obtain for me the help I needed in so pressing a danger. I made a vow of fasting every Wednesday, during a year, in his honor if he obtained peace of soul for me. Immediately, the bandage fell from my eyes, I recognized all the imprudence of what I had done, and I saw clearly that the good God was asking me to return to your feet, my Good Father, to receive the penance you will be pleased to impose upon me.” The Good Father sent Brother Bousquet back to St. Remy to resume his former functions. The good religious immediately got back to the performance of his duty, but he had to expiate his weakness, because the old temptation came back and it became necessary that the Good Father should protect him, with loving kindness, against the illusions of his old enemy. “I am not losing confidence,” wrote the Founder, “he has too long been exemplary and too long faithful to the august Mary, to fall again.” Actually, he triumphed over the difficulty and continued to edify the Society at St. Remy, then at the charity orphanage, the direction of which was confided to him in 1840.

Nevertheless, his health, which he had never spared, was getting the better of him. He fell seriously ill, and it was with great trouble and sorrow that he was transferred to Courtefontaine. There, his life was prolonged beyond all expectations. Given charge of the infirmary, he was ingenious in relieving the sufferings of others, without reckoning on his own. He himself, while giving his superiors an account of his average day, could summarize all in these two words: To suffer and to pray. Thus he still lived nearly 20 more years. Toward the end of his life, Father Lalanne came to preside at a retreat at Courtefontaine. When he saw Brother Bousquet again, worn out by age and infirmities, he went to him in the midst of the assembled Brothers, and the two old men remained a long time in each other’s embrace. Those were the dearest memories of the foundation, which relived in their persons, amidst the deep emotion of all those present. Brother Bousquet died on the 26th of July, 1869, feast day of St. Anne, and his death was as edifying as his life had been.

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In the following letter there is question of the acquisition, in view of the establishment of the Society of Mary in Paris, of the big Richelieu Hotel, located on the pier of Bethune, Island of St. Louis, behind Notre Dame Cathedral. It is Mr. O'Lombel who is negotiating this affair, which, in the end, had no issue. The hotel was for sale for 200,000 francs, of which 50,000 had to be paid in cash.

356 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 10, 1825

I have just received, my dear son, your letter of July 7th, and before answering it, I shall come back upon the last point of yours of June 28th, to which I could not answer in my letter of July 5th. I cannot see, my dear son, what we can do better for your parents than what Father Farine will decide. We shall always consider as done and wisely settled what he will have done and settled himself. As regards your little niece, see for yourself, before God and without scruple, what you think is the most suitable thing to do. You know her and you know the position of the four convents of the Daughters of Mary. I don't doubt that they will do all that I shall advise them to do. Besides that, I shall speak to them about it only when you deem it apropos that I should. She seems to me still rather young to enter community life. Would you not think that there is a danger that she would acquire a distaste for religious life, rather than learn its real spirit? If some establishment of the Daughters of Mary were started in Alsace or near it, the thing could be tried with at least some hope for success. Do whatever you can, by way of having her given a solid and truly Christian education. If toward this end some expense is necessary, I am well disposed to help.

The big Hotel Richelieu would seem to me very suitable for a religious establishment such as would be needed in Paris. The principal and immediate work or need should be a normal school for primary teaching, accompanied by annual two-week retreats for the schoolteachers. In this normal school, only young teachers of the Department of the Seine would be received, but also all those from the province who would prefer this school to the nearer ones that they might find.

Mr. d'Amecourt, you tell me, my dear son, would have in mind the forming, near Paris, of an establishment on a small scale which would be able to serve as a model and prove the great good of which its development would make it susceptible. This manner of proceeding is both correct and prudent, in general, for most new establishments, but as regards the one of which there is question here, the case is otherwise, and Mr. d'Amecourt will soon take notice of it if he deigns to fix his attention a little on this particular kind of establishment.

1. This kind of establishment is destined to form new teachers and to reform older ones, or, if they are not to be reformed, either in their morals or in their manner of treating or teaching their pupils, to replace them with new ones. By the reforming or replacement of the teachers, the establishment will attain the reformation of the class that takes in the greatest number of people, and that is one of the objects of the Society of Mary. If an establishment is started on a small scale, the good it will have done will not be noticed at all or, at any rate, too little to be of any use.

2. A reform in the ordinary run of people is desired and, consequently, in primary teaching. The University seems to be busying itself about it. The Royal Council of Public Instruction, along with these views, has called for several royal ordinances. This happy effect has seemed to be made possible only partially by diverse means, diverse precautions. Here an only cause is offered, which, evidently, will alone produce this effect.

3. Folks would want to see trials made. But haven't they been made? Hasn't the establishment in St. Remy brought about the reform among the schoolteachers who came there? Is it not forming new ones, ready to replace those for whom reform has no appeal? Isn't the reform of the present generation of people being brought about by the religious teachers formed by the Society of Mary? Let anyone take the trouble of informing himself about the effects that have been produced by the schools in Agen, Villeneuve-sur-Lot, and Colmar. The teachers in these schools are, in all truth, very zealous religious. But, in general, the other teachers, formed in the normal schools, will not undergo as many difficulties as most will be teaching only in the country places.

I say, my dear son, that an establishment on a small scale, which would serve only to show or prove what an establishment on a big scale could do, would be only employing, and without profit, subjects that are so much needed in establishments already formed or asked for.

The acquisition of the big Richelieu Hotel is terrifying. What is to be done? As you say, await the time indicated by an amiable Providence. We already have more work than we can do. I would have been pleased with this establishment in Paris only because it would have been, so to speak, under the eyes of the King, of the University, and of the Government, and also because it would have brought about more emulation in the Province.

I have reread, my dear son, your letter of April 28th,[1] and it filled me with sentiments of respect and gratitude. I would have much desired that our first dealings with him[2] would have led to the forming, in the commune of which he is mayor, of the little establishment that he is proposing to us, but I don't think that the moment for that has yet come. We have too few subjects and this establishment would be good to improve some, but not to attract any. Later, if he has not realized his views, I shall be the first to propose the matter to him. If we formed the big establishment in Paris, it is not because we have an overabundance of available subjects. On the contrary, we would have much to annoy us in the beginning, and we would postpone many that are asked of us. It is only because it would give a happy push, it seems to me, to the work so important, of which there is question, and also to that of our sodalities, so useful everywhere, but above all in Paris. If I were not fearing this big establishment as much as I desire it, and even more so, I would have been able to make diverse estimates, which might have sufficed to compensate the Association of

[1] Father Chaminade, doubtless, wanted to write June 28th.
[2] Doubtless, with Mr. d'Amecourt.

Benevolence, for at least a part of the money it would have had to pay on this acquisition, but I have very willingly given up the idea. If the good God wants us in Paris, he will be anxious for ways to attract us there. On that score, we need have no worry.

Thank the lady proprietor and also Mr. O'Lombel and Mr. Quadres. They can make their speculations as regards this big hotel. They would be able to buy it, at first, only by policy and under private seal. Once it is approved, the Society of Mary would have little to pay for registration. Providence is so admirable in its ways of managing events!

As regards Mr. Quadres, if he did not take part in this speculation, which is not lacking in importance and which must naturally entail great cares, he could retire to St. Remy. In spite of his great age, he could still teach for a few years and continue to sanctify himself in retirement by the practice of the Christian and religious virtues.

You have done well in following the advice given to you, not to buy the collection of laws and ordinances on public instruction. Try, nevertheless, to have that of April 8, 1824—I believe that is its date—it is the royal ordinance that makes the schoolteachers dependent upon the bishops. This law has been accompanied by instructions to the bishops. There must be another one in practice which I know nothing about. They are to be found separately, especially when they are not old.

You must be finding much incorrectness in style in my letters, for while writing, I am constantly disturbed and I have no time to reread what I have written. About the only way I can get to think about affairs, is to treat about them. Ordinarily, however, it is without solicitude, in the peace and in the presence of God. May the Lord deign to continue his blessing upon you!

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Here is a note which Father Chaminade addressed to his niece in Sarlot.

357 – TO MRS. SOPHIE LALA, SARLOT

Bordeaux, July 11, 1825

My dear child: I think you would rather receive a few lines in answer to your letter of last May 21st, than to await a long letter later on and always uncertain. I am laying aside the most serious affairs in order to give you this little sign of life.

I would very willingly accept the same quantity of wool as last year, and even more, if you made me come back to the little advance money payments you are obliged to make, either to buy it or to have it prepaid.

I felt a real joy in learning about the change for the better in our Fermin. My influence for a marriage would be greater, if it were proposed by another rather than by me. I have had occasion to note this already several times. Let him take great care in finding out his vocation and to live as a real Christian, and let us hope that the good God will let him know the one he destines for him. He is still so young to get married!

My sister joins me in expressing our love to all of you and in offering our respects to Miss Mondesse.

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358 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 15, 1825

My dear son: I have received your letter of July 6th. The rector of the Academy of Bordeaux allowed his imagination to be impressed by the thought that, should he grant to Brother Auguste the teaching of philosophy, other teachers in the boarding school might make the same request. He remained in the city too short a time, so that anyone might be able to convince him that there was no boarding school in the city able to give him the same guarantees and to show the same titles. Maybe this trifling reason was alleged, since one had to be alleged, that it was suggested by the difficulty arising from the fact of his not having been consulted before speaking of it to his Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction? This is the first impression he allowed to be known when the request of Brother Auguste had been sent back to him. If the Council of Public Instruction was impressed by so feeble a reason, we simply have to be patient, as in all other annoying contradictions. It would, nevertheless, be well if you had occasion to talk confidentially with Bishop d'Hermopolis or with some other outstanding member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, to have it observed that the general good will be seriously hampered in the activity of certain academies, if the recommendations of their rectors are followed without examination. The passions of men, their dispositions more or less favorable to the faith, to religion, to the monarchy, play their game among these authorities as among others, all the more reason for great discretion, so that the evil may not be increased.

If Father Poirier,[1] or anyone else founds societies of brothers well and good, we should see him with neither envy nor jealousy. If the good God sends them, let us rejoice in the fact that the good will be multiplied, etc. There would, nevertheless, be two things especially to be feared in the multiplication of these institutions: the first, that where they are, they prevent the establishment of a real normal school and of retreats, in the sense that we understand these terms, and that means no uniformity in the primary teaching and very little reform among the schoolteachers; and the second, that it is morally impossible

[1] Founder of a society, Brothers of the Cross, which does not seem to have continued to exist.

that these institutions would not degenerate and even quickly enough, in the members that compose them: *Corruptio optimi pessima*. Let me know, nevertheless, all that shall happen in this regard. Send me their prospectus and all that you will be able to learn about their organization and regulations. Father Poirier, you tell me, my dear son, would not be opposed to some propositions of union, but who would make these propositions? We are always ready to hear some, but we are not making any. Propositions of mutual help? But of what help? In subjects? It is impractical, since our subjects do not go anywhere alone. In money? What appearance is there of abundance on the one side as on the other?

I think that Father Lalanne will willingly adopt the idea of sending you the samples of his work[1] for the ends you have in mind. I shall shortly speak to him about it. A feast for the anointing of the king is being prepared in the boarding school on Mirail Street. We would have been very glad, had we learned beforehand that the king had sanctioned, etc. . . .

I am taking and rereading the copy of the letter that Brother Louis Rothéa is writing to you. If once Vesoul is disposed of, we would be able to look after the Convent of Lubbach in Alsace.[2] You could speak to me again about it, if you thought it suitable. It seems to me, we could occupy ourselves more seriously about some convents in Alsace, if we had established a good one in Vesoul.

I do not see any difficulty in the reception of the two young men, fifteen and sixteen years old, in the novitiate of St. Remy and offered by Mr. Juif. If the brother of Mr. Mona, just as his school chum Lachat, are good subjects, be they in rhetoric or in humanities, they may both come to our little seminary in Bordeaux. . . .

If any establishment is made, be it in Alsace or in Franche-Comte, the young ladies of Ottmarsheim may present themselves there . . . Since you know the young ladies of St. Marie-aux-Mines, relatives of Brother Troffer, you may more easily come to a decision in their regard than I . . .

Now that Bishop d'Hermopolis did not judge it suitable to make a statute as regards the costume, I think you did well in withdrawing the copy of my letter that spoke about it; if Father de la Chapelle did not speak of it in his report, this letter copy could only have hampered the admission of the Statutes. However, do not neglect to have the matter of the costume settled, about as I have indicated. This is, in truth, but an accessory matter, but one of very great importance. . . .

As long as the advice of the Royal Council of Public Instruction is not entirely favorable to us, the Council of State could easily pass it over. However, all is in the hands of the Lord and of the Blessed Virgin!

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[1] There seems to be question here of one of his works on entomology.
[2] Lutterback in Alsace.

When you will have noticed that I have forgotten to answer you on some particular point, have the kindness to let me know about it, by mentioning the letter in which it is given in detail.

It would be desired that the boarding school, named after Brother Auguste, would henceforth be named boarding school of Mary. Is there anything to be done about it?[1]

Let us seek, my dear son, only the glory of the Lord and that of his august Mother! I am asking him to shower upon you and upon all your labors his holy benedictions.

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359 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 19, 1825

My dear Son: I haven't received from you any news since your letter of July 6th to which I answered immediately. I am not doing anything definite about my voyage to the Haut-Pays, always fearing to get some letter from you calling for a prompt reply. I imagine that there must be some kind of impediment either to the Council of Public Instruction or to the Council of State. Your sister[2] has just had a letter given to me. It seems by this letter that the Sister you met in Paris, instead of retiring to your place, went to Agen. I had not heard anything further about the matter. I am now receiving a letter from Brother Clouzet which among other things tells me that Father Bardenet, on his arrival in Besançon, brought him the news from the archbishop, that the 3,000 francs[3] had been granted. Father Lalanne will see to it with pleasure that you get a sample copy of his work for Father Receveur.[4] He doesn't think that the ecclesiastical papers will want to bother much about a work that doesn't seem to have any relation to religion. See if you could find in some secondhand bookseller's shop either bound or in paper covers, a work in two volumes, which I don't know under any other title than *Christian and Spiritual Discourses on Diverse Subjects Relating to the Interior Life*. If you locate it, you could take two copies, if available. One would be for you, for I believe you would read it with profit. I have only the second volume in paper cover and in bad condition. I have read it, nevertheless, with interest, in spite of my lack of time.

In the midst of all my occupations, my dear son, let us not lose sight of him for whom we are working. *In omnibus respice finem*![5] May the peace of the Lord be with you!

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[1] Is there some legal formality to fulfill with this in mind?
[2] Daughter of Mary under the name of Mother Holy Savior.
[3] Voted by the General Council of Haute-Saône for the normal school at St. Remy.
[4] The Secretary of the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs
[5] In all things, look to the end!

The negotiations relative to the legal recognition of the Society made an important step forward.

The text submitted by Father Caillet to the Council of Public Instruction was discussed and modified by this assembly, and passed it on for examination by the Council of State.

Father Caillet communicates to Father Chaminade this modified tex,t which calls forth the following answer from the Founder.

For the understanding of this answer and the correspondence following it, we are reproducing in the immediately following two parallel texts: Father Chaminade's makes reference to the fourth edition.

FOURTH EDITION OF THE STATUTES OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY,
IN 22 ARTICLES, following the observations of Msgr. Frayssinous: 14 May 1825.

1. The Society of Mary is especially devoted to primary education.

2. The principal object of its labors is to spread and preserve in childhood and youth the principles of the Catholic faith, of gospel morality, and of a sincere attachment to the monarchy.

3. To be admitted into the said Society, one must be of sound mind and body, in the enjoyment of a stainless reputation, have interest in education or be capable of rendering service in the interior of the houses; to be accustomed to or disposed to mildness, humility, obedience, and a great confidence in God.

4. No engagement is taken in it before a year of probation.

5. The first engagement one takes after the probation is only for three years, and only the definitive engagement will give the privilege of full membership.

6. At the time of the definitive engagement, the agreement between the new member and the Society will be in accord with the spirit and rules of the "universal Society and of all goods" foreseen by the Civil Code, Title 9, Chap. 2, Section 1.

7. The subject who would want to withdraw of his own accord could do so only after notifying the Superior of the Society six months in advance and only if his withdrawal would not in any way harm the school year.

8. The subject who would withdraw of his own accord, or whom the Society would dismiss, could claim nothing for his service, industry, use of property brought in, or

for the use of his movable property, all this being acquired by the work undertaken. However, he will reclaim his belongings for the future at the end of the school term or after the six months mentioned above. In all cases he will owe an indemnity by reason of the board and instruction received unless it had been otherwise agreed.

9. A register will be kept in the Motherhouse, in which will be inscribed, in order and without blank, those entering into probation, the temporary and definitive engagements, just as well as the withdrawals should there be any. The said acts will contain the names, Christian names, the place of birth and age of the parties, who will sign with the Superior, if they know how to sign, or they will be required to sign in the presence of two witnesses, who will also sign. The register will serve as proof in court, if in some circumstance, proof should be demanded.

10. If, by reason of distances or of the number of institutions, the Superior of the Society, upon the advice of his Council, authorizes other houses of probation, then these authorized houses will have to provide themselves with a register similar to the one mentioned in the above Article 9.

11. All the establishments of the Society recognize their Lordships, the Bishops and Archbishops, in the dioceses where they are formed, as their first superiors in the spiritual order, and the Superior of the Society keeps a direct engagement with all the members who follow everywhere their Rule and their customs.

12. The government of the Society will be composed of an ecclesiastical Superior approved by the Ordinary, of three Assistants, named Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Work.

13. All the acts of the Society, in it or outside it, are done in the name of the Superior. Those of the acts in which there would be question of sales, acquisition of properties, exclusion of persons already admitted and like matters, will be done in the name of the Superior, upon the advice of his Council, with the result that decisions would be reached in regard to these last-mentioned acts. If the Council were opposed, definite action would be postponed.

14. The association, furthermore, is governed by its rules of interior discipline.

15. The teaching in the schools will be in the three degrees announced in Article 2 of the Royal Ordinance of February 29, 1816. The Methods will be submitted to the approbation of his Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction.

16. The Society, to attain the more promptly the great object of its institution, will respond more particularly to the requests made by their Lordships, the Bishops and Archbishops, by the Academies, and by the Departments for the establishment of normal schools, near which will be given each year retreats for the schoolteachers,

according as will have been arranged with the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. These retreats will be of at least two weeks duration. During the first week, work will be focused mainly on the manner of teaching and of controlling the pupils and also on the manner of instructing them in religion and its practice.

17. In order to be able to furnish capable subjects, the Society has houses of preparation where it forms, according to its Method, the subjects whom it intends for education.

18. If in the principal house some young pupils manifest a vocation to the ecclesiastical state and outstanding talents, the Society could continue their education to dispose them for the priesthood and then to employ them in the various establishments.

19. The functions of the priests of the Society will be the instruction and spiritual direction of the pupils of the primary schools and of those of the normal schools, and they will be employed in the annual retreats of the schoolteachers.

20. The Society recognizes as its Founder and present Superior, for life or until his voluntary resignation, William Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux. He will name his Assistants. The Superiors who will succeed him, just as his Assistants, will be named by the Society through a plurality of votes, for the time fixed by the internal regulations of the Society.

21. The Superiors of the Houses established by affiliation, the Heads and professors of the different schools, will always be named by the Superior.

22. The present Statutes will be put at the feet of His Majesty, and he will be very humbly requested to have them examined and approved, if that is needed, for the good of religion and of his subjects.

FIFTH EDITION OF THE STATUTES OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY, IN 18 ARTICLES, following the observations of the Council of Public Instruction, July 12, 1825

1. The Society of Mary is especially devoted to primary education.

2. The principal object of its labors is to spread and preserve in childhood and youth the principles of the Catholic faith, of gospel morality, and of a sincere attachment to the monarchy.

3. No engagement is taken in it before a year of probation.

4. The first engagement one takes after the probation is only for three years, after which, if there be cause, one will be admitted as full member.

5. When a subject is admitted as full member, the agreement between him and the Society will be in accord with the spirit once the rules of the "universal Society and of all goods" foreseen by the Civil Code, Title 9, Chap. 2, Section 1.

6. The subject who would want to withdraw of his own accord, could do so only after the notification he will have given the Superior of the Society six months in advance, and in the sole case that his withdrawal would not in any way harm the school year.

7. The subject who would withdraw of his own accord, or whom the Society would dismiss, could claim nothing for his service, industry, use of property brought in or for the use of his movable property, all this being acquired by the work undertaken. However, he will reclaim his belongings for the future at the end of the school term or after the six months mentioned above. In all cases he will owe an indemnity by reason of the board and instruction received unless it had been otherwise agreed.

8. A register will be kept in the Motherhouse, in which will be inscribed, in order and without blank, those entering into probation, the temporary and definitive engagements, just as well as the withdrawals should there be any. The said acts will contain the names, Christian names, the place of birth and age of the parties, who will sign with the Superior, if they know how to sign, or they will be required to sign before two witnesses, who will also sign. The register will serve as proof in court, if in some circumstance proof should be demanded.

9. If, by reason of distances or of the number of institutions, the Superior of the Society, upon the advice of his Council, authorizes other houses of probation, then these authorized houses will have to provide themselves with a register similar to the one mentioned in the above Article 8.

10. All the establishments of the Society recognize their Lordships, the Bishops and Archbishops in the dioceses where they are formed, as their first superiors in the spiritual order, and the Superior of the Society keeps a direct engagement with all the members who follow everywhere their Rule and their customs.

11. The government of the Society will be composed of an ecclesiastical Superior approved by the Ordinary and three Assistants.

12. All the acts of the Society, in it or outside it, are done in the name of the Superior. Those of the acts in which there would be question of sales, acquisition of properties, exclusion of persons already admitted and like matters, will be done in the name of the Superior, upon the advice of his Council, with the result that

decisions would be reached in regard to these last-mentioned acts. If the Council were opposed, definite action would be postponed.

13. The teaching in the schools will be in the three degrees announced in Article 2 of the Royal Ordinance of February 29, 1816. The Methods will be submitted to the approbation of his Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction.

14. The Society, to attain the more promptly the great object of its institution, will respond more particularly to the requests made by their Lordships, the Bishops and Archbishops, by the Academies and by the Departments for the establishment of normal schools.

15. In order to be able to furnish capable subjects the Society has houses of preparation where it forms, according to its Method, the subjects whom it intends for primary education.

16. The Society recognizes as its Founder and present Superior, for life or until his voluntary resignation, William Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon of the Metropolitan Church of Bordeaux. He will name his Assistants. The Superiors who will succeed him, just as his Assistants, will be named by the Society through a plurality of votes for the time fixed by the internal regulations of the Society.

17. The Superiors of the Houses established by affiliation, the heads and professors of the different schools, will always be named by the Superior.

18. The present Statutes will be put at the feet of His Majesty, and He will be very humbly requested to have them examined and approved, if that is needed, for the good of religion and of his subjects.

360 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 21, 1825

My dear son: I received only today your letter of the 12th. I examined almost immediately the copy of the Statutes approved by the Royal Council of Public Instruction. I am somewhat surprised at the suppressions, most of them important, that it has made. What surprises me is that Mr. de Clauzel does not present to the Council of State, even the text of the Statutes, which was first submitted to the Council of Public Instruction, with the amendments made by the said Council. And the reason for my astonishment is that the

Council of Public Instruction does not give a final decision in this affair, which is to pass over to the Council of State. It simply gives its opinion. That is what the pastor of St. Pierre, who is here a member of the Council of the Academy, heard me remark when he noticed the fears I expressed in regard to the Council of Public Instruction.

But, finally, the inconveniences of these suppressions must be prevented, for it is to be presumed that the Council of State will have pronounced itself before you get this letter, and perhaps even with some new modifications.

Here are the first thoughts that came to my mind:

1. I shall not speak of the 3rd statute, which can easily pass into the interior regulation.

2. I thought I noticed a formal intention of not speaking of any definitive engagement. No matter, for it seems to me, the thing can be supplied.

But, may the new edition of the 5th statute permit that one can be admitted as full member of the Society, who has not finished the three years of his first engagement? Could he be dispensed from it and be received as a full member of the Society as soon as he shall have passed one year of trial? The duration of the trials, the engagements of three years that follow them, are meant especially for youths, to have them prepare for their coming of age.

3. To the 17th statute, to the last word, education, the new edition adds primary. Rarely would we have good normal school professors if the subjects destined as such had not made some advance studies . . .

4. In the 16th statute, the hint to the spiritual retreats of two weeks is suppressed.

This is, doubtless, because the 18th and 19th statutes were also to be suppressed, really so necessary to the Society of Mary in the attainment of its final end . . . But the gentlemen of the Council of Public Instruction are perhaps afraid that it will attain the said end in even greater measure than they would want. . . . Something must be added and his Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, who had edited these two articles, will have the goodness to suggest to you the means for doing it. Would it be a means, for example, that you write for me to his Excellency, to ask him to settle some difficulties that lie in the letter of the law or in the statutes? Or, still better, if you place before him the desire we have of conforming to our statutes, which we consider to have the force of law, you would tell him that the instruction and spiritual direction of the pupils of the primary schools and of the normal schools, just as the annual retreats of the schoolteachers, oblige the Society to continue the education of a certain number of pupils who would show signs of a vocation to the ecclesiastical state, and talents outstanding enough to dispose them for the priesthood, and then for employment in the various

establishments. Furthermore, that the professors destined for the normal schools often need a particular training, one more elevated than that given to ordinary schoolteachers, etc., that we had taken it for granted that there could be, near the Mother House, one of the houses of preparation or training, etc. . . . I have scarcely done more than copy the suppressed statutes 18 and 19.

In the same letter you might say to his Excellency that we had also understood that statute 5 did not oblige to the waiting for the expiration of the three years of the first engagement, in view of the reception of subjects as full members of the Society by a definitive engagement, if they are of an age and maturity of character that leave nothing to be feared from the inconstancy attached to human nature . . .

As regards the 14th, also suppressed, I think nothing is to be said, but that it is to be included in the engagement of each one of the new members . . .

Perhaps his Excellency will allow you, in the same letter, to place before him the costume of the Society, that of the laymen as well as that of the ecclesiastics. The letter, written in conventional style, would need only a short answer, which could even be put at the end of the letter.

If there happen to be other major difficulties arising from the context of the statutes, in the way of the Society's attaining the end with which God has deigned to inspire us, they should be resolved at the same time, if prudence permits it. Before seeing his Excellency, you might have a serious conversation with Mr. de Saget. He might see all the editions of the statutes that have been made, see this letter, make for you a sketch of the one you would have to present to his Excellency, bring it all to the first audience, should his Excellency approve of this means. Even if he would not approve of it, and chose another, your work with Mr. de Saget would always have been useful if for no other reason than to express yourself more easily with his Excellency. You must not content yourself with mere words, promises, etc. For still a long time there will be found in France, Rectors of Academies, Prefects of Departments, and Mayors of cities who have but little love for religion and who will be very glad to find in the text of the statutes ways of causing trouble.

I am adding one last reflection. I think that the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs will follow the ordinary policy, on such an occasion, for showing the Royal Ordinance. In other words, to be given to me, it will be sent to the Prefect of the Gironde and to the archbishop as well as to the department and dioceses where we have establishments: Lot-et-Garonne, Haute Saône, Upper Rhine, in the dioceses of Agen, Besançon, and Strasbourg. If it were not so, what would I have to do?

The hour for the departure of the mail carrier being close at hand, I shall continue to write to you on another sheet, while the first and longer part of my letter is being copied and which I shall sign as if it were finished.

The incidental affair of the Richelieu Hotel, my dear son, is not a matter of indifference in the views of Providence.

Since Mssrs. Quadres and O'Lombel are now in a position to acquire it, as a matter of speculation, and as they might have the desire that the Society of Mary have an establishment in Paris, it would not seem to me too difficult to enter into these views. Let us suppose the acquisition to be an accomplished fact. They would rent what would be needed for the establishment, because the whole place would be far too large for its initial needs. The establishment would pay for the part it occupied. But how would it pay? That is what should be talked over with Mr. d'Amecourt. Even at that, the expense would be less than for a temporary or trial establishment at Paris.

This first start seems to offer many difficulties. The biggest seem to me to result from the rights of registration and of transmission, and then from the uncertainty as regards the success of the establishment.

Wouldn't the first difficulties be somewhat lightened if these gentlemen made the purchase in your name? The communities, societies, etc., authorized by the King, pay next to nothing for registration, according to a law passed last year. The second kind of difficulty would be removed if the archbishop of Paris wanted the normal school and the spiritual retreats for the schoolteachers about as they exist in the diocese of Besançon. Here I am only indicating the means. These gentlemen have enough intelligence to make their own use of them. When all would be about settled, I would transfer myself there and I would hope somehow to attract all the material necessary to fit out the establishment, even from its very beginning; sufficient space, furniture, personnel, everything. It is not to be doubted that the place properly fitted out and producing its fruits, would find in Paris sources of income to reimburse Mssrs. Quadres and O'Lombel. If Mr. de Saget would come to settle there he could also help a lot by his talents, reputation, and fortune. I now have to stop. Take care of your health, my dear son. Preserve always your peace of soul! I bless you with all my heart, calling upon the sweet names of Jesus and Mary!

* * * *

Two days later Father Chaminade had taken an important resolution, that of authorizing the acquisition of the Hotel Richelieu and of introducing the Society in Paris.

361 – TO MR. O'LOMBEL, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 23, 1825

I would think I am going against the designs of Providence, my dear son, if, in spite of my fears and of the very small number of subjects we have, I did not accept the offer which your religious friendship has inspired you to make to the Society of Mary.

In my name, you will buy the Hotel Richelieu on the Isle of St. Louis, if we are approved in time and if the approbation can exempt us from paying the enormous registration fee of 15,000 francs, and if the lady proprietress will accept you as surety and consent to have dealings with me just for form's sake. This way of doing things will not deceive the government, I mean, the revenue officers, since your intention, like ours, is to form of this hotel a real establishment for the Society of Mary. Will it possibly be someday the Motherhouse?

If, by next August 1st, all were not ready to draw up the official deed, I don't see any inconvenience in drawing up one, but not before a notary public, however, with the promise of producing the official document at the first requisition of the parties involved. The lady selling the place may have the 50,000 francs promised, etc. About a month ago I had a place in Bordeaux bought in this way, a big house, that the Society needed. It was all paid in cash by one of our friends. We are awaiting the royal authorization before drawing up the official contract.

A procuration in due form will besides be necessary, and we are now at July 22nd. This letter will leave only on the 23rd, but you might be able to send me the project of this procuration by return mail.

In whatever name the acquisition of this Hotel is made, since it will really be yours until you declare that you have been reimbursed, I accept, my dear son, that this Hotel become as a branch establishment of our house in Bordeaux. I consent to look after its spiritual direction.

I accept the two or three large rooms which we shall need to start the works proper to us, just as for the chapel. The Institute of Mary will keep its hands out of the material administration of this house, and out of whatever may result from it, be it in gain or loss.

You understand, my dear son, that all these acceptances are, nevertheless, subject to the authority of the archbishop of Paris or of his representatives. It would be well that he would want, at the same time, both the normal school for primary teaching and the spiritual retreats for the other schoolteachers of his diocese.

You also understand that we would not be doing much this year, I hardly see the possibility of paying you a visit before the beginning of winter. I have to know the

dispositions of the archbishop of Paris, to arrange for this first visit and for choosing some subjects suitable for the work they will be expected to do. Besides, you need time to provide the material for your administration. You need much wisdom, so that all suspicion of desire for wealth may be turned away, both from yourself and from us. He who has inspired you with this plan will inspire you, I hope and pray, also for its successful execution. I shall often ask it of him for you.

I cannot send you, with this mail, my dear son, your Certificate of Affiliation to the Society of Mary, but it is already accorded to you in my heart. It is for this reason that, in this letter, I don't know any other title to give you than that of son. This feeling of tenderness does not in any way harm that of the consideration with which you have inspired me from the first, and with which I shall be humbly at your service and disposition.

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362 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 23, 1825

My letter to Mr. O'Lombel may surprise you, my dear son. Before taking up my pen, I wanted to ask for advice. There was some difficulty on account of the nearness of the mail carrier. I got down on my knees. I felt all that I said to Mr. O'Lombel. After having written, and without rereading I what I have written, I am in still greater peace and more satisfied.

Do I really want an establishment in Paris? Here I could answer yea and nay, without tampering with the truth. Yes, as first superior of the Society of Mary. This establishment, above all, from the modest manner in which it is planned, seems to me in the views of Providence and very suitable to the development of our very little Society, and to the rapid attainment of the excellent end, for which the good God has called it into existence. I could say no. I fear it as peculiar. My laziness, my almost complete insufficiency in all things, the multitude of my defects of all kinds, would make me waive the very idea of it. I am now acting for Paris, as I have acted until now, in all that relates to the Society of Mary. Convinced on the one hand that God wants it, and, on the other, that I have neither aptitude nor ability for this work of the goodness and mercy of God, for the good of our unhappy country. I throw myself into all the paths that Providence seems to open to me. I sometimes laugh at the idea that some good persons attribute certain works to my intelligence and ability.

We must not count too much on the archbishop's immediately taking to heart the normal school and the spiritual retreats. It suffices that he knows we desire them, just as we desire the sodalities, and that on the other hand, in the meantime, he sees with pleasure the establishments of the Society of Mary in Paris.

Acquaint Mr. de Saget with this matter of the establishment. Let him look into it thoroughly, and let him have the kindness to be careful not to allow any imprudence to slip into the transaction. Let him take the trouble to prepare all the papers and look over carefully all those that would be prepared by others. I have much confidence in the shrewdness of his intelligence and in the honesty of his judgment. Always give him marks of my sincere friendship and of my entire devotedness. Let him take great care not to oppose the views of God upon him, and especially the movements and inspirations of his grace. If he is faithful, the good God will enlighten him as to what he should do. Let him work still more at becoming better than at becoming expert in religion. Faith is a gift of God and not something acquired by study. Study is nevertheless a good guide when it is made with uprightness of heart.

I am going to the altar, as the bell for my Mass has rung. There, I shall repeat the blessings I am giving you here, my dear son.

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363 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 26, 1825

You often sigh, my dear son, on the banks of the river of Babylon, and you long to return to the father's house or to go back to St. Remy to make known the mercies of the Lord and of the august Mediatrix of the human race. I understand, I even feel the sorrow you must have, in treating of semiworldly matters and of depending, so to speak, on persons very far from favoring religion.

You are, doubtless, not mistaken, my dear son, as regards a sort of interest that certain persons seem to take in the requests for approval that are made to them. This is not so much for favoring the divers institutions, as to control their activities, to stop or hinder these or at least to direct them, as much as they can and in accord with their own views. As you know, that is what has so long delayed me in having the Society of Mary approved. It is only by an interior impulse and because the political horizon seemed to brighten a little by the elevation of Bishop d'Hermopolis to the rank of Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction that, even with much fear, we finally presented our petition to the king.

I have been astonished that, having used so much circumspection and discretion with the ministry, you should at once surrender to the Council of Instruction, one of the most important statutes[1]—a statute so meager, so to say. The Council of Public Instruction has not the job of any final pronouncement. Why should we not have had recourse to his Excellency the Minister who himself had had the kindness of studying statutes 18 and 19? On the whole, the Society of Mary would find itself all distorted if the suppressions were

[1] No. 19, relative to the priests.

taken seriously. I am willing to grant that in the beginning the reasons for the suppressions are not left to appear, but in the end and perhaps seem . . . .

I would suggest to you, following what I learned about them, a means to remedy the situation, one which will not cure all the evil of the suppressions, but which still leaves some force with which to defend ourselves. It would be necessary, if you haven't already done it, to try to have the audience with Bishop d'Hermopolis and to speak to him without reserve in order to see if he does not consider practical the means I am suggesting or if he might not know of better ones. However, as I think I have already indicated to you, this means must not consist in mere promises of protection, etc. . . .

Perhaps you now obtain audiences with greater difficulty. Formerly, I had the same difficulty in Paris.[1] I used to write to these high dignitaries by the little post.[2] And I had information about an audience within twenty-four hours. Some of the reverend secretaries could also take it upon themselves to let his Excellency know of your embarrassment. Patience, with care and firmness!

Flexibility is no doubt necessary, and I wonder if we have not been lacking in it, in turning out so many editions of our statutes! We have consented to everything that did not clearly alter the nature of the Society, but we cannot consent not to be what we are.

You seem to fear new hindrances on the part of the State Council. If it were asking for new important suppressions, for some important changes, or if it were imposing heavy obligation, you must not sign, but write to me immediately.

You would do well to have a discussion about everything with Mr. de Saget. He sees things correctly and justly. The Society of Mary would not have really needed approbation. Its existence, its organization, and its works contain nothing contrary to the laws. On the whole, approbation would be desired for its works, rather than for itself. With regards to the big Richelieu Hotel, nothing must be settled with Mr. O'Lombel without consulting him.[3] Mr. O'Lombel and ourselves might likely do something not in conformity with the laws. If, as a result of the approbation of the Society, the Hotel bought in my name were free from the registration tax, would it not be looked upon as national property? In having ourselves approved, we have no intention of alienating any of our particular properties. Let us advance, my dear son, with circumspection! *Timeo Danaos, et dona ferente* . . .

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[1] We do not know to what period of his life Father Chaminade here makes allusion. There is question of the time he was a student in the College of Lisieux, when he was called upon to defend the interests of the College of Mussidan, or of the year 1809, at the end of which he had gone to the Government to plead the cause of the Sodality, or of a voyage he had made to Paris under other circumstances. The documents on hand do not permit us to come to any definite conclusion in the matter.
[2] Special mail service for the city of Paris under the old regime.
[3] Doubtless, Mr. de Saget.

Herewith enclosed is a Diploma of Affiliation for my new son, Mr. O'Lombel . . . . I am leaving you with regret. The hour of the mail carrier is at hand. *Pax tecum*!

* * * *

On the same day, Father Chaminade dated a letter addressed to St. Remy.

364 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET

Bordeaux, July 26, 1825

I have just received your letter of the 11th, my dear son, and I am answering it right away. We cannot receive Miss Genereuse Franchise, by reason of her advanced age, 38 years, her defective health, and also because of the fact that she spent eight months in another Community. As regards Miss Pauline Picard, I see nothing in the way of her admission to the Daughters of Mary. She is of that beautiful age in which to choose the heavenly Spouse and to devote oneself entirely to him. At the age of twenty, nothing is difficult, one can submit to anything. However, before settling anything, I am advising her to write to me herself about all her sentiments, all the good and even all the bad she believes to see in herself, the motives behind her desire for the religious state, etc. This is to be an entirely confidential letter she is to compose and write herself. She can also honestly tell me all that may concern her health, her reputation, and the means of her parents. She may already take it for granted that our union is made, that she is my daughter and that I am her father.

I learn from Father Caillet that he wrote to you and that he has arranged everything as regards the retreats, as I had asked him to do. I, on my part, let him know the news that Father Bardenet has brought to St. Remy, on the 3,000 francs . . .[1]

I can easily imagine, my dear son, that the interior of the community must cause you worries, difficulties, and a solicitude, perhaps more tiring than all that may come to you from the outside. That is about what comes to all superiors. What is to be done? Nothing else than what we can do, and adore the profound designs of Providence. There are precious few days in which I don't have to say: God has permitted this. It is up to me to permit it and to submit to it.

Father Rothéa is writing me a little but very satisfying letter about the fatherly reproaches I had made to him concerning the flights of his imagination during his voyage to Alsace. The discussion that arose in your little Council surprises me. 1. In a council, there may well be a sort of discussion when there are divergent opinions, and when the matters to be treated present great difficulties as regards the stand to be taken in their regard, but

[1] See Letter 359.

religious modesty does not permit the heated and stubborn adherence to one's own opinion. Tell Father Rothéa that I do not see with pleasure that he puts you in a position, in your Councils, to sustain contests, even when he would think he is proposing just and suitable things. Moderation always! Peace, union, and love among the Children of Mary, never any contests, etc. . . . 2. And now to make an application to this to the case in point. What kind of charity would that be, to tell the truth, to make of the entrance of the Community a kind of tavern, where folks would be, free of charge, but which would anyhow bring along most of the inconveniences peculiar to taverns? Nevertheless, this is not saying that something to eat and drink might never be given, for it is understood that on certain occasions, charity, justice, and gratitude may call for it, but there must be reasons, and strong ones too. If another Head, apart from the regular superior, was not able without going against established custom, to go to the latter for permission to serve something to eat or drink at the entrance, he would let him know about it at his first meeting with him.

I received your last letter of July 16th, my dear son, with the copies of the letters of the Ministry of the Interior and of the prefect of the Department of the Haute-Saône. Although, by this letter, we can get the 3,114 francs granted by the General Council of the Department and already refused with so much obstinacy by his Excellency, the concession seems to me worse than the refusal. . . . Whatever the case may be we must profit by it to do good. We shall be in a better position to judge by what will follow. I imagine that the letter will have arrived in Vesoul before or during the holding of the General Council, to render its views without effect. Patience in everything!

This letter was begun already a week ago. Each time that I took up my pen to continue it, other pressing matters intervened. . . . Brothers Laugeay and Louis Rothéa wrote to me that you had given to the former an order from me to go to St. Remy on a certain day of the month of August, I no longer remember which. Why do you write in this way? Although I desire that Brother Laugeay goes to St. Remy for the vacation, and that I suffer perhaps more than you at not being able to send you more of the help you need, I had no mind at all of abruptly removing the subjects from the places they occupy . . . I learn at this time that Brother Olivier has just disappeared from Colmar. May the Lord be blessed!

I am stopping now, as the mail is about to leave. I hope not to forget anything of what you tell me. May the blessing of heaven fall upon you and the entire establishment of St. Remy!

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Nevertheless, in Paris, the affair of the legal recognition of the Society was meeting difficulties. The Council of State was formulating objections relative to the placing in common the goods of the members, according to the rules of the Code, concerning the universal Society and of all the goods. To which Father Chaminade answered with indignation, in terms that keep all their force in the present circumstances.

365 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, July 28, 1825

My dear son, I am going to answer your letter of July 23rd. The Council of State—and it seems that it was by the agency of Mr. Cuvier[1]—would want to deprive us of at least a part of our civil rights, rights granted to all Frenchmen, and this because we bring together our goods and our persons in the interests that are dearest to France, these concerning morals and education. In reading the Civil Code on the privation of civil rights, I saw there only two causes that might bring it about: the loss of French citizenship and court condemnations. If article 6 is suppressed or restricted, we find ourselves deprived of the finest rights that even the vilest Frenchmen may enjoy. Would it not be a kind of stigma attached to Frenchmen who are occupied with doing only good to their fellow countrymen? Would it be like telling them to be careful because the Government mistrusts them, even up to the point of not considering them as Frenchmen? If our Statutes carry article 6, is it not an act of sincerity on our part? By this article, we show ourselves in the open, for what we are, with no underhandedness whatsoever, why then should we be feared?

But who is stirring up these fears? Might it be Mr. Cuvier? In fact, it must be within his principles to be fearful. His religion must let him see with concern, if not painfully, the rise of societies that are clearly Catholic. But would there be many of the members of the Council of State who would espouse his views and his fears? Mr. de Clauzel has a good case to defend!

Mr. de la Chapelle was to make this report. Why is he being replaced by Mr. de Clauzel? Hasn't it been worked at by Mr. de la Chapelle? If difficulties continue, Mr. de Saget might see his Excellency the Guardian of the Seals, and the latter would reassure the Council against the childish fears that biased members would want to bring up against the Society of Mary. I am saying childish because the motives and suppositions brought up, like the one that says we are Jesuits, that there is a Sodality in Bordeaux that I have formed, etc. What kind of resemblance can be found between the Company of Jesus and the Society of Mary? There is no other that I can see, than the fact that both organizations profess the Catholic religion. As regards the connection that is supposed to exist between the two, only our word in answer is needed. The Sodality of Bordeaux is older than the one in Paris.[2] The customs and practices of one and the other are entirely different, there having been no previous communication at all between the Directors. The name of sodality may bring illusion, but would it not be puerile to stop at a generic word, and to draw from it inductions in so serious a matter?

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[1] The famous geologist, President, since 1819, of the Section of the Interior of the Council of State. He was a Protestant, and Father Chaminade had reason to fear that, for this reason, he opposed the legal recognition of the Society.

[2] The Sodality of Bordeaux goes back for its origin to December 8, 1800, that of Paris dates back to February 2, 1801. On this same date was pronounced in Bordeaux the act of Consecration of the first twelve sodalists.

It is not so much the authorization to be what is mentioned in article 6 that we are asking for, but rather the ability to carry on the works as mentioned in the ensemble of the Statutes. How could we ever have had the idea of asking for what the law grants? Mr. Cuvier must know better than anyone else the kind of prudence in this regard his ancestors made use of and which his own party still uses to sustain the Protestant religion. And this between us. Mr. de Saget must know what is happening since the beginning of our troubles. . . . That we should be punished for siding honestly with the Government!

Nevertheless, my dear son, if the Council of State, in spite of all our observations, were not approving purely and simply, do not give your consent without writing to me about it. Do, then, all you can so that these poor Statutes, so taken to pieces, do not get the royal sanction. And, at bottom, it would not be the Society of Mary, as it really is, that would be being approved. The little details that you give me about the law, relative to the religious sisters are precious. Gather all the material you can that could enlighten our conduct in this regard.

I am not telling you, my dear son, how much your long stay in Paris annoys me, but I suppose it is necessary, then, patience!

My young copyist made me remark that, at the bottom of my letter to Mr. O'Lombel, I had put by mistake in the address: To Mr. O'Donnell. If you did not correct the mistake offer him, I beg of you, my excuses, while at the same time assuring him of my respectful attachment.

Do not be anxious, my dear son. I am not worrying, as all is in the hands of God. I embrace you tenderly and wish you all that is in the benevolent views of the Lord.

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The archives of the Society preserve a first sketch of the preceding letter. Since it contains considerations that are not in the preceding edition, we believe it well to reproduce it also, following the autographic manuscript.

My dear son, I have received your last letter dated the 23rd of the present month. I surmise, from what Mr. Cuvier says to Mr. de Clauzel, that our Statutes will not be passed by the Council of State. Although we are asking by article 5 only to enjoy the rights accorded to all the French by the Civil Code, from the time that we ask it as a Society, they will fear the reunion of the rights of a religious society, become political by the Government approbation, with the rights of civil society.

You must remember that our Society, once approved, has what is called a political existence. Mr. Cuvier, perhaps better than anyone else in the Council, feels what all this really means. The Protestants have maintained themselves in France only by having made

good use of this distinction. Why then, you will say to me, is political existence called for today? 1. Because in the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs, no inconvenience was found in it. 2. Because there was no reason for believing that the efforts of religion would be so much feared, and that a society, showing itself so thoroughly honest and whose labors were so useful in the regeneration of morals, would be hampered. 3. The little extent which this society will always have in itself. 4. I wasn't imagining that Mr. Cuvier would bother about speaking in an affair of this kind. You tell me that this gentleman is a member of the Council of Public Instruction and of the Council of State. Doubtless, he has not deliberated in one or the other Council, for the same member has a deliberative voice on the same matter in only one Council. All these reflections are only for you, so that you may know our affair better and at the most, that you may be able to reason about it with Mr. de Saget. Whatever the case may be, if, by the blessing of heaven or by the influence of the Guardian of the Seals, provoked by Mr. de Saget, the Statutes pass, all has been said. If, on the contrary, as I told you in my last letter, you are asked to curtail or essentially change some article, you will say that your power does not extend that far, and that, besides, you have orders to retire and to confer with me. If Mr. de Clauzel assists at the deliberation and there are signs that he will, in his quality as reporter, he must be strongly asked not to consent that we be approved only in part, and with conditions other than those contained in the statutes themselves. If Mr. de Clauzel were not present at the deliberation, then Bishop d'Hermopolis would have to be asked to be there. In any case, if the Council of State gave its approval in its own way, as it sometimes does, then the royal sanction would have to be delayed. Bishop d'Hermopolis can do it easily. He could also get you all the papers you have already furnished; Miss de Lamourous found herself in a case like this one. Perhaps Bishop d'Hermopolis still remembers it, for he was one of her protectors and counselors . . .

Furthermore, my dear son, prudence, discretion, and strength, nevertheless, and also activity. Speak little and blame nobody. Know well how things are to be done and know equally well the persons with whom you have dealings.

* * * *

366 - TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, August 1, 1825

Every counsel from Paris, my dear son, wants that the big Richelieu Hotel be bought in my name and that I have the principal direction of the establishment. Mr. O'Lombel, who is supplying the funds, seems to desire to act only as second in command.

Mr. d'Amecourt in particular, and he knows Mr. O'Lombel very well, is of this opinion. He seems disposed, with several other rich persons of distinction, to come to my assistance. Mr. O'Lombel is to pay 50,000 francs in cash when the contract is to be drawn up, but he does seem to be taking this money from his own funds, as he seems to have only

25,000 francs in the bank, and these are destined for the first expenses of the establishment.

I would not want to be responsible for any payments: acquisition, interest, registration, big repairs, be they for the Hotel or for the chapel. As regards means for subsistence, I would willingly confide in Mr. d'Amecourt, or rather in Providence.

Cannot Mr. O'Lombel be my security in such a way that no blame can be laid at my door? In accepting the acquisition in my name, I have already expressed my wish in this regard, and I have had Mr. de Saget take this matter in hand, and he seems glad to do it. I, nevertheless, fear. Mr. de Saget, named President of the Royal Court of Bordeaux, is likely to leave shortly for Paris.[1] Let me know, my dear son, all the precautions I must take, so as to have no anxiety as regards the payments that might be agreed upon in my name. I shall write again by tomorrow's mail.

I am being sent the plan of procuration to be made out here by a notary. I have reason to believe that it is by the hand of Mr. de Saget. If you believe it suitable, do what is necessary, so that this procuration may leave by tomorrow's mail.

I see that much pressure is being exerted, so as to have me buy. I would have desired that our Society would first have been approved. It seems that difficulties appear to multiply instead of diminishing, at least, to approve it such as it is. May the peace of the Lord, my dear son, be always with you!

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367 - TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 2, 1825

My dear son, I have received your letter of July 28th with that of Mr. O'Lombel and the plan of procuration that accompanies it. I am not able to send with this mail the procuration duly notarized. It cannot be made exactly conformable to the plan, but it will

[1] The cares that Father Chaminade had given and caused to be given to Mr. de Saget were not in vain. Having returned to Bordeaux, Mr. de Saget showed him his gratitude for them by the offering of a magnificent copy of the New Testament, in five volumes, richly bound, a work which Father Chaminade kept in his room until his death and which is preserved in the museum of the Society. This edition of the New Testament, published in 1793, when the Revolution was at its worst, by the famous Parisian printer Didot, deserves a special mention. It reproduces, in a very careful printing, the translation of Sacy and is enriched by a number of drawings by Moreau, splendid composition, engraved on copper by the best artists of the time. It was offered to the National Assembly and bears on the first page this curious extract of the Verbal Process of January 17, 1791. "A member has offered the Assembly, on the part of Mr. Claude-Marin Saugrain, the dedication of a new edition of the Gospel, ornamented with engravings, the drawings of which are by Mr. Moreau the younger, and the typographical part by Mr. Didot the younger. The Assembly, although it had decreed that it would accept no dedication whatsoever, received this one by acclamation, desiring to give this new proof of its affection and respect for the Christian religion."

give Mr. O'Lombel all the latitude necessary to complete all our views as regards the big Richelieu Hotel. I shall join to the procuration a little plan of security which Mr. O'Lombel will be kind enough to copy. One never knows, as we say, who is dying and who is living. His intention is certainly not to leave me without security in regard to such great sums. All will leave, I hope, by the mail of the day after tomorrow, August 4th. I shall send along a letter to Mr. O'Lombel. In the meantime, I have the honor of greeting him very kindly.

The heart and good faith, even purity of views, have nothing uncertain with Mr. O'Lombel, but are things the same with regard to his fortune? Here are then 200,000 francs. They produce 10,000 francs a year at 5% interest. Then, the registration would not come, as he thinks, to 15,000 francs, but rather to about 12,000, which is considerable. Do you happen to know what his fortune and his means amount to? It would be very annoying to go to Paris to form so important an establishment and to expose oneself to a dazzling lawsuit and to an expropriation. It is very true, I hope, that we shall have him recover his funds, but when? And who can know it? It is likewise very true that to reimburse him for the interest he will have to pay, we shall facilitate for him, as much as we can, the use of the apartments of the Hotel that we shall not occupy. Still, it is true that we shall make him a participant, as much as we can, in whatever help we may receive from other sources. I hope that he will not surpass us in loyalty and sincerity.

There is then no uncertainty in our sentiments and intentions, but might there not be some in the eventual risks as they affect us? As regards Mr. O'Lombel and the obligation he is assuming, it is certain that he will have to furnish the funds at the times designated in the contract, and for that, fortune and means are necessary. In the supposition of the death of this excellent confrère, what would we do? Who would replace him? In what condition would his family be? I must not forget, my dear son, that in allowing this acquisition to be made in my name, I will have to be the first one responsible, and that, for a long time, I cannot fall back on my own belongings nor on those of the Society to meet our obligations for the Hotel Richelieu. We have no establishment, either of men or of women, that is not more or less in debt. Taken together, these debts would frighten me, if each time that I borrowed money I had not thought that I was not departing from the order of Providence in our regard. I hope Mr. O'Lombel will not be upset that I am taking all these precautions. It seems to me he ought to be taking some, in linking himself with a Society that would proceed inconsiderately.

Still a last consideration. If we should receive considerable help, and even more than we need, to sustain ourselves in Paris, would it not be suitable to use it to procure for ourselves the material needed for the institutions we shall be able to found in this large place, unless Mr. O'Lombel is always able to advance the funds, until the establishment as such is ended. I honestly thought we should speak of it with all frankness, with the one who sincerely calls himself a friend of the Society of Mary.

Twelve o'clock noon is ringing, but I am continuing, my dear son, on another sheet while awaiting that first sheet to be copied.

You have well answered the Baron[1] Reporter of our affair to the Council of State. We are unable to change the order of Providence, which is having us fall into such a section of the Council of State, and in the absence of the Ministers. If, on the arrival of my letter, no resolution has been taken, you must not fail to make to the baron all sorts of grateful acknowledgements. If you have found out with whom he is closely connected, this party might also be seen with profit. With these gentlemen, each one of the Statutes need not be much defended, nor need its truth and power for the good of religion be made clear to them. But, on the contrary, let them know what little importance this affair really has, that this Society is something very small after all, both as regards the number and the quality of its subjects, that, by its way of operating, all leads to the belief that it will increase very slowly if at all, that besides, if some of the Statutes were modified, that might cause trouble in the Society itself, that, already, there is a small group of members of the Society who have united in order the more surely not to do anything against the laws, who could not imagine that it would ever be possible that they would be denied what the Law accorded them, etc. to each his own ideas, with patience and confidence in our heavenly Protectress! Mr. de Clauzel ought to make these observations himself, and to all others he might judge a propos, for the support of the work of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction.

I am leaving you now, in wishing you the peace of the Lord.

P. S. The health of the archbishop is holding up well, since his last malady which alarmed us so much a month ago.

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Although ninety years old, the venerable archbishop, in fact, continued to spend himself for his diocese and, in particular, for the Society of Mary as the "adopted child of his old age" as is proven by the following note.

368 – TO ARCHBISHOP D'AVIAU, ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Your Excellency, I have the honor of asking you to add the goodness you have in administering Holy Communion to the pupils of Bro. Auguste, that of giving the tonsure to two students of the Institute of Mary: Bro. Thomas Mary LeBihan[1] and John Brunet. Their papers are already known to be in order. These two subjects are worthy of your favors. I am with the most profound respect, etc. . . .

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[1] Baron Cuvier, President and not the reporter of the section of the Council of State occupied with our affair.

[1] Thomas Mary LeBihan, born in Quimper in 1801, entered the novitiate of the Madeleine in 1825, where he died the following year on July 26th, feast of St. Anne, "a death, peaceful and edifying," after having pronounced his perpetual vows.

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369 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 4, 1825

I am passing over to you, my dear son, my procuration to Mr. O'Lombel, with a little letter which I have the honor of writing to him. I am joining to it an instruction in duplicate. Let him have one of the copies and send me the other by return mail, after he has signed it. If he found any trouble in signing the procuration you understand that, in that case, you should not give him the procuration. This is an enterprise of mutual confidence in which human wisdom cannot foresee everything, but in which all should be done that it suggests, leaving all the rest to Providence.

Your confidence, my dear son, seemed to waver somewhat in the face of the difficulties you are encountering. Maybe you have had too much when you found yourself so well received in the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs? May all our confidence be in the Lord and in his august Mother, our powerful protectress. Without changing in any way the dispositions of these with whom we have necessary relations, these dispositions may be putting blessings in their mouths, instead of the curses they would want to utter against their work.[1] Whatever the case may be, let us not cease adoring the designs of Providence, even the impenetrable ones, in the contradictions which it permits. Let us pray, let us do all we can and remain at peace! . . .

I am stopping here. It is noon and the notary has not yet sent the copy of the procuration. *Pax Christi, fili mi*!

* * * *

Mr. O'Lombel signed the Instruction and received the procuration, but as will be seen in what follows, he was not able to get to the point of having it duly notarized, for he lacked the necessary funds. Let us come back to the question of the authorization. As we saw in Letter 367, Father Caillet had had an interview with Baron Cuvier, President of the Section of the Council of State, and this man had asked him a series of questions, more or less insidious, to which Father Caillet had answered as well as he could. Here is the text, such as Father Caillet sent it to Father Chaminade:

1. What is the real object of the Society of Mary?

2. What do you mean by engagements, definitive engagements, and at what age are the ones and the others taken?

3. How do you understand this Society and all its belongings to be universal?

[1] The allusion to the Bible story of Balaam.

4. What is this immediate action which the Superior General preserves over all the members of the Society?

5. This Superior General, being an ecclesiastic and preserving an immediate action over all the members, as this Society could become very widespread and very numerous in memberships, is it not necessary that he be named for each election by the king or that each election be subject to the approval of His Majesty?

6. What do you mean by these rules of interior discipline, and why not produce them for the Council of State?

7. Articles 18 and 19 of the Statutes presented to the Council of State, do they not form a kind of Little Seminary and do they not refer to members of the Society who are Fathers and priests, with members who are only Brothers and laymen?

8. Why should the actual Superior General be in office for life? Should he not be named temporarily, as are his successors? What is the time fixed by the interior regulations of the Society for the duration of the functions of the Heads, etc.? Do all the members of the Society have an equal say in the elections to be held?

In several of these questions, we feel the mistrust that shows through, and we can easily see why they provoked in Father Caillet a feeling of discouragement. Father Chaminade reassures and comforts him.

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370 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 8, 1825

My dear Son: I received your letter of August first, and I am delaying my answer only as much as will correspond with the departure of the next mail.

I don't doubt that your present position is very embarrassing. You might not be so embarrassed if, from the beginning, you had not had so much confidence and if you had been better informed as regards all the channels through which you would have to pass. No matter, do not be disconcerted. As you say, let me know the persons and the things. *Si Deus pro nobis, quis contra nos*?[1]

I am passing over to you, my dear son, my answers to the questions asked of you by the Baron. There are eight of them that I have transcribed very exactly. If the Baron had note of them, he would see that there is exactitude in them. I permitted myself to change only

[1] If God is with us, who shall be against us?

one word in the eighth request. Instead of "Would he not be," I put, "Should he not be." I thought this was the meaning of the sentence, as there cannot be question of my will considered in itself, and out of all connection with the usefulness of the Institution.

Are you keeping, my dear son, a copy of my answers? If you made a written copy of them for yourself, either they coincide with mine, in which case you are free to do as you please, and you call attention to the coincidence, or they have notable differences, such as are contrary to the natural meaning of the Statutes; then you would ask the Reporter to substitute the ones by the others. If there were any other difficulty, ask the Reporter to give it to you in writing, so that you can pass it over to me. I am referring to some difficulty that would seem real to you and to which you would have to give an answer in writing. All these writings remain in safekeeping with the Council of State, as in the other lower administrations.

My dear son, do not give any signs of weariness in regard to the questions and requests that may be placed before you. On the contrary, you must seem to be edified by the attention and the rigorous examination the Council of State gives to the matter submitted to it. That is not at all a proof of bad will. You can truthfully say to the Baron, Counselor of State, from me, that I am very glad that the Council of State has a correct knowledge of the Institution being placed before it, that I am prepared to give him all the information about it he may desire, that, although I have at least 48 years of experience in this kind of words,[1] I am thoroughly persuaded that one can always do better, and that I would consider it a great act of kindness of his part, were he to give me the permission to consult him, be it on the development of the Society, or on several questions that are to be proposed only confidentially to persons of high rank and merit.

I am stopping here, my dear son, so that this letter may not miss today's mail. *Dominus tecum*!

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371 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, August 9, 1825

My dear son: I was writing to Father Caillet when I received your letter of July 30th. I am astonished that, by the 30th of July, you had not received the letter that he told me he wrote to you on the subject of the retreats. You must surely have received it by now, just as the one I wrote to you on July 26th.

[1] Since the start in teaching, Mussidan in 1777.

The news which you give me about the resolution of the General Council of the Department of the Haute-Saône[2] and of the repairs you have made at St. Remy sounds very agreeable to me.

I am always ready, my dear son, to deal with the house in Vesoul, for the Daughters of Mary, provided that sufficient means are on hand. I shall write again to Besançon about it, following the offers Father Bardenet makes to me in his letter of July 28th. I shall answer him only after I shall have received word relative to the intentions of the archbishop of Besançon, since the seminary may not be sold without his authorization. In the meantime, I am asking you, please, to offer Father Bardenet the assurance of my esteem and respectful affection, and to tell him that I am disposed to accept all the conditions he makes to me for the divers sums that are to make up the price of the house in Vesoul, with the exception of the one regarding the reimbursement of the 20,000 francs in one year. . . .

A brother of mature age would be needed to be first sacristan in Colmar. I have already written about it to Brother Rothéa. Both he and I have thought of Brother Bousquet. It is a fine place where one can sanctify oneself so easily, being constantly in the house of God and working directly in his service! One can also work at the edification of an entire people in comporting oneself with the piety and the charity of a real religious. I would then think of giving you, as Head of Work, Brother Louis Rothéa himself. However, if Brother Bousquet does not want to conduct himself as a true religious, he must not be thought of for Colmar.

Following the retreats and the return of Father Caillet, we shall see about the subjects you might have ready to send us. Unless no earlier occasion should present itself, would it not be possible that a brother from St. Remy make the voyage to Bordeaux to lead the different persons destined to come to us, and at his return, we would send with him those destined for that part of the country? In this manner of proceeding, there would be both good and economy. Other societies do the same thing.

I am embracing you tenderly, and I am wishing you, as all your Brothers, my very dear children, the peace of the Lord.

* * * *

Nevertheless, the end of the negotiations was in sight. The Council of State, in its session of August 3rd, had studied the project of the Statutes transmitted by the Council of Public Instruction and issued the statement that there was reason for approving it, after having introduced in it the following modifications:

[2] Granting a subsidy of 2,400 francs for the new school year.

Art. 1. The word "especially" used in this article seems to indicate other destinations. All equivocation would disappear by suppressing this word and saying: The Society of Mary devotes itself to primary education.

Art. 3 and 4. It would be suitable to express that the engagement as member of the Society will be taken only at the age of 21, and that, for engagements before that age, the consent of the parents will be necessary.

Art. 5. The intention of the Society being to put goods to common use and not the ownership of immovables, this intention would be more explicitly expressed by saying: "According to the rules of universal fellowship," and suppressing the words "and all the goods," which would do away with all manner of doubt, according to Art. 1839 of the Civil Code which says: "The simple agreement of universal fellowship, made without any other explanation, takes away only the general sharing of gains and profits."

Art. 7. This article should settle upon a term, after which there would no longer be place for a member who would withdraw, to ask for an indemnity and who would have rendered enough service, so that there would not be any reason of an indemnity. In all cases, the bases for the indemnity should be determined in advance and at the time of the engagements according to the nature and value of the goods the newly admitted one will bring to the Society.

Art. 8. The last paragraph of this article must be suppressed, for only the law can declare that in courts of justice, official registers will serve as final proofs.

Art. 16. It is said, at the end of this article, that the Superiors who will succeed Father Chaminade will be named to office for the period of time determined by the interior regulations. These regulations, not being in any way mentioned, it would be suitable to express in this article the time fixed and to mention that the Superior is or is not eligible again.

The committee finally believes it ought to call the attention of his Excellency to the general question of knowing whether or not there are inconveniences in authorizing associations, which may spread through all of France and in which the authority and immediate action of the Superior on his subjects may give rise to difficulties with the Ordinaries of the dioceses.

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Father Chaminade resigned himself to the modifications asked for, and in consequence, gave his instructions to his representative.

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372 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 11, 1825

On receiving your letter of August 6th, my dear son, I clearly saw that we were to give up the idea of possibly seeing you before the end of October. I am saying possibly, in fact, would it not be possible if your principal affairs were finished by the end of the present month, and that you would begin your retreats at the beginning of September as Brother Clouzet seems to desire? Then, you could be here for our retreat with those who should accompany you. It is true that a retreat must be given to the Community of St. Remy, and that it could hardly come before that of the schoolteachers. Do all for the best, but always in peace!

I have some hope of being able to send a priest of middle age to St. Remy sometime in September.[1] His schedule is in order. He is able to teach a pretty heavy class and can speak easily. However, it may be some time before he can be of any substantial help in the Tribunal of Penance. I shall come back to him if there is reason for it. The bishop of Perigueux seems to want to give a young priest whom I had a mind to send to St. Remy,[2] but if I can arrange matters with the first, and if the second is free during the vacation, it is to be presumed that I shall give him another destination . . . From now on, I shall often speak to you of St. Remy.

I reread attentively, my dear son, both your letters and the edition of the Statutes of the Society of Mary of last July 12, in 18 articles.

I consent that in the first article, the word “especially” be suppressed.

I consent that Article 5 read as follows: “When a subject is admitted as a member of the Society, the agreement that will be made between him and the Society will be in the spirit and according the rules of the worldwide Society, foreseen in the Civil Code, the Title 9, Chapter 2, Section 1, Numbers 1838 and the following.”

I consent also that in Article 8 the words that are at the end be effaced: “The register will be final proof in a court of justice, if in certain circumstances it were called for.”

If you have received an official copy of these three changes, and they happen to be like those you pointed out to me in the letter to which I am giving answer, you may, my dear son, draw up a new edition of the statutes presented on July 12th with these three changes, or have it done for you. You may sign it in my name, as you did it on last July 12th, and this for speedier forwarding, even if, at the reception of this letter, you would have already mailed the official answer you had been waiting for. It is quite possible that you have no other

[1] Doubtless, Father Boutoey.
[2] Father Brothier, see Letter 380.

answer than the one you get from the Baron. If this were the case, you would go to him with your new edition duly signed, etc. . . .

Here are now some observations which in no way affect the statutes and which are meant only to give greater clarity to the latter.

To the end of Article 4, add: "For life." Member of the Society for life. The reason seems clear. There is a first commitment for three years during which one is really a member of the Society, although with three years as a limit.

To the same Article 4, add: "Or during which if there is reason for it." I am going to recopy this entire article: "The first commitment taken after the probation is for only three years, after which, or during which, if there is reason for it, admission as a member of the Society may be granted for life." The reason for this addition is that several subjects already older and seen to some to their full legal age, may present themselves and give sufficient assurance of steadfastness, that there may be nothing to fear as regards their admission as members for life. This three-year commitment has been adopted especially for younger members, as a new test to last until they reach their majority.

You could bring the editions to the Reporter, the one, literally conformable to the changes asked for by the Council of State, the other, with the above explanatory words added to Article 4.

I finally see, my dear son, that you will soon be finished with this whole business. *Deo Gratias*! Nevertheless, you must not remain indifferent as regards the edition of the Royal Ordinance. I believe it belongs to the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction. I am hoping from Bishop D'Hermopolis that it will be pure and simple, or that if there are additional expressions, it will be but to the honor of the Society of Mary with tokens of his royal and paternal goodness . . .

You must have received, my dear son, my answers to the request which had been proposed to you by the Reporter of the Council of State. I read with much interest those drawn up by Mr. de Saget. Nevertheless, if the answers which you supplied were to remain in the Secretariate of the Council of State, I would prefer that my answers would be replaced by those which you have already furnished. All being ended, I think that the Baron Reporter will accept them without any trouble. It is even possible that in consequence he will easily give them back to you and without substituting other answers. Leave as few writings as possible, while taking note of those that might be still in the various Secretariates, be it of the Council of State, the Council of Public Instruction or of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs. Try to know those which are registered. I think that you have kept duplicate copies of all of them. On my part, I've kept copies of all those I sent you. With our operations finished, we must now take an account of our true position . . . You have said one good word, when you spoke of 'knowing the persons and things.' Everything and always with prudence, discretion, and moderation. . . .

Take information about the medals[1] or rather, about the artists who are occupying themselves with this line of business. Silver medals on which would be engraved the Immaculate Virgin, or even set off in relief with or without a circle, etc., artistic forms, their price, whether cast or struck, etc. It would be good, it seems to me, that the medals be of different sizes, even if the form is the same. You saw those of our Prefects of the Sodality and those of our Assistants. They are gilt, while the others are not. It would be the same with regard to the cords or ribbons with which they would be suspended. Many difficulties would be obviated if the king, in signing his Ordinance, would pass one over to me through the mediation of the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs. This is something which must be said or touched upon very lightly and as coming from you. The Minister, in this supposition, should, it seems to me, be supplied with the medal, to present it to his Majesty. It ought to be sent to the archbishop of Bordeaux, that he may give it to me, and at the same time, determine whether the white cord or a ribbon would be most suitable.

In ending this long letter, let us bless together, my dear son, the holy names of Jesus and Mary! *Sit nomen Jesu benedictum, sit nomen Mariae benedictum, in saecula saeculorum! In te, Domine, speravil non confundar in acternum! In te Domine, spiravi: non confunder in acternum. Pax Christi, fili mi!*

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On August 13th, there is a new letter to Father Caillet, written this time by Brother David. We are extracting from it the following reflections, backed by the P.S. of Father Chaminade.

373 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 13, 1825

What the persons think, when you have consulted in Paris, about the right we might have of doing, under pretense of the Statutes, what these would not permit, is, by a good deal, neither just nor true. These usurpations, ordinarily speaking, lead into trouble. What is included in the principle of a Statute can be done, although this not particularly mentioned, but if we want to spread out to a different thing, its utility must be proved and we must have it approved. The abuse into which some corporations have fallen, in a different sense, have brought about only insults and suspicions harmful to every kind of good. Furthermore, do you know if some of these, who are making these idle remarks, are doing little more than provoking you to explanations, in order to find out the correctness of your principles? It seems to me altogether suitable that we speak in the name of the Institute of Mary, that all suspicion of any mental reservation be set aside and that the civil administration may not believe that, in asking authorization to do one thing, we have in mind doing one entirely

[1] Destined for the religious of the Society of Mary.

different. This confidence on the part of the civil authorities will come to us, step by step. I have every reason to believe it. In the meantime, let us at least try that, on our part, there be no obstacle in the way. Great successes have come to us from the observance of this principle. I believe God approves of it. Let us hold to it! . . .

You must be neither surprised nor cast down, if you sometimes make mistakes, as you must know, by this time, that everybody makes them. For example, take articles 18 and 19, that come neither from you, nor from me. God permits these things, either for the good of his service or for our salvation. May his Providence watch over us and may it protect us against greater mistakes. That is what I am asking him for all of us. May his mercy be accorded to my children and to me!

What follows is from the hand of Father Chaminade.

P.S. This letter was written by Brother David. Father Caillet may, as regards all that concerns the statutes, hold to the last one, dated August 11, that his Good Father wrote to him and that he did not communicate to Brother David, while, nevertheless, drawing profit from the reflections he makes in this letter—Note of the Good Father, written in the sacristy.

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In the following letter, where Father Chaminade gives Father Caillet divers instructions in view of his coming voyage to St. Remy, there is question for the first time of a foundation at Courtefontaine, a name which will often come back in what follows in this correspondence and to which is attached some of the dearest souvenirs of the Society of Mary.

374 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 18, 1825

My dear son, I have just received the messages from St. Remy. Among them, is a little letter from Brother Rothea.[1] That you may have it sooner, I am passing it over to you, just as it is. You will blame what is blamable. For what remains, you will decide with Brother Clouzet what will be suitable. Brother Clouzet is not wrong in giving way a little to the importunities of Brother Rothéa, but, on the other hand, Brother Rothéa should not be importunate.

[1] Editor's note: In the following letters Father Chaminade makes reference to one of the brothers Rothéa, Brother Louis Rothéa or Father Charles Rothéa. It is often difficult, as in this case, to determine which brother is meant when the French designation is simply Monsieur. An attempt has been made, as with all the names in the letters, to indicate the proper English title. Where this is not possible, "Brother" has been used to translate the French Monsieur. Biographical data on Brother Louis Rothéa may be found in Volume I of *The Letters of Father Chaminade* at Letter 129 and for Father Charles Rothéa at Letter 169.

A copy of the letter of Father Reviere, Vicar General, has been sent to me, an original copy of which you must have received in St. Claude. I do not think that you know the place designated under the name of Contrefontaine.[2] Furnishings are not being talked about. Would everything really be ready for the first of November? Would the place be large enough to lodge the old schoolteachers, who would be attracted there by the retreats? It seems to me, before acceptance is definitively made, that we would have to go and see the bishop of St. Claude. It is only by inconveniencing ourselves a great deal that we would start this establishment by the first of November. Besides, you would see about the four or five subjects that the Vicar General is offering as a start. What would be in the way of their being in St. Remy until next spring? You could write to him that you could have an agreement with him, if he is well enough informed about the views of the bishop of St. Claude and about the place he is offering. See for yourself whether it would not be in place to write to the respectable prelate, at the same time that you would be answering Father Riviere.

My dear son, handle this matter with prudence. All I can do now is to offer you some general reflections. If the bishop backs us up with zeal and loyalty, we must work with him, so much the more because this diocese is under the jurisdiction of the administration of the Academy of Besançon. You would also see what advantages the designated place might offer for the formation of a men's sodality. Would there be a large enough chapel? What is the population of the city?, etc. . . . What means of subsistence would there be for the religious? If the bishop can be induced to issue a little note, I shall send you a procuration to treat and sign, etc. . . .

I am also having the letter of Brother Clouzet passed over to you, although I imagine that he wrote to you at the same time that he wrote to me. If you have finished your business with the Council of State, I think that his Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, will permit you to go to St. Remy, considering the urgency of this visit and that the affair of the Royal Ordinance will not be delayed because of it. If both his Excellency and yourself mutually promise, it will be good to leave to someone the job of keeping an eye on the Royal Ordinance, as you would do yourself, if you were not obliged to absent yourself.

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[2] Father Chaminade wants to say Courtefontaine, and he supposes that there is question of a place in the city of St. Claude. Courtefontaine is the name of a small village in the diocese of St. Claude, located on the confines of three Departments, of the Jura, of the Doubs, and of the Haute-Saône. It derives its name from an abundant fountain which springs from the rock, to disappear almost immediately into subterranean cavities. Until the Revolution, it had been the seat of a friary of Canons Regular, whose church, in the purest Roman style, is classed as a historic monument. It was in the remains of the cloister buildings that, some years later, was to be made the foundation of the normal school, here referred to. The establishment of Courtefontaine became one of the most important in the province of Franche-Comte. There, were found united, the school of the village, a boarding school of primary instruction, the postulate, the novitiate and the scholasticate of the province, the residence of the pastor of the parish, and the provincial seat. It was suppressed by the decrees of 1903.

In this case, the one taking your place would have to be carefully instructed. The Reverend Missionaries of Beaupre are going to St. Remy for the two retreats, and so you can give the greater attention to everything, so that these retreats produce the greatest amount of good possible . . . . I see a lot of crowding . . . . It is not possible that Brother Laugeay be present at the beginning of the first retreat. At best, he can be there only toward the end.

You will decide as regards the lame candidate. Is he such, as the result of an accident? Just to what an extent is he lame? Does he make up for his physical defects by great qualities of mind, heart, and character?[1]

I shall also await your advice as regards the coming of Brothers Pascal, Petitjean, and Mouillet. You will also see about the young Alsatian lady. Brother Clouzet had written to me about two other young ladies of the Department of Haute-Saône. I had answered affirmatively, as regards the one, but she has not yet written to me, as I think I had asked her to do. It seems that Brother Rothéa, who answered the Alsatian lady that she would have to come to Bordeaux alone, told nothing about it to Brother Clouzet. On the other hand, it seems that, during this vacation, there will be much movement, due to changes in appointments and places.

The nephew of Brother Griffon, nine years old, is rather young to be with the postulants. Would it not be better to have him among the boarders? Are the postulants and novices of all ranks kept together? If they are, see, my dear son, what measures can be taken that this be not so. . . . I shall try not to lose sight of Brother Bousquet. . . . I shall not answer Brother Clouzet nor Brother Rothéa on the matters touched upon in their last letters. You will take care of that for me.

You may bring to the notice of his Excellency that the Royal Ordinance is greatly needed at a time when everything must be prepared and definitely settled for the school

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[1] There is question of Mr. Pierre Gobillet, who was, in fact, admitted into the Society and fully realized the hopes of the Founder. Mr. Pierre Gobillot 1803-88 born in Marast, near St. Remy, entered the novitiate of St. Laurent on October 15, 1825. He was a religious blessed with a great spirit of faith and a deep attachment to the Rule. He filled, at different times, the functions of Director and passed a great part of his life in the houses of formation. He was even placed at the head of the novitiate of St. Laurent, 1827-28, and it is to this time that the following trait has reference, as written by Brother Silvain in his memoirs: "One day, at a conference given by Father Chaminade, a superior knelt down before him and asked to be relieved of his office, giving as his reason his bodily infirmity—he was lame—and also the infirmity of his mind. Father Chaminade then asked him if he had a high idea of the rhetoric of St. Peter, the first of the Apostles who converted the world. . . . Useless to add that the suppliant retook his place and continued to fulfill his office." As regards his infirmity, he used to make this reflection: "When I broke my leg, my parents said: 'What a misfortune.' And now I say, What happiness! Because who knows what I might have become without this accident?" "Brother Gobillet was a rugged Brother of Mary, leading a religious life after the manner of the Fathers of the Desert," writes a contemporary, "never having any fire in his room, practicing until extreme old age all the fasts of the Rule, with the most complete detachment from his family. . . . In proportion as he approached the end of his career, one could see his ruggedness little by little give place to the mildness of maturity." In a letter of August 29, 1843, Good Father Chaminade pointed him out as a good teacher, "teaching with great clarity and order" and as a good religious "gifted with an honest severity in all matters related to regularity and good example."

year about to begin. Try to forget nothing of the various observations that I made to you at the time of drawing up of this Ordinance.

The health of our saintly prelate is keeping up fairly well. The bishop of La Rochelle, older than he by about two years, is in Bordeaux. He is less worn out than the archbishop.[2]

I am wishing you, my dear son, the twofold peace which our Lord wished to his Apostles on his first apparition to them. It seems to me that I feel, for many days, that the Blessed Virgin is taking a deeper interest in her little Society.

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[2] Bishop Paillou was then ninety years old. He had migrated to Spain, where he had met Louis Chaminade, who was living with the bishop of Orense. He had been consecrated in St. Sulpice on February 2, 1805, by Pope Pius VII himself. He died in 1826 with the reputation of a saint.

375 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 22, 1825

My dear son, I am sending you by today's mail a Certificate of Affiliation for Mrs. O'Lombel.

I received your messages dated August 14th only on the 20th in the morning. This delay was caused, it seems to me, by the absence of the archbishop.[1] On the eve, he was in the country with Fathers Barres and Gignoux. It seemed suitable to me to give an answer to the opinion given by the State Council to his Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction. I want to write directly to his Excellency in sending him my answer. There will be two letters: one, in connection with my answer and the other, confidential. I hope to be able to send both by tomorrow's mail, as that seems impossible for today. Uncertain as to whether you will not have obtained the permission of Bishop d'Hermopolis to leave for St. Remy, according to the letter I wrote you last Thursday, I am writing to Mr. O'Lombel to withdraw the little package addressed to you, to take the certificate to his wife, and to have this letter sent to you if you happened to be gone. I think I shall shortly receive from you advice as regards the choice you will have made of the one who was willing to replace you, to continue what you were doing, relative to the Royal Ordinance. I presume that it is Mr. O'Lombel. Be it he or someone else, you will have him made known to Mr. Receveur, so that he may enjoy the advantage of the free postage. I shall write also to Mr. de la Chapelle, either to tell him all about what I shall write to His Excellency or to tell him all that, in my opinion, might help this affair. You will also do well to interest once more Mr. Receveur and Mr. Tribuguet, and to have them meet Mr. O'Lombel or whoever may be the one to replace you. Mr. O'Lombel will be able to correspond directly in regard to the affair of the establishment, and address to me his letters just as you do.

As regards the affair of St. Claude, I did not believe you to be so well informed as you really are about both the places and the persons concerned. Give the bishop, directly or indirectly through Mr. Riviere, all kinds of tokens of good will, but let there be no tenants on the place designated, that etc., etc. Let him be kind enough to supply this establishment with all that is strictly necessary, etc. . . .

Mrs.— . . . asks you to make a novena right away for her daughter who is a boarder at the Reunion.[2] This child seems to her too dissipated, and she fears for her First Communion. She gave me one hundred francs for you, as a stipend for the novena. I think that if you don't happen to have what you need for your voyage, you will have to borrow. Let me know.

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[1] The correspondence of Father Chaminade with Father Caillet was carried on through the medium of the archbishop's palace.

[2] In the boarding school conducted by the Ladies of the Reunion to the Sacred Heart.

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Father Caillet left Paris before having been able to get the Royal Ordinance. At St. Remy, he presided at two retreats for the schoolteachers, of which the success was all that could be desired, complete in every way. Of the month of September, all that remains to us is the following letters.

376 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 15, 1825

My dear son, I have received your letter, as well as that of Brother Laugeay, the one and the other, both dated September 5th.

I am not surprised that the retreats that start with the eight days of preparation[1] succeed better than those which start with the main exercises. The exercises destined for the preparation, when put in the last place, can only weaken the strong impressions made by the main exercises.

All the good that Brother Laugeay tells me about the normal schools is very deeply impressed in my heart. You know all I have done, since the purchase of the château of St. Remy, in order to give them a first place in the Department of the Deube and the Haute-Saône. I have thought a long time about the Department of the Jura, as being under the jurisdiction of the same administration of Besançon, but then I was not thinking that the diocese of St. Claude was going to be detached from that of Besançon.[2] For the time being, I have nothing to add to what I wrote you in Paris on the subject of the establishment of the normal school asked for in St. Claude by its worthy bishop. Besides, when this letter reaches you, you will already have made your plans as regards this subject. No normal school is to be accepted, unless the annual retreat of fifteen days for the former schoolteachers can be joined to them, and that the said schoolteachers can lodge in the establishment.

From all that you have already told me about the young lame fellow, I am quite ready to receive him at St. Laurent. His deformity matters little, provided that he can become an excellent religious who can teach the postulants and the novices, and that he is of a character equally firm, mild, and amiable.

I shall receive the seven subjects that Brother Laugeay names for me and with all the more pleasure, if you are at their head to lead them. The St. Laurent retreat will probably not begin before the evening of October 16th.

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[1] In which the schoolteachers assist morning and evening at a religious instruction, while receiving during the day professional training.

[2] The diocese of St. Claude, created in 1742, following the secularization of the abbey of the same name, had been suppressed by the Concordat of 1801 and its territory annexed to the diocese of Besançon. It had just been reestablished in 1817.

From this, you can see that I am consenting, even with pleasure, that Brother Bousquet comes to Colmar, to be the first sacristan of the parish. That was my first idea, when there was question of replacing Olivier, but I feared being wedded to my own ideas, on the representations that Brother Laugeay and Rothéa made to me. I hope to be able to send to the schools of Colmar, Brothers Weber and Colin, especially if they can be advantageously replaced at Villeneuve by two of those you will bring along.

I read with satisfaction the letter written to Father Rothéa by the Rev. Pastor Bader. It seems that a little establishment of Brothers may be made in St. Marie-aux-Mines. It would be too bad if it were not the Society of Mary that would rear the children of the town St. Marie.[1] Have Father Rothéa write then to the pastor, Father Bader, so that he, on his part, may induce the mayor of the town to write to me officially, to present his request and to make about the same offers, and in the same way as they are made in Father Rothéa's letter. It would have to be pointed out that four Brothers would be needed, especially if the school is to serve the two parishes of the town. With only three Brothers, it would not be possible to take the smallest children, those who would not yet have begun to read. For such a town, what difference could an additional 300 francs make, considering the great advantage accorded to children from the earliest years in which they are susceptible to training? Father Rothéa will do well to consider this serious point.

As regards the young ladies who desire to come to the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary, I am leaving the decision up to you. It seems to me that the sister of the postulant of the normal school that you will bring along will be able to enter only as a lay Sister companion, and we shall send her to Agen.

Since I have a pretty bad headache, I am writing to you by the hand of Brother Tissior, of whom, I think, Brother Laugeay spoke to me. Nothing as regards him is as yet decided for next year. We shall speak more of it another time. I am embracing you tenderly, as also all of our dear children in St. Remy *in osculo pacis*.

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At the beginning of the month of October, Father Caillet is expected in Paris, where a letter from the Good Father preceded him.

377 – TO FATHER CAILLET, PARIS

Bordeaux, August 4, 1825

My dear son:

[1] The schools of St. Marie-aux-Mines were, in fact, confided to the Society of Mary, but only from the beginning of 1827.

I have received your letter of September 23rd. I am not making any comment or reflection upon its contents, since you are going to leave St. Remy and this letter is to find or wait for you in Paris. Nor am I saying anything about our Paris affairs, since Mr. O'Lombel will bring you up to date on everything. He has copies of all that I have written, either to Bishop d'Hermapolis or to Father de la Chapelle. I was somewhat anxious over the lack of news from Mr. O'Lombel when I received some, and that makes me cut down on the long letter I was going to write to you.

By my last one to Mr. O'Lombel, I invited him to come to Bordeaux to take part in the retreat, if the whole of our business might permit him an absence of about two weeks. He is accepting the invitation and profiting by this occasion to accompany his wife as far as Bordeaux. Explain well to him how these retreats are given and how they are made, the simplicity of the instructions or meditations, the smallness of the place and the resulting crowded quarters for the number of retreatants, the frugality of the meals, etc., etc., so that he may not be surprised at anything.

I think that, as you have said to me, you will have taken precautions that the little group of postulants you are bringing may not be endangered in any way during the two days that you intend to stay in Paris. Youth must always be supervised, however good it may be, just as one watches the milk on the fire. . . .

Right now, Brother Olivier is entering my room, not being able to withstand the reproaches of his conscience, in order to be able to write to you and to Mr. O'Lombel. I am sending him to St. Laurent.

Offer my humble respects to Bishop d'Hermopolis, as to Father de la Chapelle, but in such a way that they understand that these are really heartfelt and not just cold compliments with which, by this time, they must be surfeited.[1]

If the new edition of the Statutes were made, you could sign it for me, as there would be less delay. For the editing of the Royal Ordinance, I am depending upon the interest and benevolence which his Excellency bears towards the Society of Mary.

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[1] On their side, Bishop Frayssinous and Father de la Chapelle had conceived for Father Chaminade sentiments of genuine respect and veneration. On September 3rd, Father de la Chapelle wrote in his own hand a long letter to Father Chaminade which ended with the following declarations: "I saw Mr. O'Lombel twice, but I experience so much satisfaction in corresponding directly with you, that I should ask him to pass these reflections over to you. I prefer by far to pass them to you myself with as much confidence as you have had the kindness to acquaint me with your own. Please be assured of my eagerness to cooperate in everything that may hasten the conclusion of an affair which, in giving your Society a legal existence, assures the perpetuity of an establishment, which will always be as precious and useful to the Church, as it is to the State, so much will it preserve the spirit of its Founder and his zeal for the greater glory of God. Please accept, I beg of you, the assurance of the veneration and respect with which I have the honor of being, Reverend Father, etc."

May the Lord deign to shower his blessings on all our affairs, which are properly his own, on you in particular and all your traveling companions. May all your Guardian Angels accompany you in peace and keep all danger from you. May I soon have the satisfaction of giving you the fatherly kiss!

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On this same date we find, written by the hand of Father Chaminade, the wording of a letter of Affiliation accorded to a Mrs. De Milanges of Paris, benefactress of the Society. She had taken active measures to help the negotiations of Father Caillet and of Mr. O'Lombel and was then on the point of leaving for New Orleans, where she had considerable interests to supervise.

378 – TO MRS. MARY ANNE BLANCHE BRUNO DE MILANGES, PARIS

Bordeaux, October 4, 1825

Upon special request for affiliation, addressed to us from Paris by our well beloved son, Father Caillet, priest of the Society of Mary, in favor of Mrs. De Milanges, and also upon the earnest solicitation of the said lady through our respectable son, Mr. O'Lombel, zealous affiliate of the Society of Mary.

In consideration of the zeal and devotedness that Mrs. De Milanges shows for the support and propagation of the Society of Mary, and in consideration, furthermore, of the good and sufficient tokens of her good life and character given by our said dear sons, as well as of her tender devotion toward Mary, her exactitude in the accomplishment of her duties of religion and charity toward her neighbors, etc. We have by these present, etc.

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Father Caillet came to Bordeaux for the retreat of St. Laurent, and Mr. O'Lombel is following up alone the affair of the legal recognition. The letters of Father Chaminade, during the following period are rare. At the beginning of November, here is an interesting obedience given to a religious whom affairs recall to his family.

379 – TO BROTHER DOMINIC WEISSEMBURGER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 2, 1825

Our dear son,

Brother Dominic Weissemburger, tonsured cleric, professed of the Society of Mary, will be permitted, as soon as possible, to go to Ribeauville, city of his birth, to fulfill the little mission on which we have agreed. I recommend to him recollection against dissipation, which is so common during long voyages, and Christian and religious vigilance over his heart, against the inclinations of nature, which dispositions should be constantly renewed in the midst of his parents, relatives, and former friends. May he always be able to say truthfully: *Ego non sum de hec munde; de supernis sum*.[1] May he always recall that, by his

[1] I am no longer of this world; I am from above.

sacred commitments, he is dead to the world, in order to lead a life hidden in God with Jesus Christ, *Mortui estis, et vita nostra abscendita est cum Christe in Dee*.[2]

I permit him to lodge with his parents in Ribeauville, and, although I exempt him from what is peculiar to the conventual regimen of the Society, be it while traveling or during his stay in Ribeauville, he will try to observe it as closely as possible, always remembering to carry in his body, as did St. Paul, the mortification of Jesus Christ.

His stay in Ribeauville will last, at most, seven or eight days. Unless there be an accident of some kind, or something unforeseen, he is to be back in Bordeaux on the 23rd of the present month.

To conclude, I want to recall to him, once more, the recommendation of St. Paul to the Philippians: *Modestia vestra nota sit emnibus hominibus*.[1] And I wish him all that fatherly tenderness can wish to a well-beloved son, from whom he is being separated with so much solicitude, although for so short a time. May our august Patroness, the most blessed Virgin Mary, deign to accord him a special protection until his happy return! Bordeaux, November 2, 1825.

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At the end of November, there was a letter to Brother Clouzet concerning the needs of the personnel in the various houses.

380 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 30, 1825

My dear son,

Yesterday I received your undated letter, but it must have been of November 4th, like that of Brother Rothéa. . . .

The young theologian of Strasbourg that you and Brother Rothéa address to me has just arrived and in tiptop shape. . . . Always send theologians that give promise of being good subjects, for we can always find a place for them. You know that Father Lalanne is superior of a kind of little seminary we have here. At the same time, he is teaching second year of college.

Father Brothier is always ready to leave for St. Remy. He has a great liking for teaching and is really able to handle the heaviest classes. Furthermore, he will be able to hear confessions, give instructions, etc. He seems really to like work and especially such

[2] For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.
[1] Let your modesty be known to all men.

as is connected with retreats. The bishop of Perigueux persists in refusing him his *exeat*. He has just left to go to cast himself at his bishop's feet to beg, etc. If he succeeds in getting what he wants, I shall retain him only to have him make a new retreat before receiving him as a novice.

I feel all the need you have of some priests and professors, and I am hoping all along that the Lord will send us the subjects we need. St. Laurent and the Madeleine are being staffed little by little, as there are in both houses several good subjects. Have patience, as I am saying always and everywhere, because everywhere subjects are lacking. If we do not let subjects mature before using them, we are weakening instead of strengthening ourselves.

I am always more astonished, my dear son, that you did not send Brother Constant to Colmar. As I had Father Caillet remark to you, the weaver you sent will not have much success in Colmar, and you ought to have left him at his own trade and not tried to make a professor out of him. I don't think that our Brothers in Colmar ask of you other subjects than such as seem suitable to us, and they must not be more astonished than I that you send the weaver Brother, after having written to them and had others write, that they were going to receive Brother Constant. . . .

We don't happen to have a locksmith to send you as yet. We have at St. Laurent only Seguin[1] and François. This François cannot be released as yet, because he is not yet strong enough to work alone. Furthermore, although he is quite good in the matter of religious life, and although I promised to allow him to make his profession for one year, he is not sufficiently mature. We have already lost several subjects as the result of having employed them too soon. When you have some subjects suitable for the locksmith trade and the religious life, send them: one, two, or even three. We shall see to it that they are properly trained.

My greatest care and worry is to train priests and normal schoolteachers, without neglecting any of the other categories of persons.

Brother Olivier is continuing his penance with generosity. His faults will be the cause of his sanctification. . . . Brother Benedict is also on penance, but he is not doing so well. Already for some time, he recognizes his faults, but his heart is scarcely touched. Besides that, his character and his headaches are an additional obstacle to his improvement.

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[1] Jean Seguin, 1797-1889 born in Latresne, near Bordeaux, was a member of the Madeleine Sodality in 1818, and through it, got to know the Little Society, which he joined in 1822. Boss of the workshop in St. Laurent and a very clever carpenter, locksmith, and mechanic, he was sent in 1835 to St. Remy, there to organize the workshops of the St. Joseph Community. In 1848, he was recalled near Bordeaux, in the domain of La Jalgue at Coubeyrac, where the Society had just founded an agricultural establishment, which was later changed to an orphanage. He still passed forty years there and died at the age of 92. Brother Seguin was a small man, very much alive, nervous, very clever with his hands, of a mild and agreeable character, jovial, of polite and distinguished manners, and always leading a very edifying religious life.

Tell Father Rothéa that, if he wants to be with me, I also want to be able to have him come. Let him be patient and, without preoccupation, fulfill all his duties well, as a good Head of Zeal, and without mental constraint, accustom himself to the silence of the imagination. And you, my dear son, take care of yourself. No doubt, a major Superior must be firm, but if he wishes to save himself, he must have still greater humility. May the Lord be with you!

P.S. I am very mindful of the memory of my children in St. Remy. I have it always in my mind and heart to go and see them. I am very willing to grant Father Chevaux what he has asked for through your mediation, but it is the proper thing for him to write to me himself, and that I send him a dispensation in due form.

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At the approach of the feast of the Immaculate Conception, two letters leave for Auch, to the address of the Sodality of the Seminary.

The first, destined for the sodalists and written by Father Lalanne, is full of a tender and strong piety, and animated by a youthful ardor. The second, destined for their Director, Father Larrieu, seems to have been written by Father Caillet.

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The Seminary of Auch, where the pupils of the major and the minor little Seminary were united, was then one of the most flourishing in France. In 1825, the minor seminary had more than 360 pupils.

The Sodality was organized there in 1822 by the cares of Father Fenasse, Vicar General of the diocese and friend of Father Chaminade, and its direction was confided to a young priest, Father Larrieu, who was to be its very soul, for 60 years, until his death in 1881.

Father Larrieu had been able to get to know Father Chaminade at the time of his visit to Auch in 1819. He became much attached to him and would even have joined the Society, had he been able to obtain the authorization from his bishop.

At least, he visited the Founder in Bordeaux, had the Seminary Sodality incorporated into that of the Madeleine, February 21, 1826, and asked that class connections be established between the two groups. His request was granted, and on several occasions, Father Chaminade wrote to his dear children, the sodalists of the Seminary of Auch, letters that were received with veneration, carefully transcribed into the Sodality registers, “read and reread at the meetings.” Thus, wrote Father Laclavere, Vicar General of Auch and

successor of Father Larrieu, in 1909, in the direction of the Sodality. Father Chaminade did not start, but he certainly developed the great devotion of the diocese of Auch to the most holy Virgin.

Father Larrieu published two works, which had great vogue in their time, the *Manual of the Pious School Boy*, and the *Holy Lyre*. He also left several manuscript volumes of hymns to the Blessed Virgin. He is the author of the hymn, among many others, “O Beloved Cross, Receive my Faith!”

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381 – TO THE SODALISTS OF THE SEMINARY OF AUCH

Bordeaux, December 5, 1825

My dear children: You are not deceiving yourselves when you call me your father. If I interrogate my heart, I feel that I deserve this name of father, so much do I love you! Yes, I have for all of you the sentiments of the tenderest father, and these sentiments are very real, very sincere. Please take my word for it. Thus, my sweetest consolation will be to have engendered in Jesus Christ, children who will also be children of Mary.

By the great mercy of God upon me and upon the others, for a long time, I have breathed and lived only for the spread of the worship of this august Virgin, and thus to have her family ever increase and multiply.

It is among you, my dear and well-beloved children, that it has pleased God to pour the most abundant blessings upon my feeble and useless labors. Furthermore, how would you not be dear to me? How would you not have a great share in my tenderness, and your Director, an equally great share in my confidence? He has not deceived you, when he told you that I loved you, and that I desired, above all, your happiness and your progress in all that is good. I here ratify all that he has said to you, as coming from me, and you must have no doubt about the exactitude with which I shall hold to the promise I made him. Yes, quite willingly, I shall directly delegate to him all my powers, and I shall send him for you, Letters of Affiliation, convinced, as I am by all the reports I have received as regards your edifying and regular conduct, that you will always uphold the honor of Mary, your good and tender Mother, and that you will always show yourselves worthy of the glorious title of sodalist of the Immaculate Conception.

I insist on this last thought, which can, I believe, give rise to important reflection and salutary counsels.

Do you know, do you understand how glorious it is for you to be a sodalist of the Immaculate Conception and how great are the obligations that this title imposes upon you? One can be devoted to Mary in many ways. They are all good, because all that is done for the honor of Mary is doubly agreeable to the Lord. But, to be devoted to her under the title of the Immaculate Conception, that is an act of particular excellence, among all those that can have as object the worship of the Queen of Virgins. Why then, you will say to me, is it not more glorious that the august Mary be the Mother of God than the Virgin Immaculate? Without doubt, but to honor in Mary the divine Maternity is to acquit oneself of a duty of strict obligation, of a duty that the practice of the faith requires of every Catholic, whilst to honor Mary under the title of her Immaculate Conception, is to manifest towards her, a more than ordinary devotion. It is to prove to her a love which is not limited to mere

precept, it is to express to her an admiration which believes all that is permitted to believe. It is, in one word, a profession of the highest devotedness.[1]

I always take pleasure in recalling to young people some picture which they like, as I like to speak to them a language which they themselves like. Well then, my dear children, do you remember those heroic times of old France when every good and valiant French knight used to hasten to the foot of the altars to offer his arms to the God of Armies for the deliverance of the holy places, sprinkled with the blood of His Son? Do you still recall the zeal with which these warriors, in whom piety equaled bravery, consecrated their persons and their fortunes to the service of the Mother of the Son of God, to the service of the one whom they loudly acclaimed in their prayers, as their sovereign and their Lady? Do you still recall the war cry, so often repeated by them in the midst of the thickest of the fight, in the most pressing dangers: God wills it! God wills it! as well as: "Our Lady"? Do you recall how these cries, which religion and confidence inspired to our gallant heroes, always brought disorder in the ranks of their enemies, at the same time as they were for them an almost certain pledge of victory?

To these memories of our brave forefathers, it seems, my dear children, that I see you smile with joy, with pleasure. In the face of these warlike pictures, it seems I already hear you say to me in transports of a holy impatience: "Well then, what is to be done? What enemy must be met and defeated? Here we are, ready! Long live Mary! Will hell hold out against our efforts? Drawn up in the order of battle under the stainless banners of the Immaculate Virgin, we are invincible. Yes, long live Mary! Victory is ours!" My dear children, how I love to see in you this holy enthusiasm! To me it is a sure pledge of your constancy and perseverance. Arm yourselves with a great courage, for you will have real combats to sustain, but combats, difficult and full of dangers. . . . But again, you add, what are these combats? Who, then could really stop us, when the cause is so beautiful? Where are our enemies? May they perish! My good friends, children very dear to my heart, there is not question precisely of great heroic deeds, of blows given and received, of some vigorous outburst, for we don't get off that cheaply. We must give evidence of real bravery, not only once or twice, but often, but always! These are the battles of the Immaculate Conception that we must wage. Let me explain. It means that you must, at whatever price it may be, acquire and preserve that stainless purity which you have promised on the day of your entry into the Sodality, and to arrive at this end, what efforts will you not have to make! But fight, struggle always! Watch without ceasing and with so much constancy that you may never get the slightest injury from their darts, the slightest wound! Mary will not abandon you in these combats. Jealous of the honor of her children, of the dear sodalists of her Immaculate Conception, she will combat for you, she will sustain and defend you, and her help will facilitate a victory, otherwise impossible to your weakness. Now, then, courage, dear children! You will be combating under the livery of the Immaculate Conception. Indeed, what a happiness for you! Hear a heavenly voice which cries to you as it did long ago to Constantine: *In hoc signo vinces!* Yes, you will conquer, but I again recommend it to

[1] The privilege of the Immaculate Conception had not yet been defined as an article of Faith.

you, and I cannot recommend it enough to you: Watch over yourselves, watch always, and always preserve that purity which you owe to her to whom you are consecrated, under the title of her Immaculate Conception. If the livery of the Christian, who marches under the standard of the Cross is a stainless robe, washed in the blood of the lamb, *Sanguine Agni quasi immaculati*, what should be the livery of the one who, not content to march under the standards of the Lamb without blemish, enrolls himself under the banner of the most pure Virgin, under the banner and the colors of the Immaculate Conception!

How I congratulate you, my dear children, upon your engagement in the Sodality of the Immaculate Conception! By this step, you have engaged yourselves to do more than the general run of Christian is obliged to do. How I bless, for you, the divine mercy, which has inspired you with such a thought! But, be faithful to your promises! No, without this vigilance, without this continual warfare, you will not be able to preserve the purity of your soul and body; no, it is not possible, especially at your age, in the times in which we live, to lead a really Christian life and to assure one's salvation. Every touch of the poisoned breath of the world, however light it may be, weakens purity. The smallest faults lead infallibly to greater ones. You have possibly had the experience. How many times, at least, have you not seen the thing exemplified in others! From this experience, make it a principle for your entire life, that, in religion, we never make our line of personal conduct easier and surer, except in proportion as we restrict and restrain it, whilst, on the other hand, the more we attempt to broaden it out, the greater risk we run in the matter of our salvation. Without noticing it, we enter upon this broad way, upon this way of death of which our divine Master speaks, that way that leads to eternal perdition. *Lata via est quae ducit ad mortem*.

Dear children, you, the well-beloved of my heart, be then faithful to your engagements, whatever it may cost. Be grateful to your God for the graces of predilection which He has accorded to you until this day. Each one of you, in seeing himself clothed in the livery of the Immaculate Conception, may say to himself: Assuredly, God loves me and protects me in a special manner, since He has put in my hands, a sign[1] which guarantees for me the love and protection of her, who has destroyed the power of hell, in crushing the head of Satan, of her, who, in her personal conduct, gives me the most touching example of the most amiable virtues. With what transports of love, with what holy joy ought you not always bear upon your person, this exterior sign of benediction! Must you not kiss with sentiments of the most tender affection this badge, which attached you to the most tender and the most amiable of mothers!

How much greater must be your love for your Sodality! Love it always and never cease cherishing it! Let it be for your heart, the object of the most tender love! Let it be for you, as your father's house, as the dwelling place of your family, of all that is dearest to you in this world. Yes, have your friends, bosom friends! All the sodalists are your friends, all are burning with sorrows, exhortation in your discouragements, counsels in your difficulties, prayers, help of all kinds in your necessities, in your needs. Yes, once more, love and

[1] The medal of the Immaculate Conception.

cherish the Sodality and this steady love will be for you, the source of the purest joys, the reason for the sweetest enjoyment. You may be weeping at times, but may these tears have sweetness and charm! You must have already learned this from personal experience. Yes, love the Sodality, always remain in its bosom, as in a place of security. Mary protects it, just as that tower which David caused to be built for the constant defense of the city of Jerusalem, or again, like this terrible army in battle array which resists all attacks, which triumphs over all enemies, by the firmness of its position, the strength of its arms, as may the Holy Scriptures.

My dear children, I have already spoken at length, but it is the pleasure of speaking to you that has led me on, that has guided my pen and inspired all I have written. In fact, I feel so much joy in writing to you, that I figure you will read with joy, however long it has been, this letter which the most tender and the best of fathers is addressing to you.

Nevertheless, it is time that I come to an end, but it will not be before having your good Mother speak to you. But what shall she say to you? What sweet words will not her maternal lips pronounce! "Oh my children," she says to you, "how I love you! You love me and my heart also loves you: *Ego diligentes me diligo*. Young men, and especially you, young children, come to me, come to Her who promises you her boundless affection. *Si quis est parvulus, veniat ad me!* Ah, those who come to me, from the morning of their life, those who seek me from their earliest infancy, ah, those are certain of finding me and of finding in me the most loving of mothers. *Qui mane vigilant ad me, invenient me*. Yes, they will find me, and in finding me, they will find the way that leads to life, because I am the way of salvation: *Ego sum via*, the gate of heaven, *Janus coeli*. Oh, give myself to you, I shall give you an unending happiness, a happiness that shall last as long as God himself."

I am now finishing, my dear children, the well-beloved of my heart, in embracing you all and each one of you in particular, with all the sentiments of love and affection that I bear for you, that I owe to you. May the Lord deign always to continue his blessings upon you and have you grow in his love and in that of Mary! Such is the wish that the most tender and the best of fathers expresses in your regard!

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382 – TO FATHER LARRIEU, DIRECTOR OF THE SEMINARY IN AUCH

Bordeaux, December 5, 1825

My dear son: I am very mindful of all the marks of confidence and affection which your letter gives me. I shall answer it to the best of my ability and I shall do it all the more willingly, because your sentiments are so much in conformity with mine. Yes, I assure you, and I repeat it, I am taking a very lively and active interest in these young men, who are the

object of your cares. Thus, there is little that I am not disposed to do to second your efforts and your labors in their regard. Make them for me, very wise, very pious and very fervent. . . .

The letter I am sending them contains many things, doubtless, which you have already told them several times, and in a far better way than I could ever have done, but, nevertheless, you thought that a letter from me would be useful and agreeable to them. That alone sufficed to have me make up my mind to write to them. However busy I am, nothing will prevent me from showing to these good children how much I love them and with what consolation I look upon them.

As regards yourself, my dear son, courage! Work with all your strength and without respite. Hasten to fill with good works the time you still have to pass on this earth: How short, after all, is this time! An eternity is to follow it and this eternity is to be its reward or its punishment. Ah! Let us work! As you know, my ambition is to enkindle the fire of divine love throughout France. The Lord has deigned to make choice of you to help me with your means and your forces in the part of the fatherland you inhabit. Well, then, work to enkindle this fire all around you, breathe upon it as you find it in the hearts of the young people that surround you. What a service you will be rendering them! In warming them with these heavenly flames, you will be saving them, these poor young people, whom the Lord has purchased with His blood, whom our Mother has acquired for herself, in sacrificing her own Son for them on the cross, the object of all her love and of all her affection. Yes, breathe upon this divine fire in season and out of season, following the expression of the Apostle, opportune, importune. Oh! How well your efforts will be repaid! How well your fatigue will be rewarded! For these efforts and these difficulties, Jesus and your good Mother will, one day, call you to eternal rest, in the home of eternal happiness. Oh! With what joy you will hear both addressing you these consoling words, "*Euge, serve bone et fidelis, intra in gaudium Domini tui!* In awaiting this loving invitation, work with constancy, with courage in forming for Jesus and Mary, servants worthy of them.

Please receive the very sincere assurance of the most affectionate sentiments of my heart, and believe me always in Jesus and in Mary conceived without sin, Father and dear Son, your very devoted servant and father.

* * * *

In the meantime, the affair of the legal recognition of the Society had happily ended and the Royal Ordinance had been signed on November 16.

From the time that Father Chaminade had news about it, he hurried to write about it to his representative in Paris. The letter is from the pen of Brother David, as can be easily noticed.

383 – TO MR. O'LOMBEL, PARIS

Bordeaux, December 6, 1825

My dear son: I have just received, with your letter of November 28, the Royal Ordinance, bearing the authorization of my schools. The time is now opportune, as it may never be, to thank you for all the assiduous cares you have given to this long enterprise. Your visits to Mr. de Courville and to Father de la Chapelle, about whom you speak to me in your letter of the fourth, have produced their effect. On the whole, all has turned out as the good God wanted and so, we must be satisfied, glorifying him without end, for desiring to make use of us for dispositions which are entirely in his hands.

The review of the articles of the Ordinance would, in my opinion, be out of place, for this Ordinance is law for us. We shall be able to judge of this only by its execution, and doubt not, unless some obstacle should arise, by reason of some oversight, that the same favor which has, so to speak, given us life, would accord us the means of maintaining this life. For this reason, I don't think I should go into the considerations that one of the articles of the Ordinance has suggested to you. It is the thing as a whole, that must be taken and then we could try to carry it out in detail.

Without delay, I am going to acknowledge reception of the official package in which this act, emanating from the king, was sent to me. I shall thank his Excellency, the Minister, for the definite protection he was kind enough to grant us for this good work.

His Excellency seems to desire, according to the letter of advice, that I should shortly give him information regarding the definite establishment of the Society, but this definite establishment can take place only conformably and in consideration of the Statutes. Now, the Statutes, modified and definitely accepted, did not accompany the sending of the Royal Ordinance, and so, here I am again forced to delay all further action. Well, the affairs of this world hardly proceed otherwise. See if you couldn't, by a visit to the forwarding bureau, hasten the sending of the Statutes, as determined by the advice of the Council of State, for all this is, at the same time, the basis and the completion of the Ordinance.

Under the same cover, where were both your letter of the twenty-eighth of November and the Royal Ordinance, I found a notice in which all is not well. You tell me you communicated it to the Count of Chabrel, prefect of the Seine, upon the recommendation of Mrs. De Milanges, his sister-in-law.[1] The intention was good and, after all, I would not want to blame you, but this notice contains two things, which neither you nor I could consider true, and which we consider to be but an error of the moment. It would be in vain

[1] It is rather his cousin, as Mr. O'Lombel writes in his letter of December ninth. There is question of a Notice of the Society of Mary, edited by Mr. O'Lombel, in view of having the Society of Mary known to the Count of Chabrel to the archbishop of Paris, to the king himself, and thus to have its manuscript pages in which the work of the Society of Mary is exalted in enthusiastic terms, and with more zeal than discretion.

for us to want to ignore them, for we are in the case of being disavowed, either openly or in a way unknown to us. I am going to inform you about the two things and you will try to repair the mistake as best you can.

The first mistake comes from the report you give about us to Mr. Lafon.[1] This gentleman has surely been in our exterior Sodalities, and has given proof of merit at the time, and we have but praises to give him on this subject. However, he was very far from us, when the plan of the schools was conceived, meditated upon and produced. He is as nothing in this affair. Furthermore, he was looking after works of his own, and that, elsewhere than among us, so that in these we can have no share of any kind. Finally, for us to put to advantageous use this influence of his, to which we had no claim, it would have been necessary for us to notify him in advance, and that the thing be suitable to us, as well as agreeable to him. These three conditions are lacking, and they must be lacking, because they are beside the truth. It means, wanting to live by borrowing, and even by a simple appearance of doing so. Let us be before men what we are before God, poor in funds. I grant it, but let us not attempt to cover ourselves with the spoils of others.

The second mistake is in the comparison you make between us and respectable men in society, who have given proof of their ability, and to whom great things are due, because of their having acted wisely.[2] I admire them, yes, for all the good they have, so to say, lavished upon the earth, but if I allow myself to be compared to them, I lie in what has reference to the past, and I am promising much more than I am able to do as regards the future.

All these, my dear son, are but words that one might classify as ambitions, words aspiring to glory, aspiring to merit, vanity of vanities, temptations from which we must rid ourselves and against which we must especially defend ourselves.

I should like it to be said to the Count de Chabrel, that there is an error in these two regards, that I disavow them, that we are but a charitable Society, one little known, that occupies itself with primary instruction and which finds itself just recently authorized by His Majesty. Let us do only what we are.

You must have some idea of how far I am from blaming you in these two circumstances, but the blame would fall to me before God, if I said to you, and if I had you believe, that there is justice or truth in these two outlines of your Notice (. . .)

The Marchioness de Rendty has the answer to the letter with which she honored me. Her protégé, Mr. Welten[3] may come to his assigned place without delay.

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[1] He was a former Prefect of the Sodality. There was question of him in several of the preceding letters.
[2] The priests of the Society of Jesus.
[3] There is question of a postulant to the Society.

Mr. Henry Roger, the protégé of Mrs. Prevast and Mr. Lemerle, has doubtless badly explained his request, because I had understood that he could pay neither for his maintenance nor for his clothes. Today, your letter represents him to me as blessed with an income of 600 francs. If there is question only of the education of this young man, I shall be very careful not to refuse it to him, for these are funds that come to us from Jesus Christ and which we owe to all. . . .

The archbishop of Paris may be in the condition of saying that he does not sufficiently know the Society of Mary to grant it favors, but it is well, in the meantime, that I have the favorable opportunity of recommending it to his piety and benevolence, that he has heard it spoken of. It could even be that persons accredited to the household of this worthy prelate, would be willing to occupy themselves with the matter. I am to make the official request for an authorization, only whom it will be useful to do so, when an establishment is once an accomplished fact or when once appears desired.

This is, I believe, the entire purpose of your past letters. The detail is long, at least in my answer, but I wanted to have myself up to date, as we say, and I believe I have reached that point right now.

As regards my very fatherly sentiments towards you, my dear son, they neither have nor can have an end. Contracted in Jesus and Mary they will be obvious to me and will last in this world, as in the next. God will bless them. I am asking of him the grace to do so.

P. S. My sister thanks you for your kind regards. She asks me to present hers to you and to thank you most obligingly for the picture of the Duke of Bordeaux that you had the kindness to send her.

* * * *

As an answer to this letter, Mr. O'Lombel promised to make reparations for his excess of zeal.

He has just made the acquaintance of a former disciple of Father Chaminade, Brother Eloi, then Assistant to the Superior-General of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. "I procured for myself," he wrote on December 9th, "the satisfaction of seeing Brother Eloi. This highly respectable religious, who has rendered and still renders every day such great services to religion and to society, loves you as a son. He recognizes you as his father and takes a lot of pleasure in letting everybody know of it. All his religious are witnesses of it, because he experiences a great satisfaction in telling them of the fact. Furthermore, thanks to him, all know and love you. It seemed to me that he had been for a long time, deprived of the happiness of receiving news from you and it is this fact that seemed to increase that of hearing what I had to tell him about you. He is calling you to Paris with all the strength of his wishes, and far from fearing, as some people do, and what I have never feared, that your two societies will counteract each other, should they happen

to come into contact, I am not only persuaded but entirely convinced that they would be only too glad to help one another, and that their mutual agreement would only increase their success and their power for good. What you write to me about him, and especially what you could write to him directly, would make him experience a very great satisfaction, for he certainly has the finest sentiments in your regard."[1]

The following letter, addressed to a religious tempted against his vocation, offers great interest. We have the sketch of it, written by the hand of Brother David, on which Father Chaminade himself added: Remitted on December 19th. The addressee seems to have been Brother Dominic Weissemburger, to whom the Founder had given, several weeks earlier, the disquieting obedience referred to in Letter 379. The religious gave in to the reasons exposed with so much faith and emotion by his venerated Father, but he later left the Society at the time of the troubles that followed the Revolution of 1830.

384 – TO A RELIGIOUS OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Bordeaux, December 18, 1825

My dear son: I have very carefully read your letter dated today. It showed me that you are under the influence of a great temptation. You will not get out of this state with profit, except with the help of divine grace, but you cannot flatter yourself that this grace will come to you, if you do not ask for it from the bottom of your heart, and if you are not in a disposition to receive it. When the Apostles were awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit, they were constant in prayer and so, the first counsel that my paternal affection suggests to me in your regard is that you get down to serious prayer. In the effusion of my heart, I shall join my prayers to yours, and I have also asked others of our group to join us in the same intention.

After having shown you the way God has shown it to me, and that, in the simplest manner, I owe you, as your spiritual Father, counsels and consolations. But where will all this lead to if God has no part in it? I have the duty of telling you. In your case, there is no question of an indifferent matter, for it is inevitable that your final resolution, considering the circumstances in which you find yourself, will be of the greatest weight in the matter of

[1] Louis Arnaud Lafargue, in religion Brother Eloi (1777-1847) a native of Bordeaux and disciple of Father Chaminade from the time of the worst days of the Terror, had been charged by him at his departure for Spain, to keep on trying to have his name erased from the list of emigrants. After the Revolution, he was one of the first members of the Sodality and when, on February 3, 1801, he became its first prefect, in response to the honor that had just fallen to his lot, he responded with the ejaculatory prayer: The most just, the most high and the most amiable will of God be done, praised and eternally exalted in all things, thus inaugurating a tradition which, from the Sodality, has passed into the Society of Mary. At the end of a retreat made at St. Laurent under the direction of Father Chaminade, he decided to consecrate his life to the Christian education of youth and in 1806, he took the habit of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. After having successively directed the houses of his Institute in Bordeaux, Auch, and Montpellier, in 1816, he was named Assistant to the Superior-General and died in Paris, leaving the reputation of a saintly religious.

your salvation or eternal loss. Think of this before your crucifix, and ask of God not to permit you to go astray.

I entreat you, my dear son, to reread what I have just written and to carry it out to the letter. Begin by praying for a suitable time, several times each day, with the sole intention of following the voice of God, so that when the moment for a calm and conscientious resolution will have come, humble yourself before Jesus Christ crucified and, from your heart, ask Him to tell you what you are to do.

What I have just said, being well according to your intention to do or being already done at least in part, it will be useful to you to keep handy the counsels you ask of me, and which I am only too glad to give you.

These counsels, asked for in your letter, refer to three distinct points: First, am I able to commute your vows and will I do it? Secondly, have your vows been indiscreet and lightly made? Thirdly, supposing new points of view and a greater perfection, would these authorize you to put aside your vows?

After having explained myself on these three points which are only matters of counsel, I shall come to the consolations of which I see, my dear son, you have by far the greatest need. If you came to me, I would give them to you verbally, with an entirely paternal effusion. In a letter, however, I can give you hardly more than the principles underlying them, but, even at that, they will proceed from the heart. And now, to the counsels you ask for.

First, have I the power to commute your vows and would I consent to do so? I sincerely believe, my dear son, that it is beyond my power to annul agreements conscientiously made by a man with God. This is a truth that it suffices merely to mention, and that has no need of proof. I am not above God. If I am unable to annul them for both parties in the contract, I am just as unable to do it for each of them separately. To one condition, I must not substitute a different one. . . . the agreement made with God is irrevocable.

Have there been examples of commutation? It is true there have been such, but the cases are very rare, and perhaps the only valid commutations were those in which some physical impediment made the observance of the vows impossible. Thus religious expelled from their cells and dispersed by persecution have commuted their vows, in all that concerned the stability, that had become impossible for them and in what depended upon the imprisoned or massacred superiors, and in the place of whom others could not be elected. It is also possible, for the good of the Church, that the vows of a holy person are commuted, should he be called to the episcopate. Even at that, many religious, having become Princes of the Church, have kept to the observance of the rules of their Order. At least, in many cases, that was the safest line of conduct to follow.

God is not to be mocked: *Deus non irreditur*. We do not say yes and no to him. We do not change at will, the first of these words for the second. I am congratulating myself, my dear son, that I don't have to ask myself whether I want to make such a commutation, for I am dead as regards this request. It is evident that I cannot authorize whoever it may be to lie to God. He who, in his heart would have already lied to Him, would attract all my compassion. I would shed tears to obtain that he be pardoned, and he would be pardoned only on conditions that he be contrite and have the firm purpose of not sinning again.

My dear son, hold on to these counsels all your life, either to apply them to yourself or in case you have occasion to speak about them to someone else. May the fear of God be ever with us.

Secondly, do your vows seem to have been indiscreet or lightly made? The age at which you were at the time, my dear son, and the circumstances in which you were asked to make them make me think that on your part, they were maturely and freely made. The maturity of your judgment had reached such a degree and was so well known that you still tell us today that we had confided the direction of class to you, as well as the supervision of the house. Where would maturity be found, if it isn't in those in whom such a double and high confidence is placed?

You say you were following, at the same time, your course of studies in the class to which you were called. There is nothing unusual about this, as the ecclesiastics follow their courses at the same time as they are supervisors or assistant teachers in less advanced classes.

The death of your mother which you accepted with deeply religious sentiments, the family affairs which you have relegated by procuration to your father without too much worry, all these are things quite insignificant alongside of your vows, and had these circumstances been in your mind at the time of your profession, even that would not be a cause of weakening the validity of so serious an engagement, and one maturely and freely asked for by yourself.

I believe I see in your observations, the spirit of nature and possibly still more, that it is leading you to mistake pretexts for reasons. The spirit of God brought back to you by prayer will make you see the thing otherwise. I am placing my confidence in the prayers I counseled you to say. You are, as I have said, in a state of temptation and if you do not ask God to take you out of it, you will simply stay where you are.

Thirdly: New points of view and even views of greater perfection, do such authorize you to want to be released from your vows? What greater perfection do you have in mind? According to you, it means making greater progress in your studies and of finally becoming a priest. I have no idea as to what degree these desires are a settled matter with you, but if they are a settled matter, you could attain their double object without disregarding the

vows. Breaking vows is an apostasy.[1] Apostatizing is a strange way of starting to devote oneself to holy studies and to the sacerdotal state established by Jesus Christ. God forbid that I should give you such a counsel or that I should facilitate the way for you!

You must see into it, my dear son, the temptation under which you are laboring is opening a chasm before you. I who am your father, I call out to you with all my strength: hold back, beware of going that far! Having fallen into such an abyss, one no longer gets out of it. Pray, my dear son, pray and watch, for that is your only anchor of salvation. Address yourself to our eminent protectress, the Blessed Virgin, pray to her with all the fervor of your heart. You will not be the first one she has saved from shipwreck. Ask her to intercede for you, that her divine Son grant you the strength to do but his holy will. With all my heart, I shall join in this prayer.

In the meantime, I promised you some consolations and I certainly owe them to you because God has confided you to me, not that I should leave you in sorrow and desolation, but to be, as much as it lies in my power to be, your support, your guide, and your friend.

Come to my arms, tell me in the midst of your tears, all your afflictions. I shall tell you whence they arise and what will be their remedy.

How has it happened that this Institute, which you have desired and embraced, has become for you so heavy a burden? The idea of our engagements pursues you, the Rules importune you, you see nothing but difficulties and troubles that disgust you, all changes displease you. See, at least, the confidence I am placing in your letter. Oh my son, must I tell you with the author of *The Imitation of Jesus Christ*, that all this agitation is within you? Would you change yourself in changing your place of residence? Would it be leaving behind any one of the things that bother you? Would you not simply find others, perhaps even more cruel, without counting in the remorse over those you would want to fly from? Is it not the very nature of man and that of the affairs of the present life, that subject us to such perplexities? Do we fly from them just by wanting to do so? Is there a place where our heart can find peace?

Yes, my dear son, there exists a condition of peace, a place where it can be found. It is in loving God with all one's soul, and in loving him alone. Temptation has come to trouble you, arm yourself with faith, resist strongly, ask for the love of God, knock and pray and you shall receive. God is for a strong defense, but we must want to be defended! Your salvation and your peace are in his hands. Ask for them. The illusions of the world have seduced us, let us forget them. When one possesses God, one possesses all, while in possessing everything without God, one possesses nothing but trouble, bitterness, remorse and despair.

[1] This is what is affirmed by the Code of Canon Law, C. 664.

My dear son, choose the best part. Have faith in promises, for God awaits but that in order to give us peace of soul. I am asking him for all the blessings you need, all the helps, all his love. May Jesus and Mary be with you!

* * * *

Nevertheless, the sending of the Statutes approved by the Royal Ordinance of November 16th was still delayed and, at the beginning of January 1826, Father Chaminade had not yet received them. He wrote about the matter to Mr. O'Lombel, who answered him as follows:

"The letter, dated the 10th of the current month, that I had the honor of receiving from you, tells me that the Statutes of your Society invested with the royal approval, have not yet been received. Immediately I went to the Ministry and there I got the assurance that, finally, on the 7th, they have been sent on to you. Since clerks have been made more numerous, bureaucratic procedures have become complicated and the expedition of the least important affairs, results in the delays about which you complain. I know this delay was not the effect of bad will, but rather of the extremely slow move of business in the various offices. The biggest nuisance that exists is that the same men who were employed under Bonaparte are still on the job for the king, whom they detest and for a religion which they abhor."

The letter continued to give interesting details about the political situation, which was becoming disquieting to the eyes of more than one observer. We shall cite the following passage which characterizes two of the personages mentioned so often in the preceding correspondence.

"The scandalous, or rather, the seditious subscription for General Foy, having given me the idea of proposing one of a religious and royalist character, I talked about it to Father de la Chapelle. There was question of making an appeal to all good Frenchmen, to subscribe to the erection of a church consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to be erected on the spot where the Duke de Berry was assassinated. The building, by popular subscription, of such a monument would bring together several advantages, besides that of fulfilling the wish of the martyr King and finally expiating, in a public manner, the crimes of the Revolution. Father de la Chapelle told me that the time was not opportune. A subscription that would tend to separate the good from the bad must not even be suggested, on the policy that all must be avoided that would put the opposition between the one group and the other. The important thing is to stand firm, to give in to nothing that would mean the sacrificing of principles." (January 20, 1826)

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ORDINANCE OF THE KING

Charles, by the grace of God, King of France and of Navarre

To all those who will see these presents, Greetings!

On the report of our Minister Secretary of State to the Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction:

In view of the statutes of a charitable association destined to serve the primary schools of the Communes to which its members would be called to this effect by the competent authorities;

In view of the Ordinance of February 29, 1816, and of April 8, 1824, which regulate what concerns primary instruction in the entire Kingdom;

In view of the law of March 10, 1806;

In view of the approbation given by the Royal Council of Public Instruction to the Statutes of the said association;

Our Council of State consenting;

We have ordered and order what follows:

Article 1. The Society established in Bordeaux, Department of the Gironde, by the gentleman Chaminade and designated under the name of Society of Mary, is authorized under the terms of Article 36 of the Ordinance of February 29, 1816, as a charitable association in favor of primary instruction.

It will conform itself to the Laws and Regulations, relative to public instruction, especially in what concerns the obligation of obtaining from the local Bishop the special authorization to function, and form the Rector of the Academy, the certificate of legal capacity.

Article 2. The Royal Council of public instruction, in conforming itself to the Laws and Regulations of the public administration, will be permitted to receive legacies and donations made in favor of the said association and of its schools, on the condition of having either the association as a whole or each one of its schools in particular, reap the benefit, conformably to the intentions of the testators of donors.

Article 3. The certificate of legal capacity will be given to each Brother of the Society of Mary upon sight of the particular Letter of obedience, which he will have received from the Superior-General of the said Society.

Article 4. Our Minister Secretary of State to the Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction is charged with the carrying out of the present Ordinance.

Given in our Castle of the Tuileries, the 16th day of the month of November in the year of grace 1825 and of our reign, the second.

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As first result of the legal recognition of the Society, Father Chaminade prepared to form the Council of the General Administration, in conformity with Articles 12 and the following, of the Statutes.

385 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 9, 1826

My dear son: It would seem to me that there would not be great inconvenience in naming as assistant, Brother Daguzan. The biggest one I see, would be the fact of deriving so few advantages from his assistance. On the other hand, I presume that his family would be very glad about it and that, in his appointment, a certain measure of justice would be seen. He is a child of Bordeaux, having been the third to enter[1] at a time when the most vexing news about religion were circulating. If you are of the same opinion, then, draw up the first list that I must consult for the nomination of the Three Assistants: Father Lalanne,

[1] Brother Bruno Daguzan (1780-1831), born in Bordeaux of an honorable bourgeois family, joined the Sodality of the Madeleine in 1815, placed himself under the direction of Father Chaminade, and formed part of the State of the Sodalists, living as a religious in the world.

He was one of the first to whom Father Chaminade made known his views about the Institute, and without hesitating, he declared himself ready to cooperate. He took part in the retreat of October 2, 1817, as a result of which the five first ones called, decided upon the foundation of the Society, and with them, on December 11, 1817, he pronounced the private vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. During the Lent of 1818, when the most disquieting reports about religion were making the rounds, he courageously left his family to go to the little house of the Impasse Segur, where Mr. Auguste and Mr. Clouzet had preceded him. It is to this detail of his life that Father Chaminade is alluding in this letter. Finally on September 5, 1818, at the end of the St. Laurent retreat, he pronounced his perpetual vows in the hands of Father Chaminade.

At the time when the little Society, having moved from the Impasse Segur to the house on Menuts Street, had there opened its first house of education, Brother Daguzan was named Head of Work. Provider linen-man, infirmarian, sacristan, reglementaire, he took care of all these functions, besides having charge of the assistant Brothers engaged in manual labor, in the three houses of the Institute: the Madeleine, St. Laurent, and the house on Menuts Street.

It is in these humble occupations that Brother Daguzan sanctified himself. He was a man with an excellent education, a profoundly humble religious, simple soul, honest and strong; he fulfilled his daily tasks with a great charity and complete devotedness. He died at St. Laurent of a lingering disease, on November 5, 1831.

Brother Auguste, and Brother Daguzan, and also for the nomination of the Secretary-General, Brother David Monier.

By a second list, on the same day, you would have me name as honorary Counselors Father Collineau, Father Rothéa, Louis Rothéa the older, Dominic Clouzet, Laugeay and Caillet. I don't think there is any difficulty in the nomination of Father Caillet as honorary Counselor, and we'll have ample time to resolve the great question definitively.[1] You must be aware of the urgency there is of going forward. If Brother Auguste has not procured for you the registers you need, as he promised me he would last Friday evening, have the kindness to look after this matter tomorrow.

Let us take courage! The Lord and his august Mother will be with us. Although the Royal Ordinance is a rather meager affair, and that, up to a certain point, we are dependent on the Government and even on the University, I cannot look upon it as disadvantageous. On the contrary, I like to consider it as a favor God grants to religion in our unhappy country. It is up to us to know how to conduct ourselves according to His views. Furthermore, the Statutes, however modified they may be, put no obstacle to whatever else we might ask for, be it in the civil or in the ecclesiastical order. I paid constant attention to this point, from the time there was question of approbation.

I am writing at greater length than I had intended and than I thought I had time for, but it seems my courage increases as I go on. *Omnia ad majoren Dei Gloriam Virginis que Deiparae*. I am wishing you good night.

Monday evening, January 9, 1826.

I answered Mr. de Saget. I have also written to the Mayor.

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386 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 10, 1826

My dear son: I have just received the messages of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs. I am opening the package. It doesn't seem doubtful to me that the sender has made a mistake and that, instead of his copy, he has sent mine. What is to be done? Speak of this mistake in a letter of thanks to his Excellency that I owe him? Or, send this copy to Mr. O'Lombel, so that he may go the Offices to make the exchange?

[1] The question of knowing if the Statutes permitted, in view of his Swiss nationality, his being named Assistant. On this point, Father Chaminade awaited the opinion of Mr. de Saget.

I had said, in several letters of correspondence, that as soon as I received the Ordinance of the king confirming the Society of Mary, I would order in all of our communities, prayers for the King and for his worthy Minister, Bishop d'Hermopolis. I have also said that, at the top of the principal register of the Society, there should be mention of Father de la Chapelle, as having put great interest in the negotiations relative to this affair. We can have no doubt, but that he worked at it with great zeal. Should I not write him a letter of thanks? Would it not be well to join to the letter an extract from the register, in which there would be mention of him?

It now comes to my mind that it would be well to write up a historical account of all the changes that the Statutes have undergone, be it at the hands of the Ministry, of the Royal Council of Public Instruction or of the Council of State, of the principal difficulties that we met with, of the answers given, etc. Father Caillet could make a report, in which all would be related in due form, and it is on the basis of this memorandum that you would write up the historical account. All could be done rapidly enough, as I have all the active and passive correspondence, a copy of the different editions, etc. . . .

The letters of thanks to Bishop d'Hermopolis and to Father de la Chapelle seem to me rather urgent. Write them, if you please, so that I shall have only to sign them or have them copied and signed. I shall also express my thanks to the two secretaries who have best served us, Messers. Receveur and Trebuquet.

Tomorrow at noon I shall have an audience with the mayor. Send me the Ordinance we once sent to the archbishop's palace, in case the mayor would like to see it. The one that was sent to me directly is still with Mr. de Saget. I have a kind of wish to be invited to dinner in the archbishop's palace, in order to have a chance of talking at leisure as much with Father Barres as with the archbishop. From the mayor's office, I would go to the palace.

Nothing having been received from you, contrary to what I wrote to you last evening, I think you are of the same opinion as I and that, in consequence, you may as well get to work as agreed upon. I think it would be suitable to name Father Romain, honorary Counselor. He is treated honorably at the archbishop's palace and has just received marks of great confidence. He is, furthermore, one of our most fervent religious. Pax Christi!

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On January 15, 1826, Father Chaminade formed his Council, in naming Father Collineau, First Assistant; Father Lalanne, Second Assistant; Brother Auguste, Third Assistant. Brother David Monier remained Secretary General.

Let us recall, in passing, that at the time of the foundation of the Society, the following had been named to the various offices provisionally: Brother Auguste, Superior of

the Little Society; Father Laugeay, Head of Work (Council of December 8, 1818), and to complete the list, Brother Louis Rothéa, as Procurator of the Society, (September 2, 1819).

On January 16th, the new council met and adopted the following motions, which we reproduce for your information.

The Superior General, with the advice and in the presence of his assembled council, has decided and declared as follows:

1. On the 16th day of the month of November of each year, and as long as the Society of Mary will exist, there will be a votive Mass celebrated in each of the houses of the Society.

2. After the first Gospel of this Mass, the celebrant will read in a loud voice the following provision, taken from Article 2 of the Statutes of the Society:

   The essential purpose of the labors of the Society is to spread and to preserve in childhood and youth, the principles of the Catholic faith, of evangelical morality and of a sincere attachment to the monarchy.

3. After the holy Mass, the choir will sing the psalm Exaudiat and the celebrant will say the prayer for the king.

4. The order for the day on November 16th, in each one of the houses of the Society, will make mention of the obligations herein mentioned, and it will be said, “that the solemnity of the day and the prayers ordered are in commemoration of the public institution of the Society, which is due to the goodness and wisdom of His Majesty Charles X our King, to which he has given letters patent, dated November 16, 1825.”

The Superior General proposed that, in beginning the list of the founders and benefactors of the Society of Mary who will be recommended to the prayers of the members, the first place be given to the name of Bishop d’Hermopolis, Minister and Secretary of State of the Department of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction, who, having brought the Institution of Mary to the knowledge of the king, and having had its vows and labors accepted, really procured for it its real foundation.

The Council, with a unanimous voice, has adopted the proposition that, in consequence, Bishop d’Hermopolis be inscribed as first on the list of the founders, and of those recommended to community prayers.

The Superior General has said that he reserved to himself the designation of a particular list of benefactors of the Society, other than those whose names are to be expressly inscribed on the register of the Council, but that it is a matter of plain justice to name and to have inscribed on the said register, Father de la Chapelle, director of Ecclesiastical Affairs in Paris. He further says that the Society is to congratulate itself for

having met in this worthy ecclesiastic, all the benevolence of a protector, and ardent and enlightened zeal, an efficacious cooperation in the obtaining of the royal institution.

The council has adopted unanimously the expression of gratitude meant for Father de la Chapelle.

* * * *

Man proposes and God disposes. . . . The decisions of the Council did not remain in force a long time. Hardly four years had passed, and already the Revolution had overthrown the throne of the Bourbons.

And seventy years later, another government tore the ordinance that had recognized the Society and dispersed its members. But, "in each one of the houses of the Society, as long as the Society of Mary will exist," King Charles X, Bishop Frayssinous and Father de la Chapelle will be reaping the benefits of the prayers assured to the benefactors of the Society.

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NEW GROWTHS OF THE INSTITUTE

February 1826 – October 1829

The legal recognition was, for the Society, the starting point of new developments. At the moment to which we have come, Father Mertian made new propositions to Father Chaminade, in view of the union of his Congregation of Brothers with the Society of Mary, and the latter gives Brother Rothéa a liberal procuration to this effect, as is shown in the following letter the writing of which is the work of Brother David.

387 – TO FATHER MERTIAN, RIBEAUVILLE

Bordeaux, February 9, 1826

My very honorable confrère: Brother Louis Rothéa has made known to me the great kindness with which you had him come to your home, and the various proposals you made to him, as regards the subject of common interest to us. I think I ought to tell you that these proposals are agreeable to me, and that I shall not hesitate to take over the continuation of your schools in Alsace, at least as far as the boys are concerned.

My schools, engaged in about the same work as you had undertaken, were already in Colmar, and I was led to believe that from this city, they would spread farther. Yet, a sort of painful feeling would come over me, when I thought that your children and mine might find themselves inclined to a sort of rivalry, which, of course, sometimes has its

advantages for purposes of emulation, but which does not easily facilitate and does not always favor the maintenance of the love of Christian charity, which your ministry and mine have as our most essential object. The idea of merging our two schools into one is, I believe, an inspiration from God. It has come through you, my honorable confrère, and you are in this, the angel of Providence.

I do not doubt that you will want to continue your office, in accepting to be, as much as will depend on you, my collaborator in this part of France, which is better known to you than it is to me. In any case, you will be my counselor and guide, for it would be impossible for me to manage things from this distance, if I were not counting on the very ones whose direction I have, to be my principal helpers. In the final analysis, both for you and for me, this is a work of God, and done with the eye to God. Our faith assures us that our intentions have force only in him who has suggested them, and who will deign to maintain them for his greater glory and his holy service.

I am giving Brother Louis Rothéa my procuration, with instructions to guide him in its use. In these, you will get an idea of the spirit that directs me. If something, you think, is lacking, let me know. If something might be superfluous, simply don't make use of it, just so we keep on advancing toward the end we have in view, and this is to restore Christian morals among the masses of the people, by devoting ourselves to the early inculcation of the rules of our holy religion.

You must notice what great need I have of prayer, because of the size of my job. I am recommending myself very specially to yours. Make a mention of me in your holy Masses, so that God may deign to sustain me!

Please accept, my worthy and honored confrère, the assurance of my very respectful attachment.

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On the same date, is to be placed a very interesting letter, addressed by Father Chaminade to Father Noailles, in answer to the latter's letter of consultation.

Father Pierre-Bienvenu Noailles (1793-1861), whose cause for beatification is now in its first steps, was born in Bordeaux when the terror was at its worst. After a youthful period of many ups and downs, he had given himself entirely to God and had been ordained priest in Paris in 1819. Having returned to Bordeaux, he was attached to the parish of Saint Eulalie as assistant pastor, where he himself was known by his spirit of zeal, poverty, and mortification. From this time, he was in intimate relations with Father Chaminade. In 1820, he was invited to cooperate in the labors of the Sodality. In 1823, he took part in the retreat of the Society at St. Laurent, etc.

In 1820, Father Noailles had founded the Sisters of Loretto and in 1823, the Society of the Poor Priests. In 1826, he began to have doubts about himself and his work, and confided his anguish of soul to Father Chaminade, in a long letter, of which here are the principal passages.

Compelled by force of circumstances to isolate myself from the priests that are associated with me, deprived of their knowledge and example, burdened with two tasks that would require great virtue and much experience, it often happens to me to be disheartened under the weight of my occupations, and still more under that of the responsibility which goes along with them. I would be carrying this cross without discouragement, if I thought that it was imposed upon me by him who strengthens the weak and who sometimes makes use of the weakest instruments to bring about the greatest good. But I fear I have gone contrary to the will of God, in accepting a burden that I don't have the strength to carry, and so, I would want that my dear collaborators find a Superior more worthy and more capable of seconding their zeal. Besides that, I sigh after the rest and the happy security that one finds in the ways of obedience.

Would it be a temptation, or rather would it be an inspiration that I owe to the Blessed Virgin? But every time that I fall back into these troubles, my mind and heart go towards the Institute of Mary, as to the only one that can adequately meet the needs of my soul, with the ideas that I have had for the glory of God, and with the indissoluble links that bind me to the works that I have already begun. This tendency seems to have been strengthened, especially since you have given me reason to hope, that we might be able to labor under the same banner, while at the same time, remaining faithful to the vocation that is proper to us. . . .

Here is the work of the Poor Priests. They have as an end, to imitate, as closely as possible, the poor and mortified life of the Apostles, whilst devoting themselves to all kinds of good works, such as missions, retreats, sodalities, the direction of souls, of religious, etc. Their Rules forbid that they take on any works of education, such as collèges, seminaries, etc. They consider themselves as a corps of helpers to the bishops, although subject to a regular Superior. They may not accept any dignity, nor any work for which there is any regular salary or which obliges them to any particular residence. They possess nothing, either as individuals nor as a body and do not own even the houses they live in. With the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, they receive no compensation on the occasion of the functions they perform or exercise, and, not only do they place themselves sincerely in the hands of Providence for everything, but it enters into their spirit to give the example of this disinterestedness and to set aside from their Society, all that might in the least suggest that they rely on any other basis than Providence for the very necessities of life.

Now, if they aggregated themselves to the Institute of Mary, would they be united to this institute? Would they have a novitiate apart? Would they still keep their Rules and their name? And in case they would change some of these, to take on that of the Institute, would

they not be confounded with the priests who would be directing the Houses of the Society and particularly the collèges, thus destroying wholly or in part, the effect which the example of their isolation, poverty, and disinterestedness is to produce on the people? If the alms they receive as stipends for Masses were not sufficient for their subsistence, would not the easy circumstances judged to exist in the houses of their Institute, close to them the channel of charity, on the part of the faithful or the bishops? And if, to make up for this, the Institute came to their assistance, whatever might be the manner, would they not, as a result, get into the ordinary way of life of every religious, and would not this help destroy in them the spirit that is proper to them, that is to say, this blind confidence and complete abandon into the hands of divine Providence? . . .

As regards the Sisters of Loretto, they devote themselves more particularly to the welfare of poor girls, who are exposed in the world, through lack of a place to stay or of the means of subsistence. They organize groups in the world to take care of the young girls who live with them, and these groups second the designs of Providence in facilitating the vocation of subjects destined to increase the number of Sisters.

Now, how could the Sisters of Loretto aggregate themselves to the Institute of Mary, the Daughters of Mary, being cloistered and having different Rules? Would they have a separate novitiate? Would they be governed as they are today, by superiors chosen from among themselves? Would their belongings be mixed with those of the Institute, and if there were the possibility of disposing of these for the benefit of the other houses of the Institute of Mary, would these come to the help of the Loretto house in an equal degree? Would they have the same right to all the spiritual helps, be it for their soul's perfection, for the conduct of their souls, or for the extension and perfection of their works?

You feel, Reverend Father, that the majority of the persons of whom there is question, either priests or religious sisters, having assumed the obligation of remaining in the way of life they have chosen, I could not propose to them the renouncement of their wishes. I desire nothing else than the will of God, and if I am consulting you in this regard, it is because I am persuaded that you yourself desire nothing else than the accomplishment of this holy will. Be then kind enough to examine these requests in the presence of our divine Master and of his holy Mother, and, not having the time to recopy this letter, I would ask you to be kind enough to keep it, so that I may submit it, with your answer, to the persons with whom God has put me into relations, and with whom I have decided to face whatever testing he will have in store for me. I shall not cease to ask the Lord to pour down upon you his light and blessings, so that we may always walk in the way He has traced out for us, even if this way be not the same for both of us. He knows the purity of our intentions and it is in the hope that he will deign to make clear for all time, what he asks of us all, that I have the honor of being, etc. . . .

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Father Chaminade answered by the following letter, in which he put in relief some of the characteristic traits of the Society of Mary.

388 – TO FATHER NOAILLES, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, February 15, 1826

My dear son: I have received your long, interesting, but undated letter. Due to my weakness[1] I shall not answer it myself, but I hope that the hand I shall make use of, will not be displeasing to you. It is that of Father Caillet. I hope for all, through the assistance of the Holy Spirit and from the protection of the most Holy Virgin.

Although I find myself without strength, since there is a question of the glory of Mary, I am going to give an answer to the two important matters contained in your letter.

Might the religious, called the Sisters of Loretto, be united to the Institute of Mary, in a general way, and depend absolutely, without giving up anything, neither their spirit nor their works, while at the same time, keeping their Constitutions and even their habit? The Order of Priests, which you modestly call poor, and of which you are the Superior, might it be incorporated in the Society of Mary, becoming an integral part of it, without losing anything of the apostolic spirit which animates its members, and with which they always want to be animated? Might they, without any alteration in the constitutions of the Society of Mary, continue to apply themselves to the preaching of the Word of God and to the practice of mental prayer, in real poverty and an absolute renunciation of every type of ownership? I have not had your letter reread to me, nevertheless, I think I have thoroughly grasped the subject matter, as well as the difficulties, contained in the two questions, that I have just had you ask me. I am going to answer the one and the other. If in my answers, you do not find the solution of all the difficulties that you place before me, I permit you to come back to me with still greater insistence, but I do hope this will not be necessary.

First answer, relative to the union of the religious Sisters, called Sisters of Loretto, to the Institute of Mary.

The Sisters of Loretto can, in a general way, be united to the Institute of Mary and depend upon it in three ways, while preserving their actual existence, just as it is, or such as you have formerly thought of it, and, by this, I mean to say, without accessory works, which would hamper their principal work, change their spirit, retard the progress that the Sisters should make in the virtues of their state, diminish the edification and the interest of the public at large, and thus preventing the development of the main work for which they were founded.

I have said that they can be united in three ways. The first would be a union with the Daughters of Mary, not by fusion but by incorporation. The second, a union with the Misericorde, not necessarily by fusion or incorporation properly so called, but only by a

[1] Father Chaminade had to remain in bed several days on account of a severe cold.

simple alliance of similarity of regime and government. The third would be a dependence, pure and simple, upon the Superior of the Society of Mary and upon his Councils.

I shall not explain the first two manners, because I much prefer the third, as it is simpler and seems to me more in conformity with the views of Providence. By this third method, the Sisters of Loretto would be to the Society of Mary what the Misericorde is to it, and they would enjoy, at the same time, all the favors and all the interest that a truly fraternal charity would inspire, be it toward the Daughters of Mary, to the staff of the Misericorde, or to all the members of the Society of Mary. In speaking of the Misericorde, I said, to the staff of the Misericorde, and not to its religious directresses, because this institution links so closely the directresses with the girls of the Misericorde, that they form together but one corporate whole, so that there would not be any Misericorde, if one of the parties were missing. I admit to you that I would have greatly desired the same close relationship to exist between the Sisters of Loretto and their main work, which is looking after poor girls, whose innocence is exposed to ruin, by reason of poverty or lack of work and education.

Answer to the difficulties, relative to the union of the Order of Poor Priests, to the Society of Mary.

I think that the proposed union must take for granted, the closest union possible, union by fusion, in such a way that these priests would be real members of the Society of Mary, religious who are true Children of Mary, who have no other distinction but their priestly character and the degree of religious perfection to which they are called.

Can the Society of Mary receive into its bosom priests who desire to lead an entire apostolic life, to work under the direction of obedience at the salvation of the neighbor, in complete disinterestedness and in an absolute renunciation of earthly goods? If the Society of Mary had some rule which would oppose such an admission, I would not hesitate to say that it should soon be suppressed. Such a rule, however good it might at first seem, would be entirely contrary to the main spirit of the Society, which is to present to the world the spectacle of a people of saints, and to prove by the fact that today, as in the primitive Church, the Gospel can be practiced in all the rigor of the spirit and of the letter. If there is any different way, the Spirit of God, without any prejudice to the Gospel Spirit, can inspire it, and, in fact, has inspired it, according to the epochs of human history, where he has inspired different Institutions.

The Society of Mary is, they say, an endowed Society. Each one of its members is poor, but together they are rich. No single member has any kind of property, but united to the others, he is an owner. As a member of the Society, he has rights even to the belongings of the Society. Without saying directly what are the goods that the Society as a whole may or could possess, without explaining here why the Society as a whole may possess, nor what use it is to make of goods actually acquired or that it could acquire, so that it may never be a rich or opulent body, and that it may always more and more approach the ideal

of evangelical poverty, without entering, as I said, into these explanations unnecessary in this circumstance, who is there to prevent that its priests, for the most part, not only do they deprive themselves of all ownership, but also renounces, and forever, whatever rights they might have as society members, to all the belongings of the Society as to all of its revenues, and never receive anything from the Society except as pure charity or as an alms? Weren't the Apostles to receive from the charity of the faithful what they needed, as regards food and clothing? Or did they receive what was necessary for them from the people of the world, Jews or idolaters, rather than from the Christians whom they had formed? Would then these priests cease to be poor and truly poor, because a society of regenerated faithful would charitably provide for their needs, when it would be able to do it, either in the midst of their labors, so that they might be totally independent of those for whom they would be working, be it in their communities, which they would direct or in which they would devote themselves to study and prayer, or be it in their decrepitude, their infirmities or in their illnesses? I shall remark at this time, that the members of the society, whatever they may be, priest or laymen, are always to be treated as poor people, whether in time of health or illness. With all the more reason would such be treated, who would have given up all rights to the belongings and the revenues of the Society.

But, will it not be said that the Society of Mary is necessarily a teaching organization? Yes, no doubt about that, and the Apostles were also essentially a teaching body. *Euntes docete omnes gentes*, etc. Besides, the Society of Mary has a fourth vow, which its members, priests, and laymen take, the teaching of Christian doctrine and morals.

It will be said that this particular line of teaching is not talked about, but rather that of human knowledge and literature. It is true, the Society of Mary destines the majority of its members to the teaching of human knowledge and literature, but it gives them this work only as a necessary means for the regeneration needed at the present time in all states and conditions. It is then astonishing that it destines especially a certain number, above all among the priests, solely for the teaching of religion, for the work of preaching, for the giving of retreats, missions, and for all the various exercises of the holy ministry? This is so thoroughly the spirit of the Society of Mary that it is thus represented in the approbations, in the first place, by the archbishop of Bordeaux, then by several other archbishops and bishops, and that, by the very fact of its institutions, it has an essential need of missionaries. This is not saying that the Society of Mary, being essentially missionary in the universality of its members, and working for its grand object, the maintenance of religion, the multiplication of Christians, the propagation of the faith, etc. And, as I say, working at all this, particularly by means of the teaching of human knowledge and literature, the members who would not be employed in this teaching, would be indifferent to it and take no interest in it. On the contrary, they must, according to the occasions provided by Providence, put a great interest in the formation and development of establishments of this kind, and, in the different exercises of their functions, attract to the Society qualified subjects whom they would think called to religious life.

As regards the spirit and the practice of poverty and of the renunciation of property, taken intrinsically and in the evangelical sense, I think I have sufficiently shown it to be possible in the Society of Mary and, to speak truly, it is the great desire of my heart and it will be the object of my solicitude, to have it deeply rooted more and more in the Society of Mary until the end of my days.

But, I feel that I have not answered to the difficulty of some exterior practices of poverty, which leave a great satisfaction to the poor, because it seems to them that their own poverty and their disregard for all goods is brought out in greater light. Without examining this satisfaction intrinsically and considering it, on the whole, good and pure, why not give it up for the glory of God? Would we want to sacrifice essentials for external forms? We think it our duty to adopt customs and a diet that would permit us to attack in every way the corruption of the century. Why, then, should we sacrifice the success of the enterprise with which God inspires us, for some practices which could be good only in certain circumstances or for certain particular individuals who would adopt them? Nevertheless, the Society of Mary can give, in exchange for this satisfaction, a much greater satisfaction and one more intrinsically religious, that of the complete abnegation of self, toward which the missionary priests must specially tend, and which they would have endless chances of practicing.

I would have much desired, my dear son, in closing this letter, to correspond to your confidence and to give you a few practical counsels. Well, that may be the special object of another letter or of some special interview. I would have still more desired to speak to you of the august Protectress and Mother of the Society, the divine Mary. Your love for her, your entire confidence, the habitual desire you have of forming part of her special family, of the Society that is so glorious in bearing her name, of this Society, so feeble and so imperfect in the universality of its members and above all, in its first Superior, but which believes itself so strong and so powerful in the possession of the Name of Mary, as to attack what is strongest and most powerful in this century; this desire, I say, that you have always had, with that of leading a truly religious life, are for me a proof of your vocation, and if you find in your confrères this double desire, I shall put no obstacle to their admission among the number of my children and of the Children of Mary. They need have no fear at all of finding any double-dealing, any subterfuge, any mystery, in a word, anything which might serve to change the views and sentiments with which the Spirit of God has inspired them. In entering into the Society of Mary, they will find no other change, than a firm and constant direction toward the end they propose to themselves, a great number of means for perfecting themselves in the spirit of their state, and for a better attaining of this great end or, at best, of attaining it very feebly and imperfectly. Let them feel the force of this old saying: *Vis unita fit fortior*.[1] Have them feel more specially that Mary is to be glorified from century to century, but more particularly in these last centuries, by the visible and appreciable protection that she will grant to God's Church and to the body which, to obtain it, will constantly publish her greatness and the power of her protection.

[1] In union there is strength.

I embrace you, my dear son, very tenderly in the maternal Heart of Mary.

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It seems that Father Chaminade completed his thought in a later letter, of which a manuscript note of the Sisters of the Holy Family reports the following passage: "Take care," he says, "to end these meetings as promptly as Providence will permit, as the delays could give rise to difficulties." Father Noailles answered in these terms, full of respect for Father Chaminade and for his religious families (September 23rd).

Having seen the beginning of your work being closely associated since childhood, with the first members of your Institute, and having very often found myself in a position to have recourse to your wise counsels, all leading me toward the Institute of Mary, and I would perhaps have entered it a long time since if ties of conscience had not kept me in the world. Thrown, I don't know how, into a series of good works, I very often felt how advantageous it would have been for me to be directed by such a man as you, and I would have wished that my new position had been able to bring me close to you and to your pious Society, but this hope, seeming irreconcilable, neither with my interest in the works I had started and for which I was responsible, nor with the engagements I had taken with the priests who wanted to associate themselves with me, had to be abandoned and I expressed to you my regret over this fact on every occasion we had of talking over these matters. This link of charity, this enrollment under the banner of Mary, would cause me much joy, if it would contribute to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls. It would be sweet to me to work under your protection and with the aid of your wise counsels, and, furthermore, I think that my confrères would share in this matter, my way of thinking. However, if we were able to hope for some advantage from such a union, I do not see how you could expect any on your side, and it is this that gives us reason to doubt that this is conformable to the will of God. Let us wait until he further explains what he expects of us, and whatever be our position, we shall always be happy, if it ever gives us occasion to be of some service to your holy Institute.

In fact, the union never took place, too different were the ends and means of the works of the two founders. The Society of the Poor Priests could not continue, and disappeared the following year. The Sisters of Loretto, on the contrary, having become the Sisters of the Holy Family, experienced great development. With their seven branches, governed by one central Administration, residing in Bordeaux, they are a unique creation in their own way and manifestly blessed by God. On February 16, 1830, a pious union was established between the Sisters of the Holy Family and the Society of Mary, and thus were realized, in some way, the wishes of the two founders.

Later, on November 23, 1837, Father Noailles, excusing himself with the Archbishop of Bordeaux, as not being able to undertake the foundation of an agricultural work in the old monastery of St. Aubin, gave Father Chaminade and to the Society of Mary a new token of

esteem, one precious to gather from the mouth of the Servant of God: "You have, your excellency, much more light and experience in the venerable ecclesiastic . . ., Father Chaminade, whose zeal you have welcomed with so much benevolence in your first diocese, and who will not be less useful, nor less devoted to you in this one. He has resources which I don't happen to have, having already formed Brothers who are destined for this kind of work. The blessings that God has bestowed upon his labors in the north of France, are a guarantee of those that he will obtain while working in our regions. Furthermore, what may we not expect when working under your auspices? This one thought would have sufficed you to induce me to undertake this good work with confidence, if you had deigned to accord me your protection, the help of your wise counsels, but taking for granted that God would not have provided you with a better instrument in the person of Father Chaminade. . . . As for the rest, your Excellency, I ask God to inspire you with the thought of compensating me in another way, for the sacrifice my incapacity imposes upon me, and which calls for the preference so justly due to Father Chaminade."

The following letter, addressed to a priest of Toulouse, whose name we don't know, shows us Father Chaminade in touch with the archbishop of this city, the celebrated Cardinal de Clermont-Tonnerre, for the establishment of a house of missionaries and of a normal school in his diocese. Father Chaminade insists on the major importance of the normal schools for the regeneration of the country, and begs the Cardinal to come to his aid in the recruiting of members of the Society.

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389 – TO A PRIEST IN TOULOUSE

Bordeaux, February 17, 1826

Reverend Father, I have had information about the letter you took the trouble to write to Father Caillet on the 14th of the current month, as well as about the note his Eminence wrote to you on the ninth of the same month.

While answering this letter, I shall first ask you, please to offer to his Eminence the homage of my profound respect and gratitude. I also beg of you to express to him the sincere regret I experience in not being able, purely and simply, to grant his request.

Granting that the ceding of the house of the Recollects and of the land dependent upon it, has been made only on the condition of having there country Missionaries, it is all right that the establishment of the normal school occupies only a secondary place on the same property, even if it is of a greater advantage for the reformation of the diocese, and even more timely than the work of the Mission. I admit I was ignorant of this important circumstance.

When you made in Paris the first propositions toward this double establishment, that of the Calvary Mission and of the normal school, Father Caillet had the honor of telling you that he did not believe the Society of Mary would be able to give you more than one priest, but that others would be added, little by little, in proportion as others entered the Society and especially in proportion as His Eminence would give some. Then, when you had the kindness of repeating the same request on the part of his Eminence, I did not fail to tell you that, at first, I would not be able to give you more than one priest for the Mission, for whom we would temporarily provide aids and helps that would be available. Since then, I have not become richer in priests, although I still have hopes in that direction. In fact, several have presented themselves, capable of setting to work immediately and even as missionaries. In the novitiate of St. Remy and at the Madeleine, I have several theologians, of whom some may be suitable for the missions. I am not speaking of those who are in the lower classes. But all these advantages do not permit me to promise his Eminence to organize for him a corps of missionaries. All I can do for the present is to promise him that I shall seriously occupy myself with the matter.

In speaking of the normal school, I said that this establishment was perhaps an advantage, more prompt and more effective for the reformation of the diocese than the Mission itself. If you recall to yourself what you learned about this in Paris, and what is happening in St. Remy, for the Departments of the Doubs and the Haute-Saône, it will be easy for you to convince his Eminence that there is here no exaggeration at all. I had charged Father Caillet to draw up the prospectus about it very carefully, and also to note all the means to be taken to insure its success.

A young priest of the diocese of Perigueux has been offering himself for more than eighteen months, to enter the Society of Mary. He has all the signs of a true religious vocation. Before receiving the imposition of hands, he had already given notice of his desire to Bishop de Lostanges of Perigueux. The young priest has persevered uselessly, as up to the present, he has not been able to obtain his *exeat*. I had destined him for an establishment where there is a novitiate,[1] and which has desperate need of at least one more priest. Would there be any indiscretion in asking His Eminence to write to Bishop de Lostanges? There is no doubt that the young priest would then be free, and Toulouse would even gain indirectly. I am going to put into this same envelope the last letter which this young priest wrote to me.

Several bishops, and in particular their Lordships of St. Claude and Nancy, are asking me for establishments, and are offering me the necessary means to go about them. Since I began this letter, I received a new invitation, as regards the one desired in the Capital. I have not formally accepted any establishment since our correspondence about those of Toulouse. If His Eminence does not accept the offer I have the honor of making him, and which I am really making from the heart, I shall be obliged to you to have me know

[1] St. Remy.

of it as soon as possible, in order that I may go back into my first liberty of action. I am with respectful devotedness. . . .

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At the end of March, Father Caillet received an obedience to go on a third mission to the north. He was charged at first with the task of retaking in hand the negotiations with Father Mertian, in view of the fusion of his Institute, with the Society and of the cession to the Society of the House in St. Hippolyte. These negotiations, confided at first to Brother Louis Rothéa (Letter 337) had ended in an act, drawn up in Ribeauville on March 9th, but which Father Chaminade had not been able to accept by reason of clauses, judged dangerous by the subtle mind of Brother David.

He was then to come to an understanding with Father Bardenet, for the foundation of an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Arbois, a little town in the Jura region, in a former Capuchin convent: presbytery, barracks for mounted police, etc. which the city council had decided to give to religious Sisters for the opening of schools.

He had finally to intervene in the interviews with the bishops of St. Claude and Nancy for the creation of normal schools in their dioceses, and with the rector of the Academy of Besançon for the direction of the College of Gray, Haute-Saône.

These diverse affairs, in the course of the following months, called for a very active correspondence, but which came almost entirely from the pen of Brother David. We shall reproduce only the passages which offer some interest as the expression of the thought of the Founder.

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390 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, March 28, 1826

LETTER OF OBEDIENCE TO MY RESPECTABLE SON,
FATHER GEORGE CAILLET.

My respectable son, Father G. Caillet is writing to take on a third mission, possibly as difficult as the first two, but more consoling, as far as the heart is concerned.

In the first two, there was question of sowing, while today, there is an abundant harvest that must be gathered in. It is the reunion of an entire Institute that must be consummated. It is an establishment of the Daughters of Mary for Arbois, that must be definitively decided upon. It is also a question of several establishments offered as normal schools, for the functioning of which, ways and means must be studied.

I shall not go here into any particular details, but I am joining to this letter some instructions which will direct him in the most essential and delicate points, that he will have to treat. I leave the others to his zeal and prudence. In everything and everywhere, may he always have in mind the beautiful motto of the Society of Mary: *Ad majorem Dei gloriam Virginisque Deiparae*.

Given at Bordeaux, March 28, 1826, under our seal: sealed and countersigned by our Secretary-General.

David Monier, Secretary

G. Joseph Chaminade
Superior General of the Society of Mary

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The following letter treats of the affairs regarding the Richelieu Hotel which Mr. O'Lombel is still trying to acquire, but for which there is no longer any chance of success.

391 – TO MR. O'LOMBEL, PARIS

Bordeaux, April 11, 1826

Your letter, my dear son, like that of Father Caillet, informed me of the reciprocal joy you experienced in seeing and meeting each other again. It is not the joy of the world that you have experienced, as I see the matter, but rather the joy of true Christians, that of being able to strengthen one another mutually in the faith, in the virtues, in the courage for doing good and in procuring, according to our weak forces, the glory of God. Let us try to keep to our way with perseverance, as it is this which I ask of the good God for all my children, and at this moment, particularly for you, my dear son.

After a brief moment of good recommendations, we must get soon to business and speak of current affairs. Happy those who can pass from religious reflections to the requirements of business without losing the sense of the presence of God! That is what I hope his grace will grant you. In any case, in not speaking too long about business matters, you will the sooner come back to God.

I shall then limit myself, without hesitation, to tell you that the borrowing plan which you submit to me as a project, cannot be suitable to the Society of Mary. You would be borrowing, you tell me, a sum of 100,000 francs in shares, for which we would give a mortgage on the property and then we would find lenders for the surplus, which is an additional 100,000 francs, as you know. In this plan, we can see little more than the purchase of a property, all on credit, without paying as much as the first cent, and in burdening ourselves with incidental expenses, repairs, furnishings and maintenance, and the privation of all manner of rents. Where and how would we stop, were we once to find

ourselves heading down a grade of this kind? In spite of ourselves, that would mean falling into an awful financial mess.

And then, in the second place, what capitalists would come to lend 100,000 francs on a property loaded down with a mortgage of 100,000 francs, which would always be given the first consideration? Again, what notary, what businessman would want to advise these capitalists for such an investment? Even we ourselves, in proposing it, would be giving the impression that we are looking for dupes of some kind. Let us be very careful about anything we haven't at heart, and which may not be there under any circumstance. . . .

Providence will provide for everything, if it is in the designs of God that we lay the foundations of the Paris establishment. Let us know how to bide our time and not to rush in any way.

This trifling misunderstanding does not in any way alter my affection for you, my dear son. The precaution you took to notify me before you acted serves only to confirm my esteem and my confidence in you. It is the case of a son in the arms of his father. The father warns him and, on the other hand he recommends him to God with all the ardor of his soul. In these sentiments, my dear son, I love you in Jesus and Mary.

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Here are to be placed three letters addressed to Mother de Trenquelléon, on the subject of difficulties arising from the admission of a benefactress, Mrs. de Clairefontaine, into the offices of the convent in Agen.

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392 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 8, 1826

My dear child: Were the remarks of people a hundred times more vexing, we must not give way to anxiety, provided that we haven't been the cause of them by our fault. It is not the wind of idle talk that must make us change our line of conduct, it is not upon the remarks of others that we shall be judged before God, it is not the calumny of men that is to determine our desires and our inclination towards the glory of God and his holy religion. You know all this, my dear child, just as well, and perhaps even better than I.

But you fear, you say, that the sins the world commits on this occasion are not very great. They afflict you. You would desire to diminish their number or to stop them altogether, if that were possible. I neither blame nor forbid this emotion of your soul. You do very well in desiring that all evil in the world should cease, that God, this God so good,

should reign upon earth, as he reigns in heaven, that he be glorified by all men, in everything and everywhere, without measure and without end. I approve your desire, I share it, but is it in your power to bring it about that the whole world thinks well, and that the reign of God is realized over the entire earth? It is very well that the just man formulates the wish, but the obstacle which he meets is also a good, as far as he is concerned. It is in the pursuit of this ardent wish that we meet the strongest proof of our powerlessness. We would like to, and we can't.

In spite of our will to the contrary, scandals will come and spring up again in the world. The just man will always be the object of its unjust criticism. There is still more, the censorship of the world will grant indulgence more easily to evil than to good, which it finds displeasing. In excusing evil the world assumes authority in such cases, while in blaming certain forms of good, it believes it is exonerating itself for not practicing them. The world is not inconsistent, neither in what it blames nor in what it praises, but in the designs of God, it must not be believed that these remarks, which come from the world, however vicious they may be, never have good effects. God knows how to derive good from evil. This is his secret. We see it by its results. These remarks or proposals of the world and its injustices are a trial to the Christian who finds himself exposed to them, but they are trials that strengthen him in virtue. Very often, they serve to unite more loving hearts to the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and it not infrequently happens that those who make themselves spokesmen for these remarks, and by being enlightened in regard to the truth, become sincerely converted.

We must pray from the bottom of our hearts for those who blame us. This is the only rule of conduct I have to give you, as far as concerns the bad remarks which have not been provoked by any fault of ours. However, on the other hand, it would not suffice to pray for those who blame us, when, in fact, we are blamable. If we have acted in any way to cause scandal, the scandal is ours and comes from us. In such a case, if we had an easy conscience, it would be a great evil, for it would be the effect of a severe punishment on the part of God. Anxiety and remorse are graces in the soul that has sinned. The grumbling and the satirical remarks of the world are for us a salutary warning, as the call for a serious examination of ourselves and of all our intentions.

In this case, we must not despise the remarks of the world, as some say we should do. They must be listened to, the evil must be remedied or at least lessened, according to our power of doing so. Here you have, my dear child, what is essential for you to observe, because of the tribulations with which you are threatened by the world, and with which you are already afflicted. Evil reports in Tonneins, evil reports in Agen. Even if all this were more serious, more afflicting, let us maintain ourselves in the presence of God. In the things wherein we cannot consider ourselves guilty, let us thank him who has kept us from evil, whereas, in those things wherein we may have been at fault, let us ask for mercy, let us seek the means of making reparation, let us resolve to do better in the future. Now, you are all set, I hope.

The question remains, is there fault on your part or is there not? There is, if you put into the matter bad intention or, at least, an intention that was not honestly directed toward God. There is, if you did not bring to the matter that Christian prudence that is recommended to you in all things. Examine yourself to find out whether your intention was pure, whether all you did or planned was for the glory of God. If necessary, make your coulpe. Beyond that, I refrain from judging.

The lack of human prudence, such as the Institute recommends to you, has reference to questions which will follow. It was up to you to take counsel with the Administration and to do so in time, to present a sincere and complete report: have you done it? Have you misrepresented the circumstances while seeming to be asking for information? Were you asking for advice after you had done the thing on your own responsibility? In this case, was it not the most natural thing for you to present the matter in the light most favorable to you? . . .

In the meantime, I still presume that your idea of having badly managed this affair may be false. I come to this conclusion from what Mr. F— says to you about it. In the main, he approves of the thing as a good work, but he would want the board of censors to be appeased. If the things are up to that point, all consciences being satisfied, the vanities of the world will go wherever they care to go. Give me your report and suspend all decision.

In giving shelter to a Christian woman, Mrs. de Clairfontaine, I have seen only a good work, for she seemed forsaken by all. I see that an effort was made to maintain her home conditions, her general well-being, her personal habits, and that all types of human helps and of religion were put within her reach.

For what remains, I have a very strong desire of going to see you, and this incident makes it stronger and almost necessary. Give me your answer in the sense that I have just said, and when I shall have received it, I shall tell you of my definite resolution as regards this affair and my projected voyage.

Receive the blessing of a father who loves you in Jesus and Mary.

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393 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 18, 1826

My dear child: While regaining your composure before God, as regards the affair of Mrs. Clairefontaine, you contributed also to the peace of my soul. Your explanation seems sufficient to me. But whence comes it that this trouble bothered you so much? It cannot be that this trouble arose from the background of the affair itself. Might it not have arisen from the fact of not having accepted it as coming from God and in view of God? We sometimes

mingle with our best thoughts, human views or human satisfactions, and the thing becomes very simple, because every human view is variable and uncertain, every human satisfaction is temporary and mixed with some bitterness. Is it then surprising that when God abandons us to our own heart, we feel ourselves deprived of support?

My dear child, we have to purify our intentions and make use of the favors we receive, as not using them. God gives them to us. May his holy will be done! God withdraws them from us. May His holy will still be done! May our heart be attached only to God, who is our last end. Then, the changes that occur in the world will be indifferent to us, and the reports of others will be only the more foreign to us. The Book of the Imitation says that we are only what we are in the eyes of God. Praises do not make us more virtuous, and censures do not in any way detract from the uprightness and sincerity of the actions done with God and for God alone.

In order to maintain all the simplicity of the work which concerns Mrs. Clairefontaine, let us begin by carrying out what has been said. Is the house that was destined for her built? Is nothing being neglected to bring this about? Will her belongings be there in a short time? I do not wish that anything be taken from her of those things that were promised her in the first place.

But she would want to get ahead more rapidly. His Lordship, you say, permits it to her and I did not hesitate also to permit it to her. But be very careful, my dear child, so that this second favor is not a retraction of the first. Mrs. Clairefontaine is to have her home conditions, as has been promised her, in the new house, and besides, into the bargain, once she has been received inside, she will have to stay in. She must then be granted the two things if she is to be favored, and there is no question of taking away from her what every fair-minded person may regard as the main thing, in order to give her only the one which may indicate far less. . . .

The best in all this is, I think, that I come to Agen, and that, on the strength of your verbal observations, I come to a decision. In communication by letter, one difficulty succeeds another. In a thing that lasts some time, we must not begin by giving a false notion to everybody, for soon all will be displeased by the very fact that the service of God and His greater glory would not have been sufficiently kept in mind.

Have the construction of the house hastened. For the rest, I think I shall arrive in four weeks, and all can then be easily arranged. In the meantime, pray to God and ask him that we may, in all things, do his holy will. Besides that, from the bottom of my heart, I am asking of him all his blessings.

(*On a separate sheet):*

My dear child: I am writing you this little word separately about general matters and you will see that you must not mix what I have said to you with many other things, more or

less uncertain, and which might be delayed without any inconvenience. Here is what there is question of: You had arranged with my dear son, Brother David, at the time of his visit, that the two granddaughters of Mr. Lacoste would be received in Condom, where his youngest daughter already is. Since then, you made your report to me, and I sent it back to you, leaving you to your promises. The Mother Superior of Condom wrote to you about it, and I am told that you would have decided that what had been promised would not be kept, but this is not what you wanted to say, I am sure, but the way things turned out, indicated the revocation of the promise.

I am adding here a copy of the letter I am writing to Mr. Lacoste, as this is one way of putting an end to the misunderstanding. Had we promised a lot more, we'd have to stand by our promise. However, don't go to any further trouble. Let us do what must be done. The good God will bless you.

394 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 25, 1826

My dear child: I thought I had hastened a great deal in having my observations come to you, as regards the matter concerning the interesting Mrs. Clairefontaine. I was mistaken about my expectation and my letter came to you too late. Once an affair is an accomplished fact, further counsel is needless. This is true and very true in the present case, but even a counsel received rather late may serve as a warning for the future, and this is what is to be desired from more than one point of view. We must know how to ask in time and not hasten the execution before the answer has been received.

The same thing happens to us in regard to loans and the calls for payments presented to me by Mother St. Vincent. The borrowing has been done, the payments are

awaited on the one side and promised on the other, how then is one to back out? What counsel can be given to you, unless we wanted only to risk doing much harm and to deserve a loss of confidence? When what has been done orders what remains to be done, then we must act forcibly. That is where Mother St. Vincent finds herself at present with her plan and her excuses. I believe what she says, that her intentions, in directing herself, have seemed good to her, but is religious prudence behind it all?

My reflections must give rise to your own. This is not the time to renew for you the rules of direction on this matter, but when I get to see you, I shall have to speak to you about them, because our establishments, which are always larger and more numerous, oblige me to do so. What would soon become of us, if, in each place, the superiors placed themselves in a position of speaking too late, and of merely saying that they acted with independence? . . .

I shall see about the other of your many interests at the time of my visit. I hear the summer house being talked about, the budget to be decided upon to meet the living expenses of Mrs. Clairefontaine, the kind and duration of the promissory notes referred to by Mother St. Vincent, and about some other human miseries.

But the great object of my visit, as must be expected, is to purify and clarify all hearts, to advance them all in the way of our holy Institute, to form new and stronger links among the members of our Society. If we were able to be thoroughly sanctified by the exercises and the indulgences of the jubilee that is being granted to us, it seems to me that, as one solid body, we would attain our perfect union in Jesus and Mary, and what a blessing that would be! What an anticipation of paradise! Join all your prayers to mine and may God grant you his graces without measure!

* * * *

The following letter is an answer to a case of conscience concerning the rights and duties of the children toward the parents in the matter of a religious vocation.

395 – TO FATHER JUIF,[1] PASTOR OF FERRETT, ALSACE

[1] Father Peter Juif (1751-1836), after having finished his studies at the Jesuit college of Porrentruy, entered the convent of the Cistercians in Lucelle, Alsace, where he made his profession in 1771 under the name Dom Bernardin. Chased from his monastery by the Revolution, he devoted himself, during the Terror, to the support of religion in all the Upper Rhine region, where he was the representative of the Bishop of Basel, the Upper Rhine region, at that time, depending on the diocese of this name. After the Concordat, he found himself exposed to the persecution of the former constitutional Bishop Saurine, who had just been promoted to the See of Strasbourg. In 1822, the bishop, the Prince of Croy, who venerated him as a saint, named him archpriest of Ferrette, near the Swiss frontier. A monument has been erected to his memory in the cemetery of Oberlarg, where rest his remains, with this inscription: “To the Apostle of Sundgau.”

Bordeaux, May 2, 1826

The two questions that you propose to me, my dear son, are both easy to answer in the light of the laws of God, but the answer will not be less displeasing to the world, because it goes contrary to its tastes, prejudices, and false interests. The complaints of the malcontents will become all the stronger, in proportion as they will be able to give color to their cries by two specious motives, if they can't find any with any depth. They will say that a praiseworthy natural affection is being set aside, in other words, doing something wrong under pretext of doing something good. They will not want to see that the most praiseworthy affections are such only within just limits, and that, strictly speaking, to resist doing evil, painfully, is, by the very fact, avoiding it.

After these ideas, which it was good to mention, before explaining your doubts in regard to the questions you place before me, I shall now offer you their solution.

"A well-born young lady, of fully mature age, 25, who is drawn by her sentiments of piety towards God, may she, without deserving blame, leave her father and mother, with whom she is living, in order to retire into a religious house?"

In such a question, it is always good not to reach the decisive answer before looking into some circumstances which could singularly modify it. It is unfortunate, in a way, that human nature is not able to decide questions in an absolute manner, but to be always obliged to examine them, so to say, from all possible angles.

The two principal circumstances that here deserve consideration are to know whether there is refusal to consent on the part of the father and mother, as regards the vocation of their girl, and if this refusal is not to be excused by actual and temporary need of assistance on the part of the parents.

Not to have asked either the advice or the consent of the parents, and to leave them without their having foreseen or been able to foresee the cause, would certainly be a lack of respect contrary to the law of God and a lack of parental reverence, blamable in the eyes of everybody.

To leave those to whom we owe our life and education, when we owe them present help or such as can be foreseen to be close at hand and urgent, would be an act of ingratitude and insensibility which nothing could excuse. This is, in the order of the laws of God, a serious lack of charity in the first degree, and toward the creatures who have the most formal right to expect to be and, in reality, to be the objects of a well-ordered love.

But you tell me that the father and mother have been notified, have been implored, and that their refusal dates already from previously and is persistent, that this refusal has no other motive than their natural affection for their daughter, and the very unfavorable idea they have of the benefits that the state of retreat in a cloistered house is able to procure.

In this state of things, we must not hesitate to answer that the affection of the parents is misplaced and badly ordered, and that divine and human laws agree in leaving to the girl the free disposal of her person and the choice of her retirement among the places consecrated to religion.

It would be needless to say that human laws permit it, since a virgin who wants to consecrate herself to Jesus Christ does not concern herself about rules of conduct based on purely human laws.

In the order of religion, one of the first precepts given by God to men was that the child leave her father and mother to follow her husband, and to be but one with him. Certainly, one would have to be carnal-minded, as were the Jews, not to admit the precepts, in the case wherein the Christian virgin consecrates herself to Jesus Christ and takes him as her only spouse.

But let us for a moment leave to the world its false ideas about the marriage of the virgins to their divine spouse, Jesus Christ, and let us grant for a moment that marriage, in the less sublime sense, is the only marriage of which the Creator wished to speak in his precept. That is placing a limit, by our human authority, to the word and the law of God that smacks of impiety and closely borders on a kind of atheism. Notwithstanding this, let us pass on and suppose that it is to follow her affections, her religious vocation, that the virgin of whom there is question, separates herself from her father and mother.

There is no commandment in divine religion that orders her to do so. But the Savior commands and exhorts by his own personal example. It is said that when the prelude to his celestial vocation had arrived, he separated himself from his father and mother, at the age of twelve years. He left them in the anxiety of not knowing what had become of him. He had taken refuge in the temple, where he was explaining the law of God. The man, the woman, have not as vocation, as their divine Master the dictation of the law of God, but they have as vocation to go and hear it, to go and meditate upon it. They will abandon even household duties, like Mary, leaving them to Martha, and they will listen to the spouse and he will tell them that they have chosen the better part.

I now pass on to the second question you asked me. Of what money may she dispose, who quits father and mother with a religious design in mind?

She may dispose of all the money that her father and mother have placed at her free disposal, for her preference, for her usage, for her free satisfaction. Since she is following a design that is without blame to dispose toward its accomplishments or attainment, of things which are left to her free disposal, is certainly not to abuse them, but it is acting according to the order of law and morality.

She can economize, she can even save on other works, if she has acquired such a habit, and use all in relation to her great design on realizing her perfect consecration.

She can borrow and oblige herself to pay back at the time, when goods unexpectedly come to her, without designating that it be done at the death of her parents or benefactors. I recommend that this time be not expressed: after the death of such and such a one, because the world having adopted a false idea of death, has put in its maxims that this has become an annoying omen, and that there might be found in it a wish for the death of the person designated. This scandal must be avoided, because it really becomes one. The scruples of the world are, besides, so rare and it were so much to be desired that this would never happen, that it must not be opposed in the present case, which is practically unique. If money is borrowed for the purpose indicated, let the promise be made to pay back with the first returns that are available, without saying another word about it.

On the other hand, could not the friends, the real ones, who console this virgin in her troubles and afflictions, come to her aid, with a promise other than the verbal one given above? There are some who would bring their savings as a gift, for the erection of a church or of some kind of holy house. I see it in the writing that has been passed on to me. Hasn't the living temple of God the same privilege as the exterior one put up by the hand of a mason?

Whatever the case may be, the daughter belonging to a good family who consults, must not take money belonging to her parents, and which the latter have had no intention of giving her. Although there is no question here of saying that the money taken by the children from their father is stolen, the idea of joint possession being accepted, and, in any case, pardon being in the natural order of things, it is no less an immoral action and one which must be avoided in order to offer to the divine Spouse pure hands as is his wish and desire.

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396 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 8, 1826

My dear son: I have received your letter about Arbois, the one which tells about the city of Gray and the one, very afflicting, which announces to me the serious illness of our dear Father Rothéa. My emotions were stirred only by this last one, since the others seemed to me such trifling matters. But the strange malady of Father Rothéa, considering his age and the post Providence had assigned to him, seemed to me to have the character of a punishment or, at least of a severe trial for all the members of the Institute. We have to submit to the hand of God and to have recourse to his clemency. I have recommended our dear patient to the prayers of all.

Possibly, all of us are not sufficiently purified, perhaps all are not walking in the presence of God in their state, either of innocence or conversion. Relaxation is setting in, the firm purpose of well-doing is being lost, and of not doing anything for the glory of God, and our divine master is warning us that the shepherd will be struck and the sheep dispersed. The oracle concerns no one in particular, it touches us all, such as we are, and God will often remove the purest among us. He will know well how to glorify them, but woe to those, who, forsaken, will not have learned how to profit by this lesson.

If the youngest of our priests are taken away from us, if they are rendered useless and, as it were, paralyzed, on whom will then rest the tradition of our holy Institute? Let us not deceive ourselves. The priesthood is needed in it, and when the first priests become old, there is neither rest nor security except in the assurance that God makes it possible for us to plant and to preserve new sprouts around the first olive tree.

Next to the confidence that I place in God for the preservation of this well-beloved son, I must rely also on the good care you will take of him. I am entirely confident that, in whatever temporal need he may have, he will lack nothing, insofar as the matter will depend upon you. For the rest, I am lifting my heart to God and I accept, although with sorrow, the affliction which he is giving me.

Regarding the establishment of St. Remy and the need for spiritual helps in which it found itself, I had reason to believe that Father Caillet would have arrived, due to a happy intervention of Providence. His last letter was from Colmar, and before another week he was to be making a stay here in our St. Remy. He ought to be there by this time. I must believe that, independently of all the other needs of his voyage, the helps to be given to St. Remy must have obliged him to stop there and will keep him there until he shall have provided for them in sufficient manner and measure. His quality as Visitor requires it so, for a visit is not made to recognize an evil that has suddenly sprung up and leave it unremedied. When a wounded man is met on the highway, and the 170 inhabitants of St.

Remy[1] are this wounded one through the illness of Father Rothéa, he must not be passed by. One must be the Good Samaritan, bind up the wounds, and provide suitable treatment and care. Our Father Caillet will surely do his duty.

As regards Father Rothéa, I require of you and I require of him that he be not put back to work until his convalescence shall have been pronounced complete. His resumption of work, after his first unexpected symptoms, has brought about the seriousness of his subsequent attacks. I forbid work to him until I have reason to believe that his return to health is perfect. One must not make sport of tongue and head. His tongue, more or less affected, makes it a duty for us to consign him only to the recreation quarter of the house. This sort of treatment and time will fix up everything.

This accident which affects me, being explained to you, I have little more to say to you, it seems to me, on the affair of Arbois and on that concerning the city of Gray.

I wrote directly to Father Bardenet about the affair of Arbois, highly praising him for his activity and his success.

I thought it my duty to have him observe that the affair in itself was one of great complication, there being an exchange of immovables, a money reimbursement, the appointment of another place for the rural police, the lodging of the pastor, the promise of help to the schools, etc., so many things that depend on different Ministers. And, is it difficult to get anything from any one Minister—so much are they overburdened—what then can be expected when something must be obtained from each one of them or from all acting in concert!

This affair, in these particular regions, would have to be started over again or not to be ended in ten or twenty years! I did not think I ought to think the same in regard to places that have other administrators, other customs, other needs. I suppose that, for the places in question, all this was the least evil or the best possible good.

I simply recommend to Father Bardenet to solicit and to activate the authorization of the high administration for his contract, as the most important thing. I reserved to myself, once the concession of the place would be assured, to have the Sisters authorized in a legal manner to go and occupy it, and this calls for a little more time after the concession of the place into his hands has been assured. I finally promised that our Sisters would be obtainable in the coming month of September, provided any hindrances unknown to them have been removed. I explained what had to be obtained from the bishop and the Municipal Council, in the special name of the Institute, but I took care of the matter myself.

[1] The teachers and pupils of St. Remy.

Of all this, there now remains my answer to Father Bardenet, which confirms his designs and which is positive, as regards my promise to furnish Sisters, and accompanied by observations which I believed necessary or useful to assure its more prompt execution.

In what concerns Gray, I chose to answer Father Calmels, Rector of Besançon, directly. I approved your provisional answer such as you had made it to him. I accepted Gray for the month of September, before the end of the school term. I asked of him a reciprocal service, to replace two or three subjects for me, and since this takes none from his own groups, and that there is question only of an informal recommendation, I think he will grant it to me. For the rest, I asked of him some notions about the proficiency of the collège, the extent of its property, the condition of its furnishings, etc., in order to proceed in advance for whatever might be needful.

Now, your letters are answered, except perhaps the request you make in the first, to send you Brother Laugeay for the benefit of our normal school, made up, you say, of 60 teachers. I gave an obedience to Colmar to have Brother Laugeay sent to you immediately. How comes it that you say nothing to me about this matter, while from Colmar all I hear seems to indicate that Brother Laugeay is absent, but without anyone saying it positively? I shall advise that, for the future, such uncertainties no longer take place. Reports and administrations must be organized on a firmer basis to be of any value.

Somewhat toward this end, and for other useful purposes, send me a nominal list of all the subjects in your house, in the order of grades and qualities, the officers of all ranks, the professed, the novices, etc., and of the subjects on the recruitment list for this year.

The dispensations of the Law in the matter of recruitment came to me as I had expected. I shall send you information about them. I ask of God to grant you consolations, as well as to our dear Father Rothéa, and I solicit for all my children of St. Remy the most abundant benedictions. Your Good Father in Jesus and Mary.

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Brother Louis Rothéa complained about having been disavowed in his operations relative to the reunion of the Brothers of Father Mertian and the cession of the château of St. Hippolyte. Father Chaminade exhorts him to humility, confidence, and peace.

397 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, DIRECTOR IN COLMAR

Bordeaux, May 12, 1826

You seem to believe, my dear son, that you are being blamed beyond measure, that I am acting in your regard with preoccupation, that I do not see in what others have been at

fault in the same affair with Father Mertian, and that in telling you to keep out of this thing, I do harm to you as well as to the affair itself.

All this, my dear son, has very little foundation or rather, has no foundation at all. I am in no way at all blaming you for your intention, for it was good. It is useless for you to justify it, as it is entirely justified with me and in a better way than you could ever do it. Be convinced that I see you better than you see yourself, at least in the present case.

What then have I pointed out in your conduct? I have pointed out an error. What man is never mistaken or in error? Why trouble yourself when I tell you that you have made a mistake and that I don't say anything else?

You yourself, my dear son, have written to me, that you had been drawn into this affair when you were told that it was understood that the law would be laid down for you, and that it was not going to be up to you to do it. Since then, you wrote to tell me you had been deceived and that you recognized the fact. Well, that is about all I am telling you, and I add that it is altogether suitable that you no longer implicate yourself in it. If your soul remained in peace, without any trouble, you would see for yourself the entire extent of this suitability because, if I continue in your regard my powers for this same object, I thus approve all that is past and I render your error necessarily my own. To defend myself, I must then tell you to put yourself aside, and that it is I who must regulate the acts of the Institute, and because I adopt this attitude, you are almost beside yourself!

What in the world are you not asking me in this regard in your letter of the second of the present month! . . .

Even if you continue to ask questions, my dear son, I can answer them as I would have wanted that you answer me: I may have made a mistake. If there is still time to correct it, I must do it. At another time, I shall be more circumspect.

Here you have my submission, my dear son. At present, let us look a bit further. Aren't all our requests just so many means of showing, if that were possible, that the error did not come from you? And what difference would it make, were the mistake not less made in the title-deed of Ribeauville? It exists and it is a heavy burden for us. Of what use is it to try to find out from whom it comes? There was a misunderstanding. That is the point. From whom does it come, from you or from me? But who is interested in knowing it? However, for the direction of your conscience, and since your letter of the fourth brings us back to it a little, it is good that I help you in taking your part of the blame and that I do not reinforce your tendency to cast all the blame on someone else. . . .

From the six weeks that, according to you, Father Caillet took in bringing you an answer and which brought about the misunderstanding, subtract the time that you took in having a copy of the title-deed to come to me and of which I could have no idea, without having seen it. Since it was received, why do you complain? Father Caillet was able to tell

you that we had only the time to assemble the Council of the Institute, to have the document sent, which of necessity concerned Paris, Alsace, Haute-Saône, Nancy, and quite a number of places, which were not to be omitted. Everybody worked night and day. On the day of departure, the Council was assembled at one o'clock in the morning. Several members did not go to bed. Father Caillet left by coach at four in the morning. Where do you find reason to blame us? In Paris, Father Caillet was detained by the Minister, by some bishops . . . that is not his fault. He left his earnest money with the mail carrier, so much was he in a hurry to get away. . . .

As regards those confounded articles of furniture[1] of which you speak to me, I ask you, is it any subject for difficulties? Who has brought up this peculiar difficulty? Is it that you do not understand the spirit of the Institute? This spirit is, most certainly, to follow the counsels of Jesus Christ. If anyone asked me for my mantle, I shall give him my tunic in addition. Take it for granted, my dear son, that the poor man who will go away from us, asking for an object worth six francs, will receive one worth twice that much. God will provide for it, and that is the last will I shall leave to all my children. . . .

See, my dear son, where lie the real difficulties, see to what you want me to employ, what you call my good heart and my zeal. Providence will open some other way by which to help the schools of Alsace, and I hope that it will not find fault with me, neither for having refused by cooperation nor for having put obstacles in the way. The first step that leads to this help is to restore peace in your heart. With this peace, you will have confidence and you will second our central management. God will not permit that we go astray. Ask it of him. Pray particularly for those of your Brothers whom you believe to be at fault, but do not insist on condemning them, for God does not want us to judge.

My long explanations have as principal object to cooperate in bringing calm back to you. I am praying God, from the bottom of my heart, to give it to you by his grace. I ask it of him in union with Jesus and Mary.

P.S. May God grant his blessings to all my children in Colmar.

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398 – TO FATHER ROTHÉA, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 13, 1826

[1] There was question of articles of furniture belonging to the house of St. Hippolyte and which certain Brothers of Father Mertian, leaving the Institute, meant to take along with them. Father Chaminade writes that these articles of furniture are to remain in the house, but that the Brothers who claim them will be given double their value. Letter to the bishop of Strasbourg of June 1, 1826.

There is no need, my dear son, that I should blame you for taking that emetic[2] inopportunely and without a prescription, because the pain you have experienced will serve as a warning for the future. I have been told that you remained for five days deprived of speech, unable to ask for anything except by signs. Not much more would have been needed to deprive you of life all of a sudden, or that you would have remained powerless and, as it were, paralyzed for always. As soon as we got the news, you were recommended to the prayers of all, and, I dare hope for it, God has heard us, at least in the fact of rendering you wiser in this regard. Whims of this kind, my dear son, are beyond the limits of discretion. You had no idea of the enemy you were introducing, at least I like to think so, but to forestall anything of the kind in the future, as much as in me lies, I require that you take no more remedies, except such as shall have been prescribed to you by a man of the medical profession, and the same is to apply to all our Brothers. I am applying this rule to all, because your example might become contagious for others, who, under pretext of some modifications, would consider themselves wiser and more clever. It is permitted to no one to be a judge in his own case, when there is question of illness Even the most clever physicians do not dare to act in this capacity.

Furthermore, in the Institute, the rule is expressed in this way: Notification must be given as regards the pain one experiences, and one must resign oneself to the regimen and to the treatments that are ordered. You have the obligation, my dear son, more than many others, to have the Rule observed. You are the shepherd of your flock. The surest means of having the Rules appreciated is to observe them oneself, with the greatest attention. Without doubt, you had overlooked the one I am talking about, or you did not consider it as overly important. Does it happen to be missing in your copy of the Constitutions? If I happen some day to come into your quarters, I shall look into all that.

In the meantime, it is good that I reaffirm here what I have already very often said, but which really cannot be said too often.

The more one studies the Rules, the more one gets penetrated by them and the less one is embarrassed in the conduct proper to each day and even to each moment. A case presents itself, the Rule is there to state what is to be done, and all is settled.

There are many more cases that fall back upon the Rule than one at first believes, and than is generally believed. The Rule may apply to the most ordinary matters, just as to such as are most unforeseen.

There are moments when the mind is in perpetual hesitation about everything. The temper makes us lose time with trifles that are not even scruples, with matter, the choice of which, for or against, is a matter of complete indifference. For example: shall I read seated or standing? Shall I pray walking up and down or prostrating myself, when prayer is free? To read and to pray, in these two cases, is my object, and the temptation turns aside from

[2] Tartrate of potassium and of antimony, a powerful emetic and producing a strong depression.

both, in having me figure out whether I shall be standing, seated, or prostrated. What does the Rule tell me, in a thousand and more cases resembling these two? It tells me not to bother myself in such cases with what is not essential, to abandon my mind to God, to do all for the love and glory of God, without regard for what concerns my miserable body.

The same is the case in the matter of works of charity and of service towards the neighbor. There is question of doing them with a good heart, opportunely, without voluntary delay, without formalities and usages that characterize anything but a work of charity and often render it beyond recognition.

For oneself, one is always disposed to choose what is most humble, what seems to be the least. No detailed or advance deliberation is necessary, when the good purpose is habitual and when the help of grace is called upon.

How acquire this state in all things? This is the way. You will habitually say this prayer, recall it upon occasions and meditate upon it from time to time: "My God, may it not be myself that speaks and makes the decision, may it rather be your Holy Spirit." *Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed Spiritus Patris vestry qui loquitur in vobis*. (Matthew X, 20).

Pray, ask, and you shall receive. You will take up the habit of entirely abandoning your body and soul into the hands of God. When you are in this state, and that may come about quickly, you will not deliberate about trifles, you will not deliberate if you need the emetic or the quinine. You will take it, if it is prescribed for you, you will not hesitate as regards the most ordinary acts of life, you will go through your ordinary timetable, without even being aware of it. Your only attention will be to ask that the Spirit of the Father speak in you: *Loquere, Domine, quia audit servus tuus. Loquatur in nobis Spiritus Patris*.

I desire that my letter may be for you the occasion of useful exercises during your convalescence, and that the fruits which God will bestow in them may remain with you all through your life. Since God has wanted that I love you as a father, He will not cast aside my request. On the contrary, he will send you his blessings.

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In the following letter the high esteem in which Father Chaminade holds the mission of the priests given to the ministry of education will be remarked.

399 – TO FATHER CALMELS, RECTOR
OF THE ACADEMY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, May 17, 1826

Reverend Father Rector: Your letter of last April 13th, addressed to Brother Clouzet of St. Remy, had reached me and you now honor me with a new letter, dated May 8th. Although I have answered the first, I shall repeat my answer in this one.

I have accepted and I accept for one of my subjects the principalship of the Collège of Gray, Haute-Saône. I shall supply to it one of my most distinguished children,[1] Father Lalanne. He will replace very well, I have reason to believe, Father Collineau, whom you pointed out to me. I cannot place the latter to another post,[2] as fidelity to engagements already assumed is necessary, and my conduct, as regards the latter subject, although it seems to hold a kind of negation towards you and not a refusal, guarantees to you, by the very fact, stability for the future in all that we shall have succeeded in doing in the city of Gray.

To supply the subject desired, it is not suitable that I should interfere elsewhere with the scholastic year, and so, whatever I promise will be for the end of September.

I have reason to think that you might be able to hasten my arrangements and facilitate the release of the principal that I destine for your praiseworthy city, because the changes of place that I make, step by step, to provide you with a principal, do not succeed equally well.

In removing him from his present post, I have in view to fill the resulting vacancy, calling two subjects who desire to be trained to education in my Institute; one is under one of our Archbishops and the other belongs to a bishop. Both subjects have asked, for a long time, their release, their *exeat*, but there is difficulty in the fact that their Superiors are of the small number of those who do not see any relation between ecclesiastical service, properly so called, and education which is eminently Catholic, and from this comes their belief that giving a priest to education is losing him for the Church.

My opinion on this subject—and facts justify it—is that a priest who has a vocation for education, being ceded to an educational establishment, produces a hundredfold of priests for the sanctuary, and excellent priests at that. But, I do not have much authority to make this doctrine carry in high places, but, somehow, I don't seem to be able to detach myself from it.

With things as they are, I had chosen the part of inviting you to aid me with your approval, in the estimation of his Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction, and to obtain his powerful mediation, be it with the Ordinaries in general, or with the two prelates whom I venerate, but who have refused to the two subjects their transition to the study and discipline of education.

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[1] Father Calmels, rector of the Academy of Besançon, who became Vicar General of the diocese of Albi, where he helped to introduce the Society in Realmont.
[2] Father Collineau was already employed as Principal of the College of Villenueve-Sur-Lot.

There was perhaps trouble in asking things of this kind by letter, but since Providence was pleased to have you called to Paris, many of the difficulties disappear. Would you be able, Reverend Rector, to obtain from the Minister of Public Instruction, that he be kind enough to write to the archbishop of Auch and to the bishop of Perigueux with this in mind? For example, would it not be possible to tell them that the Society of Mary, being invited to give subjects to meet the needs of certain collèges, our Lords the Prelates would be doing a fine thing, one agreeable to the friends of the restoration of doctrine, to give to this Society individuals who would find in it their vocation? In particular, would it not be possible to ask the archbishop of Auch, to lend or to give Father Larrieu, employed in the steward's office of the Seminary, and the Bishop of Perigueux, to be kind enough to give Father Brothier, officiating priest of a little subsidiary church? Both have as motive, a vocation of long standing and reasons of conscience, for wanting to retire into the Society of Mary. Obedience to a Superior is their only motive of caution and reserve.

It remains to me, Reverend Rector, to ask of you, as in a preceding letter, some details on the quarters, more or less spacious of the Collège of Gray, on the strength of the classes, which can be limited to the third and second of rhetoric or stretched to full exercise, some notions about the furnishings, the provisions, about everything that calls for the most pressing arrangement.

Please accept, once again, the assurance of the confidence with which I am acting, and of the profound respect with which I am your very humble and very obedient servant.

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400 – TO FATHER CAILLET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 18, 1826

I have in hand, your letter of the seventh of this month, dated from St. Remy. At first sight, your conduct during your round of visits appears to me to have been well regulated, except your omission of a visit to pay homage to the bishop of Saint Claude.[1] The pretext of this omission, taken from what Father Bardenet, according to the report that he made to you about it, had explained the facts better than you could have done it, does not satisfy me at all. There is no question of explaining the facts more or less well. There is question of submission and of deference that we owe personally to one of the successors of the Apostles. This duty can be accomplished only by us.

[1] Bishop de Chamon, first bishop of St. Claude, after the reestablishment of the See, governed the diocese from 1823 until 1851. He was during this long episcopate one of the most devoted and faithful friends of Father Chaminade.

The bishop of St. Claude would certainly have been satisfied to hear the same facts from yourself, and to compare them with what had already been told him by divers intermediaries. I require that before you quit the region, you go to repair this wrong, even if you have to prolong your absence and make an extra trip, for this is an indispensable duty.

I received a letter from Father Bardenet about the Arbois affair. I did not surmise that he was hesitating between another Order and that of Mary. What you let me see, though feebly, of this hesitation, surprises me, and I am inclined to believe that you are completely mistaken. Whatever the case may be, I gave my answer to Father Bardenet in all confidence, as if there were question of a work decided upon in common, and which had to be brought to a finish with the least embarrassment possible. . . .

I am holding back all the preparations of our Sisters until I get his answer, but since they are already on the move, I shall destine them according to the views of God. Destinations are not what we lack. The real trouble is that each group requires a good leader, and support for this leader. God forms them sparingly and it is he also who takes care of all the rest.

See the Bishop of St. Claude. In presenting to him my greetings—too long delayed—open your heart to him, beg of him to grant me his benevolence in regard to the journey I propose to make before long into these regions, and whether or not his Lordship is willing to make use of my Institutions, assure him that in all places and at all times, I venerate in him the Apostle of Jesus Christ and his decisions.

You will communicate our Constitutions to our Lordship, I mean our Letters of patent and our Statutes. If his Lordship were inclined to believe that he could make use of unprofitable servants, according to the language of the Apostle, it would be well, during your stay, that you submit these documents to registration, as has been done in the dioceses where we are being employed.[1]

You will return to the establishment of St. Remy. The hope you had entertained for the prompt recovery of our principal, Father Rothéa, in this residence, pleases me much, but I don't dare to depend upon it as you seem to do. After his accident, he needs a long period of care. I recommend it to him, just as I recommend it to Brother Clouzet, and I am recommending it to yourself. My former letters tell you enough about this subject.

As soon as the answers of Father Bardenet will have come to me, I shall decide upon your return, because the disposition I have made of several subjects will render your presence necessary for me. But you must go through with your round of visits.

The registration of the Statutes in the bishop of Strasbourg's office is indispensable. I don't know if the prefect will want to take note of our existence. As regards the Prefect of

[1] There was question of the registration of the Royal Ordinance in the diocesan secretariat.

the Haute-Saône, who talked to you about it, I had occasion to promise him a copy of our titles, which we expect to receive very shortly.

May the good God continue to direct you along the way, and that upon the request of a real and tender father, he grant you his blessings.

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401 – TO FATHER CAILLET, COLMAR

Bordeaux, May 20, 1826

Your letter of the eleventh of this month, my dear son, is beginning to clear up a little the whole of the operations that were confided to you. Continue, in whatever else you will have to tell me, to recall as much as you can, the part of your instructions to which the matter most naturally refers. This manner of proceeding greatly facilitates the explanations, and then, this assures us that you do not disturb, without consideration, the manner of proceeding outlined for you. I shall have occasion to examine just up to what point your instructions have had their expected success.

The affair of Father Mertian and the registration of the Statutes in Strasbourg are the matters which are, for the time being, most in suspense. As to what concerns Father Mertian, the good God will decide as pleases him, with the aid of the bishop of Strasbourg. I have no doubt that the registration will be made, as everywhere else, without any difficulty.

You propose two new things to me: the one would tend to the establishment of a normal school in Colmar, and the other, to the authorization of a visit for you to your immediate family.

I don’t think that there is any solid reason for us to bother about a normal school, neither in Colmar nor anywhere else since the bishop was kind enough to busy himself with placing it elsewhere, and that he had you understand that, if the first place were lacking to us, he had another in prospect. It would be oddly wanting in respect toward him to believe ourselves better able to judge than he. It is up to me to await with respect, that he has come to a decision as regards the matters proposed, and on the carrying out of his own views. We must know how to wait until those in command have made up their minds on what they propose to do.

Your visit to your family would not have interfered with anything, if it had been made at the time of your arrival in the region. Today, it presents a series of ifs and becauses that must be avoided. It won’t be long before you receive your order to return, as my preceding letter announced.

It is possible that your father is declining, as the pastor of Ferretter has been telling you, but his illness is something rather common, and so, it may be another twenty years before anything really serious and urgent develops, and so, your family arrangements need not be made before their time. What you have thus far done will suffice. This is a sort of little temptation that did not come to you, but which was only suggested. You will henceforth know how to guard against it.

Do not look to my preceding letters, my dear son, neither this one, nor the others, as you would to matters containing the natural elevation of the human heart. There is nothing in them that might humiliate you. It is the statement of what I desire that you should do, and of the order to be followed in your answers. We would never come to an understanding, if we did not agree on these points, the more so, when we are so far apart from one another.

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In a letter of May 8th, again from the pen of Brother David, Father Chaminade outlines the detailed plan of his approaching visit for the Superioress of the Daughters of Mary.

402 – TO MOTHER de TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 28, 1826

My dear child: Four houses of the Institute are going to be the object of my visit. I have checked the list of the principal matters to be taken into consideration, and I have settled upon the order of treatment. I think that, in the established order and which you have herewith indicated, we shall attain the essential purpose of this kind of visit, which is to know the exact state of everything, in order to apply remedies wherever necessary to advise ways and means of sustaining and of increasing all that is found worthy of approbation.

It has seemed to me in place to send you in advance, the sketch of these operations, so that you may arrange everything to facilitate them, and to render their conclusion all the more precious. If I have succeeded in explaining myself well, and if you have understood me equally well, it seems to me that the effect of the visit will be, to revivify everything, while healing a few little sore spots that may be found to exist here and there.

Let us ask God together to grant us this grace, which would mean a treasury of blessings for us. Your father in Jesus and Mary.

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Visit of the . . . June 1826[1]

First Conference – With the Mother Superior, and in case of illness or other hindrance, with those of the Mothers who replace her.

Object – All that she will believe suitable to place for the examination of the Superior for the general order of her establishment, all the requests she will deem suitable to make toward the same end, and which would tend to obtain information or the concession of something needful. Her reports about every other House of the Institute.

Second Conference – With each member of the Council, in the order of rank and succession but without interruption.

Object – All that the Sister in charge will believe to say and to observe in the general order of her functions, or in her reports with the other Heads, the advantages or embarrassments she experiences, etc.

Third Conference – With the assembled Council.

[1] The visit could not really have taken place before the end of July.

First Object – All that concerns the ordinary holding of the Council, the interruptions that have taken place; the manner in which these have been made up; the means for greater regularity in the future; the method in practice or to be practiced for maturing the deliberations and of assuring that they are always religious, charitable, and of prompt execution.

Second Object – The condition and the needs of the house, of the personnel, as regards what is moral and what is material.

As regards the personnel – A complete account of the persons, classed according to rank: Superior, Heads of Departments, perpetual professed, temporary professed, choir novices, postulants of the same, perpetual professed sister companions, temporary professed sister companions, postulants and novices, day students, ordinary help and special help.

As regards the moral: Regularity, choir and religious services, fasts, vigils, penances and meditations.

As regards the material – Ordinary food, clothing, care of the sick, enclosure, constructions and garden, individual and furniture in common, the church, sacristies, burying-place, etc.

Third Object – Relations with the outside, movements at the doors, in the parlors, on the towers, sights from the windows, letters and correspondence, Third Orders, Sodalities, day student classes (secondes clotures ?).

Fourth Object – Boarding school and novitiate, number of classes, their number, behavior and direction, their actual spirit, their success in the past, their success hoped for, known obstacles, inside and outside, remedies and changes to be used.

Fourth Conference – With the Heads and Sodality councils, with the Heads and councils of the Third Order.

Object – On all that concerns the one and the other of these respective groupings, first the general considerations and then the individual interests which would be most striking.

Fifth Conference – With each one of the Sisters, beginning with the Superior.

Last Observation – The religious instructions and the direction of consciences will have their determined times immediately after the arrival of Father Superior, all independently of the conferences that have just been designated.

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The following letters bring us back to the affairs of Alsace and of Franche-Comte.

403 – TO FATHER MAIMBOURG,
PASTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, June 1, 1826

Reverend dear Father: Several of my children have informed me that you had asked them to provide themselves with certificates of capacity for the schools. Your watchfulness in this matter is easily understood, as I always thought that you were as a father to them, and that they were to follow your direction and your counsels religiously. I had busied myself personally with the diplomas of capacity, of which there is question. Article 1 of the Royal Ordinance, under which we function, obliges us to it, and Article 3 determines the form. To this end, each one of the Brothers must have his letter of obedience from me.

On the other hand, I cannot exercise this right in the entire extent of a diocese, insofar as the Royal Ordinance and our Statutes are officially transcribed in the diocesan registers.

I have taken care of this with his Lordship, as far as I am concerned, but his important and numerous occupations have not permitted him, until today, I am sure, to have this formal Ordinance sent to us. As soon as I shall have obtained it, I shall deliver these Obediences and I shall take the certificates desired, under the diverse names of the subjects being employed.

If it had happened that some one of the Brothers employed in your interesting schools was shown to be insufficient for or forgetful of his duties, you would be doing a work of charity, Reverend Father, to be kind enough to let me know confidentially, so that I could remedy the situation to the extent of my ability.

This is a very favorable occasion for me, again to give you this token of the respectful consideration with which I am entirely, Reverend dear Father, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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404 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, COLMAR

Bordeaux, June 1, 1826

I am very glad, my dear son, that your mind is finally at rest, after the agitation caused you by St. Hippolyte. Profit by this time to take special care of your schools, in all that regards interior discipline, instruction, and zeal in the ways of salvation.

If, by the aid of grace, we realize our salvation, we shall have done enough, but it is no longer permitted to us to hope for salvation in our state if we do not cooperate in the salvation of our pupils. This must be, my dear son, our great preoccupation.

I beg of God to maintain you in the right way and to reserve for you the reward that comes with perseverance in it.

Your Good Father in Jesus and Mary.

P.S. Herewith enclosed is a little letter from the Reverend Pastor of Colmar. Read it, and if need be, make a copy of it. Seal it, let the wax dry, and deliver it yourself. My fatherly blessings to all of our children.

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At the end of May, the final failure of the negotiations with Father Mertian could be feared, and Father Chaminade, giving up the offer of the Château of St. Hippolyte, by reason of the conditions imposed, had asked the bishop of Strasbourg to take it in his place. (June 1st)

Bishop Tharin intervened personally, and all the difficulties were smoothed out.

405 – TO BISHOP THARIN,
BISHOP OF STRASBOURG

Bordeaux, June 23, 1826

Your Lordship: It will always be for me a great satisfaction to be aided by your counsels in the religious works and, in them, to do as you say.

When I had to relinquish St. Hippolyte, I experienced but one regret, that of getting away from your pastoral jurisdiction, and not to see for myself any likelihood of return to it, but I believed to be doing an act of justice in the interests of religion. The property of St. Hippolyte, replaced into your hands, became free, and assuredly more useful in the designs of God than if it had remained in mine.

Your Lordship realizes that it is in place, once more, to allot this property to the Society of Mary, but under a new title. You have deigned, Your Lordship, to indicate the plan of the arrangement and to forward me a copy in eleven articles, along with your benevolent observations. I am deeply impressed by your goodness, and I shall not go to examine the motives which induced your Lordship to pronounce this decision. I have received it and I submit to it without reserve.

If it should ever occur to me to find worries in places of situations I cannot foresee at the present time, I dare hope always to find, in your pastoral charity, the encouragements and consolations that I would then need. I have confidence in another power than mine, and I dedicate myself to it. The schools of Alsace will be restored and taken care of, in the best possible way. I have also good reason to hope for some counsels and kind services on the part of Father Mertian, in spite of the fact that I have caused him some moments of grief without wanting to do so.

I am setting things in motion by sending Father Caillet my procuration, corrected according to your advice, your Lordship. I am adding to it a notarized procuration to accompany the donation, as required by Article 6 of the arrangement. As soon as I shall have received the Statutes, Decrees, and Ordinance from your Lordship authorizing me to do so for the schools and novitiates of Alsace, I shall get ready to solicit from the king the ordinance of junction which is desired.[1]

Father Caillet will again go to present to you the tokens of my respectful veneration, until I shall be able to go in person, to acquit myself of this duty, of which I never lose sight.

Be pleased to accept the expression of the very religious respect with which I am, of Your Lordship, etc.

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406 – TO FATHER MERTIAN, RIBEAUVILLE

Bordeaux, June 24, 1826

Reverend dear Father: I have received with religious satisfaction your letter of last May 31st. It has finally brought me promises of union, peace, and charity, sentiments in the way of which I feared having placed myself, although without the slightest intention to do so. My preceding explanations, having remained so long without an answer, gave me a hazy idea of something extraordinary that I had no way of explaining to myself. Your letter, so conciliating, let me know that I was to you the occasion of bitterness and annoyance, by expressing myself badly, or by having completely misunderstood you. It is then with entire justice, for that's how I see the thing, that I take upon myself the full responsibility and guilt, and I am grateful to those who were kind enough to try to diminish the effects and to make us forget the past.

My thanks are addressed more particularly to that very worthy apostle of Strasbourg to whom you referred the whole matter, just as I did. Through one of his very gracious letters, his Lordship forwarded to me the twelve articles that he thinks must be sufficient to

[1] The ordinance or decree authorizing the joining of the two institutions, respectively approved by the Government in 1821 and 1825.

effect the union of the two Institutes. He was kind enough to tell me that this arrangement in eleven articles was the result of what had been explained in his presence by Father Caillet and yourself, Reverend Father, whom I also must thank. I am giving them my entire support and that without reserve of any kind.

As soon as I shall have before me the statutes and constitutive Acts of the Brothers of the diocese of Strasbourg, and that the bishop will have deigned to designate me as Superior, according to Articles 4 and 10, I shall prepare the work and the request to the Government for our union without delay.

I would have great need of your benevolent assistance, Reverend Father, in some rather difficult operations, those upon which depends in every way, the success of the work we now have in hand. I mean the retaking of the establishments, the improvement in each place, the knowledge of the personnel, the prospects of the good which such and such a locality seems to promise, and many other things where the glance of the Superior cannot well be replaced.

All these needs make me realize the necessity of a voyage to Alsace, without further delay. Some interviews which you would consent to grant me, would give me a good start. You have supplied the land and you have planted. I am called upon only to water and to maintain. I hope that, while awaiting that the king has authorized me, you will keep an eye on this work in which you alone, Reverend Father, can foresee and even prevent the failure of several plantations, and to prepare the hope for new ones. You will prevent, as the father of this Institute, that your plans be lost or in any way altered. Our united schools will be forgotten, neither by the one nor by the other. God will bless them, and we shall have reason to rejoice at the good which we shall not have accomplished, but which God wished to accomplish through our hands.

Please receive, Reverend Father, this new token of the charity which unites me to you and the sentiments of respect with which I am your very humble and very devoted servant.

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407 - TO FATHER CAILLET, COLMAR

Bordeaux, June 23, 1826

Your letter of the 13th of this month, my dear son, is the last I have received from you until today. Your trip to Arbois and to St. Claude gave me some consolation. I was pained at the displeasure which the worthy Father Bardenet seems to experience. Nor was I much at ease over the fact that on the occasion of your preceding visitation tours, you had not expressed my very sincere greetings to the bishop of St. Claude, but I now see that all is about repaired or made up. God does not leave us always in desolation. . . .

Now for your personal line of conduct:

1. There is certainly more than one difficulty to be foreseen in the running of the schools in Alsace, and others which we have not foreseen will present themselves.

Those to which we cannot close our eyes, come from the fact that I have no positive idea of the customs, habits, needs, and resources of the personnel which is to remain.[1] or of that which will have to be completed or replaced.

If Father Mertian did not continue his paternal affection for his establishments, and if he did not help us in all these matters, we would be doing little more than feeling our way, in the midst of a very dark night. This fact must not be kept from him. I have no doubt that he also sees it this way, and that he has resolved not to let us fall blindly into one or more holes in the ground. He will help us with his experience and his acquired influence.

2. In the schools, we must have men of God and, furthermore, men who know the vernacular language derived from the German.

In order that they be constantly men of God, they must pass through the Institute so that they have its imprint and spirit, and it is this imprint of the Institute that has everywhere prevailed and which must be preserved from one generation to the next.

We have but few Germans who are formed according to this discipline. Some of the Institute of Father Mertian who would be most likely to submit to it would become a very precious nucleus. In telling them about it, they would be lost, so, they must be kept, without a word being said. It is the work of God. If they study at the Institute, I have confidence that they will be all to God from their hearts. But there must be guidance. Let them enter the Institute and let them learn what it would be fortunate for them to know already, but which we must take for granted that many of them do now know at All. . . .

After you have made the effort, try to tell me, number by number, what you have succeeded in doing and what has remained without effect.

I have left aside many little things scattered throughout your diverse letters. Someday we shall gather all these remnants and we shall sift them thoroughly. For the present, we must see what will become of the Mertian affair, that of Arbois, and that of the collège of Gray. You will not have much to do with this last, because it is being regulated in Paris. It is quite possible that all will not reach the point of maturity. God rules the seasons. Let us always come back to him with purity of intention.

[1] The Brothers of Father Mertian.

The climate where you are, that of where I am, all is under the hand of God. In each place, he blesses his elect and I ask of him this blessing for you. Your Good Father in Jesus and Mary.

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In a letter to the Rector of the Academy in Besançon, relative to the direction of the Collège of Gray, we detach the following description of Father Lalanne, designated by Father Chaminade, to occupy this post.

408 – TO FATHER CALMELS, RECTOR OF
THE ACADEMY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, June 26, 1826

. . . . This subject, according to the needs of the Collège, will take charge of teaching the class of rhetoric or any other.

I don't think that his activity may be easily surpassed. He could easily look after four employments, for he has already given proofs of his ability. But is it not suitable to spare him somewhat? I hope the accumulation of salaries won't be the reason for it. Give him a load of work, as he has no fear for anything of that kind, but should the need of the work require that he be replaced, he will easily be able to add to the corresponding salaries of those replacing him, if that has to be, so that the things run better.

He will know very well that no man is perfect, and I am not announcing this phenomenon to you in view of the one I have promised to you. However, he has been working a long time at the correction of his imperfections. One must not expect anything else in this world, for it is with this that God does everything. He does the good with very imperfect instruments. I perhaps realize this truth more than anyone else.

I beg of you to continue in our relations, the sentiments of kind indulgence which you have already shown me, and to believe me with a respectful consideration. . . .

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From July on, the correspondence of Father Chaminade resumes a more personal character. He writes himself a part of his letters, he dictates others to his nephew, Jules Chaminade, that he took as secretary after the death of John Tissier.

409 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, July 12, 1826

I was going to write to you, my dear son, when your letter with details about the visit of the Prefect of Vesoul arrived. I shall do what I can to write to him tomorrow, and I shall send you a copy of my letter. If all does not leave with this same mail. . . .

The young priest that I mentioned to you since such a long time ago, will finally leave. It is Father Brothier of Lavand, of the diocese of Perigueaux. I received him as a novice a week ago. Yesterday, he finished a general confession. Tomorrow, Friday, and Saturday, he is to give some spiritual exercises to the pupils of the First Communion class of the school on Mirail Street. He will be leaving next Monday or Tuesday, if his trunk has arrived by that time. He will be professor in whatever class is assigned to him. Before becoming priest, he had already taught rhetoric and philosophy, but he will teach whatever you want. I hope that he will get along well with our dear Brother, Father Rothéa, as regards confessions, instructions, etc. Here, there is some jealousy over the fact that I am sending you this subject. Although there was great need of him elsewhere, I think he is absolutely necessary to you. Besides, I had promised him to you, and I was far from expecting to find so many obstacles to prevent our having him. May the name of the Lord be blest in all things.

It causes me pain, my dear son, not to be able to speak to you, at times, about our last end and the means of reaching it safely. I would also like to write, at least once in a while, to all my children at St. Remy, in order to encourage them. I am seriously thinking about going to see you all, after my visits to the Haute-Pays. What is vexing is that they are always being delayed in spite of the fact that they are so necessary this year. . . .

The archbishop of Bordeaux died last night as a saint, just as he had lived.

My sister was buried the day before yesterday.

Let us not cease to work, my dear son, for the glory of our good Master, and of his august Mother, whom he has deigned to give us as Mother. Since I am obliged to write to you so briefly, say to all our Brothers, my dear children, how much I love them, how much I desire to see them and to speak to them unreservedly, and to penetrate them with the spirit of their state. Whatever you may be telling them on this subject, I don't think you are likely to exaggerate.

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It will have been remarked with what brevity Father Chaminade, overloaded with work, tells Brother Clouzet of the two misfortunes, which struck almost simultaneously, the death of his sister Lucretia and of his great protector, Bishop d'Aviau.

Here is the letter to the Prefect of Vesoul announced in the preceding one.

410 - TO THE COUNT OF BRANCOS, PREFECT OF THE HAUTE-SAÔNE

Bordeaux, July 13, 1826

Honorable Prefect, the visit with which you have honored my establishment has had the most salutary results. The heads of Departments have written to me about it in terms that leave no doubt concerning the emotion which your presence has aroused. They bore witness, so to say, to the sentiments of emulation, of perseverance, and of new ardor in the good which you left there at the time of your departure. Father Caillet and Brother Clouzet inform me more particularly of the advantage which they have had since being admitted to your table. They have also told me about your confidential interviews and about the schools of arts and crafts. I am inclined to believe, Honorable Prefect, that among all the views concerning the public good which the position and interest of those under your administration suggest to you, this one would not be one of the least. Do not doubt, Honorable Prefect, that if I can help in any way, I shall do so with a good and willing heart.

I am not sure if you have been told, Honorable Prefect, that this same idea of a School of Arts and Crafts was the principal cause which led me to the acquisition of the château and property of St. Remy. It is in this same view that one of my men went there from here and liked the place, after having looked it over and judged it from all points of view. We busied ourselves with the project, even under the administration of Mr. de Villenueve, your predecessor. The unavoidable distance of the one I had put in charge delayed the preparatory steps, and I know that since then, very little progress has been made in this part of our works. However, if your noble views have been directed upon this object of public utility, it doesn't seem doubtful to me that with the favor of your powerful support and your knowledge, Honorable Prefect, we can go rather far.

The letters I receive from St. Remy inform me that you have been kind enough, Honorable Prefect, to have had a plan of project worked out and that you would even have the kindness to acquaint me with it in a week or so. This activity on your part can only arouse mine, and I shall await with much interest the communication with which you will be pleased to honor me. I shall then make it a duty on my part to place before you my observations, if there is need for it. As far as I see, it would be advantageous that the plan were brought to a certain degree of perfection before long, by reason of my voyage to your regions, which can no longer be much delayed. Once the plan is fully matured in the mind of the cabinet, it would be better to try it out on the spot as soon as possible. Such a plan takes in so many things: the material, the personnel, the spirit, the interior order, the movement and progress in studies, the thousand and one needs and accidents that must be foreseen or prevented . . . When the idea is once very definite, then the carrying out of it will come as a matter of course.

I am congratulating myself, Honorable Prefect, over the fact that your honorable visit and the proposals that followed it made it a duty for me to thank you on my own part and

that of my children of St. Remy—that is, in their name. I am even venturing to assure you of their disposition to do the good. My eagerness to join them all in your views upon the schools is also for your further assurance, as regards my dispositions. These are, furthermore, upheld by the sentiments of confidence, of the high consideration and respect with which you will permit me to be, Honorable Prefect, one of your most humble and most devoted servants.

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Father Chaminade, now free to head for Alsace, is preparing for his trip to the Haute-Pays. The following note, addressed to Brother David, reveals to us his dispositions, as regards the wills made in his favor.

411 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, July 17, 1826

Can we settle, my dear son, on Thursday evening for our departure, after the funeral of the archbishop, on condition that a coach is to leave on that particular evening?

I am having the will copied by the hand of Mrs. Dubose passed over to you, the one Jules thought he could correct, and in which are several unapproved erasures. Mrs. Dubose is asking for a copy of the said will that she would leave among her papers. I have always experienced great repugnance in receiving the last provisions of this lady. If, however, you believe that as the one in charge of the interests of the Society, I must rise above it, see if I couldn't be exempted from the obligation of paying 4000 francs to her servant, as well as a life annuity, by giving her the house with which she could pay herself, as well as the funeral expenses and all other little debts, etc.[1]

If it is already completed, send me the letter asking for exemption from taxes for the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary.

If we are to leave Thursday evening, you would have to be free tomorrow noon, so that we could settle everything in Bordeaux that needs to be settled before our departure. I shall take note of it. The affair of Father Lalanne as regards Gray is getting more difficult. . . .

Yours very truly, my dear son,

[1] In an autographic note, relating to the same will, and without any indication of date or destination, Father Chaminade wrote: "I have never been the counselor, properly so called, of Mrs. Dubose in what concerns her temporal affairs. My condition and my occupations did not allow it. I was able, in some circumstances, to give her some counsel, which she was free to follow or ignore, and of the result of which I know nothing."

P. S. Mrs. Dubose is anxious to conclude . . . they say she is experiencing weak spells.

Father Chaminade left Bordeaux on Thursday evening, July 20th, visited the houses of the Daughters of Mary in Agen, Condom, and Tonneins, arranged in Moissac with the Archpriest, Father Imbert, for the opening of a new school of the Society (July 26th), passed on to Villeneuve, and came back to Bordeaux toward the feast of the Assumption.,

Almost immediately afterward, August 24th, he undertook his first visit to the Houses in the north. He was accompanied by Father Lalanne, who was going to Gray, and by Father Brothier, who was destined for St. Remy.

His itinerary was the following: Paris on the 27th or 28th; Nancy on August 30th with Bishop Farbin-Janson; Strasbourg, during the first days of September, with Bishop Tharin, with whom he passed a day in his country house in Molsheim; Ribeauville, with Father Mertian; St. Hippolyte, of which he took possession toward September 11th; Colmar, September 15th; Mulhouse; St. Remy on the 19th or 20th of September; Besançon; Arbois on October 1st, for the new foundation of the Daughters of Mary; Gray; Nancy; Paris; return to Bordeaux on October 16th.

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In the following letter, Father Chaminade announces to Father Liebermann, Vicar General of Strasbourg, the conclusion of the negotiations entered into with Father Mertian. In fact, the document drawn up in Strasbourg, July 13th, between Father Mertian and Father Caillet, the delegate of Father Chaminade and confirmed by Bishop Tharin, had promised to the Society more than he was able to give it.

Father Mertian had chosen to cede the old château of St. Hippolyte with its dependencies, and the schools of Strasbourg, Erstein, Markolsheim, Ribeauville, Ammerschwir, Guebwiller, Benwhir, Blotzheim, Zellwiller—in all, ten establishments, and about twenty Brothers. Now, only three Brothers consented to be united to the Society of Mary, Brothers Enderlin, Cholet, and Kientzler, who were excellent religious; only two establishments, St. Hippolyte and Ammerschwir, were kept by the Society.

The foundation of the School of Ste. Marie-aux-Mines (1827-73) of which there is question in the following letter, was the fruit of the zeal of Father Bader, pastor-dean of this locality.

412 – TO FATHER LIEBERMAN, VICAR-GENERAL OF STRASBOURG[1]

[1] Father Francis Liebermann (1759-1844), born in Molsheim, was ordained priest in 1783 and named Director of the Grand Seminary in Strasbourg, at the same time as preacher in the Cathedral. During the Revolution, he exercised his ministry, first in Alsace, then beyond the Rhine. His compatriot and friend, the bishop of Mainz, then secured him for his major seminary, where he remained twenty years and

Colmar, September 15, 1826

Very Reverend Vicar General, I have the honor of presenting to you the verbal account of my operations in St. Hippolyte, for the conclusion of the merger of the Institute of the Brothers of Strasbourg with that of Mary. I shall be obliged to you, to have it deposited with the Secretariat of the diocese. I have already sent to His Lordship, the bishop of Strasbourg, the necessary documents to obtain the authorization of the Government. In leaving for Paris, he has been kind enough to take the matter in hand.

He excused himself, at first verbally and then in writing, to Father Mertian for having made mild complaints, as regards the counsel he had given to the majority of his Brothers, that they should ask for another year for reflection. I did not care much for his reasons, even the written ones. Without putting in a rejoinder, I answered him that I believed that he had had only good intentions in all that he had been able to say or to do for the conclusion of this affair. Furthermore, the verbal account speaks only of facts, and he admitted the compete truth of them all.

Reverend Vicar General, I look upon this affair as finished. I am leaving tomorrow for Colmar and on Monday I shall leave Alsace.

I had planned especially to form an establishment of Brothers in Ribeauville and perhaps even in Guebwiller. Father Mertian had provided for this, even before the general merger, as fifteen Brothers, at least, had their special designation. I had asked of Father Mertian a list of names of the Brothers and of the communes where they were placed. I did not give this matter any serious attention until I noticed, in my particular conferences, a perfect agreement among them.

After all that has passed, I promised only four complete establishments in Alsace for the reopening of classes: at Colmar, St. Hippolyte, St. Marie-aux-Mines, and Ammerschwir. I nevertheless consoled the rector of Ribeauville, the Justice of the Peace, and other inhabitants of this small town, in having them hope that perhaps later I could lend myself to the realization of their desires. They understood that I could not easily send Brothers of Mary to Ribeauville or elsewhere, while former Brothers, having come out of the Strasbourg Institute, would be conducting schools.

I experienced great regret, Reverend Vicar General, to leave Strasbourg without having been able to do and say goodbye to you, as I had the honor of writing about it to his Lordship. For all the affairs of our humble Society, I shall take the liberty of addressing

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published a course of Theological Institutions, which had a great success at this time. Under the Restoration, designated for the bishopric of Metz, he refused the honor and accepted in 1824, only the office of Vicar General of Strasbourg, which he filled until 1834.

myself to you, and I shall do so with entire confidence, since you have already given me so many tokens of deep interest. I am with profound respect, Reverend Vicar General, etc.

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After the conclusion of the affair concerning St. Hippolyte, Father Chaminade concludes the foundation of Arbois.

413 – TO FATHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Arbois, October 1, 1826

It is from Arbois, my dear son, that I shall finally write to you. I shall be leaving for Besançon tonight at two o'clock. Wednesday morning, on October 4th, I shall go to Gray where I shall stop for only a few hours. From there, during the night, I shall go by coach from Vesoul to Nancy, then from Nancy to Paris, where I shall be, I hope, at the latest on the 10th or 11th. I shall make a stop in Paris of only two or three days. I shall be taking all kinds of coaches, in order to arrive in Bordeaux towards the 16th or 17th of the current month. If the bishop of Nancy does not delay me, I shall try to be in Bordeaux in the morning of Monday, the 15th, so as not to find myself traveling on Sunday.

The retreat of St. Laurent may open in the evening of the 17th or of the 18th, as you folks may see fit, but it seems suitable that it ought not to be delayed beyond that date. If I have not yet come back, Father Collineau could take the lead, if his health permits. I shall be occupied with so many affairs upon arriving, that I shall need that one or the other help me with some of the religious exercises. They could get ready in the meantime.

I received all your letters addressed to Strasbourg and the one addressed to Colmar. I stayed in Strasbourg only three days and a half, of which one and a half was passed in Molsheim, the country place of His Lordship.

Dear Brother Clouzet had been too much in a hurry to write that the Prefect of the Jura did not permit the Daughters to establish themselves in Arbois without previous approbation. All difficulties have been lifted by now. It would be good they were brought together in Bordeaux when I arrive, so that they may leave a short time after my arrival. If I do not join the list of their names to this letter, as it seems likely, I shall send it while I am on my way. I am leaving out many reflections, as you may easily notice. . . .

I am bringing along with me a young ecclesiastic of Alsace who is ready to receive Holy Orders. He has a decided taste for the Arts and Crafts, and is even good enough for sculpture, especially in marble. Since we left Mulhouse, he is my inseparable companion. I brought him especially to the prefect in Vesoul, in case it might be necessary to discuss this special pursuit to a finish. In passing through Gray, I shall take along another

ecclesiastic, who has made very good studies.[1] Father Lalanne is keeping Brother Muhlkraupt for himself. It is to be presumed that the two Barnhartes will go to Gray.

I am forced to stop here. Be sure to give news about me to all those who may be interested in having some.

I am saying nothing, my dear son, about the pain I experienced in learning about the bad state of your health. Anyhow, you did well in also telling me of the improvement that has taken place. Nor am I telling you how often I think of and pray for you. As regards myself, I can say that I never felt better.

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The following letter is dated from the bishop's palace in Nancy, where Father Chaminade is the guest of his friend Bishop de Forbin-Janson.

414 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Nancy, October 7, 1826

To my dear son David. Here, my dear son, is the list of the religious that I had chosen for Arbois and that I did not have the time to copy at the time I wrote to you from this city. Sister Mary-Joseph, Superioress; Sister St. Joseph, Directress of the boarding school and Mother of zeal; Sister St. Denis, Mother of work and Mistress of embroidery; Sister St. Francis Regis, classroom teacher; Sister Scholastica, teacher of writing; Sister St. Joseph (bis), Mistress of the day pupils; Miss Dardy, teacher of vocal music and piano; three lay sisters, or at least two. The Mother Superior of Bordeaux will be able to help you in making the choice, without hampering too much other communities. Here are a few directive observations.

1. In the place of Mother Mary-Joseph and Stanislas, call Mother Louis of Gonzaga who will have the double title of Superioress and Mistress of Novices. She is in Condom as Mother of Zeal. The latter, Mother Gonzaga, would be replaced by Mother Holy Faith who is in Agen. Sister St. Joseph, or Miss Durrenback, is in Agen and fills no office there, unless only as a titular. Sister St. Denis is in Bordeaux. So are Sister Francis Regis and Sister Scholastica. I think that Miss Dardy is already in Bordeaux.

[1] Mr. Augustine Bouly (1790-1878) born in Chargey-lez-Gray, after having taken, for four years, courses in theology in the Seminary of Besançon, he entered as a postulant in St. Remy, where he tried himself out in teaching in 1824. He made his novitiate at the Madeleine under the direction of Father Caillet (1826-27) and was employed as professor at St. Remy and at St. Hippolyte, director in Marast and Charolles, assistant pastor in Courtefontaine. He died in Besançon after a short illness, leaving the memory of a zealous and charitable priest.

2. If Sister Josephine, who is in Condom, is restored to health, and in condition to make as long a trip as going to Arbois, she should be united to the group of Sisters there. Although Mother Emmanuel is generally in charge of the Community, because the Superioress doesn't know how either to command or direct her, I image that, to withdraw her, even temporarily, you would find many obstacles, as much because of the boarding school as of the Sodality, and nothing must be forced. The Superioress is both weak and timid, but there would be no obstacle in taking Sister Josephine away, provided she is in a condition to stand the voyage.

What would have made me desire Mother Emmanuel for Arbois, at least for some months, is the reason of her exterior appearance. In this city, one must make a sensation on arriving. Now, there will be quite a big number of distinguished guests both in the boarding school and in the novitiate. If the Daughters of Mary are not inferior to the Religious of the Sacred Heart established in Besançon, it is not to be doubted that both the boarding school and the novitiate will furnish us with tolerably good subjects.

Sunday, October 8th. I am leaving this evening at six o'clock for Paris, with two theologians, one an Alsatian, the one who has taste for the Arts and Crafts, and the other from Gray, who was teaching this year at St. Remy. I thought I should bring him to Bordeaux. I am continuing my observations.

3. Father Bardenet is offering to the Community in Arbois, for one year, a cook who is very clever in preparing food, in going to market, etc. He considers her very suitable for a convent. It is believed that she is one of those who are in St. Remy. In consequence, there will have to be quite a few lay Sisters for the washing and the gardens, of which there are already two large ones, one for the boarders, another for the novices, etc., etc. . . .

4. I think that Miss Bruite will stay in Condom this year, but I would not see any difficulties, in case she does not enter there, to join her to the group of Sisters in Arbois, under the same conditions as in Condom, provided, of course, that the Superioress feels that she will be able to control and govern her, so that she may not be harmful to the community.

I am not speaking, my dear son, of the affairs that I had to handle in the various places through which I passed, since I hope to be able to embrace you again very shortly. Very often, I would have wanted to have you at my side, before coming to a decision. *Sit nomen Domini Benedictum*!

I am now obliged to close. The bishop of Nancy is finishing his Mass and the bell will soon call us to lunch. My health is holding up well, in spite of my frequent traveling during the day and at night. I shall write to you again from Paris. *Pax Domini sit semper tecum*!

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According to his previsions, Father Chaminade had returned to Bordeaux by October 16th and was giving the exercises of the annual retreat to his religious united in St. Laurent (October 19-26) and was also providing for the needs of his old and new establishments in the North, as is shown by the following obedience.

415 – OBEDIENCE TO FATHER ROMAIN, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 28, 1826

Our dear son, Father John B. Romain, priest of the Society of Mary, is chosen this year to go and exercise the functions of chaplain in our establishment of St. Hippolyte, Department of the Upper Rhine. He will conduct six of the Brothers of Mary destined to four of our establishments, namely Brothers Bouveret and Delcamp for St. Remy, Upper-Saône; Brothers Colin and Hunolt for Colmas; Brother Perriguey for Ammerschwir; and Brother Thiriet for St. Hippolyte, where he is to go by himself. . . .

He will pass by Lyons and Arbois, in the Department of the Jura. We recommend him, as well as the Brothers, the leading of whom we confide to him, to all the authorities, civil and ecclesiastical, if, which God forbid, some accident should befall them on their long way.

Given in Bordeaux, October 28, 1826.

The Superior General of the Society of Mary.

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In the course of his recent trip, Father Chaminade had prepared the foundation of an interesting work in Besançon; there was question of a school for the Arts and Crafts for the benefit of the orphans of the Hospital of St. James. He confided the execution of this work to Brother Clouzet.

416 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 6, 1826

To my dear son Clouzet, Superior of St. Remy – I have just received your letter of October 24th, and I am answering it almost immediately. I have not had any other news from Father Brothier than those which you gave me.[1] I have known about all concerning his past. Before and after his priesthood, at all times, there was evidence only of uprightness, piety,

[1] Father Brothier had left St. Remy during the retreat.

and refinement. The numerous Mass intentions he accepted here and there, will be most conscientiously taken care of. During the long stay that his illness obliged him to make in Paris, a religious of another order did all he could to disgust him with the Society of Mary, and doubtless, to attract him to his own. Patience, and all will be cleared up in due time.

You will do well in seeing the archbishop of Besançon, and here is the chance for it. While passing in Besançon, I was at the hospital, as I had promised I would be to the Superioress and to the sister of the bishop of Strasbourg.[2] I visited the large building destined for the orphans of the city, and I thought I could entertain the hope that we could take charge of the direction of the entire place, as well as of the teaching of reading and writing, and of the four trades there followed.[3] Six Brothers seem to suffice for everything, one for teaching of religion, writing and reading, who is known there as primary school teacher, four Brothers for the four trades: hosier, weaver, carpenter, and shoemaker; and a cook. This part of the hospice is or can be sufficiently separated from the rest of the hospital, so that the Brothers can live there in community with the children, etc., etc. I thought at the beginning of November you might be able to go there on a visit, to look over everything in order to be able to assume full charge sometime in January.

As regards the workmen [of the hospice] who might bother you, you might temporarily keep the same ones, offering them the same advantages as they receive from the Administration. For them, there wouldn't be any difference except that of being dependent upon the Brothers and of being paid by them instead of by the Administration. One or two, like the hosier and the weaver, I believe, are of these orphans who were reared in the Establishment, and who, it seems, would easily become attached to the Society.

As regards the primary teacher, you might take Brother Perriguey.[1] He is actually on his way to Ammerschwir, but since his departure, I have learned of the death of Brother Jerome[2] and of the illness of Brother Benedict, his school colleague.[3] I am writing to Father

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[2] Sister Tharin, religious in the Hospital St. Jacques in Besançon.

[3] The orphanage of the Hospital St. Jacques of Besançon, confided to the Society of Mary in 1827 was destroyed by fire in 1840 and transferred at this time to the school near Besançon, in the quarters previously occupied by the students of philosophy of the diocesan seminary. It remained there until 1898.

[1] Brother August Perriguey (1797-1834), born in Accolans, Doubs, entered the novitiate in St. Laurent in 1825, and was employed in the Hospital of St. Jacques in Besançon, then in St. Remy, where he died as the result of an accident. Several interesting letters of Father Chaminade to him remain to us.

[2] Jerome Probst, Brother of the Congregation of Father Mertian, died in Ammerschwir, as a novice of the Society.

[3] Brother François Joseph Enderlin (1804-79) is one of the most outstanding and the most venerable of the first members of the Society of Mary. He came from Schlierbach, Alsace, and entered the Congregation of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine, which Father Mertian had just founded, under the name of Brother Benedict, and in 1826, with several confrères, was united to the Society of Mary as has been seen above in letter 412. After having directed for twelve years the school in Ammerschwir, Brother Enderlin was called through the confidence of Father Chaminade to introduce the Society in Switzerland, by the foundation in 1838 of the important School of Fribourg, which he directed with extraordinary success until its close in 1847, at the time of the defeat of the Sonderbund.

Shortly after, in 1851, Brother Enderlin was charged with a new mission of confidence. Upon the invitation of the great German bishop von Ketteler, he opened the school of St. Marie in Mainz, where he

Doyen, pastor of Ammerschwir, to ask him if he could have the teaching interrupted for some time.[4] I wrote at the same time to the very dear Brother Laugeay to keep him temporarily in Colmar, or to send him to St. Hippolyte. Brother Perriguey does not seem to me entirely qualified to be Head of all this establishment in Besançon.

Put genuine interest in this matter of the Society's taking charge of this Besançon establishment, but without harming its spirit in any way. As I see things, this establishment will be both the cause and the model of several other establishments of about the same kind in several other large cities, and especially in Paris, where they are particularly necessary.

I am sending you, as I had made known to you through Father Caillet, Brothers Brunet and Delcamp. They are traveling in slow stages, and so, if their arrival is delayed as regards the reopening of classes, I think that you will have made provision for that by looking after the pupils of Brother Brunet, being assured of his arrival. Brother Delcamp has a fine handwriting, and is passably educated in all that concerns primary teaching, nevertheless, he must be employed, be it in the novitiate or elsewhere, only under the direction of dear Brother Gaussens, because of his great youth and inexperience. I hope that if he is well directed, he will soon be a great aid to you and also an excellent example for the entire community.

I had written to you through Father Caillet, to send Brother Couston to St. Hippolyte. I think that you have immediately taken care of that. In giving this good Brother the counsels he needs to conduct himself in this establishment as a true Child of Mary, you will do well, although he be far from you, not to lose sight of him and to correspond at times with him.

I am now finishing by embracing you tenderly, as also all my dear children of St. Remy.

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Dated November 7th, we find two acts of application to the Society in favor of Father de Cadignan, superior of the Daughters of Mary in Condom and of Father Imbert, founder of the school in Moissac. The latter, on account of its very eloquent content, deserves to be reproduced.

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was to work until his death, after having won the confidence, the esteem, and the veneration of the entire population. A monument erected through the care of his former pupils covers his mortal remains in the cemetery in Mainz. The works founded and directed by Brother Enderlin were the occasion and the point of departure for the establishments of the Society of Mary in Switzerland, in Germany, in Austria, and in America. Thus, in a special manner, he merited the gratitude of his religious family.

[4] The school of Ammerschwir, given over to Father Chaminade by Father Mertian, was directed by the Society from 1826 until 1874.

417 – TO FATHER IMBERT, PASTOR OF MOISSAC

Bordeaux, November 7, 1826

Certificate of Affiliation to the Society of Mary.

We, William Joseph Chaminade, Priest, Missionary Apostolic and Superior General of the Society of Mary, having gone to Moissac at the repeated invitation of Reverend Imbert,[1] Priest, Honorary Canon of Montauban and Pastor of the said city of Moissac, in order to give a decision as regards the establishment of a free school to be taught by the Brothers of Mary, having been touched by the honesty, disinterestedness and loyalty and, especially by the ardent zeal for the glory of the Lord with which he is animated, we accepted the establishment proposed.

Having had the advantage since then of having him with us several days in Community[1]; having been able to examine more thoroughly the excellence of the virtues, which we at first only admired, we have accepted the new offer of joining to the establishment at which we were already working, two schools: the special school and the normal school.

Father Imbert, having made known to us the ardent desire he had to be united as closely as possible with the Society of Mary, while preserving his place and title of pastor of Moissac, where he could be more useful to the Society than in incorporating himself in it and living in its bosom, we did not hesitate to promise him this affiliation and intimate union, from which religion, the said Society, as well as the respectable petitioner, could draw such great advantages.

And by these presents, signed by our name and as Superior General of the said Society, we have affiliated and intimately united, as we affiliate and intimately unite by the fact, our very honored and very respectable Father Imbert to the Society of Mary, of which the central House is in Bordeaux, so that in consequence, the aforesaid may be a participant in the prayers, good works, and merits of the said Society, and of all the Associations that are affiliated to it or which will be in the future, and enjoy also the prerogatives, privileges, and indulgences which are attached to the said title of Affiliation, while asking the favor, with devotion, that each month, in one of the holy Masses what he

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[1] Father Imbert (1767-1840) who, according to a tradition, must have known Father Chaminade in Spain, after having exercised his ministry in Moissac during the Terror at the peril of his life, became archpriest of the Church of St. Peter in this same city, where he was to end his career. He offered his own house to Father Chaminade in which to start a school which still exists today and actually bears his name. The wish to found a normal school in Moissac could not be realized, but around the humble primary schools opened on November 2, 1826, the Society established successively a boarding school and a Scholasticate (1868-79). At Moissac, finally, the Society later opened a novitiate (1872-97), directed the minor Seminary of the diocese (1851-98), and made it the seat of the Province of the Midi, (1809-79). About the House of Moissac, see the *Apôtre de Marie, XVII* page 204.

[1] On the occasion of the retreat of St. Laurent.

will celebrate on a day of his choice, finding himself dispensed from all other prayers because of his breviary.

Furthermore, we wish that our aforesaid Father Imbert, be regarded by the whole Society as one of its members, with all the attentions and with the same confidence as the other priests of the Society of Mary.

In testimony of which, we have signed and have countersigned these presents by our Secretary and sealed with the seal of the Society.

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On several occasions, we have seen the Founder preoccupied with the financial situation of the Society. The worries of this kind were becoming more serious in the Boarding School of Bordeaux, as is proved by the notes addressed to Brother David. If, later, catastrophes were to be the result, it was not because Father Chaminade had not given the timely warning by pointing out the dangers and taken measures to escape them, insofar as it depended upon him.

418 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 1, 1826

The course of action we are taking, my dear son, with Brother Auguste will not lead us—at least it is to be feared—to the end we are proposing to ourselves. We shall get to it, I hope, if you take over, not the accounts, but the directions of the accounts. Don't wait for a completed job and still less for a sustained job. Let him in on it, part for part, and then sustain him. He seems at this time well enough disposed. Do with it whatever you can.

Brother Auguste has good will but he needs to be guided. The multiplicity of details absorbs him, and as a result, he is incapable of a general administration. He will go if he is directed, and if he is given work piecemeal and one part at a time. We have, otherwise, reason to hope that we shall be able to find him some helpers. All to you, my dear son, in the Lord.

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419 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 20, 1826

I am writing, my dear son, to Brother Auguste, and I am enjoining him to communicate my letter to you. I beg of you to do what I am indicating to him, and do it as promptly as possible. The delay here, for something better, would give occasion for the application of the old saying: the better is opposed to the good. Take care of your health.

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A man of means in Orleans, Mr. Pothain, former notary public, had proposed to Father Chaminade to sell him the old buildings of Abbey St. Mesmin in view of establishing there a house of education. The Founder, by the pen of Brother David, makes reference to it to the Bishop.

420 – TO BISHOP BEAUREGARD,
BISHOP OF ORLEANS

Bordeaux, December 2, 1826

Your Lordship: In order to correspond as much as in me lies, with the desire of Your Lordship to know my Institution, I shall have the statutes and the ordinance of the king, which are its foundations and which determine its nature, sent to you. I shall have the honor of sending these documents to you in the way you have indicated to me. However, it would be possible that one of the members of the Association, being on a round of visits,

might be charged with the presentation of these papers to you in my name, and with the expression of my most profound respect.

As regards the project, that it seems was attributed to me, to buy the old house of St. Memain-lez-Orleans,[1] and to form there one of our establishments, the misunderstandings are so great that this account is nearly all contrary to the truth. The fault would have been extreme on my part, to plan, to buy, and to establish, without having previously obtained the authorization of the Episcopal Seat.

The truth is, that Mr. Pothain of Orleans proposed his plan to me and not mine, for the realization of a religious establishment in St. Mesmin. That my principal answer was that I could not do it, if I was not authorized by your Lordship and if neither I nor my works, such as they are, were not known in your diocese.

On the other hand, Mr. Pothain did not have the deciding word in the making of the cession he was talking about. He needed the authorization and the consent of a third party, and finally. . . . the fitness or unfitness of a religious body involves serious questions. Would the establishment meet, in some way, the needs of the diocese? Are the buildings sufficiently large? How are they as regards safety and healthfulness of location? Time is needed to discover the real purchase price, as well as the expenses connected with the carrying out of the plans, and so many other things . . . the preparation of the teachers for the classical courses not for this year, but for another year, what is the spirit of the places? On what kind of cooperation and encouragement can we depend?, etc.

On the lips of the seller, all the difficulties are easily covered with a clever sentence. Here, the historic and religious mementos were not omitted, but it is not being said that there is question of only the thirtieth part of the old monastery, that this thirtieth part is the most difficult, as far as upkeep is concerned, that the remains of the saints are no longer there, that the church has been destroyed. Yes, there is a lot to be thought about. If Mr. Pothain comes into his right of making the cession, all these things will have to be considered. I shall then certainly take the liberty to ask counsel of you. In the meantime, I am congratulating myself over the fact that your letter has meant for me lessons and examples which inspire in me toward your Lordship the sentiments of veneration with which I shall not cease to be, your very humble and faithful disciple, etc.

[1] Former Abbey of the Feuillants, where was established in 1841 the minor seminary of the diocese, rendered famous by Bishop Dupanloup.

The following two letters, written by Brother David, treat of a curious foundation project, of a house for the Daughters of Mary in the city of Aire, in the diocese of the same name, a project that was not to see realization.

421 – TO MISS BEAULAC, AIRE

Bordeaux, December 10, 1826

My dear Daughter: Your undated letter, but which I think was written during the last days of the past month, came to me. It sufficiently recalls to me your preceding letters and the answers which I gave you at the time. I am referring to them in all their contents.

One of the preliminary measures is the only one that has met with any difficulty, but the fault is not on your side. There was question, as I now recall, of making a visit to your place, and then of deciding what could be done with it. My intention was also that the same visitor, who was supposed to give me a report on the place, should go in my name to the ecclesiastical authorities and take information as regards the religious and moral conditions of the locality. All this is necessary to know how to establish oneself, and to prepare the means to make the work bear fruit, to sustain it, and to safeguard it against

certain obstacles. Finally, the thought came to me that, at the time of my visit to our establishments of the Garonne, the Lot, and the Gers, I would be able to make a digression as far as the edge of the Pyrenees, to which you are so close, but all these thoughts could not be reconciled with the designs of Providence, which brought me to the other end of France, at the foot of the Alps, and on the banks of the Rhine. It is not a very long time since I have been back, and your establishment, so long delayed, had come back to my mind without having at my disposal the kind of visitors that might be suitable for the task in hand.

From your last letter, I consulted before God what I was to do in order to carry out his will and to correspond to all your confidence. After all has been examined, it seems to me, that considering the actual state of things, nothing better can be done than to confide the visit and the report to be made, to the worthy pastor of Aire, whom I have the advantage of knowing before his appointment to that post, and that I appreciated as he fully merited to be. This worthy pastor, if he is once convinced that the enterprise is possible, suitable, and capable of producing fruits of virtue and of religion, will take it upon himself to secure the consent of His Lordship, your bishop. He will be kind enough to let me know all that will have happened, and then I shall act without further postponement.

There will be question of sending you a good and well-trained religious sister with one or two companions at most, who, as a result, will arrange everything according to the Rules of the Institute. You will make a study of these Rules, with order and under her direction. This will serve you in place of a novitiate. You will be the foundress of the house of Aire, and you will associate with yourself those of sisters or of your friends, whom you will judge capable of supporting you in all you do. You will associate them to the foundation, because only the foundresses are authorized by the Institute to make their probation outside of the general novitiate, and only in the house newly founded. If a greater number of postulants or foundresses were met with, you would send them to Bordeaux, where the novitiate is located. I have my eyes upon the two Mothers of the Institute, equal in goodness and of whom one will be delegated to you in the meantime, and to get things started.

I am adding here a letter to your pastor; you will read it, my dear daughter, and if there is nothing in it that might be opposed, and anything that I might be ignorant of, after having sealed it, make it your responsibility to get it to the pastor.

In the meantime, pray to God that he may direct you in this work. I am asking Him from the bottom of my heart, that he may deign to grant it, as to you its foundress, his holy blessing.

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422 – TO THE REVEREND PASTOR OF AIRE

Bordeaux, December 20, 1826

Reverend dear Father: It has been a long time since the good God has left us to be separated, one from the other, in our respective works, which, as I fondly hope, are also his. From one day to the next, I was hoping to be able to propose that you help me in accomplishing a design which has application in your territory and which seemed by that very fact to belong to you. But the plan had already been formed and several means of realizing it had been taken before the church of Aire had been placed under your charge. Here is the fact.

Miss Beaulac, of your city, has had the desire for a long time of converting the house of education that she has into a religious house, and to establish it in such a way that it might continue as such after her death. She asked me about Rules, and how she might set about the undertaking. She would have wanted that I be able to see the situation by myself or that, in any case, I have the matter judged by a friend of God, habitually gifted with the ability of judging such establishments.

I entertained the hope of satisfying her, but this hope has vanished. Establishments located far from us, placed at opposite ends of France, have taken up my time and all my strength, as God has wanted. At my return, Miss Beaulac asks me what she should think of my long silence, and if she can hope that I will come to her aid. The good God having been consulted in my prayers, you come to my mind. I don't think that this should provoke you in any way, and that you should give the matter any great or serious consideration.

We would start the establishment under the title of the Daughters of Mary, an Institute which already has notable houses, and of which the divine goodness has wanted me to be the superior. Miss Beaulac would be recognized as the foundress of the house of Aire. She could join to herself co-foundresses, at least to the number of four, which, with herself, would bring the number up to five. She could go beyond this number provided the house offered enough resources for their maintenance in the religious state. Among the number, were it five or more, would be two or three Sisters whom we call Companions, Assistants, or of service, who are not to have less of the religious spirit than the Mothers and being part of the foundation are to receive and share the same privileges, indulgences, etc.

If Miss Beaulac would not be able to join to herself more than two cooperators, we would then have to associate to the foundation, some of the Sisters of our establishments already formed, who would, in this case, have a share in the work of foundation. The number of at least five is indispensable, as the Institute does not know of any foundation with less than this number. You would see to their choice, in connection with Miss Beaulac, among really pious persons and free from any past irregularity.

I informed Miss Beaulac that I would keep in readiness to leave one of the Mothers, who is better instructed in our Rules, who will go to do what several holy religious have done in the most edifying monasteries of the Church. She will get to know these new

Sisters, to direct them during the time necessary and the duration which I shall determine, instructing them in all the Rules, both by conferences and personal example. She will also bring along with her two or three sub-officers, also well instructed. The time of these studies will take the place of novitiate for the subjects admitted for the Foundation, and the individuals will be left to themselves until their progress will have led them to a point in education that leaves no more to be desired.

The miraculous harmony, if I may so speak, that reigns in the convents of the Order, will continue, I hope, in the new group. However, for the moment, there are other things to think about.

1. Is a religious house, containing a boarding school for young ladies, suitable to the region and its surroundings?
2. Can schools for the young daughters of the people and free to the largest extent possible be accommodated separately?
3. Are there now analogous establishments that are to be taken care of?
4. Has the bishop any settled opinion about these diverse matters? Will he receive this new establishment under his eminent jurisdiction?
5. Have the civil and local authorities any need to be spurred on or will they gladly receive this additional help for religion and sound instruction?

My dear pastor, let us plant the vine of the Lord together. You do the watering and Providence will bless it. With this intention, address some prayers during the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and believe me to be one with you in Jesus and Mary.

* * * *

The foundation of the Daughters of Mary in Arbois had been effected on November 16th. The consolations of the first days were soon followed by a very sad trial, the serious illness of the young Superioress, Mother Mary-Joseph de Casteras, cousin of the Foundress and who was to become the third Superioress-General of the Institute.

The religious found support and comfort with a venerable benefactress, Mrs. Crestin d'Oussieres, to whom Father Chaminade addressed the following letter.

423 – TO MRS. D'OUSSIERES, ARBOIS

Bordeaux, December 27, 1826

Dear Madame, I received your excellent letter, dated the 16th of the present month. I read it with great attention and I did not find it long, because it told me only of things that are of great interest to my heart. I am very thankful to you for it, and I beg of you always to continue your maternal cares for the benefit of the Daughters of Mary. They all have the will to do the greatest good possible, but they have little experience. They are 500 miles away

from their Good Father and so, they have all the more need of an intelligent and experienced mother. Providence has brought them close to you, and shows them to you as worthy of your affection by their virtues, at the same time as worthy of your compassion, by the kind of extreme poverty in which they find themselves. How could you stop yourself from adopting them and considering yourself their mother? It is in this hope that I have adopted their establishment in Arbois. All that I had been told about you, all that I had seen by myself, made me overlook many difficulties, which I could not at all have overlooked otherwise. From now on, I shall speak to you with great openness of soul, without any fear or letting you notice the weaknesses and defects, which ought to be hidden from the eyes of the world or strangers.

I admired, Madame, the prudence, charity, and delicacy with which you passed on the article in my letter of which Father Bardenet was the object. I shall not come back to it. I understand the discretion that must be used in dealing with him and would not find it hard to send him my procuration for the borrowing of the boarding school. I have met with few men more intelligent and more economical than he when it comes to building. Right now, he is busying himself and with great interest, with the convent of Arbois. It would be annoying to let him apply his solicitude and care elsewhere. Furthermore, it is prudent to profit by the good dispositions in which the families of your country regions seem to be, those which have daughters to be brought up and educated. It is very hard to make up for time lost in like occasions. By the confidence which you have inspired, Madame, I shall consider carefully all that you may tell me, that is useful to do. Nevertheless, I shall take the liberty of making the following observations to you.

1. The Society of Mary, like the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, has and acquires each day a certain fortune. I am not talking about my personal belongings, because I am identifying myself with the one and the other Institute. All that I have and all that I may have later on has been consecrated to the Lord for a long time. But, and you will not be surprised at it, I have contracted debts and I have taken commitments which I sincerely hope to honor in their time. I shall be quite a bit embarrassed for two or three years to make, as we say, a good face on a bad matter. Besides that, the current expenses are very heavy, as, at the present time, I am in a position to form two other convents for the Daughters of Mary,[1] without speaking of those of the men which I have promised. Although the essential expenses for these establishments are offered to me, how many accessory ones there are which are not counted along!

2. The apartments or rooms of the rural police were destined to lodge boarders. I had reckoned with Father Bardenet, that easily and with next to no expense, the religious could receive the 20 or 25 boarders. We decided, besides, that this year there wouldn't be any tuition for school. You see how the first plan is changed. It is not precisely that I disapprove of this change, but you doubtless see the consequences.

3. In order to save still more on building, Father Bardenet made me look over a vast place where we could put, without much cost, the sleeping quarters of a large boarding school. Personally, I did not understand much about it, but I turned the matter over to the intelligence of Father Bardenet, who had looked all over the place himself.

4. There, where we placed the free schools, we could without confusion, organize the paying schools. There would be sufficient place. The entries could be made differently and each group of pupils could even have a yard for gathering, proportionate to its number. I think I had Father Bardenet observe that we could arrange for a decent apartment for the chaplain. When I visited this part of the establishment, I found it very little disposed for school premises.

Father Bardenet assured me that there would be time to have all repairs done before All Saints. It seems that so far nothing has been done, and this ought to be very inconvenient for the Sisters. It must also be very hard for them to have the children go through the movements needed to train them in deportment, modesty, etc., etc. The Mayoralty you tell me, Madame, is looking after the repairs needed on the free schools. Would it not also be considered as part of its responsibility, looking after those of the paying schools, at least of those that concern the working women?

5. It would seem after all these considerations, that we could delay, without inconvenience, the construction of the big building. It would cost, in truth, enough to pay for all these repairs, but it would be a sum less than 20,000 francs and we could

[1] There is question, doubtless of the projects of formation in Aire—see the preceding letters—and in Lectoure, which were not able to be realized.

receive, without interruption, all the boarding students that would present themselves. We could even see, by the number of boarders, the urgency there would be for further building. The religious are doing well in inconveniencing themselves to receive the 12 boarders who are booked.

As regards the furniture of the boarding school, we could really limit ourselves to having all the wooden beds made the same, and perhaps also what goes with them. The parents, who it seems to me are all of the city, could have the couches made according to measure and of wood. You know, Madame, that in all the boarding houses, the boarders furnish all that they need for their personal use, but here, as there is question of uniformity, which I much approve, it would be good that the community furnish the beds, and then, as in other boarding houses, it will require a little fee from each boarder as remuneration for this service.

You see, Madame, I am speaking to you as I would to the real Mother of this establishment. You will confer about it either with Father Bardenet or with those with whom it will seem useful to you to confer. You will have the kindness to let me know about your final plans, and I shall conform myself to them. I shall not write to Father Bardenet, as you will know better than I all that is most suitable to tell him as regards myself. Anyhow, you can assure him of my dispositions to continue the work begun. I have never abandoned any enterprise, and certainly I shall not begin to do so with this one.

It would not at all seem suitable to me to have the Sisters mixed up with all sorts of temporal schemes. Let them carefully follow their Rules, enter well into the spirit of their institution and occupy themselves with their works as perfectly as possible. That is their all-important concern.

I am taking the liberty of inserting in your envelope a little note for the good Superioress, who will be, I hope, in a state of convalescence. I would fear to burden you by adding here other observations that I would have for you, as regards the personnel of the Sisters. I shall limit myself to assuring you, Madame, of my sincere gratitude and profound respect.

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The following two letters bear upon family questions. The first makes allusion to some difficulties arising between Father Chaminade and his nephew, Francis Lala, at the time of a recent stay of the latter in Bordeaux. The second treats of a claim of Francis Chaminade, the older brother, upon the heritage of his sister, who had died on the preceding 9th of July. Lucretia Chaminade, in reality, had left nothing. "You know well," wrote Father Chaminade later to his brother, "that your sister, in the last and long years of her life, has lived on scarcely anything else than the benevolence of others." (May 29, 1827)

424 – MRS. SOPHIE LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, January 7, 1827

I have received, my dear niece, your letter of January first, and I am thanking you for the New Year greetings and good wishes that you offer me. I had already offered you the same in my heart, and I am now doing the same but in writing and with great sincerity. The turkey stuffed with truffles came in good shape. We shall eat it with gratitude for your kind remembrance of us.

If your good husband had wanted to listen to some of my counsels, however poor he thought them to be, it is possible that your residence in Bordeaux would have had better success. But you know that when I wanted to make him a few observations on the difficulties that he might run up against or as regards the precautions it seemed advisable for him to take, he believed I was indifferent as regards the success of his affair, etc. You are aware of all that has passed. At bottom, what could I do? Sigh, remain patient, and leave things as they were.

I was pained, my dear niece, when you left Bordeaux, hiding the displeasure you and your husband had by reason of my conduct in your regard. You have been misled. At my return from my round of visits, you did not deign, neither the ones nor the others, to come to me, unless as it were, in passing. If I had begged you not to come to my home during my absence, you would have been obliged to believe that I had good reasons for that, and not that you were a burden to me.

I took my part in the damage the hail and the mountain streams did to your harvest. It is very rare that reverses, just like prosperities, do not succeed one another.

Firmin has not written to me. I did not know he was in Paris. I had no other news about him than that which you have just given me. I fear very much for him in the capital. It is religion, which especially in a young man, sustains virtue. I am going to recommend him to Mr. O'Lombel, but what will he be able to do for him?

My regards, I beg of you, my dear niece, to your good husband, content or not content with his uncle. Embrace him for me. I hope you will bring him to the point of recognizing the sentiments of affection and interest which I have for him, for you, and for your son.

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425 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 8, 1827

Does a childless widow, my dear son, have the legal obligation to declare in writing that she wants to use some of her funds to sustain and render her existence more agreeable? Would she be able to offer and give them during her lifetime as a feeble compensation for the numerous sacrifices that would be made for her, without further written declaration? I thought so, and you seemed also to think so, when I asked you about it some time before her death.

If my sister did not have the legal right to dispose of what she had during her lifetime, even for her needs, without this said declaration, we must not risk getting mixed up with a lawsuit; rather, we must get along with my brother, and, in one or the other case, it is easy to see the declaration that has to be made at the time of the registration.

As regards the last letter I wrote to my brother and which got him all worked up, it is difficult for me to have any regrets about it as I recall the good dispositions I was in at the time and the careful attention I gave to it.

Take care of your health, my dear son, but, as far as it will be possible for you without prejudice to anything or anyone, do not lose sight of the fact that the lack of order in the temporal affairs of the boarding school, may cause the whole establishment to crumble. Brother Laugeay has just run expenses up to 1300 francs in Colmar, which he regarded as indispensable and which are having no other effect than rendering the Brothers vain and to make them lose the religious spirit. This is the admission of two Brothers who wrote to me about it, without making themselves known. Yours sincerely.

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426 - TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 10, 1827

I have received, my dear son, with a very real pleasure, the good New Year wishes and greetings which you and my dear children in St. Remy sent me on last December 31st. I bless you and I bless them, not only for this year, but for your entire life, as well as theirs, in all the effusion of my paternal tenderness.

You have already had fifteen beds made for the new community of Arbois, you have advanced it some money, and you have done well to do so. It is thus that good brothers must act towards Sisters who are working at the same tasks as they themselves. Nevertheless, I had already written to Mrs. d'Oussieres on the subject of the beds for the

boarders, but my letter had not yet reached her at the time of your visit to Arbois or to the other establishments. I cannot say when, but you may be sure it will be done.

How is it, my dear son, that you received my letter of the 14th of December only on the 29th? I have already noticed, several times, delays more or less long. Try all you can to prevent this inconvenience.

I received your letter of December 31st on the 7th of January. You answered me too soon on the subject of the tax of 10,000 francs.[1] You did not reflect seriously before God, and you have still less placed all your confidence in the paternal providence of our God. You have seen but one means, that of borrowing 10,000 francs from some capitalist, and of being provided with a procuration that you felt you needed for this purpose. Our dear Brother Louis Rothéa answered me that he would suggest to his brother, Xavier, without seeming to do so, not to ask you for anything this year.[2] A certain number of days ago, he answered me on this subject. . . .There is a lot more importance than you seem to believe, in paying here. If some accident happens to take place, at least I shall not have to reproach myself for not having taken all the means possible to prevent it, and the least accident of this kind can do like the card penitents,[3] the first one that falls causes all the others to fall successively.

I would be pleased to see you look after the preparation of several dormitories in the garrets, to give further development to the boarding school. Nevertheless, that should not be prejudicial to the 10,000 francs. Make it a point to receive all the boarders who present themselves. Let them sleep in the extra rooms, even in my room and its antechambers.[4]

I am awaiting, from day to day, a young man in ecclesiastical garb who is to leave for St. Remy as your boarder. He is 18 years old and was in the sixth class in the seminary of Besançon. He is pious, very honest, and very modest. He left the seminary only on account of the misconduct of his father, which has become public news. The poor young fellow is trying to hide his shame and to be in some distant place where he would not be known. His mother has the wherewith to provide for his tuition, for his voyage, and his maintenance. We have agreed on four hundred francs for tuition and twenty francs for the use of the bed. He will be supplied with all the clothes he needs. I am expecting him any day now. His father's house is located about twenty miles from Bordeaux. In case of need, I shall tell you more about the subject.

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[1] In his letter of the 14th of December, which has not been preserved, Father Chaminade had asked Brother Clouzet to send him 10,000 francs to take care of urgent needs in Bordeaux.
[2] As interest on sums loaned.
[3] The allusion here is to a children's game. Cards are placed one against the other in a file, similar to a row of penitents. If the first falls, all the others fall with it.
[4] The room on the second floor at the extremity of the right wing of the château, opening on the principal alley.

It seems to me that you have been a bit hasty as regards Besançon. 1. Is Brother Troffer really in condition to be head of such an establishment? 2. Upon the supposition that he is—as can be presumed, considering how close you are to Besançon—have you seen the administrators of this establishment? Are they glad to give us the administration and the government? Will they do for the Brothers of Mary what they are doing for the present teachers? etc., etc. In a way, I would be pleased if, by this substitution, we could point to a considerable saving in the running of the place. The present heads of the shops, who would be kept, must be entirely dependent upon the head of the establishment and not upon the administration.

Take care that all the arrangements are very clear, that all is well ordered, that the rule of the House and of the Brothers is well adapted and entirely conformable to the spirit of the Institute of Mary. You will be in a position to approve everything, at least temporarily, but for definitive authorization, pass all on to me. Furthermore, I see with pleasure that you are taking interest in this establishment. If I had the time to tell you what is happening in Paris in regard to us,[1] you would be quite glad to know you had in no wise neglected it.

Father Caillet let me see the letter of apology of Father Rothéa. I had been expecting that he would recognize his mistake. I shall answer him a little later. As regards the prompt opening of the new establishment of St. Marie-aux-Mines where all is ready to receive the Brothers, here are the final arrangements that I shall order by this mail for the four establishments of Alsace:1. To St. Marie-aux-Mines, Brothers Laugeay, Weber, and Perriguex; 2. To St. Hippolyte, Brother Colin, in place of the dear Brother Rothéa; all the others, just as they are. Brother Rothéa will keep the high inspection of the house; he can do this easily from Colmar. There are three coaches each day from Colmar to Selestat. 3. To Colmar, the dear Brother Rothéa, Head, and teaching the class that Brother Weber is handling for those destined for First Communion; Brother Coustou for the big class in French. 4. To Ammerschwir, the two who are already there, until a third can be sent. You see, my dear son, Brothers Coustou and Perriguex, designated for Colmar, I cannot tell you all the precautions I had to take in order to arrive at this result, all the letters that have been written from everywhere, all the information I gathered wherever it could be had. I hope that all will go well. Brother Coustou will find one of my letters in Colmar.

Take courage, my dear son! The Apostles, in going to fulfill their mission, wept and sighed, but what was their joy, says the Holy Spirit, at the sight of the abundant harvest they reaped! You will be like the Apostles, my dear son, you sow in tears and sighs, but the blessing of God will give you an abundant harvest, and a very pure joy will be your reward, but penetrate yourself well with the spirit of the Apostles!

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[1] Through Mr. O'Lombel, Father Chaminade had been put in relations with diverse personalities who were busy with diverse social activities, in particular with the members of the Association of St. Joseph, established in 1822 by the Missionaries of France, who directed the apprentice shops for young workmen.

A new trial is threatening the founder: the state of health of Mother De Trenquelléon is becoming more and more alarming, and the lingering illness that is sapping her strength is progressing, more and more. Father Chaminade orders public prayers to be said for her in all the houses of the Daughters of Mary.

427 – TO MOTHER LOUIS OF GONZAGA, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 27, 1827

I have sent this morning, my dear daughter, by today's mail, an order that prescribes prayers and supplications for the restoration of the health of the good Mother Superior of the convent of Agen. It is to be sent to the three convents of Agen, Tonneins, and Condom. As time was pressing, I was not able to have copies made, and so I made up for that by this little letter for the novitiate in Bordeaux and for the community in Arbois, to which you will be kind enough to send a copy.

This order contained in substance the following six articles:

Article 1. Every day, until the entire restoration of the health of Sister Marie, Superioress and Foundress of the Daughters of Mary, the Litany of St. Joseph will be sung.

Article 2. The first nine days will be distinguished as a novena, to which are invited the members of the Third Order and of the Sodalities and all pious persons, friends of the convents.

Article 3. In the cities where reside our Lords the bishops and archbishops or their representatives, a humble petition will be presented to them on the part of the convents, to the end of obtaining permission of having benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every day during the novena.

Article 4. The singing of the Litany of St. Joseph will be continued until the reception of the official notice concerning the restoration to health of the Mother Superior. The pious lay persons will be able to assist at it, without any infringement upon the rules of strict enclosure.

Article 5. A day of general communion will be determined upon in the course of the novena, as much for the Sisters as for the lay persons who will be making it.

Article 6. All the communions of the Sisters which take place on Sundays, as also the Friday fasts, will be made according to this intention.

You will see to it, my dear daughter, that these six articles are carried out within the shortest delay possible, and you will kindly and promptly give notice of them to the community of Arbois.

I hope to be able to spend all the next Thursday morning in the novitiate, and I shall have occasion to listen to all those who will want to speak to me.

May the peace of the Lord, my dear daughter, be always with you!

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428 – TO BISHOP DE CHAMON, BISHOP OF ST. CLAUDE

Bordeaux, February 9, 1827

Your Lordship—I am all confused over all the good things and kind attentions that you express in your letter of last November, for which I have not, as yet, had occasion to express my sincere gratitude. All I can adduce as excuse for this delay is that I wanted to have a copy of your letter sent to Father Bardenet and to await his answer, as regards the affair of the normal school, of which he had treated with your Lordship. I have not yet received his answer. Perhaps he feels guilty of having exaggerated our pretensions for the forming of this school. I am disposed and ready to do all that will be possible, so as to enter into your views relative to this establishment, which is so necessary to your diocese. What is most difficult in the establishments, as you wisely observe, Your Lordship, is to give them a really capable and efficient head. If, as I hope, this summer I can make my visits in the Northeast of France, I shall have the honor of seeing you, of paying you my respectful homage, and of agreeing upon a common plan of action with Your Lordship, by which I can be of help to you in increasing the good you are doing in your diocese.

In the letter which I had the honor of writing to you on November 6th, Your Lordship, I omitted designating to you the superior I was choosing for the community of Arbois. In fact, I wrote to him only on November 8th. He is Father Lalanne, principal of the Collège of Gray, one of our good religious, and one of my dearest children. But, Your Lordship, although the correspondence of the community with him may be very active, considering the short distance between Arbois as he has already done several times since the arrival of the Sisters, I would believe that in pressing cases, it would be good that he have a substitute even in Arbois. The Reverend Pastor of the city seems to have the wisdom and the experience necessary. Not doubting, Your Lordship, that you will consider him acceptable, I shall write to him to tell him I took the liberty of designating him to you. I shall also give notice of this to the superioress of the community of Arbois. This budding community was not able to give its works the development they should have because of the long and dangerous illness that the superioress fell victim to a few days after her arrival, and also

because the preparations on the building had made but little progress by the time the Sisters came.

I am, Your Lordship, with the most profound respect, etc.

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Nevertheless, the moment has arrived in which the first élan passed, the difficulties inherent to the consolidation of the work make themselves felt. These are over increasing financial embarrassments in proportion as the establishments are multiplied, the capital of foundation being almost always lacking. Also, embarrassments connected with personnel: there is not enough time for training of subjects, and the requirements of the works call for less strictness as regards the admission of recruits. These are embarrassments of organization: the government of the Society is constituted only nominally, in fact all still rests only on the head of the Father Chaminade, and it is very difficult that things be otherwise. From all these causes, there results for souls less strongly tempered, fears, hesitation, discontent, and these diverse impressions begin to show in the correspondence.

Henceforth, Father Chaminade will be obliged not only to provide for the progress of the works, but at the same time, to remedy these interior dangers as well as these causes of uneasiness. He applies himself to this task in a very instructive correspondence with Brother Clouzet, which is beginning about this time and which will continue during long years.

429 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, February 14, 1827

Brother Gaussens tells me, my dear son, that you fell on the ice-covered snow and that you sprained your arm. I was sorry to get this news, and still more sorry at the thought of the pain you must be experiencing with this sprain. From day to day, I am awaiting some new letter, which will give me further details and which tell me if there have been still more annoying complications or consequences.

On the occasion of a letter from Father Lalanne on the subject of the 10,000 francs for which I asked you, and in which he finds that in this affair you reason more like a merchant than as a religious, I was going to write to you again, when I had someone reread to me my letter of January 10th, the one answering yours of December 31st, and I noticed that Father Lalanne and I had seen everything about in the same way. You will also do well to read it again and to place all your confidence in the Lord. If we are too much surprised at difficulties and we allow ourselves to be discouraged, far from advancing, we shall be throwing ourselves headlong into serious difficulties. If I have asked you for 10,000 for the beginning of next May, it is because I believed that you might be able to succeed by using the means that I had indicated to you in my request. By your letter of December 31st, you don't seem to have examined the affair seriously, and still less to have prayed God to favor the trials and endeavors you might make. Doubtless, nothing must be done that is contrary to reason and prudence, but we must know that there is such a thing as supernatural prudence, which is very much superior to the human variety.

I learned with pleasure of the arrival of Brother Coustou in Colmar, but I see with some regret at the same time, by the letter of the dear Brother Gaussens, that you needed him at St. Remy. If you had sent him right away at the beginning of the school year, when, through Father Caillet, I brought the matter to your notice, and when, at the same time, you would have given me a list of the needs of your establishment, I presume that now your house would be provided with all the subjects it needs. Whatever the case may be, I shall watch with care what is happening, so as to profit by the circumstances, and, if possible, to send you some new subject.

In the meantime, give me a very clear account of all the subjects which you might need for all the functions to be accomplished and one of the subjects who are fulfilling them at the present time. Tell dear Brother Gaussens that I bewail the fact that he is overloaded with work. I shall answer him directly in the soonest possible moment.

I am sending you the chart for a list by name of all the Brothers, which you will fill out or have filled out when you can, without haste but also without negligence.

I would still have many things to tell you, but I am obliged to stop for the present. I shall take them up with you as soon as circumstances will permit.

Say many kind things on my part to Brother Brunet. I often think of him, and I hope not to delay much longer in writing him at least a little letter.

May the Lord shower upon you, my dear son, and upon all my children in St. Remy, his most abundant benedictions!

INFORMATION OR CHART FOR THE BROTHERS RECEIVED IN THE SOCIETY OF MARY.

1. Name, Christian name, age, place of birth of the Brothers.

2. Names, Christian of the father and mother, the quality of their condition, their means of existence, the number of their children. Is there some strain in the reputation of someone of the members of the family, and especially of the same name? Is there some hereditary malady?

3. The religious name of the Brothers, if they have one,[1] the date and the conditions of their entry into the Society. The title: is he postulant, novice, professed for one year, two years, three years, for life? The place where he is stationed.

4. A little description of each Brother: his physical build, his character, his judgment, his heart, his education, his piety, aptitude for an office or for work.

[1] As was the case with the Brothers who left the Institute of Father Mertian.

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430 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 7, 1827

Your letter of February 18th came to me at the same time as that which you wrote to Father Caillet on February 16th. I was sighing for the moment when I could answer the one and the other, and I had just found it, when your letter of the 26th came. I am taking all three, and I am answering.

In the three letters, my dear son, just as in the particular sheet, I see with sorrow and much compassion, that your imagination is over excited and this over excitement is the cause of certain troubles of your good heart, which make you sick and cause you severe headaches. At all times, superiors, whatever their grade or rank may have been, have had to put up with many troubles. A good pastor has many, if he wants to do his duty, but his archbishop has many more. St. Paul had to go through many more than each archbishop or bishop in particular. You have many, but do you believe that I haven't still more? Aren't your troubles very much my own? What seems most to worry you is that you are under the impression that I doubt your good dispositions. You would be right, my dear son, if it were true that I have such doubt in your regard, but that is not the case. There is no one in the Society in whom I have more confidence than in you. I may have made several remarks to you, but that is in no way a proof that I have no confidence in you. It means only that I do not approve this or that thing. And then, are you without any kind of defect? Are you not likely to be mistaken, in spite of your good will and your pure intentions? Have I not the duty to help to lift you, when I believe you are falling or have fallen? I may, I admit it, do it rather awkwardly. It is also possible that believing you stronger in virtue, I am less embarrassed with you. Be very much convinced, my dear son, that I am all to you, as I believe you are everything to me in God and for God, and following this conviction, be patient and remain quiet. . . .

I shall follow the particular sheet as a summary of the three letters.

1. I have known something about the letters that were written to you from St. Hippolyte and from Colmar. At one time, some sentences were quoted for me. I answered almost immediately to get away from the impropriety and in such a way that it was never done again. That is perhaps what has brought to you the request that all these letters be burned. That I myself should be biased against you, my dear son, I have already assured you of the contrary, and I am repeating it here very willingly. No, most certainly no!

2. Is the government of the Institute defective? I answer: It is not defective in its principles, but I am far from denying it, as far as its action is concerned. I am so convinced of my awkwardness, that I shall never be astonished when its results are blame.

I ought, as you say, govern alone. That is just what I have been doing since the return from my visits. All the members of my Council are scattered.[1]

As far as you are concerned, in the change of Brother Coustou, it is only I, without influence from any source, who have decided upon it. You say I ought to have consulted the head of the establishment where he was. But are you well aware that I was coming from St. Remy when I made up my mind? The last time I ordered his departure from Colmar, I had just received a letter from Father Rothéa, which about told me that he was useless at St. Remy, that the refusal to send him to St. Hippolyte had hardly any other motive than his excessive vanity. The letter which Brother Coustou wrote to me at about the same time did no more than confirm what Father Rothéa had said. Take note that, previously, you had written to me that it was Father Rothéa who had decided that he was not to leave. On the other hand, what consultation I had made and what information I had sought, from the small number of heads that he have in Alsace! It was only after all possible information, that alone and without any outside influence, after having turned the matter over and over in my mind during several days, that I finally came to my final determination.

I shall be obliged to you, my dear son, that if you see any kind of defect in this way of doing things, you will let me know of it. At my age, one can profit by good advice and wise counsels, and acquire experience, which is always a wise teacher.

3. You cry too, my dear son, against the order that I had given you, to figure on about 10,000 francs for the first two weeks of May, and I see that you have reason to cry out, as your mind was not in the situation, where I thought it might be. I haven't given a similar order to any other establishment. I was taking precautions and care in making my requests, and, so to say, boasting about the imposition I had placed upon you. This way of doing has succeeded in regard to another establishment, which offers far less resources than that of St. Remy. A certain jealousy resulted from it, because, purely and simply, I was imposing 10,000 francs upon you, while the other establishment was being consulted as to what it could do. I was obliged to impose it in the same way for its own satisfaction. We hope to succeed, and it is true that we are praying much.

4. It is true that when Father Lalanne entered our little seminary as Superior, I did not disapprove that he required that all should address one another by the titles of Father or Brother, but I have never ordered that it should be so.[2]

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[1] Father Collineau in Villeneuve, Father Lalanne in Gray. There remained only Brother Auguste in Bordeaux.

[2] In his preceding letter, Father Chaminade had given this superscription: "To my dear son, Brother Clouzet, which motivated the surprise and the protest of Brother Clouzet and the explanation of the

As regards myself, at times I have done it and again at other times I have not done it. I have just given an order as regards this subject, which seems to me conciliatory to all tastes and to all considerations. I shall, however, not have it made known without first having consulted the old and the principal members of the Society. I am not consulting even you, since your advice is so decisive in your letters. Nonetheless, if you happen to have something good to say on the subject, I shall be glad to hear it.

At another time, I shall give you the answer to several other articles in your letters. May the peace of the Lord, my dear son, be always with you!

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431 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 20, 1827

My dear son: I have received your two letters of the 9th and 12th of March. Do not fear to multiply them, as I always receive them with pleasure and interest, although, since some time, they contain but few consoling and encouraging things. All those that come to me from Alsace are post paid, since our straitened circumstances have become known.

It seems that your soul does not yet enjoy great peace. Since you are experiencing still greater contradictions, you are allowing yourself to get into a kind of interior irritation that make these contradictions seem a lot greater than they really are in themselves. . . .

You tell me, my dear son, "Over here, letters are being received from some trustworthy person in Bordeaux, which give distressing details about the Society of Mary and its manner of running things in the Midi." What would you want me to answer, my dear son, to such generalities? As far as I am concerned, I generally receive from all the sections of the Midi where we have establishments of men and of women only letters of congratulation. In general, all the details given me are consoling. I am often asked for new establishments. In Bordeaux, there never has been more rule and order in everything. I have opened my heart to you as regards the kind of chasm dug on Mirail Street, but this chasm has not as yet been seen by anybody. That some persons said to be trustworthy should be writing against the Society does not surprise me in any way, for in the city, talk, for and against, is continually going on, and not based on real knowledge but on rumors and reports, most of the time without any foundation. I am not bothering at all about it. Do

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Founder. It is known that, from the beginning, the religious of the Society had called one another Monsieur L'abbé, and this custom has always been preserved. The appellation of Brother was nevertheless not excluded, as we see from the correspondence of the Founder. It was authorized by the Constitutions of 1839, Art. 132, and in the correspondence among the religious, lay, or clerical, the expression my dear brother was quite frequent at this time. The order to which Father Chaminade makes allusion was not published and has not been preserved.

the same, my dear son, and let us do all the good we can, and do it with all the prudence at our command. Let us keep ourselves in peace.

You add: “St. Hippolyte is getting along very badly and it could hardly be otherwise, for it is a very unwise policy to be wanting to do the impossible.” Do not these lines, my dear son, still announce that there is yet in you a remainder of trouble and irritation? The disorder in St. Hippolyte has not been of long duration. The fire that took place at about the same time has not had any annoying results and was in no way caused by the stumbling block that was to be found there. Father Mertian would certainly be very unkind to attribute his disorder to someone of the Society, since it is one of his former Brothers, the music teacher of St. Hippolyte, who secretly sowed anxiety and discouragement among the boarders and other persons of the house. He was sent away and peace has been restored.

As regards the reflection you make on what you call “our false policy,” I shall not excuse it because I am already entirely convinced that my way of doing things must be very defective, although I am not aware of it. I shall remark only that the word “policy” does not express our way of doing things. I do not recall having started any kind of institution without having first examined if it was in the order of Providence, and when I thought it my duty to start it , I tried to put into it all the prudence of which I was capable. That I should be mistaken as regards the order of Providence or that my prudence should be defective, I grant all that, but that is not exactly what is called policy. Besides, my dear son, can one judge either of the goodness or the usefulness of an establishment by the misconduct of some persons that could in no way be suspected?

“St. Remy is in the saddest of conditions!” I believe it, my dear son, and the illness of Father Chevaux must be giving you additional worries. I believe I have already given you notice that I would not lose sight of St. Remy. Keep me informed about the illness of Father Chevaux and if during the fine season in which we are entering he does not get better, I shall make the greatest sacrifices to send you help. Brother Gaussens, whose letter you have just sent me, speaks to me about your embarrassment, but he does it in a much more moderate way than you, although just as exact. Do, my dear son, all that will depend upon you to enter entirely into the peace of your soul, which should be none other than the peace of God. Adore in all things the dispositions of Providence. Human views are limited and uncertain. Let us entrust ourselves to the amiable Providence of our God. Let us try to carry out, in the best way possible, the views which he deigns to communicate to us, and let us remain quiet. He asks of us cooperation and not success. All the glory be to God, all pain and confusion be to us miserable cooperators!

I am going to write to our dear Brother Olive[1] to have him send you directly his procuration, in order to sell all that he has in the region. If he has a few particular

[1] Brother Peter Olive (1797-1864) born in Amance, near St. Remy, made his novitiate in St. Laurent in 1825, was employed in teaching in diverse schools of the Midi and Franche-Côte, exercised the

intentions, he will be able to let you know them. You will put into these sales all the activity you can and draw from them all the profitable cash you can.

I think that Father Caillet will have already written to you to tell you to receive the 1,000 francs that are due to Sister Marie of the Cross. I do not recall her family name.

I have received, although it was on the day after my name day, but with grateful and paternal affection, the name day greetings and good wishes which you and all my children in St. Remy sent me. I beg you all to accept the assurance of my warm feelings and tender friendship. May the Lord deign to shower upon you all his most abundant blessings!

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In the preceding letter occurs the first explicit mention of Father Chevaux, that humble religious who was to become third Superior General of the Society.

"As long as there will be a Society of Mary, his memory will be in benediction!" Such is the tribute rendered to him the day after his death by a religious charged with writing his biography, one of the most interesting in our annals, and in this he was but the echo of all his Brothers who mourned his death, as that of their Superior and father, and whom they venerated as a saint.

Born in 1796, in the village of Jouhe (Jura) at the foot of the sanctuary of Our Lady of Mont-Roland, the young Chevaux made excellent studies in the Seminary of Besançon, where he was known for his great piety, his sound judgment, and his excellent spirit, but his humility persuaded him that he was unworthy of the priesthood and he returned to his family, then put himself at the service of a venerable priest afflicted with cancer and whom he assisted until his death.

It is at about this time that the Society of Mary took possession of the house of St. Remy. Young Chevaux did not delay to present himself, dressed in a simple peasant smock, to be employed in farm work (1825). The secret of his life and virtues was soon discovered, and in 1828, shortly after his promotion to the priesthood, by order of Father Chaminade, he was charged in the Community of St. Remy with this office of Zeal, which he was to exercise on a terrain more and more vast during the entire course of his long life.

He exercised it first in St. Remy in the boarding school and in the Community of the working Brothers, called St. Joseph, which he formed more by his example than by his counsels, to the practice of the most austere virtues, to the point of making of it, according to the expression of the Founder, "a new Thebaide."

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functions of Director in Orgelet (1827-38) and in Sellieres (1839-54) and died in retreat in Courtefontaine. Everywhere he left the memory of a charming simplicity, which caused him to be called "the good father Olive."

An obedience of December 15, 1841, made Father Chevaux Provincial of Alsace, with residence in Ebersmunster. This was the first provincial nomination in the Society, whilst the provincialship was completely organized only in 1849.

Named General Head of Zeal by the Chapter of 1845, Father Chevaux from that time, lived with Father Caillet in Bordeaux and then in Paris (1861). In Bordeaux, he settled in St. Anne, where he exercised, for fifteen years, the functions of novice master and formed to the religious life, among many others, Father Simler and the saintly Father de Lagarde. From this time on, the action of Father Chevaux in the Society became more and more extended. "In the Council of the Superior General things were decided, but it was in the cell of St. Anne around that very small table in front of this little crucifix, that Father Chevaux found this simple and benevolent language, with which he knew how to say everything, how to have all accepted without ever hurting anyone's feelings, without ever discouraging anyone. Who would be able to count the souls, that he, according to need, raised, fortified, brought back, checked on the edge of the abyss, or sent along the beautiful ways of perfection! That is the secret of heaven. Those who had the happiness of living in this happy solitude of St. Anne, under the direction of Father Chevaux, will never forget, neither the meditations of the morning made aloud, neither those peaceful recreations at which he never failed to preside, nor those walks in which he but rarely took part, so much was he retained by his occupations.

The Chapter of 1868 named the humble religious Superior General. This was for him like a thunder bolt, and nothing less than a formal order from Cardinal Mathieu, who presided at the Chapter, was needed to have him acquiesce to the nomination. For seven years, he filled these high functions with the humility and the mildness that had been and which were to be to the end the characteristic traits of his life, devoting his attention especially to prayer and to the direction of souls.

He thus arrived at the end of the year 1875, which was the 50th anniversary of his entry into the Society. Toward the middle of December, his strength abandoned him, and he saw his end approaching. From then on, for all those who could visit him, it was a spectacle of the greatest edification. On the 15th of December, surrounded by his children in tears, he received the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. On the eve of the feast of St. John, his well-beloved patron, he had the first Vespers of the Office recited by his Assistants, visibly uniting himself to their prayer. Into their hands, he renewed his religious vows, then entered into his agony. At the moment when the prayer Subvenite sancti Dei *was being recited, he rendered his beautiful soul to God.*

Good Father Chevaux left diverse essays on mental prayer, the particular examen, spiritual direction, and especially a series of circulars animated with profound religious spirit. To him also are due ordinances upon the holding of councils and upon the functions of the Inspectors. It is finally he who has affiliated the Society of Mary to the Apostleship of Prayer. His body rests in Merles in the vault of the Superiors General.

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432 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, April 9, 1827

My dear son: I received, one after the other, your two letters of last March 24th and 30th. In my last two letters, you have been able to read less reproaches than paternal counsels. I was a bit sorry that you were letting yourself be mastered by your sensibility, and also because you were letting yourself be frightened by the difficulties or contradictions that you might experience. We all have great need of possessing ourselves and of not letting our imagination get the better of us. However busy you may be, my dear son, pay sufficient attention to mental prayer, as it is only there that you will find in sufficient great abundance that peace of soul out of which you must never come. It is there that you will learn to resign yourself, and to be patient in the midst of the numerous difficulties and contradictions, that are never lacking in the establishments that are meant to accomplish great good. Often adore interiorly, adore always and in all things the dispositions of divine Providence. Let us always have present in our minds this maxim of faith: that nothing ever happens without order or the permission of God. . . .

You tell me, my dear son, that it would be urgent to replace Brother Fridblatt.[1] I believe it, since you say so, but at this time, it cannot be done by Brother Laugeay. The establishment of St. Marie-aux-Mines has had a good start and is doing well, but it is still very new, and I find myself obliged to replace Brother Weber, for he is much exposed on account of his relatives and acquaintances. I am told to send him to Ammerschwir in the place of Brother Stoffel who would serve as teacher of music in St. Hippolyte. As regards a music teacher, if you think that the one we sent back from St. Hippolyte may become a good subject, you might write to him and invite him to come to see us in St. Remy. I received his certificate from the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs to exempt him from the conscription. If he does not enter St. Remy, I shall be obliged to denounce his quitting of the Society to the office of the Prefect of the Upper Rhine.

You say that Brother Cuny, professed, is always asking for an answer on my part. I have no idea at all that this Brother Cuny has written to me, nor of any request he may have made to me. Father Caillet, who might have informed me in the matter, is absent. He is in St. Laurent with all his people, directing a little retreat for all the novices or postulants in preparation for the feast of Easter. In general, the two houses, that of the Madeleine and of St. Laurent, are doing well. There is a fair number of good subjects in both.

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[1] Father Andrew Fridblatt (1802-61) born in Elsenheim, Alsace, made his novitiate at St. Remy, at the same time as he was carrying on the functions of professor in the normal school, 1824. He made a second novitiate at St. Remy, at the direction of the Founder (1828) and came back to the normal school at St. Remy, where he passed several rather exciting years. He was ordained priest in 1825 and was charged with the direction of the postulates in Courtefontaine, in Marast, and finally in St. Hippolyte where he remained twenty years. He died there, worn out with work, but leaving the memory of a religious in love with humility and poverty, entirely devoted to the most Blessed Virgin and to her Society for which he procured many vocations, in particular that of two of its Superiors General, Good Fathers Simler and Hiss.

I was on the point of sending you one of the theologians, a young man of about thirty. He is accustomed to teaching, but only the sixth, on account of the weakness of his eyesight. He can teach this class without any preparation, be it for the Latin or for the French. He hasn't, as yet, entirely made up his mind as regards the religious life, but he is quite decided to live according to the Rule, and he is among the most regular in our Little Seminary. The cause of the delay in his departure is the hope that I have of having his voyage paid by one of his protectors in Paris. Already many days ago, I had someone write to this effect.

I am now coming back to Brother Fridblatt. I have just run rapidly over the letter he wrote to me on last March 19th. I see, in fact, that his imagination is getting more and more excited, but will he get any better in St. Laurent? It is too bad, because he was very useful to you in the normal school. I would have sent you the dear Brother Etignard.[1] He would be well able to do all that you would need, but two great reasons oblige me to keep him still as Head in St. Laurent; the first, that he is not yet cured of a too great promptitude of action, which often degenerates into heedlessness; the second, that he is of this country, but not likely to be much of a prophet in it. Remain patient, for in time, I hope, we shall see the end of all. I beg of you to tell Brother Fridblatt from me that I have been very mindful of all he tells me in his letter of March 19th and that I am determined to have him come here to me, provided you or I can replace him in St. Remy. In the meantime, let him fulfill well his post, and let him do it without anxiety, now that he has completely opened his soul to me, and that I am at ease in regard to his spiritual needs.

You often tell me that you have good subjects to send, but that you fear that Brother Etignard is no longer at St. Laurent, and that he may have been replaced by Brother Gobillot. It is quite true that I would have wanted to make a superior of Brother Gobillot, but a long time ago I gave up hope of doing so. I shall then still leave Brother Stignard in St. Laurent: 1. Because he is doing fairly well there; 2. because he himself needs to be trained in view of future superiorship; 3. because I have no one to replace him adequately.

I would be quite pleased with your plans, but I shall come back on this point some other time. Maybe, I shall wait for the visit I intend to make to you, especially if you send me some money to cover the expenses, as the needs of which I spoke to you are becoming more urgent from day to day, and I would not dare to start out on a journey before all have been met.

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[1] Father Augustine Etignard (1807-78) born in Laviron, Doubs, entered the Society in 1826 and filled several posts of confidence, but he had to quit in 1836 on account of his character, little fitted for community life. He always remained deeply attached to the person of the Founder, and it is he who in 1871 in connection with Father Lalanne, erected in the Chartreuse Cemetery of Bordeaux, the monument where rest his mortal remains. He died in Bordeaux, September 25, 1878, and was buried beside his venerated master.

I have not yet been able to write to Brother Olive to send you his procuration, but I shall do so here and now. I shall also have someone write again to Sister Marie of the Cross. You no longer tell me anything about the 4,000 francs of which you spoke at the time of your return from Besançon.

I am stopping now, my dear son. Take courage. Place all your confidence in the Savior and in the protection of our august Mother. Do simply, honestly, and in peace all that you can. May the Lord deign to shower upon you his most abundant benedictions!

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433 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 7, 1827

My dear son: I received your letter of last April 24th and with it the three bills of exchange which you send me on Paris to the sum of 2,096.45 francs. You console me in telling me that this is only a small beginning, which will prove to me your good will and the disposition for doing still better in the future. When I received your letter and these bills of exchange, three hours had not passed after I had represented to the good God our many urgent needs. I am not saying this, my dear son, to cause you any anxiety, for I desire that you remain as quiet and as confiding in Providence as I ordinarily am. It is always our duty to do all we can, but in peace and confidence. . . .

Take good care of Brother Brunet.[1] It had not been so long before I got to know of the weakness of his left arm, when I got the idea of sending him to you. He was not suffering from this arm or at least not enough so it could be noticed. His sister is giving little satisfaction in the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary. She seems too much as if she needs to be treated as a child. I have placed her under the immediate direction of Sister Leocadie, who is very good, but who also knows how to have herself feared. I have not received any further complaints about her. Her brother is a good enough child, docile enough but without education and always keeping the remains of the bad impressions he received in the world. He is making some efforts to prepare himself for his first Communion. As regards his mother, I have not found out anything since I have last written to her. I beg of you to let her know the part of this letter that concerns her.

You tell me that you are in distress, in straits for want of good professors. The theologian of whom I had spoken to you has not yet left, because I am still expecting someone to pay for his trip. Besides, because of his defective eyesight, he will be good as professor only for the sixth grade of the classical course, or at best for the fifth, and also for

[1] Brother John Louis Brunet, from the Dordogne region, entered the Society in Bordeaux in 1826 and was sent to St. Remy, where he taught rhetoric and fulfilled the functions of sub-director. He had a brilliant mind, but a judgment not so sure, and so he left the Society in 1825. We find him later in Layrac with Father Lalanne, but after that, we lost all trace of him.

the duties of supervision. He is always very regular. When he takes exercise or goes out into the fresh air, as when he goes to Melac[2] or even just out for a walk, his eyes are better, and that makes us hope for still greater improvement, once he is in St. Remy.

Your worry made me think that you might take some professor that would not form part of the Institute. Yesterday, we received into the Sodality a medical student, who seems to have made quite good studies, who has already taught several years, and who likes teaching a lot better than medicine. Every now and then like subjects present themselves. If you were to meet with any in Besançon, or in any other town near it, it would be better that they were from this region. With this in view, you could put the matter in charge of competent and trustworthy persons, and it can be presumed that they might make some very valuable discoveries. I don't think I am able to send you any subject strong enough in studies during the course of this classical year—I am speaking of subjects belonging to the Institute—and I don't have the assurance even for next year. The thought now comes to me that Father Lalanne, who feels your needs acutely, might be able to find for you just what you would need . . . dear Brother Louis Rothéa, who is now head of the establishment of St. Hippolyte, had given me to understand that with three more brothers, our four establishments in Alsace would get along very well. Among the three, he was asking for one to teach Latin in St. Hippolyte. I assured him that I would be sending these three brothers shortly after the feast of Easter. He now informs me that with a Latinist, all will go well enough until the end of the year.

I was going to have Brother Olive in Moissac replaced, when Father Imbert, pastor of this town, asked me for him for the establishment of Lauzerte, an establishment that I was not able to refuse and where a brother is needed to teach Latin.[1] Father Imbert examined him and judged him capable of leading his pupils up to the fourth of the classical course, which is quite sufficient for this little town.

Nevertheless, I would like to send a subject to our good Brother Rothéa. I had at first thought of sending him Brother Memain, who is in Agen. This Brother Memain is the one who was in the seminary of Bazas. After taking some information, I think it is more suitable to leave him in Agen until the vacation.

I was going to turn my eyes upon Brother Claveric, who has made all his studies, even four years of theology, but who was admitted only among the number of laymen in the Society.[2] In my uncertainty, because the religious virtues have not grown deep roots in his soul, it was remarked to me that Brother Perriguey, who is in Besançon, and who has made

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[2] Country house of Brother Auguste in the outskirts of Bordeaux.
[1] The school of Lauzerte, near Moissac, was directed by the Society from 1827 till 1835.
[2] Brother William Claveric (1802-35) born in Dours, High-Pyrenees, made his novitiate in Bordeaux in 1826, and was employed in Agen until 1830. At this date, he was sent to Belford to found a school there, but which the Revolution of July prevented from opening. He remained in Franche-Côte and died in Courtefontaine as the result of a chill. He was an excellent teacher, much loved by his pupils, and distinguished himself by a great spirit of zeal and a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

all his classes or at least the greatest part of them, might teach in St. Hippolyte the first elements of Latin. Besides, he would always have with him Father Romain, who knows his Latin quite well but who is somewhat weak when it comes to holding a class. At St. Hippolyte, a tried and experienced religious is needed. Perriguey, on the subject of virtue and character, would be just the right man. See if you could have him suitably replaced in Besançon. I am saying suitably, because, if he is to be replaced, it must be by someone really pious and docile.

I has seemed to me from one of your letters, that you had some good subjects to send me. See if there is anyone among them who is sufficiently experienced . . . or else by one of yours, whom you would replace by one of those that you want to send. We would thus avoid the expenses of a long trip.

The Superioress of the Hospice St. Jacques of Besançon wrote to me on March 7th as you had told me. She has great praise for our Brothers, and she hopes that in proportion as the shop heads will ask to leave, they will be replaced by Brothers of Mary. She seems to believe that the head hosier will become a religious. I am writing to him by today's mail. I shall have a copy made for you of the letter I am sending him, if there is time enough to do this today.

I would willingly send you Brother Etignard if I believed him capable of meeting your views in his regard, but, for the time being, it is better that he remains a little longer in St. Laurent. If, until the vacation, he gets more benefit out of this time than he has since the last one until Easter, we may possibly have a real man out of him. At the time of my visit, we shall seriously examine Brothers Galliot and Pelleteret.[1] As regards Brother Bousquet, he is not at all the man as Head for St. Laurent, nor anywhere else, but, as he has kept a certain amount of good will and still has a great confidence in me, I hope to cure him entirely and eventually render him useful to the Society. It is not from fear of not having a Head in St. Laurent, that I am not sending you the dear Brother Etignard. I hope to be able to send you a master shoemaker, a good religious, one of excellent character. You may have him for yourself or for Besançon. We shall come back to him in another letter, as also to Brother Lequin.

I am embracing you very tenderly, and I desire for you the peace of the Lord. I beg of you, to tell all my children of St. Remy the most fatherly things from me and how much I sigh for the moment I shall be able to embrace them all.

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434 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 15, 1827

[1] Brother Claude Joseph Pelleteret. See the note at Letter 438.

My dear son: I have received your letter of May third, and am answering it right away. Dubarry arrived on the 14th at five o'clock in the morning, the day after the one you announced as the one of his departure. The same day I had an interview with him, lasting at least three hours, of which we shall see the results. Today, he is in retreat. . . .

I have some hope that our three establishments in Alsace will get to the point of doing well, and very well. I am saying three, because the one in Ammerschwir seems to me to have been abandoned.[1] It doesn't seem that for some time at least, we shall be able to undertake others, due to our lack of German subjects. Furthermore, because it is so dangerous to replace young religious in their own region.

As regards Besançon, what you tell me about Brothers Troffer and Perriguey does not astonish me. Troffer is too young and has too little intelligence to be the Head of such an establishment. I shall prepare one who will be really fit at the time of the reopening of classes, that is to say, after our retreat of the month of October. Perriguey is also too weak-minded, although he could get along very well with a good leader. . . .

At the novitiate of St. Laurent, I have a young master shoemaker, who could easily replace the master shoemaker who is in Besançon, and with whom the folks are not satisfied. He wants only to get away from his own region as far as possible, because of his parents, whom he loves very much and by whom he is very tenderly loved in his turn. I am keeping him here still some time, because, very shortly, another young man, also a master shoemaker, is due to arrive from his region, and it is suitable that he be still in St. Laurent, and that he pass a few days with him to help him become acclimatized. Wouldn't you believe it more prudent to send Salmon[2] to Besançon, and to take the latter, who is called Soleil, for several months to St. Remy, at least until he has made his profession? However good he seems to be, he hasn't finished his novitiate and it is proper to send to Besançon only subjects who have finished their time of probation.

You have done well, my dear son, to pay a visit to the rector of the Academy and to the prefects of the Doubs and of the Haute-Saône. Take all sorts of precautions for the success of the normal schools and the retreats, as also for the establishment of Besançon. Although, as I believe, our other institutions are in the order of Providence, I regard these as inspired directly by the Spirit of God as being destined to carry out the essential works of the Society of Mary.

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[1] See Letter 416. The establishment seems, nevertheless, to have been kept.
[2] Brother Peter Salmon (1805-86) born in Ehuns, near Laneuil, was one of the first novices of St. Remy, where he was formed to the religious life under the direction of Father Rothéa in 1824. He took part, as workshop-head, in the foundation of the Orphanage of St. Jacques in Besançon, where he remained ten years. He was then employed in teaching in the elementary classes and later put in charge of several primary schools in the Midi. Still later, he fulfilled with the same simplicity and devotedness, the functions of linenman and infirmarian at Cannes and at St. Remy, where he died, leaving the memory of a real child of the family.

I received the bill of exchange for 1,000 francs on Paris, and right away I gave it as after-payment of chargeable and demandable debts.

I have nothing at all, my dear son, against granting you a month's holiday, in order to go with your good brother to see your aged father, but would it precisely be up to the first of June? The fact is, that neither you nor I can make it out very clearly. Perhaps after your return from your visit home, you could be my traveling companion. . . .

I embrace you very tenderly, my dear son, again, and I hope that by the grace of the Lord and the protection of our august Mother, we shall succeed in everything we undertake, even with St. Remy, but patience and courage are necessary. Do not neglect prayer, however busy you may be.

I also embrace all my dear children. I bear them all in my heart, but I am not losing sight of the fact that they are all overloaded with work. Replace me in keeping up their courage, and cheer them, until I have the occasion of seeing them and doing it myself. Make yourself clever in securing for them the means of making their meditation well, for it is there that you, as well as they, will find the peace of soul, the strength, the courage and especially the means by which we know how to exercise ourselves to the utmost when we find ourselves overburdened.

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435 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 30, 1827

My dear son: I received your letter of May 13th. I shall make no reflection on the actual position of St. Remy, since there is question of a voyage to those parts and of our having occasion of seeing one another before long. Please act in such a way that the young Brother Brunet may have all the care that his conditions of illness may require.

Are we to receive subjects who have nothing or next to nothing? Yes, of course, 1. if they look good and bear themselves well; 2. if they have good health, etc.; 3. if they have real piety; 4. if, before too long, they can be employed usefully.

For the time being, I shall say nothing about Dubarry.

Now, let us come to our trip. I spoke about it to your brother. As far as concerns him, he cannot absent himself from Bordeaux before June 25th. Doesn't this inconvenience you too much? See, before God, whether your absence of about a month would not become harmful to the establishment in St. Remy, as you could hardly be back before July 15th, 16th, or 17th, according to the time in June when you would be starting out. I would be very much

pleased to have you give your aged father and your uncle the pleasure of seeing you again. Besides, you can render your trip and your visit to your relatives quite useful, doing all religiously and in the correct spirit that must animate you. If you see too great embarrassment in this long absence, don't worry, as you are sure of my consent, as soon as you can make this absence without causing too serious inconveniences. However the case may be, write to me as soon as you shall have decided upon something definite.

I embrace you very tenderly and wish you the peace of the Lord! Say a thousand good things from me to all my children in St. Remy.

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Father Chaminade decided to undertake, for the second time, the trip to the North. He left on August 16th, went to Paris, where he spent the end of the month; then on to Besançon, where he accepted the foundation of Marast. He arrived in St. Remy on September 2nd, where he gave his children the exercises of the annual retreat. He visited Gray on September 20th; Orgelet, where he accepted a new foundation; Arbois, on September 30th, where he presided at the retreat of the Daughters of Mary; Courtefontaine, where he prepared the opening of the normal school of the Jura. He returned to Paris towards mid-October, where he lodged with the Foreign Missions and saw the Nuncio Lambrushini and finally returned to Bordeaux on October 27th.

In Paris, Father Chaminade was met by a note from Brother David which acquaints us with one of those little detailed affairs of which life is full, but which Father Chaminade treated with his ordinary precision.

"A request has been addressed to me in writing," writes Brother David, "which looks too much like a complaint that I should let you be ignorant of it.

The chaplain and confessor of Mirail Street (Father Boutoey) says he made you, three years ago, a deposit, partly in foreign gold coins and partly in silver articles. He made up his mind, in agreement with you , to quit our Institutes and to put himself back under the jurisdiction of his bishop. You promised him the return of the deposit and a report about his religious priestly conduct. The letter was written to the bishop. This having been done, the poor chaplain betook himself to you on the eve of the feast of the Assumption, to get what should have been the result of your promises.

You told him to remain in peace during the entire feast, and that you would satisfy him on the next day. But on the next day, you left at daybreak. The unfortunate chaplain thus saw himself without a testimonial as to his conduct and without provisions or traveling money. This position was very sad, to say the least, and it became worse with the negative and rather rough answer of your representative.

As your old counselor, permit me to recommend to you the reparation of this forgetfulness on your part. So many affairs of this kind have happened in the world, to the detriment of our holy religion, that we cannot afford to be the cause of new ones. A deposit in money not given back on time as promised is no small matter. Of course, your many worries make of your forgetfulness a rather slight fault, but it concerns serious matter. If the most prudent act in this manner, what about poor me, who am so little advanced on the ways along which I wanted to walk? Pray for me and always pray for me. The good God will be merciful to me. I believe, I hope, I wish to love."

To which Father Chaminade answered:

436 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Paris, August 24, 1827

My dear son: Your letter of the 20th found me happily still in Paris. It is entirely true that before my departure, I forgot to leave for Father Boutoey, the objects which he reclaims. I had notified Brother Auguste of the position in which I found myself, and nevertheless, I forgot. You know, or possibly you don't know, the occupations I had on the holy day of the Assumption, the eve of my departure. I would never have thought that this forgetfulness on my part would give cause for similar alarms, and still less, that it would be numbered among the affairs that have happened in the world, and that have occasioned such detriment to our holy religion.

Father Boutoey told me that he would leave at the end of the classical year, which is toward the middle of September and that, in the meantime, he would have to make some purchases.

I told him that I would give back to him all that I had received from him. We made an accounting. I told him that he had in his purse 14 gold coins worth 20 francs each. He answered that that was correct, though he had withdrawn 50 francs, but he never spoke to me about a certificate attesting to that fact.

Whatever all these considerations may amount to, first, I ask of you, my dear son, to count out for Father Boutoey the sum of 230 francs, in gold if possible; second, I am writing to Marie[1] to give him his silver articles, and to tell her where they were placed at that time, as well as to give him a purse in which there is a great number of five-franc pieces; third, I shall add, in the form of a letter, the certificate recently asked for.

I shall not write to him otherwise, but you will do well to make him a few wise observations, in having seen in the hurry of my departure, only the privation of his wherewith to live, the explanations to be given his bishop, etc. Having noticed my forgetfulness, why could he not have written a word to me about it, and if he was in such a hurry to make purchases, he could have asked you or Brother Auguste for some money on account, and not allow his imagination to . . . I don't dare say it. Have I ever given him any cause for alarm?

I don't have to make use of the letter of Mr. deVilleminat. Mr. Clauzel de Coussergues[2] gave me reason to hope that my petition regarding the rhetoric class[3] would meet with success. I wish you, my dear son, the peace of the Lord.

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[1] Miss Marie Dubourg, his housekeeper.
[2] Member of the Chamber of Deputies.
[3] There was question of the right to open the class of rhetoric in the boarding school Ste. Marie on Mirail Street. What Father Chaminade did, did not meet with success, and the pupils of rhetoric had to continue to follow courses given at the royal collège.

P.S. This short letter will make you understand that it is written in a hurry. I shall leave for Besançon on the morning of the 27th. I have greater grief over the flights of imagination of Father Boutoey than over the forgetfulness that caused them, but in all things patience.

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437 – TO BISHOP DE CHAMON, BISHOP OF ST. CLAUDE

Gray, September 20, 1827

Your Lordship: While entering into the provinces of the northeast of France, my first solicitude and care was to take information about Your Lordship, and where I could meet you to offer my respectful homage. I learned from Father Bardenet that you were to have ordinations in Orgelet. Having arrived in Gray, I realized the impossibility of arriving by Saturday. I am going to leave for Arbois. I shall there await the answer you will be kind enough to give me and which will let me know the place where I shall have the honor of meeting you in the course of one of your pastoral visits.

Father Bardenet will be in Arbois next Tuesday, the 25th of the current month, and I presume that he will be as happy as I to have the honor of discussing with you some means I have in mind, regarding greater good in your diocese.

I would much desire that our departure from Arbois, in order to meet Your Lordship, would not be deferred later than the 26th, as I still have much work to do in these regions, and I would see myself obliged to abandon a good part of it.

I am with the most profound respect, your Lordship, etc.

P.S. My address is the Convent of the Daughters of Mary or the house of Mrs. d'Oussieres in Arbois. I am addressing this letter to Orgelet in recommending it to the Reverend Superior of the seminary in this city.[1]

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[1] From 1827 to 1852 the Society of Mary directed in Orgelet, a primary school, to which was later added a secondary boarding school.

438 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Arbois, October 1, 1827

My dear son: Before leaving Arbois, I shall say to you only a few words. It is only tomorrow that I shall go to Courtefontaine. All is arranged for this establishment, as much with the Bishop of St. Claude as with the Prefect of the Jura, in what concerns Father Bardenet's authorization for taking up a collection in the entire Department to meet the expenses of the normal school. I doubt that we shall be able to make an appeal to the candidates, so as to have the opening around All Saints Day. One dear Brother Laugeay will not have to go to any trouble as regards a teacher of plain chant, as the Reverend Pastor of Courtefontaine is very strong on this subject.

I am still working at the appointment of professors destined for St. Remy: Brothers Brunet, Chevaux, Carrere, Muhlhaupt, Gaussens for the French language, etc.—Brother Brunet, prefect of studies. Brother Gaussens will continue as Head of Instruction, but I would desire that Brother Brunet be admitted to the council, as also the new Head of Work, whom I hope to send you soon. You also do well to admit to the Council, the Head of the normal school, Brother Fridblatt. Your establishment will never get along better than when all those most occupied with it are well united and work with heart and soul as jointly responsible for the success of the task which the Lord confides to them.

You will do well, my dear son, to have Brother Chevaux and Brother Pelleteret[1] take the soutane. I shall lose sight, neither of the one nor of the other. The latter may help with the beginners, and he may also help Brother Fridblatt, as with the problems of supervision. You will be numerous enough to take care of everything, but you must have clear understanding among yourselves and work together as one. Get them together for discussions once or even several times, and have them divide the various functions among themselves, etc. If the spirit of faith animates them, I repeat it, all will be well.

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[1] There were four religious of this name in the Society. Peter Francis Pelleteret of whom there is question here, born in Oricourt, Haute Saône, April 27, 1804, who seemed to give promise of becoming a good subject, but the hopes placed in him were not realized. He left the Society in 1836.

Claude-Joseph Pelleteret, born in Oricourt, January 2, 1807, brother of the preceding one, entered the Society at St. Remy in 1827, was employed in numerous communities in Franche-Comte, filled the functions of Director in St. Claude, 1838-42, Strasbourg, 1844-49, Givry, 1856-66. In this house, fell victim to a serious malady which weakened his faculties and obliged him to retire from active work. He died in Givry on April 3, 1878. He was a religious, blessed with great energy and exquisite charity, who placed all his energy and care in having the family spirit to reign in his community, and in inspiring in all respect and confidence.

Francis-Xavier Pelleteret, also born in Oricourt, February 21, 1808, and perhaps a relative of the preceding ones, carpenter, died piously in St. Remy on the 19th of May, 1830.

Jean-Baptist Pelleteret, born in Arpenans, Haute-Saône, on August 2, 1818, entered the Society at St. Remy in 1835, did the work of a farmer, led a very austere life and died on January 26, 1837.

As regards Brother Galliot, I would like to put him in another establishment, where I would need a man of complete trustworthiness. He would be there at first only to teach French, but I am afraid to cause him pain. You would please me if you would write to me about him from Paris, addressing your letter to the Foreign Missions, always under the protection of His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction.

I am putting in your envelope three little letters, one for Brother Meyer, one for Brother Gaussens, and the last for Brother Brunet. I may still have time to add another for Brother Rothéa. I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and wish you the peace of the Lord.

P.S. Give, I beg of you, my dear son, the tokens of my affectionate remembrance to all of my dear children of St. Remy.

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439 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Paris, October 18, 1827

My dear son: I have received in Paris your letter, written on the ninth of the present month. I really believe that the normal course will hardly be able to start in Courtefontaine at or about Easter time. Father Bardenet has reason to believe that it would be better, in general, that those destined for this course be prepared in St. Remy, but in this particular case, they will have taken measures to this effect. I am destining Brother Laugeay and Hunolt for Courtefontaine, and I have placed them temporarily at St. Marie-aux-Mines with Brother Joseph Cholet.[1]

In passing by Besançon, I gave to the Reverend Secretary of the Archbishop the securities concerning the property in Marast,[2] and he promised me to send them very soon to the Prefect of Vesoul in the name of His Excellency, the Archbishop. The Prefect must have received them by this time. If there is a possibility that he has not yet sent them to the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, please beg of him not to delay doing so any longer . . .

It would be necessary, my dear son, to send me a little report about the retreat which has just been given in St. Remy to the school teachers, and about the obstacles

[1] Brother Joseph Cholet (1792-1864), one of the exceptional Brothers of Father Mertian, who joined the Society of Mary in 1825, was one of the religious, who by their zeal and devotedness, contributed the most in establishing the Society in Alsace. He directed, successively, the houses of St. Marie-aux-Mines, Ribeauville, St. Claude, Eccle, Conflans, Arc-et-Senans, and passed the last years of his life at St. Remy, edifying his brothers by his piety and his humility.
[2] Property which the diocese was proposing to give to the Society and which was eventually given to it.

which it was up to you to overcome. How do you wish that we should grow in experience if, at each retreat, I receive no detailed report about these exercises that are so interesting?

Father Lalanne tells me from Colmar that at the time of his stay there, a remarkable thing had occurred in regard to one of the teachers. Have you written a detailed and exact account of it, or have you had it done by someone else and duly signed? If you have not, then see to it without further delay, and be sure to send me a copy. I now have time only to add that I have named Brother Copey, though as yet only a novice, for the establishment of Ribeauville. I hope he will do well there. It is dear Brother Weber who will be the Director. I am embracing you tenderly, and I wish you the peace of the Lord.

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Having hardly returned to Bordeaux, Father Chaminade gives an account to Mother de Trenquelléon about the steps he had taken in Paris in view of the legal recognition of the Institute, and urges her to collect various papers necessary to this effect.

440 – TO MOTHER DE TRENQUELLÉON, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 1, 1827

In Paris, my dear child, I received your letter, and I am proposing to answer it, as well as taking care of several other matters, as soon as possible. In the meantime, don't do anything about the 17,000 francs as part of your indemnity. You might, at most, give the establishment of Tonneins part of the interest when you get it. The capital, being for emigrant indemnity[1] will be paid only at the rate of three percent.

This letter is only to send you a copy of the edition of the Statutes of the Daughters of Mary to be presented for royal authorization, and to tell you what you have to do.

1. You will have these Statutes in your Grand book or the Council register, signed by all the members of the Council.

2. On the copy I am sending you, you will put at the bottom: Certified true copy. Then you will sign it as Superior-General, and have it countersigned by the Secretary and before her signature, the Secretary will put: By order of the Superior General.

3. You may ask Father Mouran to see the Mayor of Agen, and to tell him that the Daughters of Mary, wanting to appeal to the king in view of asking for the authorization for their Community of Agen, he would be kind enough, according to the Law of May 24, 1825, relative to the authorization of the sodalities and congregations of women, 1. to give the

[1] There was question of the indemnity granted to the emigrants by the law of May, 1825, and of which Mother de Trenquelléon was to benefit, as the heiress of her father, the Baron Charles de Trenquelléon.

information required about the suitability and the drawbacks of the Agen Community, and 2. to ask the advice of the Council of the Commune. Furthermore, Father Mouran will add what he will think fitting, so that the information as well as the advice of the Council may be favorable and even honorable to the Community of the Daughters of Mary.

4. You will write a little letter to His Lordship, the bishop of Agen, and you will ask him to add his approbation at the bottom of the copy of the Statutes that you will send him. You might let him know of our determination to have approved, and very soon, both the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and the central house in Agen. You may tell him also that I have prepared everything for the Ministry, so that the authorization may not be deferred, and that the discussions may not be prolonged in the State Council.

5. You will draw up a little petition for His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction. His petition is to be collective, which means, drawn up in the name of the Daughters of Mary, and so, you will sign: De Trenquelléon, Foundress and then will sign the Mothers of the Council and all the professed members of the Community, who will know how to sign suitably. The petition may be very short and very simple, for example:

> That the Daughters of Mary, desiring to enjoy the benefits of the law of May 24, 1825, humbly beg His Excellency to obtain for them the Royal Ordinance, which authorizes the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, as well as the central house in Agen: that they dare to hope for this favor from the goodness and zeal of His Excellency; that, in consequence, they address to him: 1. their Statutes duly approved by the bishop of Agen; 2. the information about the suitability, the unsuitability, and the opinion of the Commune of Agen.

As soon as you have assembled these papers, you will send them to me in the safest way possible, and I shall address them myself to the Ministry. The short petition should be copied by someone who can write passably well, and especially by someone who can spell. If you have no one like this in the community, Brother Memain will gladly render you this little service. I need not tell you that this petition should be written on a good quality of paper, the kind that is known as Minister paper, and in a style in keeping with its end and purpose.

The 11th and last article of the Statutes[1] will perhaps astonish you and also astonish His Lordship, the Bishop, as it seems contrary to the essence of the vow of poverty. Nevertheless, this article is indispensable and without it, the authorization would not be obtained. The explanation I give of it is satisfactory to any conscience. I have consulted

[1] "Each Sister keeps the ownership of her present goods and such as she may acquire in the future, and the right to dispose of them conformably to the laws, and especially that of May 24, 1825. As to the usufruct, when she has the use of one, she turns it over the house where she happens to be, and which owes her no account of it."

other persons of merit, His Excellency, the Representative of the Pope in Paris.[2] He approved the explanation that I gave of it. I shall tell you, in passing, that I have agreed with the Nuncio Apostolic that, after the authorization of the Government, we would have been definitively approved by the Holy See, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, the Society of Mary, their Constitutions, Regulations, etc. It has approved everything we have done for the two religious bodies, as well as for the sodalities.

I have just taken notice of the letter which Mother St. Vincent wrote in your behalf, my dear child, to Father Collineau. It is a good idea that you have to endow the community of Tonneins with the little property of d'Aiguillon. All we have to do is to delay the sale, and I shall seriously examine and study how this might be done.

May the Lord shower upon you His most abundant blessings!

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441 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 7, 1827

I have received, my dear son, the summary of the retreat given in the establishment of St. Remy to the schoolteachers on September 24, 1827. I bless the Lord and His august Mother for all the good effects which it has produced.

As regards the miracle worked on the person of Labe, the teacher, you must immediately give information about it to the archbishop of Besançon, if you have not yet done so, as it is up to the ecclesiastical authority to decide upon the reality and authenticity of a miracle.[1] The archbishop will know what attitude will have to be taken, but you must give him all the information you may have, in order that he might be able better to direct his course of action. The physical condition in which the archbishop happens to be might cause some dangerous delay on the part of the Vicars General and so, you will do well to write to Father Breuillot to push the matter somewhat, if you deem there is reason to do so. You will let me know all that happens in regard to this subject.

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[2] Archbishop Lambrushini (1776-1854), who early entered the Order of the Barnabites, accompanied Cardinal Consalvi to the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and was named successively Archbishop of Genoa in 1819, Nuncio to Paris in 1827, and Cardinal Secretary of State to Gregory XVI in 1831. He did not cease showing the greatest benevolence toward the Founder and toward his works, in particular at the time of the various steps that, in 1838, ended in the Decree of praise of the Society of Mary.

[1] In his memoirs, Brother Bernard Meyer reports the fact in this way: "During the retreat of 1827, there was a teacher who could walk only with the aid of crutches. He came into the little chapel, in the place where the organ is at present, to go to confession to Father Rothéa. In going out, on the order of his confessor, he left his crutches behind and walked, in order thus, better to perform his duties as a teacher."

Brother Carrers and Malbouriane must have arrived by now, since they had left some days before my arrival in Bordeaux, which took place on October 27th. They left, as I have been told, full of zeal and courage. Brother Carrere is to teach the class which will be decided upon by all the professors and yourself. Brother Malbouriane is to have the post of Head of Work, even if we may not be able to give him the official title, not having as yet made his profession. At first, he will be rather new in this work, but I think he will learn, little by little, if you have the kindness to direct him for some time. It will be good that he assist at the Council, at least when there is question of temporal matters. He will have only a consultative voice in them, and his consultative voice, not deliberative, could thus be included in the minutes of the various sessions.

It will not be long before it is noticed that he has real aptitude in fulfilling satisfactorily the functions of the Head of Work. Anyhow, I do not think he will ever have all that is required, especially if St. Remy has all the development we are expecting, but, in the meantime, it seems to me clear that temporarily at least, he is well able to assist you in the post to which we have assigned him.

I saw in Colmar a boy of mature age who desired to go into retreat in St. Remy. He seemed to know a lot about agriculture. I have invited him, before definitely ending his affairs in Colmar, to go and pass a few days in St. Remy in order to start a chestnut grove. He seems to me to have already been in St. Remy and that you had already adopted him. You will tell me about him, whatever you happen to know. He seems to be at his ease, and even to be able to make at least a start in all the useful changes in the establishment in what regards farming.[1]

As regards the arts and crafts, if the big establishment in Versailles happens to succeed well,[2] it will be able to furnish artists and workmen for St. Remy. I am in a position to form there ten arts and crafts as a start. I shall tell you this whole story at a time less pressing than this one. You are perhaps saying to yourself: “Why doesn’t our Good Father rather do in St. Remy what he is doing in Versailles?” The reason for it is very simple. I have for St. Remy neither suitable subjects, artists or workers, nor even the means that would be needed. While in Versailles, I shall be able to find, or at least I hope to be able to find, all that is necessary. Let this suffice for the present.

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[1] The postulant in question is Maximilian Geng (1797-1870). He was in the service of the Meyer family of Equisheim, whose two sons, Leo and Benedict, he followed into the religious life. A hard worker, he devoted his entire life to the works of the Society, first in St. Remy and at St. Hippolyte, then at Ebersmunster, where he passed three years alone after the purchase of the old abbey by the Rothéa family, occupied in repairing the ruins that had accumulated there during the Revolution, always joyous in the midst of poverty and privations and happily calling himself “the Prelate of the Abbey.” Then he was again in St. Remy as farmer and finally in Paris, where he fulfilled the functions of Provider. He went to die in St. Hippolyte on the 28th of January, 1870.

[2] There is question of the “Royal Establishment of St. Joseph,” under the special protection of His Lordship, the Duke of Bordeaux, started in the “Grand Commune” of the Château of Versailles, which its Director, Mr. Galibert, had just offered to Father Chaminade (Letter of October 17th).

I have obtained in Colmar the permission to bring along with me Father Meyer. Father Lalanne had been charged to tell him all that concerned him when he would come to rejoin him at the retreat of St. Hippolyte, but I have no longer heard anything said about him . . . Father Lalanne doesn't tell me a word about him in the long letter that he writes to me after the retreat. I am going to write him a little letter. If he is no longer at St. Remy, then see that he gets it as soon as possible. You will know or you will easily be able to find out where he is.

I am not forgetting that you need a good novice master, but I don't have as yet a definite answer as to whether the one I have in mind is able to go. May our dear Brother, Father Rothéa, remain in the job with his customary zeal.

I shall answer my dear children, Brothers Gaussens and Fridblatt, a little later. My dear son, constantly reanimate your faith. May you, with the help of our good Father Rothéa, reanimate it in all your Brothers! I saw with sorrow that the spirit of faith had weakened in St. Remy.

May the Lord deign to shower His most abundant blessings on you and upon all my dear children in St. Remy.

P.S. I left with Father Rothéa the plan of the instruction which I gave on the generation of the Children of Mary. Father Rothéa may easily make himself a copy, but it will have to be returned to me. Your last letter, or rather, the resumé of the retreat given the schoolteachers, came to me by mail. You will do well not to forget to put all your messages in the double envelope of the archbishop of Bordeaux and of his Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction.

* * * *

Father Leo Meyer, who makes his appearance in the correspondence of Father Chaminade, was born in 1800 in Equisheim, Alsace, of a family with patriarchal manners, which gave nearly all its children to the Church. After good studies made in Luxeuil and Strasbourg, he was ordained priest in 1823 and named chaplain of the Hospital in Strasbourg.

Nevertheless, for a long time, the call to the more perfect life was working in his soul. Still young, he had taken refuge in a Trappist monastery, from whence only an order from his father had been able to recall him. Having become priest, he thought of entering the Society of Jesus. After three years of entreaty, having obtained permission from his bishop, he made his way to Fribourg where there was, at that time, a novitiate of the Society of Jesus. But Providence, which destined him to be one of the pillars of the budding Society of Mary, was waiting for him. As he wanted on the way to prepare the entry of his young brother, Benedict, into the boarding school in St. Remy, he happened to come when the teachers' retreat was in full session and he was asked by Father Rothéa to help him for a

few days with his holy ministry. Soon he was won for the Society, and instead of going to Fribourg, after several months passed at St. Remy, he took the road to Bordeaux, where Father Chaminade initiated him into the religious life. On October 20, 1828, in St. Laurent, in the hands of the Founder, he made his religious profession for life "in the joy of his soul."

After a second year passed in Bordeaux, in the intimacy of Father Chaminade, Father Meyer came back to St. Remy in 1829 where he fulfilled for some years the functions of professor and chaplain. He was then put at the head of important houses, Courtefontaine, 1833, and Ebersmunster, 1843, until the moment when Providence designated him to carry the Society into the New World, 1849.

Having hardly arrived in Cincinnati, where the religious opened the first school, he was sent to take care of cholera patients in the little city of Dayton. He there found occasion, on March 19, 1850, to buy a property to which he gave the name of Nazareth, and which became the motherhouse of the Society of Mary in America.

Twelve years later, when the Province of America counted twelve houses and sixty religious, Father Meyer was recalled to Europe, 1862, where he consecrated his remaining strength to the foundation of the Orphanage in Kembs, in Alsace. In 1866 he retired to St. Remy, the cradle of his vocation and died there piously on January 30, 1868.

According to his contemporaries, it was Father Meyer who, among the disciples of the Founder, had his spirit in the highest degree. In fact, after having been formed by him to the religious life, he did not cease to maintain with him a correspondence full of mutual confidence, and no one, during his life and after his death, remained more attached to him. Under such a master he had soon raised himself, according to the expression of the Rule, to the heroic exercise of the virtues of his state.

Among all these virtues, his robust faith stood out prominently, a faith unflinching ready for any trial and which God more than once rewarded with prodigies. His poverty was heroic. His clothes were at times so patched, that it was a matter of surprise how the pieces could still hold together, and it was impossible to convince him of the need of having others made. As regards his food, he contented himself with what was coarsest and always in such minute quantity, that it was asked how his constitution, quite strong, could get along on so little. During Lent, in the last years of his life, he celebrated Mass at 11:30 and joined to it a little homily on the gospel of the day. While his Brothers took their noonday meal, he made his thanksgiving, and then partook of whatever they happened to leave. When, at Nazareth, he had finished by dint of savings, the construction of the first convent, fire destroyed all in one night. He had only one word to say: Deo gratias! Deo gratias! *His chastity was no less remarkable. On this point, he was of extreme reserve, and watched jealously for himself and his Brothers anything that might have been able, even from far, to expose their virtue in the slightest degree. When, during his last years, he was tried in his body like the holy man Job, and obliged, in spite of himself, to have recourse to the cares of an infirmarian, he was able to admit that, since his earliest infancy, no one had ever seen or touched any part of his body. "When I used to bind his wounds," adds Brother Damien Litz, "I felt a sort of veneration for those suffering members, thinking of our*

Lord, who thus abandoned himself into the hands of his executioners." His obedience was the equal of his other virtues. With his superiors, his dealings were always characterized by great sincerity, candor, and freedom of speech, and once he had made known his mind, he obeyed with the simplicity of a child.

He had given himself, heart and soul, to the Society. For it, he was ready to undertake as well as to suffer everything, as was amply proved in the course of his long and fruitful career. On the other hand, he was better qualified to inaugurate works than to direct them.

With Father Meyer, one was always sure of a kind of obliging welcome. He loved particularly the little ones and the poor. No one, else had his gift of winning the hearts of children and young people and of attracting them to the religious life. "There are very few priests," wrote the venerated Founder, "who know how to win youth for virtue and to piety like him." Furthermore, his goodness had nothing soft about it. On the contrary, it helped him to lead souls to the practice of the most austere virtues. His spirit of faith manifested itself, finally, by a tender devotion to the Blessed Virgin and to her glorious Spouse.

From the days of his youth, he had taken the habit of reciting every day the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception, and as a result, he had felt himself attracted to the Society of Mary in which this practice is in honored. He also was very dilegent in the recitation of the Rosary.

As regards his devotion to St. Joseph, it was legendary. After having received it from the Founder as a precious heritage, he passed it on, still more increased by his fervor, to all those who were his disciples. In all his needs, he had recourse to St. Joseph, and St. Joseph always came to his assistance. When he bought the Nazareth property in America, he did not have any resources at all.. He gave a St. Joseph medal to the seller as security, and a few years later everything was paid in full.. "How did you manage to find all that money?" the archbishop of Cincinnati asked him. "Your Excellency," he responded, "I don't keep accounts with St. Joseph." Father Meyer conversed familiarly with the souls in Purgatory. He prayed for their release and called on their help.

The memory of Father Leo Meyer will always be preserved in the Society, as that of one of the most faithful disciples of the Founder, of a religious admirable by his spirit of faith, and the heroic practice of the religious virtues.

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442 – TO MR. FIRMIN LALA, SARLOT

Bordeaux, November 12, 1827

Your letter, my dear Firmin, met me in Bordeaux where I had just arrived. I am sure you do not regret very much, the marriage the folks wanted you to contract in Paris. In looking for a big fortune in a young lady rather than desirable personal qualities, you will risk entering into a marriage which, all told, will cost you a great deal. It seemed to me that your stay, either in

Bordeaux or in Paris, was of very little profit for you on the subject of religion. Take care, my dear Firmin, do not adopt the false maxims of the world!

I would like to be able to lend you the sum that you would want. If I were able, I would do so without requiring any interest, but I am always financially on the rocks, and it is only with the greatest difficulty that I can meet my obligations.

I beg of you, my dear Firmin, share the token of my sincere friendship with your father and mother.

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443 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 29, 1827

I have received, my dear son, your letter of the 20th. I made no condition of any kind with Mr. Christophe. He seemed to me to be in quite easy circumstances.

It did not seem to Father Lalanne any more than to myself that I had succeeded in reanimating the faith in St. Remy. If the faith there had been a little more lively, then certainly Father Meyer would not have long doubted whether he was to leave for Bordeaux or not.[1]

I am, nevertheless, pleased that you are recalling this important article. Reanimate your faith, my dear son, multiply your acts of faith each day. If you are constantly following the dictates of faith, it will, as it were, infallibly lead you to heaven, and during your entire stay or pilgrimage here on earth, it will cause you to enjoy a profound peace.

As regards Brother Copey, I answered Father Rothéa on the day following the one on which I wrote the letter in which I addressed him such just reproaches. But he has admitted his mistakes with humility. It is anyhow surprising that a Head of Zeal has not sought to repair these same mistakes, while at the same time dispelling the doubts which obliged Father Meyer to consult Father Bardenet. Take courage, my dear son, enter into the beautiful views of faith. All will be arranged, all will be well. I wish you, my dear son, peace of heart.

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444 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 27, 1827

I shall use a few moments, stolen as it were from other occupations, not to answer the questions in your letters that may not as yet been answered—just to find them would easily take up all the time at my disposal—but merely to entertain myself a little with you.

I am seriously trying to do all I can to supply the novitiate of St. Laurent with all it needs, so as to make of it a real normal school for interns. It is composed of 35 individuals, but I am doing some cleaning out, and already some questionable subjects have been sent away. I am going to send three to Orgelet, if the mayor of this town is willing to pay for their traveling expenses. I am awaiting several other subjects, and I shall perhaps be able to attract one or the other from the other establishments.

In spite of very numerous occupations, I am drawing up the plan for the teaching of religion, which will be followed in the normal schools for day students. I shall have someone draw up the daily program for these schools. I have had a sort of prospectus made, regarding the

[1] Father Meyer had been called to Bordeaux by Father Chaminade, who wanted to form him in the Spirit of the Society. On the entreaties of Brother Clouzet, Father Rothéa, and of the other Heads in St. Remy, he had thought of being able to prolong his stay in St. Remy.

nature and utility of the normal schools, according to the plan of the Society of Mary, and I have sent two copies to Paris to be seen by . . . , by . . . , etc. I am sending it back to be tried out in the establishment of St. Remy. But at St. Remy, how is the normal course going? Or, if it has not been started, for what time is it scheduled? I recall now that you told me you had destined the big stable for the normal course, but is it big enough before having made the reparations of which we had spoken? Have you perhaps found some better disposition than that which you had pointed out to me? How will you lodge the schoolteachers during the retreats? Explain your plan to me and do it well, for this is one of our principal works, which I have very much at heart and which, in a general way, is of interest to everybody. Never weaken on this point. I have a serious request for one in Colmar, for the Department of the Upper Rhine.

Do not think, my dear son, that to occupy ourselves with ourselves and with others, I am forgetting that you have no Master of Novices, properly so-called, and no normal school for boarders. I have every hope that we shall succeed in furnishing it with all its needs, if the one of Bordeaux is once what it ought to be. Patience and confidence in God! And why should we not have confidence? It is for him that we are working.

Be careful to let me know about everything, or to have me informed if you don't happen to be able to take care of that yourself. Encourage and support Father Rothéa and, nevertheless, look after his health. An unaided man is often able to do many things when all is well directed. I hope that the various kinds of help will become more abundant. They must be asked of God and awaited with confidence. My time is now about over, and I am making use of the last moment to embrace you in real fatherly fashion.

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By the hand of Father Collineau, Father Chaminade writes again to his dear seminarians in Auch.

445 - TO THE SODALISTS OF THE SEMINARY OF AUCH

Bordeaux, end of 1827

My dear children: It is now almost a year since we sent you a banner of the Blessed Virgin. It was to be placed on the altar of Mary and to become your rallying sign.

I have no doubt that you have had, since then, many combats to sustain, since the devil is so furiously set on your loss! But, has everyone remained at his post? Has everyone fought as valiantly as he was expected to fight? I am transporting myself today in your midst—in heart I am always there—and I am going to count on you.

And, so, first of all, where are all your old friends? O, my children! May the Blessed Virgin have had to weep over the loss of someone? Might anyone of her children have ceased to love and to serve her divine Son? I do not know what answer it seems to me I hear at the bottom of my heart, and which fills it with sadness. . . . See, my children, count yourselves, and if it is

true that the Heart of our good Mother has been rent, console her by your fervor, and above all, instruct yourselves by means of her example. Woe to the one who prays negligently, woe to the one who has dealings with men who have lost the fear of God! Woe to the one who feels the lessening of the love of the Blessed Virgin in his heart, and who does not make of it his duty, to renew himself in the spirit of his vocation!

But we have another matter to treat. It is not enough to defend oneself; conquests for the Blessed Virgin must also be made. This is up to you to accomplish, by your mildness, your humility, your exactitude in your frequentation of the sacraments, and in the fulfillment of your duties of state, above all, by a very Christian union, in making those with whom you live understand and feel how sweet it is to belong to Mary. Have you implanted in their hearts the desire to unite themselves to you? Keep count, my dear children, because such should be your zeal that at the same time as we perfect ourselves in doing good, we must draw a great number to follow after us. I am giving the kiss of peace to these new children of the Blessed Virgin with all the effusion of my heart. The Sodality of the Young Men of Bordeaux is giving you a banner of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Mary will present you this adorable Heart, and while studying the Heart of Jesus, you will learn how to love and honor Mary. I have blessed your banner.

I am embracing you all, my dear children, your Prefect, for whom I pray, and your respectable Director. Once more, let me say, love the good God, my children, and be ever faithful to the Blessed Virgin.

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Part 2

The following letter is the first indication of the direct relations of Father Chaminade with the one who was to be his most intimate confidant and his second successor.

446 – TO BROTHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 9, 1828

I am very glad to see, my dear son, that you should be the first to inform me that you received the tonsure and minor orders. I see that Father Rothéa is doing a good job with you, and, without doubt, he has good reasons for acting thus, although he has not yet

written to me in your regard.[1] Always try to find a little time, in spite of your numerous occupations, to study theology. For the purpose, come to an understanding either with Brother Clouzet or Father Rothéa.

I am happy to think that the wishes you offer to the Lord for me at this beginning of the year proceed from a heart that is sincerely and lovingly attached to me. I am accepting them with great satisfaction and gratitude. I beg you to accept those I am forming for your sanctification and happiness, as well as the blessing your father is giving you from the effusion of his heart.

* * * *

During the night of January 8, 1828, Mother de Trenquelléon died at Agen. Father Chaminade was not with her at the time, but he did not delay going to Agen to console his Daughters, and it is there that he received from the mother of the Foundress the following letter.

"I was well aware, Reverend Father, of the sorrow that the death of our daughter would cause you as her spiritual father. To me, her mother in the natural order, her death caused a sorrow which is beyond words to express. It seemed to us that she would have been able still to be of some use to the work of God, but the good Lord judged otherwise and if, according to all appearances, she is in his bosom or will shortly be, she will be a zealous Protectress. She certainly was that while on earth!

"It will be with great satisfaction that I shall give the details of her childhood and youth. She was predisposed to the influence of grace, even before the age of reason. You are free to take from my notes whatever may serve as edification. As to the genealogy—as a life of this kind must preach the humility, without which there is no real virtue—I think we must be satisfied with the statement that she was the daughter of Mr. de Batz, Baron of Trenquelléon, former officer of the French Guards, Knight of St. Louis, with the rank of Colonel in the armies of His Majesty, and of Miss Peyronnencq Saint-Chamarand.

"I have no idea at all, Reverend Father, as regards the monument. In this matter, have it made entirely as you will judge proper. Whatever you decide upon will be all right with me.

"I shall always learn with interest whatever concerns the organization of the Daughters of Mary, as well as whatever concerns them personally.

"This Institute will always be dear to me, and I shall always have for you, Reverend Father, the most respectful sentiments. I shall never forget the satisfaction, which, alas! is

[1] It is known that Brother Chevaux, already before entering the Society, had followed with success the courses in theology given in the Major Seminary of Besançon.

now lost for me, that you had caused me in permitting me to see my dear daughter in a particular manner.

"I have the honor to be, Reverend Father, with the greatest veneration, your very humble and very obedient servant."

Peyronnencq de Trenquelléon

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At St. Remy, Brother Clouzet had made, without first notifying Father Chaminade, considerable expenses for the installation of the normal school. About that, the following observations of the Founder.

447 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 28, 1828

When I shall be entirely satisfied, my dear son, with our boarding normal school in St. Laurent, I shall send you my plan for it. Herewith enclosed is a note about the normal schools. It does not yet correspond very well with all my ideas; however, in the meantime, we can make use of it.

Yes, my dear son, I am taking a real interest in the normal schools, and I shall never cease giving you evidences of it, as also to all such as may be able to take part in them. Nevertheless, I would have had still greater pleasure, if you had not yet made the changes that we had planned. You could so easily continue this year as you had done last year, leaving the candidates as they were and doing everything in the ordinary way, and only taking better care of the normal course without prejudice to the care needed by the boarding school.

You know what our situation is in Bordeaux. It is more annoying than last year, and I have as my part of the burden, eighty persons to be fed, to entertain, and to care for, in health as in sickness and then, the heavy expenses connected with all the establishments of men and of women. And it is in this situation that you take from me all hope of receiving any help this year from St. Remy. You even make me fear the need of having other recourse to me. Don't you think that it would have been in place before making so notable a change, and especially before beginning such expensive repairs, to let me know about what you intended to do? The question I was asking you in my last letter was to awaken you, to make you aware of the little attention you seemed to be giving this year as regards both the normal course and the retreat, corresponding to the changes you had made.

Furthermore, I think you have correctly taken all your measures and dimensions, so that whatever is needed in a normal school on the grand scale may be found in the

building. It will already be an annoyance if we find ourselves obliged to interrupt the normal course or have it given elsewhere in order to be able to give the retreats. You must bear in mind that two departments are involved. The normal course is set for five months, but you understand very well that, as a result, this determination will not be possible.[1] Furthermore, I urge you to see to it that the candidates are well taken care of. Ordinarily such candidates are fairly reasonable. If they are satisfied, the information will spread and the normal course will be well patronized.

The prefect of Vesoul passed on to me the Royal Ordinance that confirms the donation of the property in Marast. I have just received again the same Ordinance through the intermediary of the archbishop of Bordeaux. Thus, this Ordinance is inscribed in the prefecture of Vesoul and in the episcopal palace in Bordeaux. Do you believe that the prefect of Vesoul was glad to receive a little case of 25 bottles of Bordeaux wine, old Medoc? Although we haven't been entirely in agreement as regards the establishment of the arts and crafts at St. Remy, I have, nevertheless, preserved for the prefect great sentiments of respect, of esteem, and, I dare say it, of tender affection. Besides, I acknowledge to the prefect of Vesoul, the reception of the Royal Ordinance which he so kindly sent. You might write confidentially to the secretary-general, and at the same time, send him a copy of the little note of this letter, which expressed my dispositions in regard to the prefect, which begins with these words: "Do you believe" and goes up to the next paragraph.

You talk to me about the vast project that Father Breuillot would have on his hands, in transforming Marast into a hospice for the insane, but you don't say much more about it. What would you want me to answer? Write to Father Breuillot that I am disposed to be entirely with him in all the arrangements he will judge suitable for carrying out his benevolent views, but that, when all is done, St. Remy has to find a suitable reimbursement in compliance with the views of the testators.[2] You tell me that Marast has been afflicted this year with the scourge of hail, and that you, nevertheless, paid the assessments. If you place before the prefect the accident that has occurred in Marast, you will be able to obtain exemption from the assessments for this year, or at least a considerable reduction in them.

I am writing a few words to Brothers Gaussens, Brunet, and Carrere to begin the cure of the ills of which you speak. As regards you, my dear son, I have an exact idea, I believe, of the extent and difficulties of your solicitude, but this does not prevent me from saying to you that the more you have of affairs, the greater is the need that you should possess yourself, and the more you have need of the threefold interior silence that we so much recommend, that is to say, the silence of the imagination, of the mind, and of the passions. The more you need to pray, the greater is your need to become a man of faith and of mental prayer. You will never accomplish better the full extent of your duties, than when

[1] Father Chaminade wanted a course of three full years.
[2] Marast had been bequeathed to the archbishop of Besançon in view of the establishment of a house of education.

you pray better and acquit yourself of your exercises of piety with more recollection and faith. But you ask me: Where shall I find the time? You must try to find it, my dear son, and most certainly you will find it, if you look for it with determination and prudence, if you keep full control of yourself and conduct yourself with a spirit of faith. I admit that you will have more time, if it were only by dispatching your affairs more promptly, and in this way, even with more success.

I am writing to Father Meyer and leaving him in St. Remy until a new order. His stay in St. Remy has seemed useful until the present and to have been such in reality, but I don't believe that this utility counterbalances the blessings which a simple and blind obedience, as much on your part as on that of the other Heads, would have attracted upon this establishment. I am not saying more, so as not to add a new affliction to those which you already have, but I shall not cease to repeat it: become a man of faith, for without faith we shall not do much good, and if we happen to do any, it would be without merit for us.

For a long time, you have been talking to me about sending four or five candidates for the entire month of January. Father Meyer was awaiting several subjects from Strasbourg in order to leave with them. The candidates of whom you and others have talked to me, are they the same as those for whom Father Meyer was waiting? It would not seem so. Whatever the case may be, send the five or six subjects of whom you are speaking to me, since they are good and will be carrying a little pension.

I shall not delay much in seriously occupying myself with the little establishment of Besançon. If I happen to make any changes, I shall tell you about them.

I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and wishing you the peace of the Lord.

* * * *

The letter of Father Chaminade to Father Meyer has not been preserved. Of it, there remains only the following passage transcribed by Father Meyer with other extracts of letters of Father Chaminade in his spiritual notebook.

448 - TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 29, 1828

Calm all your anxiety, work with a good heart and stay in St. Remy until further orders. Try to win the confidence of all the professors and to strengthen the union among them. The boarding school will never go well if they are not really united, if they do not act in concert, in other words, as one.

I am not hiding from Brother Clouzet that a simple and blind obedience on his part and of the other heads would have drawn upon the establishment an abundance of blessings that would have advantageously counterbalanced the utility which they have derived from your stay. I am glad to see people reason, but only for a wise application of the principles of faith. I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and wishing you an increase of faith and peace in the Lord.

* * * *

The Society had been existing for ten years. In the session of the Council of the Superior General held on February 6, 1828, it was decided to proceed with the revision of the Constitutions and that special prayers should be asked of the Society for this purpose. Hence, the following circular letter.

449 – CIRCULAR TO THE INSTITUTE

Bordeaux, February 20, 1828

My dear children: I have greater need than ever of your prayers before God. For ten years now, I have been asking this same help on the part of those who, during all this time, helped me to lay the foundations of our holy Institute. I am asking it today of each one of you and of you all as one body for the consolidation of what has been done, and for bringing it about, the improvement which each one of you must be desiring.

Let no one among you say that he can do nothing about it, because if we consider ourselves as men, who can truly say he has no power? But God wants that even in our powerlessness we still apply ourselves to his work, and that the weakest pray from the bottom of their hearts for the success and for the blessings of the works undertaken in common. It is the pouring out of your prayers that I am asking you to accomplish before God, so that our good intention may be received and that our unworthiness does not serve to deprive us of his infinite mercies.

Having the desire that the Council continue in extraordinary session for the revision of the Statutes and Regulations which form our Constitutions, and that all the associates, without exception, ask God to direct and to enlighten the work, I decree the following:

1. There will be held in each and every one of the establishments of the Institute of Mary a novena of good works and of prayers, to be opened on the eleventh of the month of March and to end on the nineteenth of the same month, feast of St. Joseph, inclusively;

2. The ordinary novena of St. Joseph, where it will take place, and the other usual devotions in connection with this feast will concur with the novena prescribed by the preceding article with neither double exercises nor any other burden on any society member, other than redoubling as far as in him lies, his fervor;

3. During the nine days, the good works will be: 1) The fast, to be strictly observed by those who will not have been dispensed from it by reason of their age or the weakness of their health; 2) the Holy Communions for which all categories could obtain permission, always for the said intention;

4. As regards the prayers, each subject of the Institute will recite once each day, whether in common with others or separately, 1) the hymn *Veni Creator* with the versicle and prayer; 2) the *Cor Jesu flagrans*, etc., *Cor Mariae*, as given here later; 3) the anthem, *Sub tuum* with the prayer *Respice quaesumus*, etc.; 4) the anthem to St. Joseph, *Fidelis servus et prudens*, etc., with the versicle and response *Ora pro nobis sancta Pater Joseph*, etc. and the prayer *Sanctissimae Genitricis tuae Sponsi*, etc. These prayers may be recited either in Latin or in French;

5. After the novena has been ended, the prayers will continue to be recited for the same intention until the conclusion of the work undertaken as regards the Constitutions;

6. The Superior General, being particularly charged with this work because he thought he should be, calls especially for the efficacy of these prayers upon himself;

7. The present order will be sent to all the houses of the Institute in such a way that all of them may have received it before the eleventh of March.

Cor Mariae immaculatum, Cordi Jesu simillimum, fac cor nostrum secundum Cor Jesu; Immaculate Heart of Mary, perfectly conformable to the Heart of Jesus, grant that our hearts may become like that of your divine Son!

* * * *

To Mother St. Vincent de Labastide, named Vicar-General of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary after the death of the Foundress, and who was to succeed her as Superioress General (1830-56), Father Chaminade continued the directions given until then to Mother de Trenquelléon.

450 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, February 27, 1827

Little Carrere has really come, my dear daughter, and if he does not keep his promises, his father will have to expect to see him again. He asked me for the trade of shoemaker, and I let him have it temporarily.

You ask me what line of conduct you ought to follow in regard to those who ask you for corporal penances. Well, my dear daughter, you need great discretion. It is certain that these penances have been praised and practiced at least by most of the saints. It is also true that the body must be made subject to the spirit and that, for the greatest number of devout souls, the other means are insufficient.

What rule is then to be followed? That of examining: 1) whether these requests are inspired by the Holy Spirit; 2) whether these inspirations announce a will on the part of God. The real spirit of penance may be regarded as inspired by God. Furthermore, in testing the persons who make these requests, it can be noticed very soon whether there is any illusion present, as it is in this matter that Satan most often takes on the appearance of an angel of light. The test makes it easy to discover whether in the request there were secret motives of vanity, ostentation, self-opinionatedness, etc. Fear, when you will see no evidence of humility, mortification, but on the contrary, stubbornness, presumption, etc. I say, fear, because sometimes the good God may inspire similar penances, precisely for taming the petitioner's pride and lack of humility. In order to discover this, observe the effects that the first concessions will have produced.

Put great order in all the catechism instructions you will be giving to the children of the diverse parishes of the city. You will kindly give me the most detailed information that you can on this important subject. You will soon know how many little girls or young ladies belong to each parish.

When your spiritual pupils will have made their First Communion, you might start a course in what is called Catechism of Perseverance, which would insist more on the reasons for the facts of faith and which would last one or two years. It is mainly from among those attending these meetings that you would choose your sodalists.

May the Lord, my dear daughter, be always with you!

P.S. Carrere is going to leave again. In this child, all is nature and caprice.

* * * *

451 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 7, 1828

I have received, my dear son, your letters dated February 6th and 8th. The two young people[1] arrived in Bordeaux after being 15 or 16 days on the road, of which about one-third was made in some sort of vehicle, the younger one unable to stand the trip otherwise.

I am writing to Father Meyer, and I wrote to him also two days ago, at first to quiet him and then to give him commission for an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in Jetterswiller, Lower-Rhine.[2] You will be kind enough to favor this commission by giving him the money to cover the expenses of this trip.

I was able to converse about you with several persons and possibly, sometimes at quite some length, but it never occurred to me that I should slip and say that you were acting in St. Remy like a despot. I am able to affirm this, 1. because it is contrary to my personal character; 2. because I have never even thought it; and 3. in such a statement, there would be no prudence. Now, form your own opinion about what you ought to think about the report that has been brought to you. When I thought I ought to blame you, I would have been able to mention more than ten actions that I would have praised, and which I did praise every time there was occasion to do so in my correspondence with you. It might seem to you that I disapprove of everything in you. My way of acting in your regard is about like that of a confessor toward his penitent. He blames him, and with reason, for all the faults of which he accuses himself, and at the same time, seeming to lose sight of all his good actions.

However, must you suspend the work which you are having done on the buildings destined for the normal school and its retreats? It is very difficult for me to answer this question, but I shall say without hesitation, no, if things are managed in such a way that the normal course and the retreat which is to accompany or follow it cannot suitably take place without this work.

When I received your letter of February 8th, I was in a position to write to you or at least to have someone write to tell you to beware of Mr. Fauvel, because I had learned according to very accurate information that he was a crook, etc.

For the time being, I don't think Brother Fridblatt should be changed for the normal course, but encourage him, try to gain his confidence, show him all the interest you have in the candidates, and you will have him do whatever you want.

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[1] Two postulants being sent to the novitiate of St. Laurent.
[2] There is question of the foundation of Rheinackern, of which there will be reference later on.

As regards Delcamp, he would have to be pushed sharply on the point of writing, and that Father Rothéa and Brother Laugeay put him back to his ease on the spiritual side. I don't think this would offer any great difficulty as the young man has religion and faith, even if pride and self-love do offer serious obstacles, and he has enough courage to turn himself around once he is really convinced of its necessity.

I wanted to continue speaking to you, but I am so often disturbed that I have to end this letter here and now that it may leave with the next mail. I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

The situation of the boarding school St. Marie worried Father Chaminade. Brother Auguste was not up to the job of looking after it properly, and this was noticed especially after the departure of Father Lalanne for Gray. Father Collineau, no doubt, had left Villeneave and had returned to Bordeaux, but he lent himself only with difficulty to the services which were expected of him in the St. Marie boarding school. The following letters show us what difficulties the Founder was up against, and with what patience he sought to overcome them.

452 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, March 26, 1828

According to the views of the Council, my dear son, which seemed wise to me, I am going to share the direction of the boarding school to three principal Heads in accordance with the spirit of the Society. I shall reunite, on the head of Father Collineau, the functions of Head of Zeal and those of Head of Instruction, and I shall give to Brother Auguste all the powers of a Head of Work.

To this effect, I ask you, my dear son, to designate, not in general, but in regard to the boarding school: 1. the functions of the Head of Zeal; 2. those of the Head of Instruction; these two offices, temporarily united under the same Head, will not cause any strain; 3. what will clearly be the powers to give to Brother Auguste as Head of Work? 4. in what way will the bookkeeping, one of his powers, be habitually submitted to the deliberation of a council? I am asking you for an answer, my dear son, as soon as possible. . . . Easter is a precious time at which to give the boarding school new life in all that concerns the studies.

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453 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER,
BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, March 28, 1828

Your answer, my dear son, is not very encouraging, considering the position in which we find ourselves.

Whatever the case may be, I shall do as little harm as I can. I am offering Father Collineau the care of the entire boarding school. If you know of anything better that can be done, be kind enough to let me know about it.

I shall give to Brother Auguste the care of the material goods, management, and the bookkeeping. It is especially he who is to appear, to act, and to decide in matters pertaining to this office, but he has to submit all he does to the deliberations of an advisor. Do you wish to be this needed advisor? The functions of advisor-director cannot lower anyone's opinion of you.

* * * *

The solution proposed by Father Chaminade was not favorably received, and after new discussions, the Founder thought he ought to draw up an Ordinance project, announced by the following lines.

454 – TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Bordeaux, April 14, 1828

For nearly two months now, gentlemen, we have been seeking a way to solve a difficult question: What must be done in regard to the boarding school of St. Marie? Your counsels could not be brought together under the same point of view, and this divergence caused me great sorrow. Adoring the dispositions of Providence, I did not wish to force anything, but after much reflection and after having had read to me the reports of our last Councils, I seemed to notice in your very deliberations a tendency or movement that might be able to lead us to the result we are after. I am going to bring together the propositions that each one thought it his duty to make, and this Ordinance or order will have no other object than finally to settle what kind of help each one is able to contribute toward the good maintenance of the boarding school. We shall examine in our Councils if there might not be anything to add, as experience is a wise teacher. Let us never lose sight of the fact that our object here is to enhance and improve this boarding school, as much on the point of studies and piety as of discipline and finances.

Here is then the most exact bringing together of your views that I was able to make, so as to make of them a kind of plan. I beg of you to conform yourselves to it in the spirit of zeal that is to animate us and in view of the end that we are proposing to ourselves.

* * **

The Ordinance project has not been preserved for us. We have only the note by which Father Chaminade asked Brother David to look over the text.

455 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

April 14, 1828

You will be able, my dear son, to give this Ordinance any other form you may deem more suitable. The one which will please most, or displease less, will be the one most agreeable to my taste. I desire that in the bringing together you will make of the various views, you give yourself a role to play, suitable no doubt, but sufficient above all in relation to economy and accountancy.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you!

P. S. Should the Ordinance be transcribed? Should a copy of it be given to each member of the Council? *Quid amplius*?

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Finally, the affair ended in nothing, and the boarding school remained under the direction of Brother Auguste. The correspondence with Brother Clouzet is resumed. There is question, among other things, of the reprinting of the Manual of the Servant of Mary.

456 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, April 28, 1828

Brother Fridblatt has arrived, my dear son, on the evening of the 26th, quite tired. I sent him immediately to St. Laurent. I have not yet examined him, nor had him examined, to see what might be done in his regard. Yesterday, I showed him a little displeasure for having put you in the necessity of making him leave for Bordeaux, before I had called him there, as had been my intention.

I had already written to Father Lalanne to let him know of my surprise over his having kept back the two novices,[1] and especially over his having put them on duty without having authorization to do so. I asked him to allow them to continue their trip to Bordeaux, unless he had strong reasons for the contrary, and that, in this case, to notify me immediately, so that what is suitable might be done. You will surely know what is happening before you send on their trunks. You will send for Brother Fridblatt all that you can, above all, his copybooks, which he thinks he needs. I told him to make a note of it. You will receive it with this letter.

I am finding out only now that Brother Fridblatt lost the little package he was carrying. As regards the two novices whom you are sending, you must tell me all that may concern them and give me the description you have made of them, as well as those which the different Heads may have made of them.

The change in ministry has changed nothing.[2] If there happens to be any change, I shall let you know of it, only, on the address of the Minister you will no longer put Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction, but only Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs as the Minister of Public Instruction has now its own Minister.

I had forgotten to tell you, my dear son, that at my passing through Paris, I had accepted an encyclopedia for St. Remy. It is a present of Mr. O'Lombel. It was on sale in Marseilles. We have taken care to have it sent to St. Remy.

My dear son, look after the reprinting in Besançon of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary* in such a way that each bound copy will come to only 20 or 21 cents, supposing that 4,000 are printed. You tell me there would be 400 pages of printing. Doubtless, this is not the same size and shape we are accustomed to, as the actual edition, as you may have noticed, has 487 pages. In Bordeaux, the reprinting would cost a lot more. Your letter came just in time, for we had just decided in the Council of the Society, that the job would be given very soon to Mr. Faye, printer. I am having all taken care of.

You may have dealings with your printer, but be on your guard:

1. See that good paper is used. You must have noticed that the paper of the *Manual* that we are using is of a very poor quality. The printer had deceived me. I had a sample of the paper on which he was to print. When the work was finished, he had it brought out; I had all counted and closed the deal. He immediately sold his presses and left for Paris. It was only too late that I noticed the difference in paper.

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[1] J. B. Hoffman and Andrew Deller, of whom there will be question later on.

[2] There is question of the faculties granted to Father Chaminade for his correspondence with St. Remy. As we have been able to see above, this correspondence was being carried on under the protection of the archbishop and the minister of ecclesiastical affairs. At the end of 1827, the Minister Villele had been replaced by the Minister Martignac. Monsignor Frayssinous was keeping charge of ecclesiastical affairs and assigning public instruction to Mr. de Vatimesnil.

2. It is understood that he will turn out only 4,000 copies and that he will give over to you all the defective sheets that he will have rejected in making up his copies. It is possible that he will want to print more, so as to have them pass outside of France or in foreign countries, as is the custom with printers in Besançon and Strasbourg. I would think we could give him the permission, if we could have enough confidence that he would not have them come back to France, as is their custom. It is quite difficult to come to suitable agreements with printers and to forget nothing, so that things turn out as they are expected to.

If it is all right with you, I shall have a corrected copy of the *Manual* passed over to you with a few changes, which will not affect the price of printing. I have been told that the Trappists who are between Vesoul and Besançon[1] had a printing shop. If it were well enough equipped, you might have greater confidence in dealing with them. You would have to find someone to correct the proofs, but I think you will find someone in Besançon or even Vesoul, but I don't think you have anyone capable enough at St. Remy. Do not delay in letting me know what has been decided, for we are already a month behind time, and the sacrifice is painful because calls for copies of the *Manual* are coming in from all sides.

I have written to Father Rothéa that he could send me Brother Copey and the turner. I would replace Brother Copey by Brother Charpin, whom I would have leave Bordeaux when I know the day on which Brother Copey was to leave. I am sending by this same mail an obedience for Brother Hunolt, who is to go to St. Remy and from there to Courtefontaine. I am sending another to Brother Houlne,[2] and he is to go to St. Marie-aux-Mines and replace Brother Hunolt.

I find it hard to understand that a tailor in Colmar should not be earning any more than he spends. If the case, nevertheless, is otherwise, I see no obstacle to our sending him to Colmar, especially if you can easily do without him. In general, my dear son, I am very much displeased to see, as I remarked to Brother Laugeay, that writing is being done in the different establishments to secure subjects. None of the subjects of the Institute is to be placed or displaced without the order from the Central House. I have the intention of giving this title to St. Remy and that, for a large civil district. However, St. Remy is not yet sufficiently equipped to enjoy this high designation. The Provincialate is not attached to the house in Gray, but it is lodged in the person of Father Lalanne, be it for his own formation in the art of government, to handle hard or urgent cases that might arise in these distant

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[1] There is question of the Trappist monastery of Bellevaux, former Cistercian monastery, restored in 1816 by Dom Eugene Hubelin. The death of this religious in 1828 almost brought about its ruin (See Letter 459.) It disappeared at the time of the Revolution of 1830.

[2] Brother Sebastian Houlne (1801-33) was remarkable as a teacher of drawing and writing. He had a special gift for winning the affection of his pupils. He died in Colmar as the result of a painful operation, after having received the encouragements of the Founder. In his agony, he cried out: "My Brothers, be constant, be faithful to your vocation! Oh, how happy I am to die as a religious of Mary!" He was the first Brother to die in Alsace.

regions, or for the adoption of good habits. However, the action of the Provincial is still but vaguely determined or outlined, and I did not think it prudent to do any more about it, at least for the present.

Our normal school for boarders of the novitiate of St. Laurent does not yet have what I would desire, and much is still lacking. Nevertheless, we are always going ahead toward the end we have in view. Don't believe that I am forgetting your novitiate in St. Remy. If St. Laurent is once fitted out with all it needs, it will be easy to do the same for you, always taking for granted a novice master sufficiently well trained to train others. Brother Gobillot, without doing well, is not doing badly, since the novitiate is being constantly inspected. Brother Gobillot, without precisely having talents, has good judgment. He is a good religious and very docile in carrying out or having carried out, what he is told. I can have full confidence in him, and that is not saying a little.

You no longer talk to me about Brother Seguin, for whom you asked me so often and whom I gave you reason to hope for. Might you have grown tired or have you feared being indiscreet? Last year, when I left for Paris, Brother Seguin was ill and there seemed to be some danger for his life. Since my return, tertian fever has been endlessly bothering him. He is presently at St. Laurent as Head of Work, and in this capacity he has plenty of work. He is the one, who among all the religious who are here, is the best qualified to fill this office. The locksmith shop is accomplishing very little.

Brother Troffer has insistently asked me for Brother Bousquet for Besançon. It seems that with him, he would not need anybody else. I've sent him to him, and now he is urging me to send him a teacher and a singer. As regards the singer, I don't think it is suitable to send Brother Fatet, as they say he is doing passably well at St. Marie-aux-Mines, and so there is no reason for changing him, at least for this year. You may see the reasons for it. Furthermore, in fitting out the establishment of Besançon, there was never any question of putting a singer there. I, nevertheless, don't want to say that among the subjects we shall have to send there, we would not take the means to find one or two with enough of a voice to sustain the choir. As regards Brother Delcamp, he must still stay in St. Remy, at least until I am fully settled as regards his destination.

I received the last letter of Father Meyer, and I hope soon to be able to let him know the decision I have come to as regards the establishment of Rheinackern. As regards that of Haguenau, tell him to continue to follow the project he has already started. I shall answer in the manner he has indicated, in case I should get some sort of request. . . . You now see that his presence and stay in St. Remy are not attracting abundant blessings. I was hearing, as you know, that he was staying there contrary to the views of Providence. There is great appearance that if he had been made to do exactly what I had prescribed for him, you would now have a priest at least, well able to sustain this establishment and to better it in every way. May the Lord be blessed, because God must be blessed in all things.

I am ending this letter, like all the others, in embracing you tenderly, recommending prayer to you and especially the spirit of faith, and wishing you and all of our Brothers all kinds of blessings.

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In the following letter, Father Chaminade gives Mother St. Vincent directions for the foundation of Rheinackern.

457 - TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 7, 1828

Before getting down to business, my dear child, I shall exhort you to redouble the fervor of your prayers to St. Anthony, and you know why.[1] Besides, I would not want to undertake my round of visits without having calmed down, etc. . . .

In quite a short time, I would be able to present to His Holiness all your Constitutions in order to solicit the authorization, or rather the approbation of the Holy See, but money would be needed. . . . When all is ready, I shall tell you of the way of proceeding, that the Apostolic Nuncio traced out for me in Paris. . . . The expenses are heavy, even when one uses great economy.

It seems suitable to me, my dear daughter, at this time, to ask the municipal Council of the city of Agen for the little inquest, which the Government requires for the authorization of the Convent of Agen. You may ask Mr. Chaudordy in what way you are to make your request to the Mayor, by simple letter or as a formal petition. Mr. Chaudordy will surely have the kindness to prepare the request for you, in the one form or another.

There would be question, my dear daughter, of working seriously at the formation of the establishment in Alsace. The new convent is called Rheinackern in the parish of Jetterswiller, quite near Wasselonne, in the Department of the Lower Rhine. I have sent Father Meyer, who himself is German, to visit the place,. The church is a place of famous pilgrimage. The buildings were found to be little fitted to serve as a convent in the full sense of the word, and quite badly disposed on the matter of enclosure. The twelve young ladies who are living there together, and whose sole desire is to become Daughters of Mary, speak only German, and have but little training and possibly also little education. They are all of mature age, the youngest being at least 25 years old.

The reverend pastor of Jetterswiller is very active, but knows little, and perhaps nothing at all, about what a foundation really involves. All the letters he writes to me are in bad French, with practically no detail, but he seems pliable and surely wants the establishment. Money doesn’t seem to be lacking. He wrote to me around Easter time, to delay the sending of the Sisters, that the workmen were hard at work, and that soon there

[1] There is question of financial help to be obtained. See Letter 460.

would be all the room needed for everything, including the enclosure. I answered him that I thought it suitable, before giving development to the work proposed, to send only three Sisters, in other words, two Mothers and a Sister-Companion. They would devote themselves to the formation of the twelve young ladies who were there gathered together, that several novices could be received, and the work already begun would be continued with them. In the meantime, all that concerns the convent would be regularized to conform to accepted standards. He has just sent me word to send the Sisters, that all was ready and that the enclosure with its grating had all that is required, etc. . . .

I do not think that all is ready to that extent, but anyhow I think I have to hold to the little project of sending our Sisters. I would think of Mother Gabriel as Superioress. See if Mother Ignatius could be her helper and also the econome of the House. A good Sister-Companion would have to be chosen. Sister Genevieve Pretre would seem to me entirely suitable. I am of the opinion that most of the ladies united there will be received only in the rank of companions and reserved for heavy work. I presume that before the establishment is well regularized, there will be some among the novices to whom a higher education can be profitably given. The reverend pastor is already talking to me about one fully educated. We shall have but few Sisters to send for the young ladies boarding school.

Would Mother Ignatius be fervent enough to be given the permission to make her perpetual vows? I would think of replacing Mother Gabriel in Arbois by Sister Xavier. What do you think of all this? I wrote to the reverend pastor of Jetterswiller that I expected all the traveling expenses to be charged to the new convent. Without answering me on this point, he simply said: send on the Sisters.

I wanted to answer your last two letters, but I simply have to call a halt here and now. May the peace of the Lord always be with you!

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458 - TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 21, 1828

I have received, my dear son, your letter of the fifth of the present month, as also the one that closely followed it, but which was without any date. It did not come any sooner for having been put in the post office directly.

See to it that whoever writes to me from St. Remy, it be done by way of the Ministry as has been agreed upon. We may as well profit by this advantage as long as Providence accords it to us.

You will do well to accept definitely the printing of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary,* 6,000 copies at the price and on the conditions agreed upon. As regards these last, you do

not tell me the cost of each bound copy, but I think that it is the one you have already marked, 20 to 21 cents. You do tell me, however, that the difference between Vosges paper and parchment paper would mean a difference of two cents per copy. The Vosges papers is doubtless the one on which is based the price you agreed upon. I am of the opinion that you will have one-tenth of the 6,000 copies printed on parchment paper and all the rest on Vosges paper. We shall take at least 2,000 bound copies. I think Brother Rothéa will be able to take a thousand copies right away for himself and the other establishments in Alsace. You can arrange with Father Lalanne as to how many he would want to take for himself and for Arbois and Orgelet. I presume that in the course of the year, Bordeaux will ask you for more, also, that since they are sent by wagon-freight, the carriage will not cost much. You put Brother Fridblatt's little trunk on the stagecoach and that cost 42.75 francs.

I think that the Besançon printer will have noticed, like yourself, that the type of this little manual is not everywhere the same. The biggest part is printed in small type, while the rest is in long primer type. At least, I think these are the correct type names. The small type is mainly for the young people, while the primer type is for those of mature age or older. This difference of type must be kept.

I shall very soon answer the other parts of your letter, but this is about all I can write for today. I am embracing you very tenderly.

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459 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 26, 1828

I wrote to you, my dear son, on the first of the present month, on the subject of the printing of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*. I was going to continue my answer to your letter of the fifth, when, by mail, stamped from Paris and charges of 40 sous, came the messages of Brother Gaussens with a little note from you. Doubtless, only one envelope was used and addressed to the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, while that of the Archbishop of Bordeaux was omitted. It is in this way that, through lack of attention, at least a good half of the letters coming from St. Remy mean postage expenses for us.

You ask me what ought to be done in case the Bishop of Besançon should not keep the establishment of the Trappists. I should say, my dear son, to each one of the religious who might present himself in St. Remy, to write to me the facts minutely detailed, and to await my answer. If you know well the nature of the Trappist Order, you will see that it is no matter of indifference to receive them, be it in the Institute in general or in any particular establishment. As to their printing shop, we must first find out about its condition and then about its price, for the laws about printing are very strict.

Each establishment is supposed to pay the traveling expenses of its subjects who are sent elsewhere, unless, on account of some special circumstance, another arrangement has been made.

Brother Laugeay had written to me from St. Remy that he was to leave for Bordeaux on the 16th of this month if he did not receive any order to the contrary.

It is much to be feared that the postponement of the normal course in Courtefontaine until next November first will strike a decisive blow to this establishment, since its opening had been announced for June first and the subjects destined for it should have reported sometime in May.

I shall answer Brother Gaussens, and if there is something more needed than consolations and counsels dictated by wisdom and experience, I shall let you know of it in my letter.

Nothing as yet has been decided upon with regard to the transfer of Father Lalanne from Gray to St. Remy. If we get to the point of settling upon something in this matter, I shall also give you ample notice. His title as Provincial is but temporary and had not yet been regularized.

The normal school of St. Laurent is not what it ought to be, as you tell me. It is true, but it will not be long in becoming what it ought, since, in a general way, all is peaceful there. The Rule is being observed and the young people are advancing in virtue. Brother Gobillot is not in charge of equipping this school, but he has about all that is needed to do well what is being done. He deserves our confidence. If he has not much knowledge, if he hasn't agreeable manners, he has enough prudence to avoid anything that might compromise him. It is he who is teaching arithmetic, and he is very strong in it. He knows, as we say, all his Bezout,[1] with the exception of logarithms. Besides, you must not consider Brother Gobillot as a Head who is beyond all control, as he is working with good headmasters and near the Madeleine. Here we are four priests[2] who are all interested in having this house achieve the highest possible efficiency.

The matter of finances is not being entirely neglected in the Institute, but is meeting with much difficulty.

Keep and develop young Delcamp until you get a further order. I shall very shortly answer Father Meyer. St. Remy is not able to serve the Commune of Cubry for divine worship because it has trouble in serving itself in this regard. I shall write to the two Rothéa brothers.

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[1] Stephen Bezout, author of a complete course in mathematics, 1780, which remained the standard for a long time.
[2] Good Father Chaminade and Fathers Caillet, Romain, and Collineau.

I pity you for the trouble you have in supplying the wherewith to pay for the immense repair work you have undertaken. I think you are giving me only the small part of it, so that I myself may not complain, because of the fact that this year you will not be able to give us any of the help we need so badly. . . . May be peace of the Lord be always with you!

* * * *

460 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, May 27, 1828

I have been very much edified, my dear daughter, that the proposition which I had made to you according to the advice of Mr. Lacaussade, to go to take the water cure at Luchon, found you in the dispositions which you announce to me in your letter of the 18th of the present month. I have always felt great repugnance that the Daughters of Mary, in their illnesses, should use other remedies than those which they could take in their respective communities, without dispensing with the rule of enclosure. I was of the same opinion, as regards the deceased Good Mother, although I never had the courage to speak to her about it. I shall not delay in writing formally to Mr. Lacaussade on the same subject. On the other hand, I may say that no none knows what is going on in this matter. . . .

In spite of the great need we would have had of the 6,332.10 francs, I am, nevertheless, very glad that this big hole is now closed. See, my dear daughter, how truly admirable is divine Providence and the care it seems to take in kindling your confidence in St. Anthony!

I took care of the matter with Father Trincaud.[1] His protégé would be received in preference to any other, if there were place for her. . . . You also know there is none for the children. . . . There are now at the Misericorde more than 250 girls. . . . That is wonderful. . . .

I really think, my dear daughter, that you should not receive in the postulate of the Companion-Sisters, any girl who would not be able to pay at least 200 francs during two years. This would not prevent that an exception might be made, if God should manifest his will in some very clear way. Nevertheless, if you found some subjects who seem good to you, you could inscribe them in your particular notes and then we would see if they could not form part of the regular Third Order of the Daughters of Mary.

Father Caillet will write to you about Sister St. Clair as about several other matters. I am stopping here, my dear Daughter, in wishing you a thousand and one blessings!

* * * *

Brother Clouzet had asked Father Lalanne to put down his name for a certain number of copies of the new edition of the Manual of the Servant of Mary*, after having seen the text. Father Lalanne had written to Father Chaminade that he could not introduce the Manual into the College of Gray unless all was suppressed as regarded the Sodality. The*

[1] Father Trincaud de la Tour (1790-1853) Vicar General of the diocese of Agen, devoted friend of Father Chaminade and of his works.

political horizon, in fact, more and more was growing dark, and Charles X had just signed the famous Ordinances against the Jesuits and the Sodality (June 16th). More courageous than his disciple, Father Chaminade reassures him and traces for him a line of conduct in the following postscript of a letter, the main portion of which has not been preserved.

461 – TO FATHER LALANNE, GRAY

Bordeaux, July, 1828

P.S. This letter, my dear son, was ready to be sent off when I received your last letter of July first. You are finding difficulties in the fact that the *Manual of the Servant of Mary* has been reprinted as it is, as much on account of the preliminary discourse as of the list of indulgences, where there is question of the Sodalities and this often and very directly. But, my dear son, there would have been much more serious inconveniences in making the changes you indicate. What then is to be done? Not to make use of it in your Collège and let it be printed as it is. Let the proofs be well read and corrected. If you have some new songs to sing, more beautiful than some of the old ones, substitute the new ones for the others in such a way that there will be about the same number of printed pages.

It will appear evident, my dear son, that there is no relation at all between the authors of the Manual and the Jesuits, since the first existed a long time before the Jesuits appeared in France and that their sodalities, declared under the government of Bonaparte, are anterior to the Paris sodalities which are the butt of criticism.[1]

* * * *

462 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, July 8, 1828

Although I have many things to say to you, my dear son, I shall limit myself to very little, because of the constant and heavy pressure under which I happen to be.

You have passed over to Father Lalanne the *Manual of the Servant of Mary* for correction. He finds it impossible to make use of it, unless the second part is all completely changed. To speed up matters, I am sending you a copy of the part of my letter which served as an answer to his objections.

Have it printed, my dear son, as soon as possible. A uniform type, which is a kind of a mean between the little type and primer type, will serve better than the double type in which it is printed, and so, don't let this difficulty stop you. If the printer sees that we have

[1] The Society of Jesus had been restored by the Bull *Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum* of August 7, 1814, and the Sodality of Bordeaux went back to the end of the year 1800.

confidence in him, he will make it a point honor to do his job well. Besides, this will not be the only work we will give him, if he does not deceive our expectations.

For your direction, my dear son, I am sending you a copy of the decision of the council, as regards the plans Father Lalanne was making in reference to St. Remy for next year. Let us remain patient. With the help of God, all will be well. As your Good Father, I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE GENERAL COUNCIL
OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY.

The Council assembled, etc. . . . Account has been taken of the propositions made by Father Lalanne in his letter of June 2nd, made known on the 25th of the same month and of which the report has been postponed until today.

The Council, while approving the sentiment expressed by Father Lalanne in his said letter, to correspond with justice and refinement, to the confidence which he has won in Gray, and taking into consideration the declaration made by him of the need which the Collège of Gray would have of his influence for at least another year; is of the opinion that Father Lalanne is to occupy himself exclusively, and during the year 1828-29, with the Collège of Gray, without any new cares or supervisions outside of those with which he has been occupied until now, since he is head of the said college, after which the question will be reconsidered if thought necessary.

* * * *

We are reproducing the preamble of the Certificate of Affiliation addressed on July 28th to Reverend Father Muhe, "the saint of Strasbourg"(1788-1865) who, during more than 40 years was "the soul of religious life in Strasbourg," as Assistant to the Cathedral, Professor of Pastoral Theology in the Grand Seminary, catechist in the normal school and specially, preacher in the Cathedral.

463 – TO FATHER MUHE, STRASBOURG

Bordeaux, July 28, 1828

We, William Joseph Chaminade, priest, Missionary Apostolic, Superior General of the Society of Mary, having learned from our very dear son, Father Meyer, priest of the Society of Mary, that Father Ferdinand Muhe, priest of the diocese of Strasbourg, desired and even solicited his affiliation to the Society of Mary, already knowing the personal merit of the respectable petitioner for several years from our frequent relations with Alsace, and

having had the honor of seeing him ourselves during our passage in Strasbourg, have by these presents, etc.

* * * *

The following letter will be read with interest. In it Father Chaminade gives Mother St. Vincent practical and detailed indications on the manner of receiving the visit of the Duchess of Berry. This princess (1798-1870) daughter of the King of Naples, had married the Duke of Berry, second son of Charles X, who was assassinated on February 13, 1820, and gave birth to the one who was to be the Duke of Bordeaux, the last representative of the old branch of the Bourbons. The composition seems to be that of Brother David Monier.

464 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, August 12, 1828

There is no doubt, my dear daughter, that, like all other civil and religious bodies, you owe a tribute of veneration and homage to the august and royal Princess, who is visiting your city. However, there cannot be any question of violating your rule of enclosure for this purpose, unless Her Royal Highness should give you an order in this regard, which, in all probability will not be the case.

Just keep your letter of homage ready for the first moment, when the august Princess will receive the ladies, then, two of your noncloistered sisters, properly but not richly clothed, will be charged with your message, which, if it is not late, will be received with the others.

I am joining herewith an outline for your letter, because you asked for it. The occasion and the circumstance might have suggested more warmth, more grace, more of that energy which results from deep emotion. Such a letter, written at a distance, has hardly any other merit than that of reason and propriety. Make use of it, such as it is, or do better if your heart so suggests, but be sure decorum and good manners are rigidly kept, as that will suffice.

It is very possible that Her Royal Highness, if she has time, will want to see for herself, know and visit your establishment. If she happens to think of this favor, remain humble, even while manifesting a holy joy over the good that might result from it for religion and the schools. Do not be embarrassed or worried, for, if you maintain simplicity, your answers will come from on high. I would not be able to trace out for you the order of ceremonies for this kind of reception, except from what I know has been done in other convents. Old usage called for many formalities that would be out of place at the present time. Keep in mind that those whom an illustrious Princess deigns to visit are poor people.

The mayor or some other local authority would form the cortege of Her Royal Highness should she want to visit you otherwise than incognito. The civil authorities have the right of penetrating into monastic enclosure, and your regulations specify the circumstances and principal forms.

Just for your personal guidance at the distance we are from one another, if Her Royal Highness deigns to want to visit you, the grand entrance to the property should be ready to open. She will advance, either in an open carriage or on foot, if she thought it proper to get out of the vehicle. You will receive her at the door with your principal aidse, and, if these are missing, replaced by other Sisters including the mistress of novices. You will express to her in a few well-chosen words, your embarrassment and your gratitude for the honor she deigns to confer upon you, and you will briefly answer the questions she may ask you. You will lead her wherever she desires to go, the recreations halls, the refectory, the schools, the dormitory, the little chapel, and the garden. The door of the fields on the side of the city wall will be open. From the entrance, whether she enters seated in her carriage or on foot, you will go to the large central hall, where all of your religious will have been assembled and in perfect order. There will be an arm or easy chair ready, and others alongside in the form of stools, which very probably will remain unused.

You say to the Lady, while using the term Madam, “These are our religious who are free at this moment; the others are occupying other establishments located in several places. They all ask of you, by my voice, your august protection.” If these are not your own expressions, at least yours should have the same meaning.

If the august Princess asks you about the establishments separated from the Motherhouse, let her know their names.

In the schools, where Madame will be led by way of the garden, arrange things so that the pupils are present. They would be there if they knew in advance that she was coming. The only way to find that out would be from the mayor.

In all, do the best you can. There is nothing to be feared that, with the entry of the Princess, people will violate the enclosure, for they are usually respectful and, besides, the Guard of Honor accompanying the Princess could easily guard your doors.

There would be no end to it, if I would want to tell you everything. The circumstances may be guessed at. Anyhow, I have reason to believe that the Vicar General de Trincaud will give you some advice in case of need, and then, if you maintain simplicity and humility, God will not permit that you be embarrassed.

In the great hall, the teaching sisters should be with the others, after having seen to the order in the classes. The pupils would be at their schoolwork, and supervised by older girls or such as are best in the maintenance of order. The teaching Sisters would be the first to leave the great hall, to lead the way for the visit to the classes.

Each employee would be ready for the reception and would go out promptly in order to go to the principal place of his or her work, because, if the Princess desires to visit them, such places should not be vacant.

You and your principal aides, while accompanying the august Princess, will make up in the best way you can for those who are missing. I hope you will not have anyone to excuse, as all will do their part to make the visit a grand success.

Earthly blessings are sent to us by God just as it suits his good pleasure, when and how he wills. Let us refer all to him. If he refuses them to us, let us bless him. If he grants them to us, let us bless him as well. That is what holy King David used to do, he who is our model in the elevations of our heart to God. I ask of God for you all, my dear daughters, all the help you may need.

P.S. The reception and accompaniment are to be made by the Sisters clothed in their choir habits. If Madame goes to the chapel, see that there is a prie-dieu ready for her, and, on entering, offer her holy water, unless there is some ecclesiastical authority that may permit you or require of you some other formality. You will remain in an attitude of prayer until the moment the Princess rises.

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Once again, Father Chaminade by the pen of Father Collineau, addresses his encouragements to his dear sodalists at Auch, and gives them his counsels for the vacation period.

465 – TO THE SODALISTS OF THE SEMINARY AT AUCH

Bordeaux, August 12, 1828

A father does not forget his children. You will, then, not be surprised to find yourselves once more present to my mind, my dear children, during these days which are not for you without their own peculiar dangers.

I do not want, in the least, to spoil the joy you experience at the thought of the coming vacation. On the contrary, I shall encourage you not to forego any of the pleasures that are obtainable during this time, however, not by frequenting the world and letting yourselves dissipate, by rough and noisy games, or at least by letting yourselves grow cold in the practice of virtue. No, such things are not suitable for Christians, for the well-beloved children of a tender mother. A purer kind of joy is reserved for them, and they will find it in the Lord: *Guadete in Domino*. Oh, my children, what occasions there are in the country, in the midst of its silence and its beauties, to elevate oneself to God! How sweet it is to go and

visit our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and to find oneself alone with him! He is present day and night in our tabernacles, and nevertheless, thinks himself quite compensated for his long wait if he sees his children come to adore him once or twice during the day.

You will have to undergo the attacks of three kinds of enemies, who will even often combine their forces. Our Divine Savior points the world out to us: *Mundus me odit*. St. Peter warns us about the devil going about us as a roaring lion: *Circuit quaeren quem devoret*. The apostle St. James points concupiscence out to us: *Unusquisque tentatur a concupiscentia*. To the world, my children, oppose the examples of Jesus Christ. Combat the devil by faith, and concupiscence by continual vigilance. Thus, you must not pass a single day: 1. without making some spiritual reading, either in the holy Gospel or in some book that develops and explainS it; 2. without making a little meditation; 3. without seriously making your examination of conscience, and if the thing is not too difficult, assisting at Holy Mass and visiting the Blessed Sacrament.

I haven't, as yet, said anything to you about the Blessed Virgin. Ah, my children, would it be necessary to tell you that she is your mother, that you are to honor her every day, that it is in her Immaculate Heart that you will always find a sure refuge in time of temptation? It seems to me, I see her offering herself to you and telling you to fear nothing if you wish to be faithful, because, during these days of vacation, she will cover you with the mantle of her special protection. Yes, my children, constantly recall this to mind: you have a mother who loves you, who wishes to help you, and whose power infinitely surpasses all the power of hell.

I am embracing you all in the love of Jesus, and I am enclosing you all in the Immaculate Heart of the Blessed Virgin. Your Good Father.

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466 – TO BROTHER VIELLEMARD,[1] COLMAR

Bordeaux, September 14, 1828

Obedience

Brother Peter Viellemard, religious of the Society of Mary, will go, by the most direct way, to Nontron, Dardogne, his native place, and he will remain there long enough to

[1] Brother Peter Viellemard (1800-75) born in St. Angel, near Nontron, Dordogne, entered as a postulant in St. Laurent in 1823, was employed as a professor in Agen and Villeneuve, then as sacristan during many years at Colmar and Ribeauville. He passed his last years in retirement at Coubeyrac, edifying his Brothers by his piety, his politeness, and his goodness.

proceed to the arrangement of his family affairs, after which he will come to Bordeaux, to the central house of the Society of Mary, Lalande Street, No. 2.

Given in Bordeaux, September 14, 1828.

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The following letter shows us with what delicacy Father Chaminade treated certain delicate questions, and safeguarded the reputation of his religious, even in the case when they might have been guilty of some involuntary imprudence.

467 – TO REVEREND CUENOT, DIRECTOR OF THE SEMINARY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, September 29, 1828

I was on the point of answering the letter, dated the ninth of the present month and by which you have honored me, when I learned that Sister Tharin[1] was being sent to Salins. After all that you had the goodness to write to me, and all the details I was given by Brother Troffer[2] about the affair of which there is question, this measure seems to me rather strong. When I wrote to the respectable sister, as well as to Brother Troffer, I was ignorant of the fact that Father Lalanne had spoken about it to the Reverend Superioress of the Hospital. I believed myself to be the third party informed about the relations, too frequent and too intimate, under the pretext of pious and edifying interviews. By the attempt to withdraw Brother Troffer, I should have known beyond error to what a degree had developed the liaison between them, and I would have arranged everything to put a stop to the imprudences, without anyone's ever knowing anything about them. Father Lalanne should have limited himself to giving me the necessary notification. I am excusing myself to you because of the too great zeal that he put into the report given the Mother Superior, and also for the trouble and embarrassment he caused you. If you have occasion to write to the respectable Sister Tharin, you will kindly tell her, I beg of you, of all the part I have taken in her affliction, as much as I was convinced of her complete innocence, as I was in that of the dear Brother Troffer. It was very easy to see that piety alone rendered these relations too frequent and too intimate, without her having any doubt about it. If the Brother had not been innocent, how would he have communicated his fears to Brother Bousquet in giving him permission to tell them to Father Lalanne?

Soon, all the Brothers who are in the south of France will come together to take a few days of relaxation and to make their annual retreat. There, I shall choose for you a fifth Brother for the hospital. He will be able to leave after the retreat. I am with respect, Reverend Father, your very humble and all devoted servant.

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[1] Sister of the former bishop of Strasbourg.
[2] Director of the Brothers' community.

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468 – TO FATHER LALANNE, GRAY

December 22, 1828

I have read, my dear son, with quite some attention, the Regulation which you sent me for the community of St. Remy with your letter of November 27th. I had it all recopied, with all the observations it includes, and I am sending it back without having retouched anything. I believe: 1. That there is no disadvantage in having it observed there temporarily, such as you have drawn it up; 2. That it would also be without disadvantage that, if the Heads of Departments wanted that some exercise be made at some other hour than that indicated, you would permit it to them. The essential is that they really act as a community and only as such, and that they fulfill the principal exercises required by the general Regulation. Nevertheless, once the Regulation is adopted, no other change is to be made in it without a new order to that effect, or without at least asking for the permission, with an indication of the motives or reasons for the changes asked for. In fact, it is possible that experience will make known the need for some variation.

I am very glad that at the château, all are living in community and, especially, that Brother Clouzet is at the head of all the exercises, and when I say exercises, I mean that he not only takes part in those of the community, but also that he is present, above all, at the recreations and walks of the pupils, and that he often comes to the study halls. During the preceding years, due supervision of the boarding school was woefully lacking, so that moral disorder went quite far, with the result that the good God withdrew his blessings. The pupils of the normal course seemed to me to do much better in instruction, piety, and good morals.

As regards the novitiate, it is easily enough noticed that Brother Clouzet and Father Rothéa have done about all they could and that they knew and felt had to be done. In this novitiate, there must be neither children nor Latinists, but only young men destined for the schools, with teachers amply capable of teaching them all that they can learn. In this novitiate would also be the professed, who would not be well enough educated, also the religious employed at the schools, who would come there occasionally to pass a suitable time, if it were noticed that among them laxity was slowly creeping in, and then we would have what we could call an internal boarding school. With the novitiate would also be all the working Brothers or those employed in the service of the house, besides those who would be destined for the boarding school or the normal school for day pupils. All these categories together are to form the novitiate community.

If the normal school is well staffed, religious residing there permanently will be needed and who will make up the community with the candidates and even the retreatants. Nevertheless, the professors of the internal normal school, or at least some of them, could

teach in the external boarding school. As regards the young postulants, at least those who are in the Latin classes, must be kept with the boarders and left to follow their respective classes. Nevertheless, they are to be specially taken care of, they must have special exercises of piety, as for instance, a daily quarter of an hour of meditation, which they would make at the end of some study period. If these postulants are well looked after, and very pious, they will become very useful to the boarders, in mingling with them in their studies, in the recreations, as well as in the walks. This kind of supervision, as it were hidden, will become very useful to the watchfulness of the heads. During my short stay in St. Remy, I noticed that during the evening recreation after dark and in the courtyard, many disorders among the boarders could easily occur.

I am speaking to you, my dear son, at greater length than I thought I would, because I realized that a copy of this letter might serve to prepare our very dear son and brother, Clouzet, at the same time as yourself, for the execution and good maintenance of regularity.

As regards St. Hippolyte, I should very much like to make of it a good novitiate for Alsace, and then we could send back to St. Remy the majority of the Alsatians. This novitiate would be somewhat differently organized than that of St. Remy. But there are still quite a number of difficulties to be overcome: 1. Father Rothéa would have to be sent there. The diploma of Boarding School Master is on his head, and on what other head could we have it fall? On that of Father Meyer? For the moment, I don't see any other. What do you think? Do you see any others? Is there not danger, under the circumstances, in even making the request? 2. Since Father Rothéa can't be the main man in St. Hippolyte, I would think of Brother Caussens, as he could be easily replaced for what he is doing in St. Remy. What do you think of that? We would send Mr. Christen[1] to sustain and direct all that is of the temporal order, and I think he would have both the will and the means to meet the expenses of the first establishment. Besides, I am just about able to see that we shall be able to find subjects to teach all that will be necessary.

You tell me, my dear son, that you are going to busy yourself about sending me your accounts. Well, I have great need that the results are very favorable. If I were to render mine to you, you would be really frightened at my position. I am not speaking of those of Brother Auguste. Do all you possibly can to come to my assistance. I am not asking that you do anything imprudent, but bleed yourself as much as you can under the circumstances. Our houses here are doing fairly well: the Madeleine, St. Laurent, and Mazarin.[2] At St. Laurent, there are about forty religious, novices or postulants. The novices, who making up the greater part, give cause for bright hopes. There are some good subjects, both at the Madeleine and at Mazarin.

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[1] Mr. Christen, an "oblate" or "given" to the Society, to which he had consecrated his person and his fortune, without making any profession, in consideration of his age. He actually went to St. Hippolyte.
[2] The novitiate of the Daughters of Mary is established on Mazarin Street.

What are you doing with Carrere? Has he seriously converted? This small young man, although gifted in the matter of studies, is very limited in his views and sentiments. His mind is about as small as his body.

Since the last vacation, I had given Brother Hunault notice to quit. I replaced him in Orgelet by Brother Pimonguet. Nevertheless, he is still staying in Orgelet. Some time ago, he wrote me a threatening letter, but I have not as yet had time to answer it. However, it is not to him that I shall write, for he must not have any of my writing, but I shall have someone tell him what I think proper for him to know.

I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and wish you all sorts of blessings.

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469 – TO REVEREND CUENOT, DIRECTOR OF THE MAJOR SEMINARY OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 28, 1828

Reverend Father, I learned from the young director of our little establishment in Besançon that there is a lack of several subjects, and that the Brothers are not up to the task of looking after all the works. I am letting him know that it is his own fault. Why, in fact, does he not keep me constantly informed about what so deeply concerns and is happening in this small but interesting establishment? I surely hope that we shall end by having it completed in every way.

I would much desire, Reverend Father, that, in agreement with Brother Troffer, you would make a little regulation, which would determine the relations which the Brothers are to have with the hospital nuns and with the public. This regulation, if you judge it suitable, would be but temporary. I hope, in the course of the spring or summer to have the honor of seeing you, and perhaps then we could come to some very definite agreement.

I am with respect, Reverend Father, your very humble and obedient servant.

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470 - TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 19, 1829

My dear son, I have received the box containing the *Manual of the Servants of Mary*. It came in good condition and contained 850 copies. No one has yet been here to collect the charges. These manuals are well printed and well bound, but 1. The print is too small and is not what had been promised, one between small type and what is called primer type of the old edition; 2. The justification[1] of the lines is too long, which makes the general form ill-fitting to the average pocket of young people; 3. Rather glaring and coarse mistakes have been allowed to slip in, which were already in the old edition, but this is, doubtless, not the fault of the printer. However, it is to be presumed that the first two mistakes have been a sort of business gambling on the part of the printer, so as to use one-fourth or even one-third less paper. Other observations of perhaps less consequence could be made, but at this stage of the game, they would be to no purpose.

The most annoying point is the too fine print, especially of such parts as are of constant and common usage, such as, for example, the text for the renewal of vows and the Act of Consecration, etc. Besides that, we see that the printer understands his trade

[1] A typographic term, referring to the length of the lines of print.

and seems to be an honest man, if in reality he held to the agreements as regards price that we had made with him.

Brother Laugeay had Brother Molinier of St. Marie-aux-Mines leave for Besançon on the fifth of the present month, the day on which he received the letter ordering his immediate departure. On the other hand, Brother Molinier was doing very well in the second class, he taught well and held his eight youngsters in good order. He already had written a letter in which he told me how much he liked teaching and of the danger to his health there was in his being employed in weaving. He tells me his chest is still covered with the same wounds he showed me in St. Remy. Brother Laugeay tells me his leaving meant a great sacrifice for him. It seems that Besançon is now well staffed, but care will have to be taken of Brother Molinier's health and means must be taken to find out if weaving might not be really harmful to him.

Brother Gobillot is far from being the first man in the world. His great worry is being director. He would far prefer being employed in washing the dishes. It is only obedience that is holding him in the first place and even at that, he experiences strong temptations for giving it up. He is now teaching only arithmetic and is in St. Laurent as my representative, as it is necessary to have there a man on whom we can count, one whose firmness can never come to terms with disorder of any kind, and whose solicitude in having all carried out is well-nigh tireless. The wisest men are not always those who best direct houses. St. Laurent is provided with all the means for advancing in all that the young people need to learn, but above all for making progress in virtue and in the knowledge of religion, as well as in their state. However, there are always many precautions to be taken, so as to render the work solid and permanent.

I would seriously think of equipping in St. Hippolyte a real novitiate, which would, at the same time, be a resident normal school. In this school, boarders would be received who would be suitable for a religious education. The biggest difficulty would be for the day students of the city. I mean, that these last would not in any way be prejudicial to the boarders. I would like to overcome it in some way. I have talked to you a little about it and I have consulted you, above all, on the subject of Brother Gaussens, whom I would like to appoint as director. I don't see how we could send Father Rothéa there as permanent head[1] but I could send Father Meyer. You know that he made his final profession at the last retreat, and since then is enjoying great peace of soul. Nevertheless, as regards spiritual direction, he is not yet all that I should want him to be, but he is beginning to understand and to act on his own initiative. Brother Fridblatt is getting along much better, but I still doubt that he has understood what it really means to combat self-love and to control his imagination. On the other hand, he has become quite regular.

Might I be able to count on Mr. Christen's going to St. Hippolyte as econome, and his meeting the expenses of the first establishment, until St. Hippolyte is in a condition to

[1] Because of his title of Maitre de Pension, which obliged him to reside in St. Remy.

stand on its own? He would have to be subject, not precisely to the rule of the community, but to some rules which will be given him and which he would have to observe, always in agreement with his director. All will go very well, if he holds strictly to all that has been agreed upon. Answer me honestly without any partiality, that is to say, as if you were not thinking of the interests of St. Remy.

I shall not lose sight of you, my dear son, but let us remain patient. In awaiting something better, let us do all we can. Difficulties are great, no doubt about it, but they could be still greater. Nevertheless, as all things are usually well taken, we can expect to reach a successful end and to do all that the good God has inspired us to do, provided that the devil does not come to overthrow all. Around here, it seems that want is always on the increase. You know to what extent the St. Marie boarding school is hampered for want of funds. As regards myself, I have at least twice as many persons to support, the price of bread has increased by more than one-fourth of its original price, and I receive next to nothing. Nevertheless, I am not worried. I am saying to you only that you take all reasonable measures to come to my assistance, to the greatest extent of your ability. Our Brothers in Colmar on the first of the year offered to take it upon themselves to provide the sum of 1,000 to 2,000 francs, to pay for the expenses of my trip to Alsace. I accepted their offer on condition that they would not practice the needed economy to the point of injuring their health. I think that it will be apropos that, right after Easter at least, I start out on my visit to all of our establishments, be they of men or women, and that I stay in each one, to regulate all that refers to both things and persons. All this, of course, is dependent upon anything that might happen in the political field. It is also necessary that I leave our houses in Bordeaux in a position of looking after themselves, during such a long absence.

I have received, my dear son, with deep emotion, the expression of your greetings and good wishes to me on the occasion of the New Year. I love all my children, but nevertheless, I always distinguish in my heart those of St. Remy, always beginning with their director. If, however, in the effusions of family love such a beginning may be imagined. It is, nevertheless true, my dear son, that you are always the first in my affectionate remembrance, but, at the same time, I see and I embrace Father Rothéa and Brother Gaussens, and then, because there is order even in my memory, Brothers Chevaux, Muhlaupt, Brunet, George Loetsch,[1] Etignard, etc., etc., etc. . . . I am counting on the

[1] Father George Loetsch (1810-83) ordinarily called by his baptismal name, Father George, born in Ensisheim, Alsace, was one of the first pupils of St. Remy, where Father Rothéa won him to the Society. From the fall of 1824, he went to the Madeleine in Bordeaux, as ecclesiastical postulant, and formed part of the Minor Seminary of the Society, of which the members followed the courses of the Royal College. On Thursdays, the postulants and novices of the Madeleine joined those of St. Laurent, and the Good Father liked to spend the day with them. In the conference he used to give them, as is reported by a witness of the time, the Good Father liked to question little George. The cassock was taken very early in the Minor Seminary, and during the summer of 1825, Father George, then 15 years old, received the tonsure from the hands of the venerable Archbishop d'Aviau. After his religious profession, made in 1827, Father George returned to St. Remy, was then employed in Ebersmunster and at St. Hippolyte as professor and assistant to the novice master. Ordained priest in 1827, he was charged in 1839 with the direction of St. Hippolyte, then in 1841, sent to Besançon as chaplain where he was instrumental in the vocation of Father de Lagarde. “Very often,” writes the biographer of the latter, “people from the outside

promises which my dear children of St. Remy make to me, that they will be well united among themselves, obliging toward one another with marks of honesty and friendship, forming a real religious community, working as one at their own sanctification and that of all those confided to their care. And you, my dear son, who are at the head, set the pace and be their model in everything. I am embracing you very tenderly.

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We are reproducing the following Certificate of Affiliation, because of the interesting particularities of the text. However, we lack information concerning the priest to whom it was given. We know only that in 1828 he gave the conferences during the retreat at St. Laurent.

471

Bordeaux, February 24, 1829

CERTIFICATE OF AFFILIATION TO THE SOCIETY OF MARY
FOR FATHER DOURDON

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came to assist in the Mass of Father George in order to enjoy the edification of seeing him pray at the holy altar." After several years as director at Charolles (1852), and at Marast (1859), Father Loetsch was put in charge of the government of the Province of Alsace, which post he held for sixteen years (1862-78) and where he won the hearts of his Brothers by his goodness. He used to be called "the good Father George." Worn out by the labors of administration, for which he had little facility, exhausted above all by the worries he experienced at the time of the annexation of Alsace to Prussia and of the closure of almost all the houses of this flourishing Province, he retired to Ebersmunster and to St. Remy, where he died piously on July 29, 1883.

We, William Joseph Chaminade, Priest, Missionary Apostolic, Superior General of the Society of Mary. Upon the request which Father Dourdon has made to us several times, as much in writing as by word of mouth, to be affiliated to the Society of Mary desiring to be always looked upon as one of its members, wanting to render it all the services possible to him in the various positions in which he might find himself, even offering to help it in its good works by all the means he might have at his disposal,
etc. . . .

Considering the integrity of the good and holy life which Father Dourdon has always led, considering besides, his piety toward God, his devotion to the most Holy Virgin, Patroness of the Society, his zeal for the spread of religion, his talents and his liking for the teaching which the Society has as a specialty; we have affiliated him, as, by these presents, we affiliate him in fact, to the said Society of Mary. We shall always look upon him as one of its members, we shall make use of him in everything he may be able to do for the welfare of the society, inasmuch as the duties of his position will permit, and we shall accept all the helps he will give us in the works we have undertaken.

In consequence, we make him a participant in all the good works we may perform and in all the merits we may acquire. We make him a participant in all the indulgences, favors and privileges which the Sovereign Pontiffs have accorded to the Society. We grant him the title of Postulant of the Society of Mary, and if the Society of Mary can render him any service, it will always be ready to do so.

The present certificate, favorably received and approved by our Council, will be made in two copies, one to be delivered to Father Dourdon and the other to be deposited among the files of our Secretariat.

William Joseph Chaminade

Given in Bordeaux, February 24, 1829

Signed: Dourdon, priest

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472 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 17, 1829

My dear son, I have received your last messages, among which was the prospectus of the primary normal school of St. Remy. I read it very attentively and I saw, with some regret, that it had been sent for the approbation of the rector of the Academy before having been communicated to me. No matter, this prospectus pleases me and I authorize you to avail yourself of my approbation whenever required, but on condition that Article 6 be written out differently.[1] Here is an example:

6. As in teaching it is not sufficient to know the subject matter, the candidates must be drilled during the last months of their courses, in the running of schools by the formation of would-be classes made up of their own numbers. They take cognizance of the most generally approved methods. They are made to distinguish amongst these, and their differences are clearly pointed out. The Society of Mary has its own method, approved by the royal Council of Instruction in 1825, and is followed in all the schools to the great satisfaction of the authorities. The candidates are put in a position and condition to appreciate its advantages.

I invite you to add to the end of Article 7 that in a grand competition of candidates, the children of about equal ability of the old schoolteachers, would have the preference for the favors which would be granted.

If this addition should displease anyone, you are free to do away with it, but such is not the case with a new edition of Article 6.

The rector of the Academy will lend a helping hand, I hope, when he considers: 1. That, in this edition, the same things are really said that are in the one first submitted to his approval; 2. That without examining here, what mutual teaching has that is good or improper, it suffices to say that it is generally disapproved such as it has been taught up to the present, so that the Society of Mary takes no part in it; 3. It would be very inconsiderate on my part to expose the Brothers of Christian Doctrine to a new persecution in this regard, I, who have contributed so much to their reestablishment in France after the Revolution. I am quite sure that these are the intentions neither of the editors of the articles nor of the rector of the Academy of Besançon, but who can guarantee the use that might be made, as a result of something an establishment of the Society would have made and approved?

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[1] It was declared that to form the teachers to “mutual teaching,” which Father Chaminade disapproved. “Mutual teaching,” which at that time enjoyed great vogue, but which was soon completely abandoned, was at this time a weapon of combat in the hands of the “liberal” party against religious teaching. The Brothers of the Christian Schools never wanted to adopt it. The method of the Society of Mary based on simultaneous teaching, borrowed from it certain proceedings recognized as useful. See *The Spirit of Our Foundation* III, No. 248.

If the rector of the Academy placed some difficulty in the way of the approval of the new edition of the article, I am sure you would tell me about it, but I authorize you to tell him that it is I who have made these observations. I shall send Father Lalanne a copy of the letter I am writing to you this far, so that he may be more prompt and more in accord with your views and the steps you are taking. . . .

I wrote to Mr. Christen yesterday and I asked him for 1,000 francs for the different trips, etc. . . . But this is rather little, for there is going to be a lot of movement. As regards myself, in ten or twelve days I think I shall be in shape to leave for Paris while passing through Brittany, and from Paris to go to the northeast of France.

I am embracing you tenderly and wishing you the peace of the Lord.

* * * *

Here is the text of the prospectus to which the preceding letter makes allusion, such as it was printed, with the correction asked for by Father Chaminade.

1. The normal school of St. Remy, located in the dependencies of the château of this name, is directed by the Society of Mary, under the supervision of the Archbishop of Besançon and of the Reverend Rector of the Academy.

2. To be admitted to the normal school, one must be at least 17 years old, know how to read and write, enjoy good health, give evidence of good moral conduct, with sufficient aptitude, evidenced by a certificate from the Reverend Pastor and from the Mayor of the Commune in which one must have lived for at least three years.

3. The course of instruction lasts ten months, from November 1st until August 31st. The students are perfected in reading and writing. They are taught all that is required by the ordinances to obtain the diplomas of capacity in all the degrees: in French grammar, arithmetic, geography, surveying, practical geometry, making plans in India-ink, geometrical drawing, plain chant, and vocal music. For all these subjects, the surest methods are followed, the latest and the most complete, keeping up-to-date as regards all that is being done and attempted on all sides for the amelioration and acceleration of primary teaching in such a way as to profit by all that is really good, without throwing oneself inconsiderately into vain and even dangerous novelties.

4. Religious instruction is not neglected. Besides the letter of the Catechism that is made to be learned and understood, the young people are given quite extensive and precise notions about the history of religion and its proofs, to do away with the prejudices of ignorance and to prevent the errors so often associated with ill-instructed minds.

5. It is not lost sight of that the men destined to give education to children ought to have some themselves, according to all the standards of their state, and to the condition of their

pupils. The regulation of the school is entirely directed toward this end, to train to habits of order, reserve, politeness, patience and firmness, modesty and subordination, temperance, cleanliness, etc. . . .

6. Since to teach, it does not suffice to know the subject matter, the candidates must be drilled during the last months of their courses, in the running of schools, by the formation of would-be classes made up of their own numbers. They take cognizance of the most generally approved methods. They are made to distinguish amongst these, and their differences are clearly pointed out. The Society of Mary has its own method, approved by the Royal Council of Instruction in 1825, and is followed in all the schools to the great satisfaction of the authorities. The candidates are put in a position and condition to appreciate its advantages.

7. The tuition cost for the ten months is 340 francs, and that takes in the bed, laundry, heating, light, paper, pens, and ink. This tuition is paid in five month periods and in advance. The candidates who might not be able to afford this tuition from their own resources would take the necessary measures to secure burses, which have been founded by his Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction, or by the general or municipal councils.

8. The requests for admission must be addressed postpaid to the Head of the Establishment of St. Remy, via Vesoul.

Outfit: three bed sheets, 12 shirts, 12 towels, six pocket handkerchiefs, two white and two black ties, six cotton caps, three pairs of shoes, one hat, one cap, clean clothes.

Seen and approved by us, Archbishop of Besançon, Duke of Rohan, Peer of France, in Besançon, April 6, 1829.

L. F. A. Archbishop of Besançon

Seen and approved by us, Rector of the Academy in Besançon, April 6, 1829.

Abbe Calmels, Ch. Hon.

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473 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 26, 1829

I have sent you, my dear son, on the 18th of the current month, the new edition of Article 6 of the Prospectus of the primary normal school. I value this edition highly or anyone like it, but above all, let there be no question of mutual teaching. It is not a question of not being able to make it known in the normal schools, as with other diverse methods, but rather of the manner of doing it. The teaching of the Society of Mary is, at bottom, simultaneous teaching, but it could well be called mixed and it is the qualification Father Lalanne gave it, because, if you take notice, it contains elements of the three kinds of teaching, that is to say, of individual, simultaneous, and mutual teaching. However, it would be risky to name them in a Prospectus and to say that there is also formation in mutual teaching.

I sent you on the next day, the 19th, as I had announced, my procuration for the early making out of our request for exemption from taxes on doors and windows.

When you spoke to me about some kinds of cloth for the religious habit that you had come across, the thought came to me of asking you for some samples. On the very day of the arrival of your letter, I had sent someone to a dealer to find out about some kind of less expensive cloth, but since I got your letter, I stopped all my action in that direction, but I was never able to find a moment to write and tell you about it. However, I then wrote to Brother Rothéa, and I strongly blamed the Brothers of Colmar for their squeamishness.[1]

Here is what Brother Rothéa has just answered me: “Brother Clouzet was wrong in having you believe that we, here in Colmar, had lost the spirit of poverty, because we did not want any of his bad clothes, dark and chestnut brown. Neither the one nor the other is suitable. The chestnut brown especially is not a nice color.” He adds, “There is no chestnut brown cloth made of wool and nice looking at less than 16 to 18 francs a yard.” Since you are making use of it, my dear son, in St. Remy as in Besançon, you must see by experience, if in fact these chestnut brown clothes are of a nice color. You can also take notice if they wear long and well. If they are such as you have told me, you could have some samples sent me, of both the chestnut brown and the dark. You do not tell me the measurement or size of the pieces, but two pieces of each color will not last long here if they don’t wear better than pieces of ordinary cloth. Don’t send us any bad merchandise, or a cat in a bag as we say, although I am expecting to see common enough cloth, if it sells for 8 francs a yard.

I received Brother Gaussens’ letter. I am very much edified at its contents. I understand that since the normal course opens on April first, you cannot do without him. Brother Lourier, whom I am always thinking of sending to you, will be all right, I think, for the

[1] For their excessive delicacy in regard to the religious habit.

teaching of the normal course, for he has been better trained than Brother Gaussens, even if he has neither his seriousness nor his virtue. He will have to be tried. Anyhow, he surely has the art of teaching well. I shall tell you more about him when he will be able to leave.

When I shall have received the money I asked of Mr. Christen, and that which you have been able to add, I shall send you the one who copies all my letters and even this one.[1] The ordinary copyist, somewhat overloaded with work today, had to have someone to help him, and it is not he who has copied this letter. He will go with another young man to replace Brother George. I am destining the latter for St. Hippolyte. . . . I would have many more things to tell you, but I must now come to an end, embracing you very tenderly.

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There remains to us no trace at all of the correspondence of Father Chaminade during the months of April and May. In the first days of June, as he had announced to Brother Clouzet in his letter of March 17th, the Founder undertakes his third trip in the North, accompanied by Brother Weber, his secretary. We do not know if, as he had planned, he passed through Brittany, and we ignore, furthermore, what affairs attracted him there. On June 8th he is in Paris, from whence he leaves again on the 10th. On the13th he is in Gray, where he has a long stay with Father Lalanne for the editing of the Constitutions. During the second week in July he goes to Besançon, where he stops several days, goes again to Gray, and arrives in St. Remy, where he still is on August 6th. On August 12th he is in Colmar, and he can be followed from there to Strasbourg, August 18th, Rheinackern, August 19th, St. Hippolyte, August 24th, Colmar, during the first days of September, St. Remy, September 10th, Arbois, Courtefontaine, Nancy, Paris on September 28th, from whence he departs on October 8th to assist in Bordeaux, October 14th, at the opening of the retreat at St. Laurent. Of this period, there remain only the following letters.

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474 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Gray, June 13, 1829

To my dear daughter, I was pleased to receive your letter in Paris, with the one you wrote to Mr. De Portets.[2] As I was on the point of leaving, from preoccupation I forgot about it, and that's why I am trying to make up for it today. He will receive it postpaid.

Arrange with Sister Nativity for a short delay, and if there is no change, then you will ask her to retire.

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[1] Jules Chaminade, his nephew.
[2] Famous lawyer, professor of law in Paris, of whom one daughter, Mother Louise Marie, was a religious in Agen.

I am, as it were, in retreat, here in Gray, where I am busy almost entirely with Constitutions and Regulations, as much for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary as for the Society of Mary. There will be some increase, some change, and I hope, much improvement. Pray yourself and have others pray. Give me occasionally news about yourself and about our dear daughters, for whom I would willingly sacrifice myself if there were cause for doing so. You may send your letters . . . to Father Collineau in order to have them reach me.

May the Lord shower upon you and upon all our dear Daughters in Agen, his most abundant blessings!

* * * *

475 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Gray, June 21, 1829

. . . Our work with the editing of the constitutions is advancing at a fairly good speed. When once it is finished, I shall go to see you. However, I shall not conclude it definitely until after having had the advice of all interested parties, each in his own way, and after he or they have had ample time for a thorough examination. It is a long and arduous task. Father Lalanne is of great use to me and almost indispensable. It is practically evident to me that the Spirit of God is directing his talent and power of penetration. Pray yourself and have others pray that we enter in all things into the views of God.

I shall notify you concerning the day of my departure as soon as I shall have been able to settle on the date. It is easy to see that there will be no possibility of leaving before the beginning of next month. Yours very truly, my dear son . . .

Gray, June 21, 1829, Feast of St. Aloysius of Gonzaga

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476 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Gray, July 3, 1829

. . . If you long to see me, my dear son, at St. Remy, I can tell you in all sincerity that I also long to see you. Whatever pleasure kind folks seek to procure for me in Paris or in Gray, I always say: I have to go to St. Remy. In fact, I am often there in heart and mind, but I admit that it is not the same thing. Patience still, just for a little while longer!

I see that I shall have to go to Besançon. Brother Cluenot is just awaiting my coming before starting out on the visits he has to make to the minor seminaries of the diocese. I have arranged the trip for next week. Father Lalanne hopes to be able to do without my presence for a few days. I shall try to make the most of that. I shall return to Gray, look over what shall have been done, pack up my things, and start out for St. Remy. In case of any change, I shall let you know of it myself, or at least I shall have you notified.

I am very anxious to meet with Reverend Rector of the Academy in Besançon. At least I was given to hope for the privilege.

How is the work of Brother Muhlhaupt on the German grammar getting along? This work is very necessary and also very urgent. There is also a professor of the German language in the Collège of Gray who, I am told, is very good. If Brother Muhlhaupt needed help, I think this professor would be only too glad to give it to him.

May the Lord shower upon you, my dear son, and upon all my children of St. Remy his most abundant blessings.

* * * *

Here is a note addressed to the director of St. Laurent, who was letting himself run into discouragement on account of the difficulties of his office.

477 – TO BROTHER GOBILLOT, BORDEAUX

St. Remy, August 6, 1829

My dear son, I have received and read your letter of last July 29th. In it I saw with sorrow and regret our perseverance somewhat endangered by your tendency towards discouragement. You have always counted more on the natural qualities of man than on the grace of his state and, resulting from that, the weak prayers and discouraging thoughts. Whatever the case may be, I shall seriously occupy myself with having you replaced, but, in the meantime, do with a good heart all you can, just as if you were not going to be replaced, conduct yourself wisely, etc.

Pray and have others pray for me until my return to your midst, and always believe in my paternal sentiments toward you.

P.S. I embrace tenderly all my dear children of St. Laurent. I long to be again in their midst.

* * * *

During his stay in St. Remy, Father Chaminade appointed Brother Clouzet, visitor of the houses in the region of the north and replaced him as head of St. Remy, by Father Lalanne, who nevertheless retained, temporarily, the direction of the collège of Gray.

This double nomination was to be, as will be seen in the following correspondence, the occasion of long and painful difficulties.

478 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

St. Remy, September 10, 1829

We, William Joseph Chaminade, Superior General of the Society of Mary, after having visited most of the establishments of our Society in the northeast of France, considering, on the one hand, the remoteness of our usual residence from these establishments and the resulting difficulty in regard to prompt correspondence, and considering on the other hand, the necessity of sustaining in each one of the establishments both the religious regularity of those who direct them and the uniformity of method in teaching!

We have decided to name, as we name by these presents, our very dear son, Brother Dominic Clouzet, visitor general of all the establishments of the Society of Mary, already formed or to be formed in the future in the north of France, releasing to this effect, my said Brother Clouzet from the superiorship of St. Remy and clothing him with all the authority necessary to obtain the results expected from the new functions we are confiding to him, without, however, permitting him to innovate anything, to change subjects, to tamper with the methods without our previous knowledge or without any urgent necessity. We do not, however, release our dear son, Brother Clouzet, from the functions of head économe of our establishment of St. Remy, and from the administration of the property as he has so wisely done until the present, and to this effect, he will have his usual residence in the château of St. Remy.

The present ordinance will be sent to all the heads of the establishments, reserving to ourselves, the presentation of it to our dear son, Brother Clouzet.

Given in St. Remy during the course of our visit, on the 10th of September, 1829, under our private signature.

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479 – TO FATHER LALANNE, GRAY

St. Remy, September 10, 1829

Ordinance

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary, considering the repeated requests made to us by persons of importance, that solicitation be made for the erection of the boarding school in St. Remy into a full-fledged collège, considering, furthermore, that the rector of the Academy of Besançon must have been of this opinion and that quite recently the general inspectors, having come from Paris, told us that they believed this request to be well in place, we have believed it our duty to name, as we name by these presents, our well-beloved son, Father John Baptist Lalanne, now principal of the Collège of Gray, superior of the establishment of St. Remy, replacing our very dear son, Brother Dominic Clouzet, whom we have been obliged to name to another place.

We do not intend that this superiorship, confided by us to Father Lalanne, should in any way interfere with the authority which he has over the Collège of Gray in virtue of his title of principal, reserving to ourselves the right to take suitable measures with whom it may concern.

We have published this ordinance in an assembly of the Community of St. Remy, as we wanted to give it to Father Lalanne at our first meeting with him.

Given in St. Remy, in our course of visits on September 10, 1829, under our private signature.

* * * *

In Paris, the Founder tried to obtain for the boarding school in St. Remy, the title of Institution, with the right of "full service"[1] and to this effect, he addressed the following letter to Mr. De Montebel, Minister of Public Instruction in the new Polignac Cabinet (August 9th). The Minister welcomed the request, but, nevertheless, the matter remained without success as the result of the opposition of the Council of Public Instruction, so great was the strength of the university monopoly at that time.

480 – TO MR. De MONTBEL, MINISTER OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, PARIS

[1] The Decree of University organization of March 7, 1808, distinguished as under the departments of a university, the lycees and the colleges, "the institutions or schools run by particular teachers in which the teaching came near that of the colleges, and devoted to studies less strong than those of the institutions." Both could exist only in virtue of a special authorization on the part of the University, and in no case could they, in their programs, go beyond the rhetoric class. The "Heads of Institutions" and the "Masters of boarding schools" were to be bachelors and could at on in virtue of a certificate from the Grand Master. By an ordinance of February 27, 1821, the Government of the Restoration, while confirming these strict prescriptions, had nevertheless admitted an exception in favor of the particular houses of education "which had deserved the confidence of the families, as much by their religious and moral direction as by the strength of their studies." They could be changed by the Royal Council into "full-fledged colleges."

Paris, September, 1829

The Superior General of the Society of Mary has the honor of informing Your Excellency that the wish of the fathers of families in the Department of the Haute-Saône and of the neighboring Departments, would be that their children be able to find, in St. Remy, all the courses necessary for their education and that, toward that end, the boarding school, which exists in this large establishment, be authorized to have all the usual classes up to that of philosophy inclusively, as they are taught in Pontlevoy, Juilly Castres, Soreze, and in several other institutions.

The Reverend Rector of the Academy of Besançon and the Inspector General, recently sent by your predecessor, were of the opinion that there would result, for the general public and for the Society of Mary, a double usefulness.

If your Excellency deigns to receive this proposition favorably, I would have the honor of presenting Father Meyer as the head of this boarding school.

Although the personal merit of Father Meyer offers the surest guarantee of the good management of this boarding school, it will be supervised by Father Lalanne, principal of the Collège of Gray, whose talents and real merit your Excellency may already have had the occasion to appreciate.

I have the honor of being, with profound respect, the most humble and obedient servant of your Excellency.

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At this same time, thanks to Mr. O'Lombel, this old friend of the Society, whom we have already met in Paris, at the time of the negotiations in view of the legal authorization of the Institute, Father Chaminade was put into relations with a man of action in Amiens, Mr. De Rainneville, who was working at the foundation of orphanages and of normal schools.

Through Mr. O'Lombel, Father Chaminade had knowledge of the following letter from Mr. De Rainneville.

I beg of you, in the interests of our work, to ask the respectable Father Chaminade: 1. If he is in a position to found the establishment in the north of France; 2. If some one of his Brothers or priests could come to pass some time with me, to examine before undertaking anything, the means of execution at our disposal. This one would have to be a really capable man and one enjoying his full confidence. At the same time, one of my friends, the Viscount of Point, whose acquaintance he has made at your home, will go to see him in Bordeaux for an interview toward the same object, and if, as I hope, our views meet with no opposition on the part of Father Chaminade, we might be able sometime next spring, to apply them to the north, to the south, and to the east of France.

At this time, we are definitely organizing a colony of orphan girls. This is a good enough start for our agricultural normal school for boys, because the help of the women will be useful to us and the mutual cooperation of these establishments, to be sure without confusion, is an excellent thing. I have reason to hope that God will bless our works, because I already see obstacles being smoothed out and resources well on the increase.

Obtain from the Reverend Father, all the useful information for setting my ideas in regard to this project, perhaps too vast for men as feeble as I, but we know that God sometimes makes use of the most miserable instruments to accomplish his designs, and so, even while convinced of our own misery, we feel we must go ahead. Certainly, contradictions are never lacking to me, but this is one of the signs that are of greatest encouragement to me.

While offering my profound respect to the Good Father, tell him how much I appreciate the excellence of his Institute for the moral amelioration of the lower classes. I ardently desire that a close union will help the carrying out of our desires, because I am personally well convinced that there is only one alliance among diverse religious institutions in order to arrive at a common end, one that is able to give them enough strength to resist the concerted attacks, only too real, on the part of the enemies of the Catholic Church. In order to attain the end which all propose to themselves, let us pray, dear sir, that the Spirit of God may enlighten us, and let us be more resolved than ever to cling desperately and with all our forces to this supreme authority, which will guarantee us against illusions and be for us the channel of graces of which we are so much in need.

My Bordeaux friend will communicate to the Father our ideas concerning the intimate and close cooperation needed for our works, and in this way, I shall be repaid for the privation I feel in not being able to meet him personally at the time of his stay in these parts. I am trying, as I know I should, to profit by the visit of a minister better disposed for obtaining some measures favorable to our objectives. This is keeping me busy, but the results are encouraging.

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To this communication, Father Chaminade answered by the following lines, of which, on the same day, he sent a copy to Brother Clouzet in St. Remy.

481 – TO MR. de RAINNEVILLE, AMIENS

Paris, October 5, 1829

At the time of my arrival in Paris, Mr. O'Lombel had the goodness to let me see the letter that you wrote to him from Amiens on the 18th of last month. It is always a new source of pleasure for me to have to correspond with you, especially as regards the grand object

which must interest both religion and our unhappy fatherland. In spite of the overabundance of my occupations in the long course of my visits, I have never lost sight of you.

At my return to St. Remy, I named Brother Clouzet, Visitor General of our establishments in the north of France. He was, at the time, superior of the establishment of St. Remy. It is he with whom you can correspond directly. I have notified him of this by word of mouth, and I am doing so today by mail, in sending him a copy of the letter I have the honor of writing to you, with a copy also of the one you wrote to Mr. O'Lombel. He will go to the places of meeting when he will have come to an agreement with you, and he will keep me informed about your correspondence with him, so that in everything we may advance in perfect accord. This measure will serve as a proof to you of all the interest I am taking in your work of the orphan colonies. This work could well become, henceforth, our own work.

Before leaving St. Remy, I admitted three young farmers of a kind and character well fitted for farm work. I don't think it will be difficult to adapt them to the practices of religious life. I have just sent away two others from Paris. One of the two is a baker. I hope that next spring, we shall be able to offer you a little group interesting enough to make a start in the work.

This work will only start in your region, in spite of the fact that I am called upon for other places. It will be in great measure from your region that a new colony will come, to go and establish itself where it will be thought best. The Marquis de Pont came to Bordeaux and conferred with Father Collineau, who is replacing me in this city, and to whom I had not given instructions as regards the matter we are treating. Nevertheless, after having heard him in the novitiate of the lay religious, Father Collineau informed me of the results of this interesting interview, and of the great satisfaction that the Marquis de Pont had seemed to have over the order he had seen at the novitiate.

You say, dear sir, that you are definitely organizing at this time your colonies of orphan girls. This is a very delicate matter. Have you perhaps already thought that it would be good to settle upon what is to be done with the two sexes, before beginning with or settling upon one of the two.

Mr. O'Lombel joins me in offering you the same token of respect and devotedness with which I am, etc.

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482 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Paris, October 5, 1829

Before leaving Arbois, my dear son, I sent to Colmar and St. Hippolyte a copy of the ordinance which named you Visitor General, in order that it be made known to the other establishments. I have myself given notice of the same nomination to most of the persons with whom I correspond in the north of France. I have as yet met no one who did not find this measure not only very useful, but also very necessary. Since then, I have not been able to find an opportune moment to send you the original copy of the ordinance. I am taking care of that today.

You will find in the same envelope 1) a copy of a letter which Mr. De Rainneville wrote to Mr. O'Lombel; 2) a copy of the answer that I am sending him by this same mail. I desire that you enter into this affair with the same interest with which its great utility has inspired me.

You see that in it I speak of the three young men for whom I had sent and who had not arrived before my departure. You also see that I sent two from Paris. I have learned, just a few hours ago, of an unfortunate incident that occurred on the way. They were to go on foot to St. Remy. They were given 50 francs for expenses on the way. Having arrived in a town, they lost 40 francs at an inn. They don't seem to know how this happened, and I don't know, as yet, how I shall make up for the loss.

Being in Arbois, I provided for the new establishment of Courtefontaine as much as possible. Here are substantially the arrangements that have been made, as much with the diocese of St. Claude, as with the pastor of Courtefontaine and Miss Coudre, who lives in the establishment.[1]

The General Council of Lons-le-Saunier allotted to Courtefontaine the sum of 3,100 francs. Of this sum, we are taking 600 francs for the expenses of a retreat for thirty former schoolteachers, whom we shall call to the retreat when we reach an appropriate time. This year the retreat will be in common with the candidates, who will then be there. The 2,500

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[1] Miss Anne-Claude Coudre, born in 1774 in Courtefontaine, devoted her fortune and her life to the good of the parish in which she was born. After having bought back the old Priory of Courtefontaine, secularized by the Revolution, she gave it to the Society of Mary for the establishment of a normal school near the village school. She was affiliated to the Society by the founder and died in 1842 assisted by Father Meyer.
One incident preserved in the annals of Courtefontaine shows well the high degree of virtue attained by this elect soul, whose memory is to be preserved as one of the principal benefactors of the Society of Mary. As she drew near to her end, she made her last wishes known to her confessor. In concluding she said to him, "I desire to be buried in the cemetery, to the left as one enters the church, and to have a stone cross mark the place of my grave." Father Meyer responded, "Is that all you desire, my daughter?" "Yes, Father." Father Meyer, wanting his spiritual daughter to be prepared for every sacrifice, believed he could propose something which would increase even more her merits for eternity. "And why, my daughter, do you still want to concern yourself with living on in people's memories? It matters little that people know about you and where your ashes are going to lie. The essential thing is that God receive you in grace and that you have a good place in heaven." "That's true, Father. I wasn't thinking about that. Please don't do anything about this matter." That was all the wise director hoped for, because his intention was to follow faithfully all the wishes of the servant of God.

francs remaining are divided to make up 15 half-burses. There is, as you know, a burse and a half founded by the last Minister of Public Instruction. The General Council of the Doubs has settled on a little sum of 600 francs for four half burses. The Prefect of Besançon could seem to want that the sum be applied to Courtefontaine, for the candidates of the Doubs who would be closer to Courtefontaine than to St. Remy. I don't think that the General Council was thinking at all of Courtefontaine. That is an idea of the Prefect. While entering into the yard of the Prefecture, the private secretary of the Prefect told me that the Council had settled on four half burses. On my part, I figured on four burses for St. Remy, but that was just a beginning.

The Reverend Superior of the Major Seminary of Lons-le-Saunier must have written a circular letter, of which I had sent him the plan. He had taken it upon himself to have it printed and promptly sent to the Reverend Pastors of the diocese. This letter must have said that the candidates are to present themselves in Courtefontaine from October 24th until November 5th, that Brother Gaussens, head of the establishment, was to inscribe and examine them, etc. It is possible that there will be some modifications in this respect, for the Academy might possibly want to have some part in this examination.

You understand, my dear son, that from all this, it seems that Brother Gaussens is the head of the normal school in Courtefontaine, in fact, he will be such during the first two or three weeks. The real head will be Brother Galliot. Brother Gaussens will teach only writing, while it is Brother Galliot who will be teaching all the rest. When Brother Gaussens leaves, he will be replaced by Brother Houlne, master writer. All has been arranged with the Reverend Pastor of Courtefontaine. The good pastor will teach singing and religion. He hopes that the consideration which the uncle of Brother Galliot enjoys in the region, will redound upon the nephew. He was chaplain for His Excellency, Archbishop de Pressigny.[1] He is, at present time, pastor in a town close to Courtefontaine. Brother Gaussens will leave Courtefontaine only to go to Bordeaux. He is really named head of St. Laurent. I shall do my best to write to him before I leave Paris.

At the beginning, there will be only two religious, Brother Gaussens and Brother Galliot, or Brother Galliot and Brother Houlne. The Reverend Pastor will live with them, and his maid will temporarily look after the housework. All the income of the Reverend Pastor, in these first stages, will go to the support of the work.

The schoolmaster of Courtefontaine will be one of the candidates of the normal school. We shall see he gets a half burse. What he gets from his pupils and what the mayor's office gives him, will serve to pay for the other half burse. He will continue to teach his class or we shall have it done, now by the one and the other of the candidates we have in mind to train.

[1] Archbishop of Besançon from 1817 till 1823.

I have formally told Miss Coudre that she could not live in the establishment, and so nothing must be started before she has left. I gave her until the 6th or 8th of October to find lodgings elsewhere.

Miss Coudre is the sister of the Mayor of Courtefontaine. She is leaving a little stock of firewood, valued, I think, at about 130 francs, and the garden crops gathered or to be gathered from the grounds, dependent upon the establishment. There are at least about thirty full furnished beds, much linen, and some articles of furniture. It would be necessary, my dear son, for you to go there, so as to make an inventory of everything, in accord with the Reverend Pastor. By an arrangement which Father Bardenet had made with Miss Coudre, she agreed to give each year 500 francs, the interest on the 10,000 francs, which will be required only after her death. I spoke to her about it and she admits that is correct, but she makes a pretext of some difficulties, and so, you will be able to arrange this through Father Bardenet.

A document testifying to the cession of this house and its dependencies will also have to be drawn up, and you will need a procuration to be able to accept it in my name. Ask Father Bardenet to make a plan for you of such a document, and I shall send it to you from Bordeaux.

Do all that is necessary to equip fully this establishment. Let me know of any difficulty you may meet with. Furthermore, each time that you go to visit it, you will write up an account of the condition in which you found it, as regards persons and things. What I am telling you for Courtefontaine, I am saying the same for all the establishments you will be visiting. You will take special care that everywhere the Constitutions are strictly followed, as well as the methods and particular regulations.

A manufacturer of hats, who seems to be a very honest man, presented himself here. His name is Duchemin. He has his wife, a child of 12 years quite well brought up, a daughter of 18, and another of 16 who has been reared in a Jansenist community and who seems disposed to take the habit. This honest man would willingly give himself with all his family to the Society of Mary, just so that he and his family can live. He would rig up a hat factory in St. Remy and train apprentices that we might want. He could even, at the same time, run the projected inn.[1] After more detailed and complete information as you might wish to have, you might call him, first alone to St. Remy, and then give him, to be sure, something to pay for his trip, and then 30 francs a month for the support of his family. You might perhaps prefer to see him first in Paris, at the time you would be on your way to Amiens to see Mr. De Rainneville. Mr. Duchemin has all his tools. In order to start, he needs raw materials to the value of 600 francs. About this, you could correspond with Mr. O'Lombel.

[1] A place to receive and lodge the parents of the pupils and other visitors to the boarding school, because there were no such accommodations for them in the hamlet of St. Remy.

His Lordship de Janson, Bishop of Nancy, told me that a normal school of primary teaching has been established in Toul. He did not want to authorize its formation, but he wanted the Society of Mary to take charge of it. I gave him your address and I think you will have need to go and see the place for yourself, to take all suitable information and to see if there would be any possibility of our taking charge of it. However, you will have nothing to do about it until His Lordship makes the first move by personal letter to you.

I feel that I would have many more things to say to you, but this letter is already so long, and I have so many others to write! I am leaving Paris, Thursday evening, on the 8th of the present month. I am embracing you with tender affection.

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483 – TO FATHER LALANNE, GRAY

Paris, October 8, 1829

My dear son, I am going to leave Paris today to go to Bordeaux. Whatever good will I may have had in the matter, neither during the day or night was I able to write to you, so much did affairs pile up from hour to hour. His Honor, the Minister, granted me all that is in the petition I presented to him, and of which there is a copy on the other page. He brought the petition himself and he took note of it in his notebook. Nevertheless, it has to be placed before the Royal Council of Public Instruction.

The rector of the Academy of Besançon, Father Calmels, was present, for I had obtained the privilege of an audience for the two of us together. In coming from the audience, he was kind enough to take upon himself the task of passing my regards on to Mr. Dalbec,[1] and through him, to try to hasten the settlement of our affair. The rector, in coming to say goodbye to me, gave evidence of his kind disposition, and told me he had promised to report the affair the following Tuesday. That was last Tuesday. So far, it has been impossible for me to find out anything about the result.

The Reverend Rector was of the opinion that you were able to take all your precautions, to make all your preparations, but there was to be no publishing of the affair by means of a prospectus, until there had been an official copy issued.

I have already made known to Bordeaux the destination of Father Meyer and Father Bouly. Upon arriving in Bordeaux, I shall give the retreat and they will have all the time needed to get to St. Remy by the 30th. Father Meyer will win the confidence of the boarders even perhaps better than Father Rothéa. It was noticed already in St. Remy how much he was loved. A difference was noticed, only when a class to teach having been given him, there was need for him to punish the pupils. I shall do what I can to send you some capable subjects. In any case, I shall send you Brother Fridblatt. . . .

Father Rollinet[2] presented himself before the Archbishop. His Excellency counseled him not to answer me. This, as a matter of information. Later on, you will see with His Excellency, what will have to be said or done specially when Father Meyer will have been at work several days in St. Remy.

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[1] A member, it would seem, of the Council of Public Instruction.

[2] There were two brothers by this name, religious in the Society, natives of Sancey-le-Grand, Doubs. Both died in America. Charles Rollinet (1804-63) entered St. Remy in 1824 and was employed in manual work. He left for America in 1853 and died in Cleveland, leaving the memory of a devout and edifying religious. August Rollinet (1796-1859) of whom there is question here, pastor of Ormoy near St. Remy, obtained in 1832 the permission to try himself out in religious life, in the company of his younger brother. The trial lasted only a few months. In 1848, he embarked for America and there devoted himself with a zeal, more generous than wise, to the hard work of the missions. In 1852, having joined our first religious in Nazareth, he made his novitiate and made his vows in the hands of Father Leo Meyer. After several years of religious life, he died piously in Nazareth

Brother Louis Rothéa is sending me the lists of names which would very much change the personnel of the establishments in Alsace. I have neither the time nor the means of making the changes he would want. As much as possible, we must maintain the diverse establishments of primary schools such as they are, and with the same persons as much as possible. We shall make these changes later on, in proportion as the houses of studies or boarding normal schools will give us capable subjects. And so, arrange everything with him. I shall answer him later on, in regard to other points contained in his letter. . . .

By the last mail, I wrote a very long letter to Brother Clouzet. I think he must have communicated it to you. In fact, I should have made it a lot longer. Let there be between him and you, the greatest union: *Vis unita fit fortior*.

I have to stop here, as the hour of my departure approaches. I am embracing you tenderly.

Father Chaminade's secretary, Brother Weber, in adding to this letter several words to the address of Father Lalanne, showed clearly the impression which the reception accorded to the Founder everywhere in Paris had left him: "I have the satisfaction of telling you that the stay, which Father Chaminade has just made here, confirms me in the persuasion which I have had for some time that the holy Virgin destines our Society for great things."

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THE GREAT PROJECTS IN THE LAST DAYS OF THE RESOTRATION GOVERNMENT

(October 1829 – July 1830)

The first documents emanating from Father Chaminade, after his return to Bordeaux, are an Ordinance of October 20th for the regular keeping of the inscription register of Society members, which offers no special interest, and the following obedience of Father Leo Meyer, called to replace Father Rothéa in St. Remy.

484 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 25, 1829

Having appointed you, my dear son, as we appoint you by these presents, Head of Zeal and Chaplain of the boarding school of St. Remy (Haute-Saône), you are to leave tomorrow, the 26th of the present month, to get to the said establishment as soon as possible.

You will join Father Bouly, who is receiving at the same time as you, an obedience to return to the same establishment.

May the Angel of the Lord, my dear son, deign to accompany you and preserve you from all dangers!

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The following letter to Mr. Christen, affiliate and benefactor of the Society in St. Hippolyte, shows the delicacy with which Father Chaminade knew how to procure and to preserve precious help for the Society.

485 – TO MR. CHRISTEN, ST. HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, October 28, 1829

I have received, my dear son, the letter you wrote to me from St. Hippolyte on the 12th of the current month. This letter, of course, caused me much satisfaction, which always increased as I kept on reading it. Brother Clouzet, at the time of his visit of the establishments, had the full right to examine their accounts, but as regards you folks of St. Hippolyte there was to be an exception. In the Ordinance which made him Visitor-General, I had forgotten to have him know of the relations we had between ourselves, and those which you were to have with the superior of the establishment.

By my letter of last February 20th, you were to have two accounts: the one God alone was to know, and the one which was to be acknowledged by the Society. By your letter, I see that you are perfectly in order, and I have already blessed God because of it. In the short visit I paid to St. Hippolyte, I noticed that you were keeping the one and the other account very exactly, the first, as it were, wholesale, the one of your disbursements and of which I was not to know the details, because the left hand, upon occasion, is not supposed to know what the right one does. As regards the second account, I have had the occasion to know about it by the very one of Brother Galliot[1] whom I was visiting at the time. This

[1] At that time the director of the establishment, and who had just been replaced by Father Rothéa.

young superior had already told me with what generosity you took care of the bills he could not pay himself.

By the answer you gave to my letter of last February 20th, I knew that you would never present any bill, at least for the 4,000 francs which you had used. Nor have I said anything to you regarding this latter at the time of my visit, and Brother Galliot had nothing to tell or to remark to you except to encourage you. All the times that we have met together, you have expressed to me sentiments that were most generous and most edifying. There was no longer any question of only the 4,000 francs that you wanted to use at St. Hippolyte, but of your entire fortune and all your labors.

Imagine what was my sorrow when I learned that you were pestered for a rendering of accounts, I who knew so well what were your last intentions! I think that God must have permitted this abuse to render still more agreeable to his eyes the sacrifices with which he was inspiring you. Take courage, then, my dear son. So that no one may be in a position to tire you, I shall send a copy of this letter to Father Rothéa and to Brother Clouzet.

Continue the repairs, I mean the walls of enclosure that you have so wisely undertaken. We shall see later about the construction of a chapel. If Father Rothéa could not go ahead with the tuition payments, you would have the kindness to help him, and to speak truly, if there are many boarders and many pupils of the Society in the boarding normal school. I do not think that Father Rothéa is able, in the beginning, to look after the making, for example, of small articles of furniture and of beds, which should always be in a proportion to the personnel of an establishment.

In my letter of last February 20th, I was telling you: “Food would seem to me a matter of right and law. You will be fed with the community, since you are going to be a part of it, and, moreover, an essential part, as économe.” I admired your wisdom, being by that letter looked upon as économe, in having interpreted this economy in its general sense, and in having avoided the economy of details, which always brings along so many murmurs even in the most regular communities. When I asked you what was the ordinary fare of the community, what was happening in the kitchen and other little questions, touching details, you answered that you did not bother about such matters. Such is not the case in regard to general economy, repairs, constructions, providing food, etc., and it was that sort of thing I had in mind.

I have learned by my correspondence that some worries have arisen from the fact that you were not always regular for the different exercises of the religious life. I don’t know how there could have been misunderstanding on this point. How could it not be understood, that without embracing the religious state, you, nevertheless, wanted at your age to separate yourself from the world, and to be edified in the bosom of a fervent community, and to find yourself within easy reach of all the helps of religion, consecrating your cares, your labors, your experience, your fortune, or at least a great portion of it, to the maintenance of an establishment so useful, in fact, almost necessary to the whole of

Alsace, your fatherland? Could it not have been seen that all this could perfectly agree with the liberty which you are always to enjoy? Liberty, which is necessary for you, as much by reason of your age as of the very works which you have undertaken.

You have done well, my dear son, to write to me without delay. It is in the beginning that it is good to arrange things so well, that there can no longer be any cause for misunderstanding or trouble in the future. Although I am usually hard-pressed with work, I hastened to answer you, and I desire that this letter may help you to forget the pain and sorrow that have been caused you in the recent past.

I am embracing you very tenderly and I am giving you, with effusion of heart, my fatherly blessing.

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The following letters touch diverse questions, in particular, a project of foundation of the Daughters of Mary in Rheinackern, which, in spite of the good will of the Vicar-General of Strasbourg, Reverend Liebermann, was not to be realized.

486 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, October 28, 1829

My dear son, I have received your letter of the 13th of the current month. All that you have set in order in the course of your trip to Alsace seems to me very well. Now, there is only the question of continuing the good work. I shall fully support you.

I am sending you a copy of the long letter I am writing to Mr. Christen. If you read it attentively, you will see that I answer about all the difficulties that concern him.

Mr. O'Lombel sent you from Paris the letter and the plans of Mr. de Rainneville. Reflect well on these plans, and let me know your reflections, and I shall let you know mine. You or I will then give him a definite answer. In the meantime, I shall have one made temporarily by Mr. O'Lombel.

You will have to make a trip to Besançon to see there the archbishop and to put an end with His Excellency to the little disputes between the Brothers and the hospital Sister. I had ended everything and made a report of all our agreements, but hardly had I left Besançon when the Sisters came back upon what had been agreed upon and settled. It seems that His Excellency does not want to get into such little quarrels. Father Lalanne must have informed him at the time of the visit he paid him that you would come to him to receive his decisions and his orders. I always wanted to send you the papers connected with the lawsuit, but I was never able to find the suitable moment. I am making up for it

today. As regards Brother Troffer, the director of the establishment, we shall see later on if he has to be replaced and by whom. . . .

The affair of Rheinackern is very serious. In another letter, I shall get you up to date about everything and inform you about what would have to be done. In the meantime, I am going to provide for the most pressing needs of the Sisters. In Paris, I have begun negotiations with a commission merchant for all kinds of cloth, as much for the Society of Mary as for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. He has made a first shipment on a small scale. I am having all verified as to qualities and prices with several honest dealers in Bordeaux. I shall let you know about the results. . . .

You know, my dear son, the tender friendship I have for you. I am embracing you with all the sentiments with which it inspires me.

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487 – TO FATHER FRITSCH, PASTOR OF JETTERSWILLER

Bordeaux, November 3, 1829

Reverend Father, I have received the last two letters which you did me the honor of writing to me, the one to Paris and the other to Bordeaux, where, at last, I had just arrived. In Paris, I had begun an answer to the first, but the rush of my many occupations made it impossible for me to continue it, and so I am answering both at this my first suitable opportunity.

Even if it were possible for me to put my hands on the sums for which you are asking me, prudence would not permit me to pass them on to you, but really I cannot do so, as it is something I had in no way expected. I said that prudence would not permit me to do so. You are asking for them as if they were due you. In giving them, I would be admitting that I am your debtor, and in a sort of indefinite manner, you must understand that that is no way of doing business.

In order to proceed with prudence, we must first settle upon our present situation. We must know if I have contracted any debts with you in sending you some religious Daughters of Mary to start in Rheinackern a convent of their order, with 12 persons who had already retired there. I had the honor of having you take notice of it on the day of my departure from Rheinackern, at the first request you made to me for 6,000 francs. Upon my observations, you told me you had all my letters. I asked you to look through them, since I was assured I had never assumed any such obligation.

On arriving in Bordeaux, I looked through all your letters and those of Father Liebermann. I read them all. All your letters take for granted a cession, pure and simple, of

the house oF Rheinackern to the Daughters of Mary. All take for granted that the house is large and abundantly supplied with furniture. All take for granted that it is sufficiently endowed to nourish and support a great number of religious sisters. You observe, from time to time, that the religious and civil authorities see with pleasure the rise of this convent. If you do not believe, Reverend Father, that you are able to admit the present situation of the convent in Rheinackern as far as my relations with it are concerned, if you persist in believing that I am your debtor, then you are obliging me to have this matter adjudged by competent persons, because it is impossible to settle anything for the future, before having first settled our own actual state and condition.

To reassure yourself completely, please recall the first agreements with Father Liebermann. He had a first note of them given me on October 30, 1827. He himself wrote to me a detailed account about them on the following November 11th. You will be able to read the first letter that you wrote on the 9th of the same month in the name of all the girls reunited in Rheinackern. I also invite you to reread your letters of November 15, 1827, and of January 20 and February 10, 1828. See also my answers. I am not passing over to you either the extracts or the copies of our correspondence, since you are in order. I shall keep them in reserve until your next answer, because—and I am taking the liberty of repeating it to you—we must absolutely settle, once and for all time, our present situation. WhilE awaiting, Reverend Father, all final settlement, I am hoping from your sense of justice as from your generosity, that you will not let the religious of the convent continue to suffer. It is possible, that having knowledge of this disagreement, they will condemn themselves to too great privations, so as to avoid the necessity of having recourse to you in needs that are so pressing. I am, etc. . . .

P.S. Would you think it in place, Reverend Father, that to have everything the sooner ended, I have the Visitor General, whom I have appointed for all of our establishments in the north of France, call upon you or anyone whom the matter might directly concern? He will then be in Alsace, vested in my authority. It is Brother Clouzet, former Superior of the establishment in St. Remy, in the Department of the Haute-Saône. That is where he habitually resides.

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488 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 3, 1829

I am sending you, my dear son, a copy of the letter which I am writing to Father Fritsch, pastor of Jetterswiller. He is the pastor who bought the poor convent of Rheinackern, and the church adjoining it, which is a place of pilgrimage to the Blessed Virgin. This pastor may have good intentions, but he knows nothing about business, and, furthermore, he is very stubborn. I shall have you know all about this pitiful affair. If Father

Fritsch does not suitably answer my letter, I shall see to it that you get the essential documents or papers indicated in this letter that I am writing to him.

Brother Weber[1] forgot to send you the papers referring to the suit between the brothers and the hospital Sisters, but Brother Troffer will let you know about everything. The background of this affair, little as it is, but interesting for the establishment, is to prevent, as much as possible, the relations between the hospital Sisters with the brothers. Let the head give orders directly in the establishment, said to be charitable, and let he himself be the responsible party with the superioress of the hospital!

You were speaking to me of changing Brother Troffer and this would be the time to do it, considering that the hospital Sisters are no longer to depend so much on him, since all his requests have been met. I could replace him by Brother Gobillot. Brother Gobillot would be a lot better as a teacher than Brother Troffer. Besides that, he can sing and could teach singing to the pupils having more aptitude in that direction. You know that the hospital is continually asking for a Brother who knows how to sing. The bodily handicaps of Brother Gobillot[1] offer no kind of obstacle to this kind of establishment. All the difficulty that there actually is, derives from the fact that if the teachers of the four trades learned by the pupils are not competent, I don't believe that Brother Gobillot can make up for them, as does Brother Troffer. Would Brother Bousquet perhaps have the same aptitude?

I admit to you, my dear son, that I am afraid to find needs and great advantages in the changing of subjects, because of the expenses that they occasion. Take care to be saving in St. Remy and see to it that economy is practiced everywhere. Permit only such expenses to be made as are rigorously needed for the good maintenance of the establishment and for the termination of the repairs that may not yet be finished. Perhaps you will be able to send me a bill of exchange, without however exposing yourself to too great want. It is useless for me to enter into the details of the financial situation in which I found the central house, as well as the other establishments of the Midi, which are dependent on it. May the Lord, my dear son, deign to grant you his peace, and the graces necessary to advance seriously in the religious career upon which you have entered.

* * * *

With the following letter begins a most extensive and interesting correspondence between the Founder and Father Lalanne, residing now in Gray and then at St. Remy. In it is seen spreading out progressively the great projects of the foundation of normal schools, which the Revolution of 1830 was all too soon to overthrow.

489 - TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 6, 1829

[1] The secretary of Father Chaminade.
[1] He was lame.

If our correspondence, my dear son, is slow, its effects, nevertheless, I hope, will not be delayed. I sent you Fathers Meyer and Bouly. If they did not arrive for the solemnity of All Saints, they must have arrived at least on the next day. I thought it well to permit Father Bouly to go and see his parents, while Father Meyer brought a religious Sister to Arbois, where he could at the same time see his own sister.

When Father Bouly learned that he was destined this year for St. Remy, he felt such intense sorrow that it was very difficult to calm him. The idea that he was being brought close to his home town only for greater ease in dismissing him at the termination of his religious obligations continually tormented him. His grief became excessive at the end of the retreat, when he saw that he was being permitted to renew his vows for only one year. In fact, he had vows for only one more year. To this last outburst of grief, followed joy and courage, when he was promised that if he carried on well, he could still become a good religious, and even be admitted to Holy Orders. For him to conduct himself well, means growing in faith and humility, it means suppressing outbursts of self-love which make him so sensitive, it means true contrition for the past sins based upon motives of faith and confidence, it means no longer excusing his faults of irritability and sensitiveness due to purely physical causes. During two years, I kept on trying to make him understand that a certain reaction had become established among his faults, especially his self-love and his nervous disposition. During the third year now he recognized the fact, then he came back to harboring illusions in regard to his faults. The knowledge he gradually acquired about these principles, the convictions about them with which he is penetrated and his tendency to put them into practice into in St. Remy, the hope to be completely cured in the end, helped him to undertake his trip with joy and courage. In spite of his defects, he is naturally good, lovable, sincere, and grateful. He is openhearted and loyal. If you get him to the point of understanding that you love him, that you are seeking his own personal good, he will accept any kind of reprimand and you may do with him anything you wish, but you must be firm in holding him to principles of faith and remain on guard against the reproaches which his self-love makes him make about himself. . . . Father Bouly has earnestly asked me to write to you at length about his weaknesses, so that you may make no mistake about them. I told him that you would soon know him, that you had no need of those long speeches with which he sometimes burdened me and that you understood at once whatever he might say. Nevertheless, I have just kept my promise and now I want him to keep his. He seemed to have great confidence in you, he is even disposed to go to confession either to Father Meyer or to Father Chevaux, according as you will judge most suitable. When he is guilty of some fault or falls into some excess of sensitiveness, which I call susceptibility, if you seem to despair of his improvement or his cure, all would be lost. That would be making him lose his head. I want to write him a little letter.

Father Meyer is somewhat thoughtless and inconsiderate, just as Father Rothéa, but as the heart of the one and of the other is piously disposed, their lack of reflection or inconsiderateness has no other effect than to adapt itself with too much ardor to the good they have to do, and not to take into consideration the circumstances of time, place, and persons. Furthermore, Father Meyer is full of zeal, he is penetrated with the thought that he is being sent to St. Remy only to exercise his zeal there. He is, otherwise, such a fine character and of such great gentleness, that you will be able to do with him about anything that your own zeal may suggest.

I have sent Sister de Chantal to Arbois. She is able to be at the head of the boarders, as much by reason of her education as by that of her talents and her virtue. Nevertheless, the Mother will have to be careful not to overload her with work, but to stimulate and encourage her. She took leave of the novitiate with much regret, because of the great attachment she had developed for her pious superioress and for her confessor, Father Caillet. Her attachment had no other motives than the courage with which the one and the other inspired her in the acquiring of virtue.

I think that by this time you will have finished the methods, be it for the primary schools or for the normal schools, and that you will have profited to this end, as you had intended, by the presence of some former heads. Brother Gaussens has just written to me from Courtefontaine, but he does not tell me anything about these methods. I think that you will arm him with all the needed information about them, and that he will come here fully instructed and trained for any type of teaching. Brother Gaussens is to leave Courtefontaine when all is going well and when all is at peace. There seem to be difficulties, especially as regards the removal of the servant of the Reverend Pastor and the leaving of Miss Coudre. He will, doubtless, write to you to have you send him Brother Marres.[1] Considering the state of mind of the folks there, he will absolutely have to have him.

I am learning from Paris that the Royal Council of Public Instruction is creating difficulties in regard to naming Father Meyer head of the boarding school, not knowing that he has his bachelorship of arts and letters.

Mr. O'Lombel tells me that he is going to have an end put to these difficulties through Father de Coussergues. I answered that it was astonishing that Mr. de Laynes, division chief, had not solved the difficulty he himself was causing, because the subjects who had made their studies in the seminaries are ready to receive all grades in passing the examination, in the supposition that he has not already done so, but that, on the other hand, he could be named by collation.[2] It is to be presumed that there would not have been all these delays if I had been able to remain in Paris a little longer, so as to have matters speeded up a little.

If I have to write to the mayor of Gray, let me know about it in a few days. Give me an accurate account of the situation, of the things and persons, as much for Gray as for St. Remy. I have learned that you no longer have Mr. de Brancas as prefect of Vesoul. You must have paid your respects to him, as was perfectly proper. You will tell me if it is in place that I write to him.

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[1] Anthony Marres (1808-55) of an honorable and Christian family of Nerae, after having tried himself out in the seminary of Agen, entered the novitiate of St. Laurent, and was part of the little group that started St. Remy. He was first employed with work in the kitchen, and then given teaching to do in the elementary classes. He had a great anxiety about his interior life, to judge from his spiritual notebook that has been preserved, and which has preserved for us, in particular, summaries of instructions of Father Chaminade in St. Remy, during the retreat of 1827. He passed the last years of his life in St. Claude, where he did especially great good to the little children by his gentleness and goodness. "He was a very good religious," wrote his director, "a man of strong character and very far advanced in virtue."

[2] The giving of a literary title as a favor, independently of the examinations, in exceptional circumstances.

The boarding school of St. Marie in Bordeaux is going from bad to worse. Our four little establishments, called of the Midi,[3] are staffed by subjects who are quite good. St. Laurent furnished me with the necessary replacements. Otherwise, all is going in its own quiet little way. It is possible that I shall send you another subject, however, capable of handling only the lower classes or for doing supervision. If it is necessary, I shall speak of him some other time at greater length.

I am closing with one remark. All goes well in the establishments where God is loved and served, and on the contrary, there where God is not searched for first and foremost, the disorder is in proportion to the evil that is committed or to the negligence of the heads in having God served as he deserves to be. I could cite examples, and striking ones, too. I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and wishing you the peace of the Lord.

* * * *

Father Lalanne, having become superior in St. Remy, began to reform everything without sufficiently taking into account either the religious formation of the subjects or the financial condition of the house. Father Chaminade calls him to order with his usual delicacy.

490 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 4, 1829

My very dear son: I received your letter which I did not find too long. It is undated, doubtless, because you worked at it on different days. You divided your subject matter into three parts. The first referred to matters of a religious nature. You had the idea of suppressing the novitiate because of the difficulty of bringing together novices of all ages and professions. The novices, spread either among the boarders of the château or among the candidates of the normal school, if they hold out, will always be obliged to make a regular novitiate, and the difficulty will be repeated when some new subjects enter. It will be necessary, according to the same rule, to put them in the boarding school or with the candidates, which means there will really be no novitiate, either for the few actual novices or for those to come later. The spiritual direction of Father Chevaux will be almost illusory as direction for the novices. I had found the same difficulty, and I had thought I had conquered it, being formed, according to our Constitutions, a novitiate properly so called, and a boarding normal school,[1] which would have been made up of the pupils who had already made the strict part of the novitiate. The pupils of the normal boarding school would be spread out as day pupils, either in normal boarding school or in the château during class time, etc. . . . We had even found rooms around the one of the master of novices for the postulants on probation. It seems to me I had well instructed Father Chevaux. I am surprised that he should have given you no indication of it. I did not speak much to you about it, my dear son, because I would not have thought that neither Father Chevaux nor Brother Clouzet would fail to make any remark to you.

The community of teachers seems to me to be well organized.

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[3] Agen, Villeneuve, Moissac, Lauzerte.
[1] Religious scholasticate.

What you call community of the novices is really a community of religious workers. It is in this community that it would be troublesome, ordinarily speaking, to put education novices, if such should come to you.

As regards the fourth article, that regarding teaching, if the boarding school has more pupils, even at that the number must still be very small, and always less than that of preceding years. Three years ago there were about 80 boarders and the candidates also lodged in the château. It is good that the classes be on the ground floor, as much as possible. Anyhow, I doubt about the possibility of having it so, because on the ground floor are places which seem to me unhealthy, but I am sure you will be able to judge of this matter better than I. As regards dormitories, either ready or to be prepared, you will not lack place on the second floor. We would even have ourselves laughed at, if we were to change garrets into dormitories, while all the time there are such fine rooms that would serve perfectly. I would be of the opinion that other dormitories not be made, or at least that only a few be made, just like the one that Brother Clouzet prepared. However, no one will have anything to say, if each room is provided with decent and comfortable beds. It is a great recommendation for a boarding school when, in vast quarters, there is so little place left for beds. We should judge in this way, even if we were in the easiest circumstances, hence all the more reason for doing it in our present situation.

The means which you propose, that there be no more expenses in Bordeaux, to send you all those who are not paying any board, is impracticable. If you insist on having the proof, I shall make a list for you, on which will be examined all the subjects we have here. Do you also wish to do away with the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary? And even if this were done, there would always remain the double rent to pay for the house bought with money sunk in an annuity.[1] There would remain rents to pay with the capital, etc., etc. . . . We must not lose sight, my dear son, of the fact that we are walking on the edge of volcanoes, and that we are liable to face, even very shortly, terrible agitations. Let us always advance but with great prudence, let us economize everywhere and on everything, without, however, cutting down on anything appropriate and necessary. Let us consolidate what we have, let us pay our debts and live within our means. I said something about this in a last letter I wrote to Brother Clouzet, but I did not say as much to him about it as I am saying now to you, which is little enough. I have always heard it said that to a good clerk, a mere word is sufficient.

Keep the normal school in good running order. The work on the chapel must be brought to an end. I have already written to Brother Clouzet about it. Physics instruments will be indispensable, but as a start, only a few. There is not question, as yet, of completely fitting out a physics laboratory. If the professor is really efficient, he will know how to make up for the instruments he may be lacking. Of course, let us keep advancing, but let us not lose sight of the times in which we are living and also, and not the least, our financial situation. Sometimes in Paris, secondhand physics instruments, and sometimes very good ones, are for sale. They are often the remnants of physics laboratories but very precious at that. You might have someone in Paris who could have an eye open for such bargains. If you know no one there capable of such a

[1] The hotel on Mirail Street.

matter, I shall call upon the former principal of the College of Colmar.[1] If St. Remy gets to be well equipped, and if the professors lead there a truly religious life, it is possible that you may have him as professor of physics. He is very strong in this subject and also in chemistry, which he likes so well. If things were to turn out this way, I would tell him, while he is in Paris, should there be no instruments in St. Remy, or not in sufficient number or quality, to find out about all the new discoveries. Those were his first ideas already two years ago, when he wanted to enter. He is a very well-trained subject, he speaks with great facility, and occasionally preaches in Paris, even as many as four or five times a day. Of course, all this of itself means little in religious life outside of interior abnegation of judgment, but with an intelligent superior, who would know him well, he could still succeed very well.

I made a great number of observations to Mr. de Rainneville about the trial plan he had passed on to me and which was communicated at the same time to Brother Clouzet. I sent a copy of these remarks to Brother Clouzet. I shall not repeat them for you here, but I would very much want that there be in St. Remy a small group of farmers, 12 or 15 would not be too many, if they are well directed. If this worked out satisfactorily, we would make it a point to procure for them all that would be needed for their religious instruction and their agricultural training, etc. . . .

I think that a trip to Paris might be of some usefulness to you. I am saying of some usefulness, because it would not be of all the usefulness you have in mind. We must discount a great deal from what the diverse prospecti of new institutions offer us. The one for example, which you mention first, Balle Institution, where the Jacotot Method is being practiced.[2] I took information about it in a very particular manner at the time of my last stop in Paris. I questioned one of the pupils of this school about it. I bought for you a copy of the *Method of Universal Teaching of M. Jacotot*. In seeing the method, you will lose the desire of even seeing the institution. The same could be the case in regard to the others. It is by reason of neglect or oversight that this method came to Bordeaux instead of going to St. Remy. I shall ask Mr. O'Lombel to buy you another copy and to have it come to you at the earliest opportunity. It must not be thought, however, that the heads of these institutions are not clever. Mr. Balle knows how to get a net salary of 12 to 14,000 francs a year in receiving as day scholars 25 pupils who give him each 50 francs a month. He teaches even during the vacation!

I answered you as regards the purchase of physics instruments.

It is to be presumed that after my observations to Mr. De Rainneville, Brother Clouzet's trip will not take place at the end of this month. If, after another look into the matter, you believe your voyage of great usefulness, I shall urge you to make it only in the springtime, as the discomforts of trips in midwinter are well enough known as not to need to be mentioned here.

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[1] Father Latouche, former chaplain of the Royal College of Strasbourg and principal of the Royal College in Colmar from 1822 until 1825. About this priest and his relations with Father Chaminade, see other details in Letter 505.

[2] Joseph Jacotot (1770-1840) born in Dijon, taught at first in his native town, had to leave France at the beginning of the Restoration because of his political opinions, retired in Louvain, where he conceived and practiced his famous method and reentered France after 1830. To judge of the value of this method, it suffices to recall of it the fundamental axioms: All intelligences are equal. All is in everything. One retains only what one repeats. Everyone can teach himself. One teaches even what one doesn't know, etc.

Messrs. Blanc and Peg[1] have arrived without a penny, owing 50 francs to the coachman. Mr. O'Lombel had paid him 50 francs less and had left them 61 francs for their current expenses. I had both give an account of what they had done with this sum, which they had divided between themselves on leaving Paris. Their use of it was pitiful. After having had both seriously examined, young Blanc was judged qualified to start his rhetoric. His companion, Peg, was put in the second class. Both are beginning to get along very well in their respective classes. How have you agreed to 200 francs as tuition for young Peg? You will get yourself into trouble in putting down 200 instead of 400 francs, the more so because in St. Remy he was paying 400.

I am stopping here. At another time, I shall talk to you about the Constitutions, and perhaps also of other things possibly less important. I am embracing you with great paternal tenderness.

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The following letter shows us the firmness with which the Founder, in spite of his great goodness of heart, watched to keep out of the Society scandalous subjects. There is question of a young man who had been imprudently recommended as a postulant by Mr. O'Lombel and Mr. Fernandy, friends of the Society.

491 – TO MR. R., ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 10, 1829

Dear Sir: I have received your letter, sent from Belfort. I was much inclined to be indulgent, believing that your fault was but the momentary effect of a violent temptation. But, from later information I have learned that when your faults became known, they had been committed already two or three weeks before, that you had seduced these young men in holding with them impious conversations and of which I have details. You understand that, although I pity you a great deal and you are desirous of all sorts of good, I cannot bear

[1] Postulants sent from Franche-Comté to Bordeaux by way of Paris.

to have you in any of our establishments. All are generally made up of young people. Consequently, I am writing to Father Lalanne to tell him that you may no longer remain in the Society.

I cannot dispense myself from writing to Mr. O'Lombel and to Mr. Fernandy to tell them of your leaving the Society, but I shall ask of them an inviolable secret. I desire and I ask of God that you may sincerely mend your ways, and that he may deign to be merciful to you.

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492 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 16, 1829

. . . You tell me that Fathers Meyer and Bouly, Brother Fridblatt and Sister Chantal had happily arrived at their destination and rid of their money. They had even borrowed something in Autun. Their accounts were separate, and they were not traveling together. Fathers Meyer and Bouly and Sister Chantal traveled by coach. Father Meyer, the one in charge of the purse, sent me his account as follows: This bill adds up to 360 francs, and I had given them 450 francs. Brothers Fridblatt and Farey started out together on foot, and I gave them 100 francs. Neither the one nor the other sent me an account of their expenses.

Brother Rothéa of Colmar made me some observations in regard to the samples of cloth that you sent him. I have not yet answered him. You will listen to his observations and judge definitely for yourself if they are correct. You will do well to tell me about the factory or factories where these cloths are made. You could also send me samples of all kinds with Brother Gaussens, when he comes this way in the spring.

Put in good order all the money affairs of St. Hippolyte. Brother Farey, who has charge of the purse, knows how to keep exact accounts once he is well set. I had a copy of the letter I wrote to Mr. Christen passed over to you. In being very diplomatic, you will be able to get much from Mr. Christen, but diplomacy, discretion, and unmistakable evidences of great confidence are necessary, etc. . . .

May the peace of the Lord be always with you, my dear son!

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A letter of encouragement to a religious of the house, nicknamed "the Charity" or the Hospital St. James in Besançon. It contains precious counsels of spiritual direction.

493 – TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 17, 1829

I received, my dear son, your second letter of the third of the present month, and you are not to believe that I have lost sight of the first. I also recall very well what you told me at the time of my stay in Besançon. I also have the note you gave me at the time you gave me an account of your state of conscience.

I thought that your great desire to come to the boarding school of St. Marie at Bordeaux did not come only from reports you could still have had from your parents, but that the principal cause lay in certain disorders existing in the establishment of Besançon, which tired you as well as they tired all your confreres. These were not remedied as soon as I would have desired, but finally, at the present time, all has been arranged and to the satisfaction of everybody concerned. Brother Clouzet made it a point to tell me especially about it. If any inconvenience still remains, it will be easy to find a remedy, with the exception of the old hospital Sister, who must be left to die in peace.

Nevertheless, if you believe that the good God asks of you to come to the boarding school, I shall very willingly grant it to you, because I desire nothing but your greater good. However, there being nothing pressing about the trip, it would seem to me preferable that you wait until springtime. Midwinter is a bad time for such long trips.

You ask me for a little rule of life, but, my dear son, you have one which doesn't leave you one moment unoccupied. All I can do is to exhort you to become more and more faithful to it.

To avoid routine, natural activity, or self-love, make it a law for yourself never to begin any action before first having made some act of faith—to renew yourself in the presence of God and to offer him the action in question.

In your particular examen, count the number of your failings, make up for them, and even impose upon yourself some kind of penance. I hope that by this means, you will do away, little by little, with all self-interest and finally enjoy great peace of soul. If, in spite of all you may be able to do you still experience some trouble, that would simply be another trial and no reason for worry.

You tell me that you have sold goods to the value of 1,000 francs, but you do not tell me what you did with the 1,000 francs, nor what it was that you sold, and the kind of sacrifice it meant for you. If you still have those 1,000 francs, or if you are to have them very soon, you might deposit them with Mr. Pidoux.[1] I could come to an understanding with him regarding them, according to the advice he may think fitting to give me.

[1] A banker, a friend of the Society.

The letters that you will write to me, you or the members of the establishment of the Charity, could be sent to St. Remy directly if you have occasion for doing so, or through Mr. Pidoux, if no such occasions arise. Father Lalanne and Brother Clouzet know the means of having mail come to me free of charge.

There remains nothing more for me to say to you, my dear son, as I have answered both your letter and your requests, and so I am embracing you very tenderly and wishing you patience, courage, and fidelity, all of which I am doing in my capacity as Good Father.

From the hand of Father Chaminade: With fullness of heart, I am blessing all my children of Besançon. G.J.C.

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With a patience that never grows tired, the Founder applies himself to the formation of each one of his collaborators. To his master of novices in St. Remy, he gives the following counsels.

494 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 29, 1829

What must you say, my dear son, about not having received any answer by the end of December to a letter written on the fifth of November? The goodness of your mind and still more of your heart will have, I fondly hope, found means of excusing and justifying me. As you see, I am not trying to do it here. I am saying only that I have made great use of your letter and of the information you give me in it, when writing either to Father Lalanne or to Brother Clouzet, but more particularly to the former. Nevertheless, I have made no mention of you so as not to compromise you in anything, and I shall always make this my policy. Thus, you will always be able to write to me most freely about everything that is happening in the establishment, and especially about all that concerns the postulants, the novices, and the temporary professed, as the temporary profession is really by a happy continuation of the novitiate, to the extent that the novice master should never lose sight of them.

I was astonished that you had made no protest to Father Lalanne about the division he made of the novices and postulants, as much in the boarding school as in the day normal school. In the account which Father Lalanne gave me of the month of November, he makes no mention of your observations. He has seen in the community or in the novitiate only a strange mixture of individuals who could or should not be together. Nevertheless, nothing was simpler than the way I had organized the novitiate. You had seemed to understand it, but Father Lalanne was not up to it at the time, and I did not have the time to go more deeply into it with him after his nomination as superior of St. Remy. Besides, the organization we had made was but an application or the carrying out of the regulations.

You have, nevertheless, done well, my dear son, to obey, if Father Lalanne required a similar division in spite of the observations that you or Brother Clouzet might have made to him. The subdirectors must always obey their superior, safeguarding their relations, as you have done with the superior general.

Such are the general observations which I made after the reading of your letter. I shall read it a second time to see if I may not have some other particular observation to make to you. I imagine that you are keeping a duplicate of the letters which you write to me, because otherwise, you would not be able to judge of my answers, unless you had in sight what you had said to me.

Keep, to the best of your ability, the novices who are either in the boarding school or in the day normal school, but I do not see how we can count this time for them as novitiate time. We shall see what is going to happen. It is the same with regard to the postulants. For the simple postulants, the division would not be an obstacle, but it is such for the postulant admitted to the Society, those, that is to say, who belong to it effectively and whom it has, as it were, adopted.

As regards the three young men for whom I had sent, you might have pointed them out to me in a clearer way. You don't even give me their names, neither their age, the names of their parents, nor the places of their birth. When I shall hear them spoken about, surely I shall not understand a thing of what is being said to me about them. You would do well to accustom yourself in making descriptions, to make them precise, clear, and characteristic, descriptions which point out subjects in such a way that were they actually seen or interrogated, they would be recognized immediately.

As regards the two I sent from Paris, the same observation is to be made as was made about the three about whom we have already spoken. They arrived in St. Remy after a long and difficult trip. It has been for them quite a hard test. I thought that in a short time, we would have them make a good novitiate, or at least a good postulate. They were destined for farm work. Nothing came of all this. One of them has been sent, you tell me, to some tailor and the other to the kitchen or to the bakery. What models have they had placed before them? What sad religious indeed, the cook and the baker! The tailors are Alsatians who neither speak nor understand French, and whose head is very homesick in St. Remy. Tell me, dear son, what kind of religious will enter, or rather, will be formed in the Society if we act thus?

I have just received a letter from Father Lalanne in which he tries to prove to me the impossibility of forming a novitiate and a normal school with the elements to be found in St. Remy. He seems to have discussed this matter a long time with you, and gives me to understand that you and Brother Clouzet have admitted that there was no reasonable way of realizing such a project. The consequence which is not being drawn, but which follows as a matter of course, is that I understand nothing about it, and that I am ordering things

that are altogether impractical and which would produce the worst results. If you had not understood me, why did you not hasten to tell me of your difficulties and to have in writing what I had already several times repeated to you by word of mouth? This is a matter of no small consequence. I am not saying any more about it.

In passing through Besançon, I agreed with Brother Troffer that he would send a young hosier to St. Remy to be trained a little to religious life, and that after the information I would have from you, I would see if I could have him come to Bordeaux, if I should leave him in St. Remy to set up in one or the other establishment a little bonnet shop. He arrives in St. Remy and you immediately make him a doorkeeper with little Fischer. You tell me that he is homesick. What do you want me to answer you? It is more fitting that you yourself give the answer. It will be less evident to you, although it must infallibly be the same.

If Mr. Corne were to present himself, he must not be easily admitted. You would have to instruct him and test him strictly, and for a long time. If he were to present himself, I say, you would have to warn him of this in advance, and there is great likelihood that he would not consent to these tests. His judgment is not correct, and there is in him a fund of malice, which falsifies his judgment.

You tell me you always have the good will to do well, but that you always feel your weakness in doing what is good. Weakness, properly so called, is very little in accord with good will. Your timidity and certain embarrassment in your ideas prevent you from following with firmness what your reason, enlightened by faith, makes you perceive. From there come troubles of conscience, which put new confusion into your interior. This is doubtless what you call your weakness. This is because I believed you had good will, and that I believed you would surmount this interior embarrassment, that I named you master of novices in St. Remy. What is annoying is that you have been put to too great a test from the beginning. By my counsels and exhortations, with your good will, we would have come to a happy end of all the trouble. Nevertheless, take courage, try to supplement or make up as far as you are able for all you are unable to do, as if your postulants and novices were not scattered.

May your zeal become ever greater! This is what I am wishing you at the beginning of this new year, whilst embracing you tenderly.

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Even more than Father Chevaux, Father Lalanne had need of being formed, and the Founder holds on to it with perseverance.

495 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 30, 1829

My very dear son, the first one who said that the better is often the enemy of the good, uttered a wise maxim and one that has quite a wide application. It is not to be doubted that your three novitiates, each one sufficiently numerous and provided with excellent teachers, are a lot better than the novitiate such as I had prescribed for St. Remy, the normal boarding school being only a division of the novitiate. But it is not less true to say that this better has quite destroyed a good, and a good rigorously necessary. If I had foreseen this turn of fate, I would have taken other measures for St. Hippolyte where there are already 15 pupils of the Society, among whom there are three or four who have already made their studies. I would not have sent for the three subjects by Boillon. I would not have sent the young hosier. I would not have sent the two other subjects from Paris. I would have . . .

I shall not follow your different numbers here, because the affair is beyond all idea of change. I shall tell you only that I had had practically all these views, and that the suitable distinctions would have taken place, doubtless with some embarrassment at first, because it was not all clearly methodically laid out in writing, and that the master of novices still has very little experience and knows very little how to extricate himself from difficulties, but he would, nevertheless, have found himself the *Plures in modum unis*.[1] Every novitiate that is not fairly numerous is rarely fervent, and it is difficult to have good masters of novices. Father Chevaux had seemed to me to be one of the best fitted to be trained in the fulfilling of the functions. It is for these two reasons that I had decided that there would be only two novitiates in the Society, at least for a very long time.

You add, my dear son, "when I shall want it, you will mention the means you have of establishing these three novitiates and of maintaining them, that you will find for each one of the place and the heads, and that you will even propose a means of having all the subjects travel very economically, if not at some profit, and that all this could be set in motion next year." Well, can you doubt that I desire it, and that I do not look upon good novitiates as the life and support of all orders, of all religious societies?

It must not be concluded, my dear son, that all things must be brought back to the state in which they should have been developed. We must remain patient. Father Chevaux must not lose sight of any one of the postulants, novices, and temporary professed, in spite of their distribution and their confusion, either among the boarders or among the candidates. And very quietly, we shall think over the means of equipping a novitiate in St. Remy, unless we come to the decision that there shall be only one in Bordeaux.

Having a long time interrupted this letter, my dear son, I am taking up yours again to see if I have not omitted anything essential in regard to the novitiate.

[1] Several reunited in one.

My eyes come upon this article: “Another difficulty. The master of novices, Father Chevaux, has none of the means that he would need to run a real novitiate. The Direction[1] which you have started is nothing else than a start. As for the rest, there is nothing definite to follow in regard to the meditations, the examens, the conferences, not even a Rule of Life for the novitiate. But all this matter to be taken care of is not settled in a day. It was surely necessary to stop during the work, etc. . . .”

We used to say formerly: he who proves too much, proves nothing. Because Father Chevaux would not have all the qualities he would need to run a real novitiate, does it follow that there should be no novitiate? Hasn’t he a sound judgment? Has he not piety and zeal? Is he not very docile? Is he not hard working? Is he sufficient unto himself? If he lacks experience, if there is a certain simplicity in his way of doing things which may retard the work somewhat, if he does not win the confidence of certain subjects by reason of his simplicity, is there no reason for hoping, for considering the good qualities with which he is gifted, that by the counsels that will be given him, he will be formed and eventually become a very good master of novices,[2] and you believe that it is better not to have any master of novices than to have one who still needs a kind of period of apprenticeship? When in the world shall we then have so perfect a master?

But the Direction has only been started. That is true, but these beginnings have been followed by some verbal explanations, which showed clearly to Father Chevaux the end toward which we are to tend. These beginnings were sufficient for a great number of conferences, as I had made clear to him. He was settled, as regards the order to be followed in the meditations, the examens, independently of the method of mental prayer which I had altered, and of the direction in this method which was already quite advanced. I had given a number of explanations as to the manner of introducing into mental prayer the simplest souls and those whose minds seemed least apt for this manner of prayer. But there was no rule of life for the novitiate. That is true, there was no rule properly so called, but we have taken care of that. There was none because this had seemed to me of little importance alongside of all the elements that were to make up the novitiate. We have, nevertheless, taken care of that by telling Father Chevaux to take as the basis the same rule as the one observed by the community and at the different work periods, to place the best fitted exercises, providing also for free periods, times for retreat and for individual direction. It is during these free periods that the novices or postulants of the boarding normal school would be in their respective classes, etc. . . .

But this is stopping too long at this first article. Nevertheless, I shall always ask you to work 1. at the *Manual of Direction*. Your work could help me a great deal in improving

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[1] *The Manual of Direction to the Life and to the Religious Virtues in The Society of Mary*. See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, Nos. 245 and 862.

[2] Father Chaminade had seen correctly, and for nearly forty years, Father Chevaux was the great former of the novices of the Society. To appreciate his worth in this delicate charge, it suffices to say that he was the master of novices for Fathers Simler, de Lagarde, and Demangeon and of the most holy religious of this generation.

mine, or still better, mine will perhaps add some improvement to yours, or at the very least, make me more competent in judging the goodness of yours; 2. at a daily timetable for the novitiate; 3. at the determination of the order to be followed in the meditations, the examens and the conferences. Although teacher, founder, and superior of a religious society, I always look upon myself as a very little novice in the act of making regulations and constitutions. I find nothing so difficult as the making of good laws, especially when it is necessary to keep in mind and to reach so many types of individuals and to maintain them throughout their lives.

Let us now come to the location of the boarding school. I did not believe having said that in general, the classes could not be healthy in the lower part. I wanted it remarked only that a considerable part of the basement, which is against the terraces and which used to serve as sheds for storing wine, seemed to me unwholesome enough, or that there would be many difficulties in transforming it into healthy and commodious classrooms. So much the better, if this difficulty is nonexistent. I haven't anymore a clear picture of the whole situation. The more use you make of the lower part, the more available space you will have in the upper part.

Without entering into the detail of divisions of the upstairs, I persist in saying that it is possible to lodge there, and very comfortably, a very large number of boarders, and even to reserve several rooms for the special purposes you will assign to them. The same room may serve the same functions for a long time; all that is needed is the will to do so. I also desire that we be forced to equip the garrets. When the time comes, the means to do so will easily enough be found.

Profit by the experience which you have had with the boarding school of Ste. Marie in Bordeaux. Exorbitant expenses are being made there as you know, and what has been the result? The sorrows I have because of them will follow me to my grave.

Still, if these imprudences do not hamper the work of God, and if I am the only one to suffer, I shall console myself over the fact, but the evil is growing worse each day. I am remaining silent. If we don't stick to a strict economy in our diverse establishments, if especially in St. Remy we do not save, if above all, expenses are made there which are not strictly necessary to develop the establishments or to render the property more productive, we are a group of imprudent fellows. The establishments themselves of St. Remy will not support themselves if the others go to pieces, and in the order of reason and prudence they will go to pieces, they will fail shamefully, if the North does not powerfully come to the aid of the South. Take care, my dear son, and imbue Brother Clouzet well with these principles. The blessing of heaven is taken away from the boarding school only because God is badly and very badly served, because each one wants to carry on according to his own notions. May things not be so in St. Remy! May the studies be well provided for in the boarding school and in the normal school, as they should be! But above all, may God be well served, for then you will enjoy the Lord's blessings, you will prosper, and you will have the consolation of supplying the means wherewith first to remove the obstacles, and then to

have the good Lord served as he should be served. What things could still be said here, but as painful to read as they would be to write!

Let us speak a little about your trip to Paris. Perhaps you are in a position to go sooner than you thought. Some days ago, I had a little project for the establishment of normal schools all through France presented to His Excellency the Minister of the Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction.[1] If the project really interests him, it will mean an order to go to Paris, or to send someone able to discuss the matter with him. I was led to this move by the reading of a circular written by the Honorable Rectors of the Academies, which made me easily surmise the views and the intentions of the Minister.

Furthermore, if this project does not take place as I presume will be the case, I have no reason to oppose the trip which you intended to make. Nevertheless, I shall place before you some considerations which might lead you to defer it to some other time such as Providence could suggest to you: 1. The expenses which it will involve, and I shall not come back to the very strong reasons we have to diminish them as much as possible; 2. Long and frequent absences, either in Paris or in Gray, would be harmful to St. Remy. Your presence is more necessary than you would at first think and that from all points of view. You could easily convince yourself of this fact, if you examined it well, just by recalling the visits you necessarily make to Gray; 3. The physics instruments you would want to buy there. If they look good and are really so, then they are very expensive, and must it be repeated? Let us make the least expenses possible. But you say, almost immediately, this is an expense rigorously needed for the course in physics at St. Remy. I answer that if you have some students in physics this year, you must have very few and perhaps no foreigner, at most some professors. Anyhow, with a very small number of instruments it is possible to go quite a distance in physics, in even the experimental type. A good professor is well able to get along with little equipment if it has to be. He makes a little go a long way. With a good electric machine, for example, a good professor will be in condition to make known, and thoroughly, all the new discoveries of this kind. The air pump and all that goes with it costs a lot. It is possible to make up for it, not to make perfect experiments, but to give a perfect understanding and demonstration of a perfect machine. I could give you other examples for the experiments in chemistry, for the extraction of gases, etc. *Experto crede Roberto*. With a very small number of machines, it is still possible to set off the small room where the experiments are to be made. I like very much that we wait for the needs in order to provide for them at least on a big scale. How many have made dupes of themselves for having acted differently! What I would advise if a physics course in St. Remy were to be well equipped, would be that the physics professor visit in Paris different halls of experimental physics, classes or laboratories of chemistry. In that way he might be able to avoid very heavy expenses for instruments which would be but objects of show in a collège.

[1] The text of this project can be read in *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, III, No. 75.

For what concerns diverse institutions to be visited in Paris, I believe as you do that there is always something to gain, even in that of Mr. Jacotot, or of universal teaching.[1] But on such occasions, reason orders us to weigh the advantages and disadvantages. I shall not weigh them here, for each one has his own scale, and mine is not yours.

As regards Mr. de Rainneville, I think as you do that we must not break with him, even if we seem far separated from one another. My last answer to a recent letter written about my observations does not bring us closer together at all.

By the arrangements which you have to make use of, whether with the professors or with the pupils, you must notice how much your absences could be harmful to you. You have hardly anyone besides Brother Clouzet who would be able to replace you. Now suppose his indifference and neglect were to take hold of him again! Father Meyer doesn't have as yet enough strength and firmness of character to replace a head superior.

You will say, I beg of you, to George Loetsch to write me a little letter in which he will make his coulpe about his past acts of cowardice until this new year, and in which he will tell me the resolutions he is taking to correct himself of them.

Jules[2] is entirely free. His father is recalling him only in the springtime, to quiet him and to let him have full liberty.

I am sorry for Joseph.[3] Brother Clouzet has spoiled him in the fear of losing him If his leaving is not yet entirely decided upon, you might be able to keep him without compromising your authority. It will not be very difficult for you to recognize his particular weakness.

I had destined Marres, as you know, for Courtefontaine.

A trip to Alsace in fine weather will be very suitable to get definitely settled on the method of teaching, and to have it put into practice in your presence by the heads of the establishments. You will assure yourself in this way, that it is practical and that is about the best we can have. In Alsace, there is a difficulty which is not found elsewhere, that of the two languages, French and German. I imagine that in the method, you have talked about the reading of Latin. When I speak of the method, I do not understand only primary teaching but also the behavior of the pupils and the kind of civility and politeness that are necessary to the children of ordinary people. I understand also the teaching of the catechism and the introduction of the sentiments of piety by this teaching of the catechism, graded according to the age and mind of the children. I noticed that the heads of the establishments in the South, and with all the more reason their subaltern confreres,

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[1] See Letter 490.
[2] Chaminade, nephew of the Founder.
[3] Joseph Bourgeois, chief cook in the establishment.

had very little tact for bringing piety into their catechism explanations, and that they did not know how to put all within reach or comprehension of the smallest children, and to draw from it the practice of religion and morality. As regards the method of the normal school, it is very easy for you to assure yourself of its goodness, and to see what might be lacking, be it in the matter of teaching, of the behavior of the candidates, or of the instruction of religion to be received and passed on to others. It will be good that Brother Gaussens, before coming to Bordeaux, passes some days in St. Remy, that you put into his hands the copies of all the methods, that he understands them well and knows how to use them. I shall read them, but I don't believe there will be any need for my making any observations about them. I shall be able to authorize them and even to order their use. I have already notified Brother Gaussens about this.

Brother Gaussens seemed to me to understand rather little about what a normal school run by the Society of Mary should be, and to be almost entirely occupied with the progress of students in their schoolwork, and too little concerned in having the candidates learn to control the children and to train them to piety and virtue. If there were question only of instructing them, it wouldn't be worthwhile giving ourselves so much trouble. Teachers of writing and teachers of mathematics will not be lacking in France, at least for a very long time. Care will have to be taken that Brother Clouzet understands all the methods well so that in his visits, he may be able to judge if they are being followed.

I have not yet received, my dear son, other news than what you gave me regarding the proposition made by Father Bardenet.[1] For many years, the distinction has existed among the Daughters of Mary; the novitiate of the Mothers and Assistants is in Bordeaux, whilst that of the Sister companions is in Agen. Up to the present, it has not been possible to follow the same order in the North of France. I shall reflect upon this project until it is brought up to me for discussion. Nor have I had, so far, any information regarding Brother Clouzet's mission in Rheinackern. Write to me and tell me all about this abbey, its position, condition, etc. . . .

I am now ending this long letter, my dear son, in giving all my children at St. Remy a very special blessing on this occasion of the new year, and distinguishing you among them, as their head and as one of my older sons. I am embracing you and pressing you interiorly to my heart. Take courage!

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To Brother Clouzet, Father Chaminade expresses himself still more completely on the reasons which oblige the Society to the strictest economy.

[1] Relative to an establishment of the Daughters of Mary in the abbey of Acey.

496 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 4, 1830

How I pity you, my dear son, to be traveling in such an inclement and rigorous season! I imagine that in Alsace the cold is not less severe than in our southern provinces. Nevertheless, take due precautions and don't in any way expose your health. Stop at St. Hippolyte or in Colmar in case there is any danger in traveling.

I cannot say anything to you about Rheinackern until I shall have received some letter from you. . . . You must have received a letter from Father Lalanne, telling you about the purchase that Father Bardenet had just made of a superb abbey in the Department of the Doubs.[1] Father Lalanne told you about the desire of Father Bardenet that the Sisters of Rheinackern be sent to this abbey. But things are not done in this way. Nevertheless, it is possible that you will not succeed in making the little convent of Rheinackern independent of Mr. Fritsch as regards the temporal order, and that the good God has taken care of this resource in a way to compensate the sisters for their griefs, and for the meager success of their zeal. I shall decide on nothing until I have been well informed about everything.

Lately, Father Lalanne wrote me a long letter in which he placed before me: 1. the reasons he had for suppressing the novitiate; 2. the necessity of having sleeping quarters for the boarders made out of the garrets of the château; 3. the great utility there would be in going to pass some time in Paris; 4. the pressing need there is for buying physics instruments. I am having a copy of the very long answer I gave him passed over to you, and this for your personal direction.

My dear son, in every establishment let there be no expenses made except such as are needed to maintain it as it should be. I would be very glad if the folks in St. Remy were obliged to make new dormitories, in the garrets or elsewhere, but not provisionally. Let us await the need for it as has been done in Soreze and in every place where there have been prudent men at the head of the establishments. Why would anyone want to do what has been done at the St. Marie boarding school, on Menuts Street, but more particularly on Mirail Street? If we are not yet drowned, it is surely an effect of the mercy of God, but the annoying consequences of the acts of imprudence and disobedience will forever be incalculable.

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[1] The abbey of Acey, located between Gray and Besançon, Department of the Jura and not of the Doubs, was a former Cistercian monastery of the twelfth century and secularized by the Revolution. Father Bardenet acquired it in 1829 and offered it to Father Chaminade who transferred it in 1830 to the little community of Rheinackern. The Daughters of Mary opened there a boarding school which prospered until 1853. This community and school were then transferred to Lons-le-Saulnier and the abbey was retaken by the community of Cistercians.

I am writing by this same mail to Mrs. Perrin.[2] I am telling her that she will be able to arrange with you as regards the tuition of her son and the money advanced to him so far. I shall send you his bill as soon as I learn you are in St. Remy.

The soonest possible, you will pass over to me all the money you may have received for the diverse subjects who came to Bordeaux, and you will add to it all that will be possible for you. Father Rothéa, in St. Hippolyte, wants to have the satisfaction to pass over to me directly all that he will have been able to spare. There is no drawback at all in letting him have this satisfaction, or his brother for that matter, who is head of the establishment in Colmar, but that does not prevent you from regulating everything with them. In spite of all the sums that I have had passed over to Bordeaux, Father Caillet had left a number of bills which he was not able to pay. Independently of the considerable sums needed for the maintenance of the Bordeaux establishments, and of the general expenses I have to make, as for example, for the trips of subjects, etc., I have considerable capital to pay or to reimburse in the near future, one for instance, of 10,000 francs, heavy interests, etc.

Would you permit yourself to say, my dear son: "But when will all this end? It is very disagreeable!" What do you wish me to answer? It is not possible to assign any definite time when all this will end, for that is in the hands of the good Lord. Things get to a certain point when they can end only by a special and, as it were, a miraculous dispensation of Providence. I am awaiting this time with confidence and, in the meantime, I do what depends upon me to keep things going, so as not to be tempting the Lord. "But, why have things gone even this far?" All the loans, my dear son, have been based and calculated on reliable enough resources. The stubbornness of Brother Auguste has taken away the biggest part of these. He gets himself all confused, in spite of the fact that I have left all his means in his own hands. The boarding school has decreased by one third this year, and perhaps even more than that in the matter of fees. Nothing can open his eyes. I shall be able to remove him by force reasonably only if I have first freed myself, when I shall be in a position to free him and to have a subject fit to run a boarding school.

I am sharing with you, my dear son, a great part of the bitter grief that I am experiencing. I am opening my heart to you much more so than I could do it in regard to anyone else, but it is not to worry you, but just that you may see what severity we have to put into our administration. Each one of the heads is interested only in what concerns his establishment, whereas concerted action is necessary, an intimate union of views and interests, and joined to an entire confidence in God.

I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, in whatever part my letter reaches you most closely. May the peace of God be ever with you!

P.S. This letter, my dear son, was finished when yours written from St. Remy, without a date, arrived. I am not sorry that you were not able to reach a conclusion with Mr. Fritsch,

[2] Mother of a postulant.

for all the reasons you gave and many others besides. The difficulty will be to evacuate Rheinackern quietly. There is no need for hurry, since Father Liebermann is of the opinion that we should still delay. I am going to write to him, so as not to miss anyone and to be in accord with established principles.

I am not sending you a copy of the long letter I wrote to Father Lalanne, but it is possible that he has already communicated it to you. Whatever the case may be, let there be no repairs for expansion; no objection when they are for maintenance. I said nothing to you in St. Remy about the expenses you were making to dispose of what you call my room and about those also that you were making around the well in the middle of the yard, but I was saying to myself in secret: the good God is punishing him. Nothing can be of service, neither for me nor for His Excellency, the Archbishop. These expenses would have been suitable enough, if we were not so deeply involved in debt. Let us make the effort, my dear son, to draw ourselves out of such embarrassment. The good God will come to our assistance, no doubt about it, but let us tempt not.

Try to send to Courtefontaine another subject, one that is truly religious, who could help Chauty in taking care of the garden, etc. . . . You must send him decently clothed. Such little defects in the taking of due precautions, often enough, do not fail to do a lot of harm. Father Rothéa left St. Remy with a torn cassock. In Arbois one had to be lent to him, then in Alsace, in the places where he was stopping, and especially in his own family, etc. . . . It is not Father Rothéa who complained. . . . All appears to be going well in Courtefontaine. There are 16 candidates for the normal school and six others whom the rector of the Academy of Besançon is to send.

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The embarrassing circumstances in the midst of which Father Chaminade is living do not prevent him from continuing his great projects, and it seems that his zeal has grown in proportion as the difficulties increase. See the following letter to Father Lalanne.

497 – TO FATHER LALANNE, GRAY

Bordeaux, January 15, 1830

Although one of the last ones to arrive, my dear son, I am immediately answering your letter and I am going to send you on a mission to Paris, but not precisely for the motives you have indicated to me. All your reasons, good in themselves, seem feeble to me for an absence of considerable length and at such a great distance. And what if we added this disagreeable time of the year? In general, we are all to look upon our presence in our respective posts as obligatory, with the result that only very strong reasons may dispense us from this view. To this end, I shall observe to you that, often alternating with Brother Clouzet or he often replacing you with the authority of superior, you agree well enough, so that what one does the other does not undo. I wrote this to Brother Clouzet the other day.

These frequent changes and such different ways of doing things are far from producing the good of the establishment. Let us come to the facts.

In the paper of last December 19th, I read a circular of the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction to the Reverend Rectors of the Academies, which seemed to me written up in an excellent spirit. His Excellency seemed to interest himself in all districts, so that they might be provided with good teachers. First, all he does is to ask them all the information necessary, but the reading of this letter gave me the idea of offering to His Excellency the services of the Society of Mary, in order to supply and equip in the different Departments, normal schools of primary education, and that if the project seemed acceptable to him or rather if he put real interest into it, following his order, I would come to him or send him someone of the Society fully qualified to treat this matter with him. Two or three days after writing to Mr. O'Lombel, I gave him the commission of seeing His Excellency, the Minister, and the better to explain himself, he should copy the article of my letter concerning this matter and to present this writing to him. Several days later, I indicated to Mr. O'Lombel a priest in Paris very much devoted to primary teaching, to ask him to present himself to the Minister, and if he should find some difficulty, to present himself. I have, as yet, not gotten any kind of answer from Mr. O'Lombel. This is strange, because he already owed me several letters on matters of great consequence and importance. A short time ago, speaking with the President de Saget, I let him know about the little proposition I had made to the Minister. He assured me of all his good intentions. He is his friend or at least they are well acquainted with one another. Mr. de Saget refused to replace him in Lyons as Procurator General, believing he could do a lot more good in the royal court of Bordeaux. *Transeat*.

You now see, my dear son, the object of your mission in Paris. It is to present yourself as my delegate to His Excellency the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction, and to explain well to him the system of normal schools run by the Society of Mary as an almost infallible means of regenerating in a few years, more than three-fourths of society in general, the teaching of letters and of religion given to the young men who intend to run schools in the country places, the cares which are taken in the establishments to reform the old schoolteachers and to render uniform the behavior and the teaching of the pupils.

If His Excellency puts into it a genuine interest, you would acquaint him with the most rapid means of starting this type of schools, and you would immediately tell me about it. The means, presenting themselves at the first glance are: 1. The approbation of the Methods, and their recommendation by all the Rectors of the Academies; 2. The institution of a new normal school with a recommendation to the Prefect of the Department, to the Rector of the Academy under the jurisdiction of which the Department would be, and possibly also, to the bishop or archbishop of the diocese in which it would be started.

There are quite a few dioceses where there are still vast available localities. The Bishop of Beauvais[1] desired a normal school in his diocese before becoming Minister. Father Armand Gignour,[2] superior of the Major Seminary wrote to me that in the diocese some large and suitable localities could easily be found. In the diocese of Agen, there is the former abbey of Layrac, which Mr. Dardy, whom you know, just bought,[1] but who would surely give it to the Society if we repaid what it cost him, or if we put ourselves in his place. Two weeks after the purchase, he was offered 15,000 francs more, which he refused, but he would do for the public good and for the Society what he would not do for some private persons. In how many other dioceses would others be found! But the government would have to be interested.

The big difficulty that could be brought up would be that the Society hasn't enough subjects. That is true, but, at the same time, one, two, three . . . would be in the process of being formed, each one of the schools well sustained, favored by the University, would present, on the whole, subjects who would be very apt for formation in some one of our establishments and that, in this way, we could employ successively and we would start establishments only in proportion as we would have subjects.

At the time during which you will be dealing with the Minister, there will be intervals when you might fulfill the intentions you had on the matter of going to Paris, but you must always be careful to make the least expense possible, without however refusing to yourself what is suitable and necessary. If there are inconveniences in regard to your lodging with Mr. O'Lombel, you could lodge with the Foreign Missions. I advise you to buy very few physics instruments. It is possible that you may make a lucky find, some good electric machine for example, a good air pump, or some other instrument among those it is most difficult to replace that would serve the young people to give an idea of the old and modern discoveries. When I learn that you are in a position to leave, I shall not fail to write to you continually in Paris, to profit to the utmost by the short stay you will be making there.

I have always desired that in the normal schools, be they for boarding or day pupils, there be a consistent and well-attended course in religion. In general, our young professors understand by the teaching of religion, the teaching of piety. It seems to me, this teaching must be of piety and also of the catechism: 1. the catechism is generally taught and explained quite well, be it in the small schools or in the normal schools; 2. in the normal

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[1] Bishop Feutrier (1785-1830) bishop of Beauvais, 1825, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, replacing Bishop Frayssinous in 1828, had the famous Ordinances of June 16, 1828 signed, retired to his diocese at the fall of the Martignac Ministry (1829), and died the following year under the weight of his sorrows and regrets.

[2] Armand Gignour (1799-1878) sodalist of the Madeleine, very devoted spiritual son of Father Chaminade, intimate friend of Father Lalanne, and future bishop of Beauvais (1842). He showed in diverse ways his attachment to the Society of Mary, in particular at the time of the foundation of the orphanage at Merles.

[1] Sodalist in Agen, head of a boarding school section, was involved with the history of the Society in the foundations of Agen and Layrac. It is known that in 1835, Father Lalanne rebought the abbey of Layrac to transfer to it the St. Marie boarding school of Bordeaux.

schools, I would much desire the teaching of the proofs of religion, along with the teaching of the dogmas. There is not enough attention paid to the century in which we are, this century of pretended enlightenment, during which there is no end to reasoning or nonsense talking about religion and all that refers to it. In the first letter that I shall write to you, I shall develop at greater length my ideas on this interesting subject.

I was always awaiting a letter from Father Bardenet. There is no evidence at all that the establishment in Rheinackern is taking place and that will make possible the occupation of the abbey bought by Father Bardenet. Still we must wait a few more days, and it is greatly to be presumed that our religious Sisters will fall back from Rheinackern to the abbey of Acey. . . .

I am stopping here and wishing you the best of all years for time and eternity and for body and soul.

* * * *

The following letters contain encouragement for the économes and exhortations to charity.

498 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 20, 1830

I have received, my dear son, your letter of the 9th of the current month with all those you tell me in it you have written. I answered all promptly under the address of Father Lalanne, principal of the College of Gray, in Gray. I shall do whatever I can and as soon as I can, regarding what you tell me about St. Hippolyte. . . .

Father Chevaux has written on the 12th about all the trouble the letter of Father Meyer caused you. That is a rash act or one of desperation, a moment of bad temper, over which he may have repented a few hours later. I shall write him a few words, as I shall to Father Chevaux whom you seem to like a great deal. Let the whole matter be dropped. That is the best and shortest course to follow. It is the fate of all the économes and official trustees always to be blamed. That was the case before the Revolution and has been so ever since.[1] In Agen, Mother St. Vincent, who was économe until the death of Mother de Trenquelléon, was always the object of the murmurs and complaints on the part of the best Sisters, and, nevertheless, when there was some foundation to be made, all of them always begged of me to leave her in Agen, which I was always glad to do.

[1] We remember that before the Revolution, Father Chaminade had fulfilled for several years, the functions of official trustee or économe of the Collège of Mussidan. Thus, he was talking from experience.

When failings on the part of subordinates are pointed out to you, you will do well to take them into consideration, or even to seem to do so. In the big houses, some objections almost always arise. I have understood that Joseph is always at his post and that is fine. Brother Marres could easily be put in his place, but do not give the appearance of sustaining or excusing him, etc. Recall, my dear son, what our Lord used to say to his Apostles: “You will possess your souls in patience.” May the peace of the Lord be always with you!

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499 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 20, 1830

My dear son: I have written to Brother Clouzet in order to quiet him over the letter which Father Meyer wrote to him. Brother Clouzet told me nothing about it, as his letter had another object. Father Meyer was guilty of an imprudence and it was, doubtless, in a moment of bad humor. You might easily have been able to stop all that, if as the result of the information that Brother Clouzet came to give you about this letter, you had told him that Father Meyer had gotten all excited and that you were taking it upon yourself to bring him back to solid reason and common sense, etc. . . .

I am being told from St. Remy that you are doing too much, that you are not taking good enough care of your health. Take care of your health and do not overtax your strength. I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

500 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 30, 1830

. . . I have just received the answer to the note presented to the Minister by Mr. O'Lombel on the subject of normal school establishments in all the different Departments of France. The Minister answered Mr. O'Lombel that he knew nothing of the Society of Mary and that, on the other hand, he would favor all the establishments of normal schools asked for by the bishops and prefects. All passed in a honest enough manner. Mr. O'Lombel doesn't think he has the qualities that I thought he had. If he really wants the good of France, especially, if he wanted to regenerate at least three-fourths of its population, it would not be difficult to have him know, on the one hand, the Society of Mary, and on the other, that the establishment of normal schools, in the sense that we understand the term is the surest and fastest means to bring about this regeneration. I say the fastest, provided the government puts genuine and active interest into it, and not simply one of mere tolerance or permission. . . .

Let us take courage, my dear son, and let us recall without ceasing, the memory of the Good Master for whom we are working, and sometimes even think of the crown which he destines for his faithful servants.

* * * *

The affair of Rheinackern has reached its conclusion. Father Chaminade decides to abandon the work and to transfer to Acey the little Community of the Daughters of Mary.

501 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, February 3, 1830

My dear son: I am sending by this same mail, an obedience to Brother Rothéa for our six Sisters in Rheinackern, to have them go to the old abbey of Acey. I am sending it to Brother Rothéa to hasten or delay the departure, according to the counsel he might receive from the pastor of Colmar, from Father Liebermann, or from the episcopal palace in Strasbourg, etc. I was not able to lay out for Brother Rothéa the route they will have to follow. Perhaps you will do well to notify him and to trace it out for him very rapidly. It would seem to me, you would have to take the stagecoach from Strasbourg to Besançon and that you, going to Besançon for this purpose, would have them conducted or you would conduct them yourself to their destination. When you would be sure of their departure from Rheinackern, you would give notice of it to Father Bardenet.

I take it for granted that Acey is sufficiently prepared and furnished to receive six religious sisters. . . .

It is possible that I shall have to write to you in a few days as regards a new establishment. Our worries and embarrassment, far from discouraging us must ceaselessly reanimate our interest in the work undertaken, that we sincerely believe to be the work of God. We must consider ourselves sufficiently rewarded by the honor which God confers on us by choosing us, and by the means which he gives us to show him our love and our fidelity. I was somewhat grieved to see you a bit disconcerted by the letter which Father Meyer wrote to you. I am embracing you very tenderly.

* * * *

Nevertheless, Father Lalanne left for Paris, according to the orders of his superior. There, he is almost immediately met by a letter containing detailed instructions and which starts with an admirable profession of faith and confidence in the conduct of Providence.

502 – TO FATHER LALANNE, PARIS

Bordeaux, February 15, 1830

My dear son: I received your little letter telling me of your departure from Gray, and yesterday I got all your messages from Paris. . . .

I am going to answer the two questions you ask. What is the amount of our debt? What are our means for liquidating it?

To answer the first, I would only have to make an addition, and I have not as yet forgotten my mathematics to the extent of no longer being able to make an addition. I am not making it, as much from a motive of a kind of natural fear as from divine Providence.

I am answering the second question. My means of covering my immense deficits, the extent of which I see only imperfectly, are: 1. Some little means already acquired; 2. Strict economy in all of our establishments; 3. Some little casual funds coming to the Brothers and Sisters; 4. The most positive means is an unshakable confidence in divine Providence.

All our debts result from two principal causes. The first, the enterprises undertaken, so to speak, by the orders of Providence or, at least, to enter into views that we consider to be those of Providence and, in that case we can assume Providence to be responsible. The second cause, the imprudences, the acts of temerity and self-conceit of some of our heads. The two great places for these expenses, or rather for these inconsiderate debts, are Bordeaux and Agen, although some other places are not to be excluded. Will the good God chastise the entire Society for the faults of certain ones of its principal members never having had the consent, neither of the Superior of the Society, nor still less of the Society itself?

But the debts contracted in the views of Providence may well have no other foundation than a presumptuous imagination. I am very far from maintaining the contrary. Furthermore, I am also thoroughly persuaded that our confidence should be of the humblest. The other expenses imprudently made, although they are not made following the advice of the Superior, may easily be imputed to him up to a certain point because of his not having had enough vigilance and firmness. And, nevertheless, however guilty we may be in all the causes that have built up this huge deficit, we render ourselves still more guilty if we lack an entire confidence in making use, with all the wisdom of which we are capable, of the little means we have or might have.

Let us conclude from these observations, my dear son, that there is great need for us, in the situation in which we find ourselves: 1. To fall back on a strict but wise economy; 2. Not to make any expenses other than those required by the necessity of maintaining the works which we have begun or of new works which divine Providence would clearly ask us; 3. To remain ever distrustful of all the improvements and changes in our works, seen solely from the viewpoint of human reasoning and considerations of personal interest. Brother Clouzet tells me that in the purchase of physics instruments, you are planning to use only your savings of the Collège of Gray. See, my dear son, if even this might not be too much. . . .

As regards Mr. O'Lombel, explain to me in your next letter the mystery of his strict silence on the most interesting and, at times, the most urgent affairs. If after a month and more he takes up his pen, it is with such speed and even evasiveness that all suffer from it.

In the first place, I believe that he is disconcerted over the fact that not one of the subjects presented by him is succeeding in our hands and still causes us quite a bit

of expense. Then, he seems to be altogether given over to the mission, undertaken by Father de Solages[1] and to be sorry that I have not taken a more active part in it; and thirdly, he is also sorry that we find it impossible to come to an understanding with Mr. de Rainneville. He has never given me any reason or motive for his silence. Last year, the same was the case and even worse.

You do not tell me where you are lodging in Paris. In writing the last time to Father de Solages, I promised him that having arrived in Paris, you would go to present him your greetings and mine. I haven't the time to relate to you the long story of a young Alsatian ecclesiastic whom he sent to me to prepare him for the mission of the islands of the South Pacific. I kept him here for about three months. The Grand Hostelry was supposed to pay his board. I brought it down to only 400 francs. I advanced the money for his trip from Bordeaux to Paris. I wrote to Mr. O'Lombel that I would write a money order on him for 200 francs. No answer. If Mr. O'Lombel tells you all that I said to him about the young ecclesiastic, you will soon be up to date as regards the reasons which made me return him to Father de Solages in the interests of all parties concerned, and above all, in those of the young ecclesiastic himself.

It is now surely time to take up what I very particularly desire of you in Paris. And first, you know that Father Rothéa was provided in St. Remy with a certificate of Boarding School Master. I would want that you procure from His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction, the transfer of this certificate to St. Hippolyte, and below, the indications, the names, and the dates. St. Hippolyte is mainly a boarding normal school of primary teaching, but, in the boarding school are also received some pupils who are able to learn at the same time as writing and arithmetic the Latin elements. Also among the pupils of the Society in the boarding normal school, there is always someone found to whom the elements of the Latin language and of the French language must be comparatively taught. To avoid all suspicion of resentment or of anxiety, I thought it prudent to ask for the transfer of the certificate of Father Rothéa to St. Hippolyte. I notified the rector of the Strasbourg Academy about all, for he has always shown great devotedness towards the Society of Mary. He wrote to me telling me to ask His Excellency directly for the transfer of the certificate. For the presentation of this request, I was awaiting your presence in Paris.

[1] Father de Solages, Vicar-General of Pamiers, had been named on his own request in 1830, Prefect Apostolic of the Islands of the South Seas, that is to say Bourbon, Madagascar, and Oceania. He arrived in St. Denis from the Reunion, then called Bourbon Island, with his compatriot, Father Dalmond. He again left for Madagascar with a catechist and a servant. The catechist, sick, went back to the Island of Bourbon. The servant died. Father de Solages continued his route to Tananarivo. At Andevoranto, fever laid him low, and upon an order from Tananarivo, he was left to die, alone and without nourishment in a miserable hut, a victim of his own charity.

Let us now come to the direct and decisive object of our mission in Paris. I have had occasion to know Reverend Guernon-Ranville, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction, by the praises made of him to me by President de Saget. He assured me that once the Minister got to know the Society of Mary and the work of the normal schools of primary teaching, most certainly he would protect and extend them. According to an interview with Mr. O'Lombel and a short extract from one of my letters, he has surely promised to protect all the normal schools that would be formed after the requests of our Lords, the Bishops and the Prefects, adding besides, that he did not yet know the Society of Mary.

If the Government did not put into it any other interest, this great means of reforming the morals and the spirit of the French would be without effect, it would never stop the progress of evil, which grows worse each day, and which can end only by ruining the monarchy and the Catholic religion. His Excellency, the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and Public Instruction, has very surely sounded the depth of the evil. He knows of it better than we. There is then question only of convincing him of the importance and efficacy of the remedy, and in the second place, of having him understand that the remedy must be coextensive with the evil, that is to say, that normal schools would be headed in almost all the Departments of France, or at least one in the extent of jurisdiction of the University Academies, because one normal school well run and well equipped may answer the needs of two or three Departments.

And again, here is my line of argument. The ordinary people make up more than three-fourths of the population of France, consequently, the means that would give to all of a rising generation a real education, could automatically change the mind and morals of the greater part of France. Now, the normal schools, such as they are understood by the Society of Mary, reform the old schoolteachers and form new ones, well qualified to give everywhere this solid education, which the children keep, for the most part, into their more advanced years. The efficacy of this education of the children of the people has been proved in proving the efficacy of the instruction of the candidates in the normal schools, and also by the reform of the old or former schoolteachers in the matter of their manner of teaching, as in that of their moral and Christian conduct. The goodness and correctness of our methods must be proved, either by the conduct or by the instruction of learning of the candidates. Especially must the instruction in religion be weighed and estimated. It must be adapted to the spirit of the century and to the position of the schoolteachers. This must, furthermore, be proved by the means of the annual retreats, by the manner in which they are given by the Society, or by the extent of the reform wrought in the old teachers. Many of these have just been replaced by younger ones already formed. The course of studies of all kinds for the candidates is to last three years with but few exceptions, mainly with such as enter having a kind of half-formation to their credit.

We shall have to work, my dear son, at the various courses of instruction in religion, which will serve both for the day normal schools as for the boarding normal schools, although the other subjects of instruction must in no way be neglected.

It would be necessary to write up a little memorandum, one well supported by facts, so as to open the eyes of everyone on this practically unfailing means. We are not saying that there are no other means of reform, for as you very well know, the Society itself has some, but she claims it is one of the greatest means, one of the most prompt in its good results, and this is one of the reasons which has led it to devote itself especially to primary teaching as indicated in its statutes, authorized by His Majesty. My dear son, work at this little memorandum, based on all the ideas we have known about these normal schools, on the methods and also on the plans of instruction in religion, which we know well enough by this time to give them great perfection.

The principal objection that may be made to you is the small number of subjects sufficiently trained that the Society can present for the formation of normal schools. But it is evident that in a small enough number of years, we would have progressively trained enough for the establishment everywhere of these schools.

I am stopping here, so as not to delay the sending of this first letter. If the plan is adopted, if the Minister strongly manifests the desire that the bishops, the Prefects and the rectors of the Academies work at equipping these schools directed by the Society of Mary, we shall develop still more whatever might have need of development. We shall busy ourselves with it without respite. I am embracing you tenderly and I wish you the peace of the Lord.

* * * *

We cannot help admiring in all this correspondence the practical mind and courageous perseverance of Father Chaminade. "With the support of governmental benevolence," writes to this purpose Brother G. Goyau, "the Society of Mary was undertaking a work which, property speaking, had no precedents, and in the collaboration which was taking shape between the young society and the Restoration Government, it was the Society which was taking the lead. . . . Thanks to Father Chaminade, at least during a fleeting hour, an era seemed to be being inaugurated during which the high intellectual formation of the teachers would have been managed and planned by the initiative of the Church, with a confident generosity."[1]

503 – TO FATHER LALANNE, PARIS

Bordeaux, February 22, 1830

. . . On the 20th of the present month, that is to say the day before yesterday, there appeared in the paper an Ordinance of the king, provoked by the Minister of Ecclesiastical

[1]"Chaminade, Founder of the Marianists, His Religious and Scholastic Action," *Correspondent*, 1913, article reproduced in *Precurseurs*, Paris, Perrin.

Affairs and Public Instruction, on the subject of the institution of primary schools in all the districts, and of model schools at least in all the provinces of the rectorates. The most effective precautions seem to be taken to supply the money for the expenses of both types of schools. This ordinance is being issued in a very fine spirit, and it is this same fine spirit which seemed to me to prevail in a circular of the Reverend Rectors of the Academies on the same subject, and which obliged me to write immediately so as to have the offer of the services of the Society of Mary present to His Excellency. If you are not acquainted with this ordinance, it must be procured for you, which is easy enough to do.

In spite of the goodness of the ordinance, I presume that its effect will not take place and that it will come to nothing, as so many others: 1. Because great agitations are to be feared; 2. Because in interesting everybody, the Prefects and the Rectors, through a lack of unity, little progress will be made; 3. Many means are being taken so that there will be no lack of money, which is already a lot, but who will choose the teachers to be placed in the country places? What precautions are being taken for the reformation of the old or former schoolteachers? Who will direct the model schools? I imagine that these model schools are what we call normal schools, although there must be a very great difference between them. I would like very much, for example, that alongside of a normal school, a model school could be established. In vain, will schools and teachers be multiplied, if these schools are not well directed, if these teachers are not well trained. Doubtless, in the views of His Excellency, the rectors and inspectors do not all have the same views, nor the same zeal. . . . Nowhere are the good methods of teaching well determined, and still less, the methods regarding the behavior of the pupils in the little schools, and of the candidates in the normal schools.

The normal school of Strasbourg is the most distinguished, as well as the most praised of its kind. Since more than three years, the rector of the Academy praised it to me in the highest terms. These praises were repeated in Strasbourg by the most distinguished persons of the city. Last August, I asked the rector to accompany me there. I shall not enumerate here the great number of defects that I found in this famous school. In going out, the Reverend Rector thanked me for the questions I asked and for the observations I had made to the director of the school. In reading the ordinance, you will find other similar observations. If I had it before me at the present moment, I would have reread it, but it seems to me that you are in a happy situation, for you are in a position to write up very clear and well reasoned accounts of conditions are they are. If there is good will, as I like to think that there is, you will succeed in determining the kind of normal school and institutions of little schools in the sense understood and presented by the Society of Mary.

You will, above all, have to work at a method of teaching religion to the candidates of the normal schools. This is the article that must interest you most of all. What would the end be of all our labors, all our solicitude in establishing normal schools, if really the schoolteachers are not sufficiently instructed in religion and if, well instructed, they neither like nor practice it? I am saying if they do not practice it from their hearts. I take it for granted that candidates are kept for three years. In Strasbourg, they are kept four years. The

course in religion may be divided into three parts, one for each year, but these three parts are related only to the proofs of religion. We are in a century in which everybody is called upon to reason or to talk nonsense, even the simple country peasants and the housemaids of the cities. All your normal school candidates must become little logicians, and even something of metaphysicians. They must know all the sources of human knowledge and truths. To shorten matters and to communicate my entire idea to you in Paris get yourself the work entitled, *The Principles of Sound Philosophy Conciliated with Those of Religion*, or *The Philosophy of Religion*, by the author of *The Theology of Sensible Beings*, 2 volumes.[1] This work is becoming rare, but if you can't find any place to buy it, you will surely find it in the different libraries. Half of the second volume of this work includes three discourses which contain all that there is to be known about the proofs of religion. In these schools, one would be explained each year, as would be done with regard to an author in a class. Those who would have greater talent and more ability would learn these discourses by heart. All the rest of the work indicated would give place to all the explanations that would have to be given. In it would be found the principles of reasoning and instruction concerning all the facts, the knowledge of which would be necessary. You have different works, more recent no doubt and very solid, but of which the development is not as didactic and as adapted to teaching for young people coming from the country, who know nothing and have never reasoned about themselves nor about anything that surrounds them.

Some years ago for the Sodalities of young people, I would have followed a somewhat different approach. I would have followed the work called "Analysis of the Faith," in which it is proved that only the Catholic faith can stand an exact analysis. It poses eight principles, each one dependent upon the other, which take in the entire deposit of the Catholic faith. From the last principle, the author comes down to the first, as from the first he goes up to the eighth. This development does not dispense from giving the preliminary notions, because one must always bear in mind that the young people often do not even understand the words that are used in explaining things to them, etc. . . .

I have no intention of telling you to follow this or that method, but a method is needed, one well adapted to achieve the end we have in view. If you are well settled on a method sufficiently clear and well developed, you will be just the right man to have His Excellency understand the goodness of the plans which I would want to have him adopt as a most efficacious means for stopping the progress of evil in our beautiful but unhappy country.

By the letter which you wrote to Mr. Pommez, I understand that you got to see Father de Solages, and that he and Mr. O'Lombel have initiated you in the vast enterprise of the Mission of the South Sea Islands. I did not think I was to take any active part in it, as you may have been able to notice from my first letter. If you can be in any way of service to this

[1] By Father Francis Para de Phanjas, SM (1724-97). This work was reprinted in the Evangelical Demonstrations of Migne.

work, of course don't hesitate to assist in any way you can, but don't let yourself be absorbed by it for it is something very secondary to what has brought you to Paris.

I shall stop my letter here. It may be that before it leaves, I shall have received the answer to my letter of the 15th. May the peace of the Lord be with you always!

P. S. 1. Kind greetings to Mr. O'Lombel, to his lady and to his eldest daughter. Tell Mr. O'Lombel especially that I love him well, but that I do not like his long silence above all without being apprised of his intention to keep it. 2. I am sure, my dear son, you did not think that I intended to omit religious instruction in the course of which I have just spoken to you.

I believe that in all the schools the catechism of the diocese must be learned, but that the subject matter must be explained in a way within the compass of those learning it. It is by these long explanations that a zealous teacher knows how to lead his pupils to the knowledge of piety and to its practice.

* * * *

Here is placed a note of direction to the good Brother Perriguey.

504 – TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, February 26, 1830

My dear son, I received your letter in its own good time. I was a bit astonished that you had passed all your belongings to your parents for 2,000 francs. You do well to rid yourself of such things, and you also do well in benefiting your parents, but nevertheless, prudence must be practiced always and everywhere. In spite of the praiseworthy detachment you have from your parents, nothing must be carried to excess. You must not refuse to correspond sufficiently with them, so as to come to an honest and prudent agreement. Your goods belong to the Lord, and you are at this time their manager, but you must enter into his views and deal with his interests. If you have difficulties, Brother Troffer will provide for you some trustworthy person to consult. Even the superior of the hospital is very wise and intelligent. You were telling me you have received 100 pistoles, which were in the hands of Brother Troffer. He has received sums which come close to that, but which do not amount exactly to 100 pistoles,[1] which seems to mean that you did not give the matter close enough attention.

The more I think of the desire that you have of coming to the Boarding School St. Marie of Bordeaux, and the more traveling time approaches, the more I am anxious about you. I have often examined the motives which make you desire your change, and I always

[1]An old gold coin worth about 100 francs.

find them more and more without solid base. You will be far less lonesome in the boarding school than you are in Besançon, because there are more subjects of dissipation and perhaps even more occasions for sin than in the establishment of which you now form part. In this state of things, I think you will do well in giving up all idea of change, and to sanctify yourself in the place where you are by a real regularity and the constant practice of patience. You have told me all, now wait till the good God lets me know directly that he no longer wants you in Besançon. I have never seen any good coming to those who have chosen their places, in spite of the fact that they had the consent of their superiors.

I charge Brother Troffer with the task of embracing you for me. I am doing it also here with all my heart and wish you the peace of the Lord!

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505 – TO FATHER LALANNE, PARIS

Bordeaux, March 3, 1830

My dear son, I have received your letter of February 22nd. I have just received 24 hours later that of the 25th, with the project regarding the Circular of our Lords, the Bishops. . . .

I am going to follow your letters of February 22nd and 25th, with the exception of the article about which I shall answer you myself. I am losing a lot of time, nursing a heavy cold to which they give the name catarrh.

I am very glad that you ended the affair relative to the institution of St. Remy and to the nomination of Father Meyer. I wish that you would see to it that I get an exact copy of the dispatches which you received about it. At another time, I shall tell you for what intention I am making this request of you. At this time, I shall remind you to have the certificate which Father Rothéa had transferred to the boarding school at St. Remy.

I think that Mr. de Rainneville is very well intentioned. I have never doubted it. All the reflections I have made on the trial prospectus that was sent to me were meant only to show that it was not an effective trial of these orphan agricultural colonies, of which there had only been question, to the exclusion of agricultural trial as of clearing the land. Mr. de Rainneville is, besides, a great agriculturalist, and his visit to St. Remy can have but good results. I know only two of his illustrious associates, the Count of Pont, with whom I had fine talks on the trial plan of Mr. de Rainneville and the Marquis of Nicolai, Peer of France, with whom I also had long talks about matters of religion and conscience, but I doubt very much that these three heads will ever fit into the same bonnet. All three are good Christians, true royalists, very rich, but very impassioned, each in his own way.

I see with pleasure that you have put wisdom and intelligence into the purchase of physics instruments.

Someone who would know how to take and to lead Mr. Latouche would draw great profit from it. He has know-how, experience, zeal, and a certain force of character. He is not much interested, but there is in him a vulnerable point which must always be respected, unless he himself attacks it vehemently. In my position, and to make a real religious of him, I had to make him recognize his trouble, his needs, at the same time as the remedies. Our old quarrel comes from just there. What he has told you, that a confidential letter of his was answered by the hand of a secretary, is but a kind of last stop of which I have been informed by you. To this last circumstance of displeasure, you can tell him that he created for himself too high an idea of the one who then wrote under my dictation, that the hand of a real secretary must not be confounded with that of a young copyist who does not try to penetrate into the interior of things, who does not connect them, who has absolutely no interest in making any application of them, who does not even know for what motive or for what occasion or circumstance he is being dictated such and such a thing. If he had communicated to me this idea that was worrying him, I would have answered what I am answering now. I have answered all the complaints that have come to me from him on the part of others. Tell him that I always love and esteem him, as I loved and esteemed him from the time of our first acquaintance, that he would have done a lot better to tell me himself from the beginning, all that could cause him grief, and that soon all would have been well, instead of telling others and strangers of the facts that he wanted me to know.

I have received a letter from Mr. de Rubelles[1] who was enjoying an entire month of rest at Mr. O'Lombel's home. This young man seems to want to leave the world, and has been looking for retirement in religion for several years. First, it was among the Jesuits, then with us. Faith seems to have very little place in his various movements, for character, natural inclination, disgust for the world, perhaps also the want of a definite status, and also some other idea about religion, seem to be his only incentives to action. Furthermore, he is always undecided, always fearful of not finding in religion what his nature desires. When I left Paris the last time, he was leaving for Fontainebleau by order of the Minister of the Interior, Mr. de la Bourdonnaye. The pastor of Fontainebleau,[2] whom you know very well, complained at that time that he was playing at his house the role of spy. All of this says nothing that is precisely wrong. All we can do is to conclude that we must merely guess at all that concerns him, since he himself does not let himself be known. You tell me that the news has spread that I wanted to make him my secretary. I don't know what could have given rise to this report. I don't even recall ever having had the idea, but I did have the idea of using him as a teacher of the French language. Although he knows German better, I think he could have succeeded. He might even succeed in teaching some music. Anyhow, it seems a bit strong to me to start by making him a teacher of rhetoric. I have somewhat tested his talents, and judge them only by his replies to some questions I asked him on a

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[1] The Knight Adolph de Rubelles, ardent controversialist of the time, directed the *Journal du Bourbonnais* and the *Gazette d'Auvergne*. Locked up by the Government of July, he had just come out when he was killed in a traffic accident (1843).

[2] Father Leautard (1774-1842) founder of Stanislas College (1804). Father Lalanne had passed a year under the direction of Father Leautard with whom he had kept the most friendly relations.

few occasions we happened to be together. I also tried to find out what he amounted to in the matter of religion.

One word more about Mr. de Rubelles. In leaving Paris at the time of my first visit, I confided him to Mr. Hoffmann, Jr., a young doctor, well converted, full of faith, and openly professing his religion. Besides, he is always very busy. Mr. de Rubelles saw him but at intervals too far separated. One would be led to believe he feared the doctor's fervor. The latter had delved into all the delirium and frenzy of modern philosophy, but today he is well capable of giving an account of his faith and does so without the least human respect. If you can win Mr. de Rubelles by sentiments of faith and religion and not only by those of nature and reason, if you can win him before he hands in his resignation and goes to join you in St. Remy, you could strengthen still more the relations between him and Mr. Hoffmann. Mr. O'Lombel will get you acquainted with this young doctor, for he lives in his own neighborhood.

Brother Fernandy is on the way to becoming a good religious. There is, nevertheless, still some weakness in the attachment he has for his parents. . . .

He has a friend, a young assistant pastor of one of the Paris parishes, who has sentiments similar to his own. He led me to him at the time of one of my visits to Paris; he would be a good capture. The pouting of Brother Latouche has done much harm, but not an irremediable harm, because all the wrongs are absolutely on his own side.

I have begun to be mistrustful of the head of Mr. O'Lombel, even before knowing him personally. I have given him hardly any important commission without first taking due precautions, but he has already taken some upon himself several times, and they have all failed. In this, he has caused us great harm. He easily and readily admits his too great precipitation and the indiscretion of his zeal, but in this he is not correcting himself and it is to be presumed that he will never correct himself. He is otherwise so good, so ready to render service, honest almost to a fault, that I have never been able to bring myself to the point of dispensing myself from having recourse to him in some accessory affairs. His zeal and devotedness merit consideration on our part, and even gratitude. It is up to us to make use of his services only with precaution, and to put up with his little pranks. I am saying "little" because we must not put him in a position to pull some off in serious matters. If I had not feared hurting his feelings, we would already have had another correspondent at long time ago. I shall not lose sight of this.

As regards Brother Fernandy and Mr. O'Lombel, I have not heard Mr. R. spoken of since he was sent to you in St. Remy and since I wrote to you to dismiss him. It is Mr. Fernandy who had given him to us.

Young Courtois[1] is quite a mediocre subject. His first education in Paris has been very bad, such as it might have been with a day laborer. In the Boarding School of St. Germain, he had brought himself somewhat into shape. He made his First Communion without knowing too much what is was all about. He came to me in Bordeaux without any previous notification, paying a tuition of 300 francs. I put him in St. Laurent so as to continue to learn what belongs to primary education. Some months after his arrival, he asked me to learn Latin. I consented. He is learning this language along with Greek with considerable facility, but he is being urged on rather vigorously. The same with several others. He is now in his third class. Since the retreat of last October, he is at the Madeleine. After the death of his father last year, at about this time of the year, his mother wrote that she found it impossible to continue paying his tuition at the Seminary of St. Nicholas in Paris. The intentions and the promises of his mother were communicated to him. He was given time for reflection. The young man never hesitated. He felt that if he returned to Paris, he would be lost. I left Bordeaux, leaving him in these sentiments. He has always persevered in them. In these later times, after the formal refusal of his mother to his taking of any engagements in the Society, I was prepared to consent to his return to Paris and had even written of it to Mr. O'Lombel, when the young man came to beg of me the favor of keeping him, assuring me that he had entirely devoted himself to the service of the Society of Mary. The young man has only ordinary piety but has a good character, nothing of a decisive nature in regard to the ecclesiastical state, either in his personal tastes or in his talents. His manners are of the ordinary kind. He has very thick lips, small eyes, he is much pockmarked, very nearsighted having an almost constant need of spectacles, but he is otherwise of a rather fine build. Following his protests, I told him that he could be employed on trial in the schools, that it was to be presumed that his mother would not have him taken by the police in the various places to which he might be sent, and that in this way, little by little, he would attain his majority. The young man contented himself with my answer. He wrote to his mother, let her know of his last sentiments and told her he would patiently await the sending of her consent at the time she would judge it apropos, that she could not order him to take on the ecclesiastical habit, this state calling for a divine vocation. Things are still in the same uncertain state, the young man is studying, he is content. I have not yet decided about him. You will give your answer to his mother as you will think best. It is greatly to be presumed that the Seminary of St. Nicholas will not bother a long time about him, if even he is admitted. In that case, the young man is lost. In remaining in the Society, he can realize his salvation, but the Society will never have in him a valuable subject, and if he cannot get to the point of holding a class by reason of the weakness of his eyesight, he will always be a cause for new expenses by way of finding a place suitable for him, but anyhow, since we have already done so much and the young man has done nothing to make himself unworthy of it, we can afford to let things ride.

The Baron can count on three good Brothers in the course of the summer and when he will retire to his country home. You know as well as I all that the Brothers need in their establishment, but what you may not be thinking about is: 1. The traveling expenses and

[1] Another postulant sent by Mr. O'Lombel.

the cost of the new habit, all of which could run up to 600 francs; 2. A small supply of body linen, bed and table linen, that is to say six new shirts for each one, 18 to 20 in all, three pairs of sheets for each one, nine pairs in all, at least two dozen towels; 3. A little supply of firewood each year; 4. A small allowance for medicines and apothecary supplies. All that is furnished always remains in the establishment when the Brothers are changed; they never take along anything belonging to the establishment they are leaving; 5. The salary is paid in advance, by quarters or by thirds. I am not speaking of small kitchen utensils, since the house is furnished. I am speaking only of what might be overlooked.[1]

I now come, my dear son, to your message of February 25th. You were right in believing that a memorandum would have been better than mere notes, or at least if you had written the notes in such a way as to be easily translatable by yourself into something like a memorandum, and when the explanations of the notes would have had their effect to be left as a recollection. The memorandum to be given would not have been read at the first hearing. It was a case, in handing it in, of making it only a quick and energetic summary, and of asking for another reading after His Excellency would have weighed the whole thing in the balance of his wisdom. The same memorandum to Mr. Rendy in such a way that he himself would be well convinced, in case he should be consulted by the Minister.

There was not a question of asking for a privilege. It being much better that the Brothers of St. Joseph and of St. Von be able to offer normal schools, the projected reform would have been more rapid. We could even have had an understanding with them. France is plenty big enough, so that different bodies can make the most of its advantages. The approbation of the Methods of the Society of Mary for normal schools is what is being asked for, as much for the need as for the suggestions of willingness to conform to it.

According to your interview, you seem to believe that it would be suitable to send a circular to our Lords, the Bishops, and you send me the proposed plan. You thought that for the prefects and the academy rectors, a well reasoned prospectus would be less pretentious than a memorandum, and you are right. I would have wanted a memorandum only for the Minister and for some other personage who might be able to influence him. The memorandum, as I understand it, would put us at enmity with every liberal party, if it were well known.[1] It is not the memorandum that the Minister would have approved, but rather a prospectus, quite short, which would have given to the Society of Mary the means of forming normal schools according to such and such a plan, such and such a method, without any prejudice to other societies, which might furnish subjects imbued with the same spirit as the Society of Mary, and well qualified to carry out its plans and its methods.

But to come back to the actual state of this affair, I am saying: 1. That the sending of a circular to all our Lords, the Archbishops and Bishops, and the sending of a well thought

[1] We do not have any other indication about this foundation project, which without doubt failed with many others at the time of the Revolution in July.
[1] If it happened to become known.

out prospectus to all the prefects of Departments and to the rectors of the academies—such things sent would draw too much attention to the Society of Mary. In regard to the University, we must comport ourselves with great modesty and circumspection, and we must not suppose that the University, taken as a whole, has the same views and the same intentions, which I suppose has its Grand Master and Minister of Public Instruction; 2. Such things sent, would give the impression that the Society of Mary is supplied with a great number of subjects, capable of functioning immediately in a certain number of Departments, which would soon be found out to be untrue; 3. The Ordinance of February 14th will be put into execution hardly anywhere, and that only as long as the actual Minister will remain on the job, and that a fairly big number of changes will have been made among the prefects and the rectors. If we came to stir up, to stimulate things, to have an Ordinance carried out in the midst of these conflicts of plans, systems and perhaps revolutionary movements, we would be very badly understood.

Without needlessly prolonging these reflections, I conclude that a good memorandum, which would demonstrate the need of our normal schools to regenerate the most numerous and the strongest class in the nation would be necessary. From this memorandum, several prospecti could be drawn. A first, which would offer a general idea of the methods of teaching of all that would be taught to the candidates of the normal schools, and it is this one which could be printed and given to anyone in need of it. It is this one which would have the formal approbation and not exclusive of the University. And another prospectus, which would present the method of teaching religion and the manner of forming these candidates in such a way as to make of them men who can attract the esteem and consideration they need to do the good in the districts where they are holding school. A third prospectus would tend to show how primary teaching could be rendered uniform, by the meetings of the older schoolteachers. It is there that the retreats could be talked about, and where the older schoolteachers could be attracted for two weeks. These retreats would produce the double object, first, of rendering teaching uniform, of learning how to control the children, and to instruct them especially in religion, and secondly, of bringing back to virtue and Christianity, those who might need it. Those who would not really change themselves might be easily replaced by candidates already trained.

I am stopping here, so that this long letter may leave by the next mail. While dictating it, I am being continually disturbed. I desire only that you may grasp my ideas well, or rather, the design with which I have been inspired, as regards this subject. Greetings!

* * * *

The continuation of the letter, as Father Chaminade had announced at the beginning, was written in his own hand. From the reading of it, the reason will be easily understood. We know of the proposition of Father Lalanne only by the answer of Father Chaminade.

I am edified, my dear son, by your devotedness and a drop of consolation has entered as far as the depth of my soul. I have never doubted that the Boarding School Ste. Marie has been the principal means of which Providence wanted to make use for the maintenance and development of the budding Society. Neither have I ever doubted about the good dispositions of Brother Auguste. He has just left himself be dragged along: 1. By the insinuations that flatter his self-love; 2. By his weakness of character, joined to an incapacity which he feared could even be suspected; 3. Dragged along and always ready to fall head over heels, he has finished by adopting the most exalted part of the ideas of Brother David, and from there his resistance, I am not saying only to obedience, but to the principles and rights of all human society. But his heart is still ours, and we can still turn him toward God. He acts only through error, sustained by much self-love and bad counsels, counsels all the more dangerous because he knows how to accept only the part that accommodates his illusions. . . .

Whatever the case may be, the project about which you have just informed me, could still be carried out and have all its effect, but on two conditions: the first, that the Ste. Marie Boarding School would be set up as an institution, as we have just done for St. Remy[1]; the second, that you, coming to Bordeaux, would not announce any new plan for the studies, nor want to make any trials. It would be necessary only to present a course of studies, a robust one so to say, according to the plans of the University, good professors, all of the Society. While beginning, we must not make adversaries, have objections raised, if by these new plans you will the better attain the end in view, which neither our ancestors nor our contemporaries have done. You would be mistaken, my dear son, I believe, if you thought that like nearly all the old folks, I esteem only what I have seen or learned. I am entirely convinced that the plan of studies and its methods of execution can be brought to a much higher point of perfection, that in the same given time it is possible to learn more and better. But I am also very much convinced that to announce it, to begin even on entirely new plans, the successes of the projected enterprise would remain very uncertain, and after all we are not in a position to play at what is uncertain.

I could, my dear son, make a memorandum in which I would bring to the point of demonstration each one of these ideas, but you don't need such a thing, and I haven't much time to spare. Be kind enough only to pay close attention to the fact that every plan of a building, however well geometrically it may be drawn up, will never result in a good and especially solid construction unless the location has been well prepared. Your location here is the general attitude of minds and the more particular disposition of jealous, malicious, and prejudiced minds, also of minds who never see anything but through the eyes of others, and there is a great number of such. I repeat it to you, my dear son, I am not the enemy of the new plans, of the changes, the tests, the trials, but many precautions are to be taken, not only when these are proposed to the public but when there is question of

[1] Father Chaminade at least hoped for it, see Letter 480; but his hopes were deceived, as will be seen later.

carrying them out ourselves, and that, in fields of action furnished by a public actively interested in success and which furnishes it only in trembling.

I am coming back to the old topic, my dear son. I adopt your project about St. Remy and, nevertheless, without prejudice. We have wanted to establish this boarding school of St. Remy on a solid basis, and we must hold to it. Very well, let there be nothing extraordinary, nothing striking, but let there be the possibility for solid studies, let there be a rigorous discipline but full unction, and above all, may the young people become almost necessarily Christian and virtuous, and may their virtue and their faith have as base a solid instruction in religion.

As regards the Boarding School St. Marie, if we figure out things correctly, with what you will be able to draw form St. Remy, from Paris and elsewhere, from the boarding school itself if there are one or two good enough subjects who want to attach themselves to the Society, from the Madeleine, etc. . . , there is question of only two things: that the boarding school become an institution and that you propose to have the ordinary plan of studies by good professors, etc. . . . It will be up to us quietly to introduce the improvements we shall deem suitable and which will increase, so to speak, the patronage of the school. . . .

At this time, I shall speak neither of the manner nor of the time of the carrying out of the change of Brother Auguste and Father Collineau, and of the financial arrangements. I believe that all is possible . . . and I shall aid you all I can. . . . But whom would you suggest as head of the St. Marie Boarding School? . . . I give you over to the spirit of God. . . . Whom would you propose as économe for St. Remy and steward for the property? Let us take care not to miss the mark. . . .

I am stopping here. Let us pray for one another, and not seek our own glory: *Soli Deo honor et gloria*. I am embracing you and I shall continue to write to you by another hand before the departure of the mail.

506 – TO FATHER LALANNE, PARIS

Bordeaux, March 4, 1830

I am passing my pen, my dear son, over to Brother Weber. Never again will you ever learn that anything has been said or written about what has been said between us, however slight the thing may appear to be.

Following the death of the Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary, Madame de Trenquelléon, her four heiresses have made a gift to the Daughters of Mary of their portion of the inheritance, to be acquired at the time prescribed by law. One of the heiresses was assistant substitute to the Superioress General. The deed of donation made her give as heiress, and accept as Superioress, something that is not allowed. At the same time, second deed of donation of the goods of the substituting Superioress General was passed, always in favor of the Daughters of Mary. This second deed of donation was spoiled by the same defect. By the statutes of the Daughters of Mary, approved by the government, the Mother of Zeal replaces the Superioress General every time that the latter is unable to act. It would have been necessary in the circumstance of these donations, that the Mother of Zeal have accepted the donations which the Superioress General was making. The two deeds of donation were sent to the government to obtain the approbation of His Majesty. The Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs sent back the two deeds to have them regularized. We thought it advisable to let some time elapse. I have finally succeeded in having them put in regular shape. The Superioress of Agen is going to have them passed to Mr. Portets, professor of civil law in Paris. We would have had them passed directly to you even if my new counselor in civil matters had not been absent at the time of the transaction of the notary. However, it is not suitable that this very simple matter, although very important, should retain you in Paris longer than you were to stay. You will do well to see Mr. Portets. He is a young man of an honesty, of a delicacy of sentiment and education, much out of the ordinary. He is the brother of one of our religious sisters. If you are still in Paris at the time of the arrival of the papers, and think you can be of assistance to him with the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, don't hesitate to be on hand. I have done what I could so as to have this matter come to Paris before the reopening of the Chambers of Deputies and Notaries. It is this absence of my counselor that has brought about this annoyance. You or Mr. Portets, if you are willing, can easily see to it that His Excellency or the divine head concerned in this affair is not left in ignorance as regards the name of my counselor. He is Mr. de Saget, who had been appointed to replace him in the capacity of Procurator General. In important matters, I no longer address myself to Brother David . . . Mr. de Portets stays in the law school, opposite Ste. Genevieve.

I am coming back, my dear son, to the last object of my letter of yesterday, without any attempt at continuing it logically. I suppose that in these first days of March, there are great difficulties in approaching the minister, and more particularly for matters that call for discussion, but perhaps it might be otherwise, were a person of influence and enjoying his confidence involved. If then, you had drawn up a memorandum in the sense that I would have desired, you would see if this person of influence continued to be well convinced of it,

and if the minister judged the affair important enough to be brought back for further discussion. You would leave the memorandum with him and also the prospectuses that you would have extracted from it.

I am going to make a few more reflections to emphasize the importance of the institution of normal schools of the kind we propose to ourselves. It is certain that France is going to ruin if she does not come victoriously out of the revolution that is threatening her on all sides, if the rising generation is not saved. Now, what means is there to save the present generation that is almost all corrupted? The children will resemble their parents and will adopt their principles and their morals: like father, like son. Whom will we have to make up for the neglect of the fathers? The priests, pastors, assistants? They see the children far too rarely, have too little authority over them, etc. . . These children are lost, if they don't have good schoolteachers close at hand. From there, the indispensable necessity of forming a sufficiently great number of schoolteachers, so as to be able to employ them in all the communes. From there, the need for multiplying the normal schools in all the departments. But by far the greater number of the schoolteachers actually at work are either ignorant, don't know how to handle children, or put no interest at all in their work. I take it for granted that they are not scandalous, but even this is not rare. From there, the need for our long and frequent retreats to render them good or at least passable or to replace them by candidates. Fully trained . . .

That other bodies establish normal schools, so much the better! But let us come to an understanding! Let them be formed according to the same plan, and a plan that can produce the same results. The Brothers of St. Joseph have too few subjects, and they are too poorly equipped to form them without first having planned the work together. The Brothers of St. Von would have greater means, and I doubt not that they had pleasure in planning together so interesting a work. I do not know if they have as yet a school that could properly be called normal. They may have some model schools I know nothing about, but anyhow, they are of very little consequence and can serve but to instruct a very small number of subjects. Some other little corporations may have attained some similar permission, but of which they have made or were able to make very little or no use. Such, for example, the Brothers, said of the Cross, directed by Father Poirier, but they have almost entirely gone out of existence. He himself offered me to buy his establishment of St. Germain. He no longer had any to run it, all the brothers having left. There remained to him only five, placed in two communes, two in one and three in the other. I know of no normal school directed by brothers. If there are any, there must be very few.[1] The

[1] At the time Father Chaminade was writing, here are the teaching associations that have received authorization from the government: Brothers of the Christian Schools, said of St. Von, from the name of their principal houses near Rouen, March 17, 1808; Brothers of Christian Instruction of Ploermelm or of Lamennais, June 1, 1822; Brothers of Christian Doctrine of Sion-Vaudemont, near Nancy, July 17, 1822; Brothers of the Christian Institution of St. Paul-Trois-Château, Drome, who merged later on with the Little Brothers of Mary of the Venerable Champagnat, June 11, 1823; Brothers of St. Anthony, in Paris, a Jansenist Community, June 23, 1823; Brothers of the Holy Cross said of St. Joseph, in Neuilly, June 25, 1823; Brothers of the Holy Spirit, said of St. Gabriel of the Blessed Grignon de Montfort and of Father Deshayes, at St. Laurent sur Sevres, September 11, 1823; Brothers of St. Joseph of Saint-Fuscien,

government has always felt the need for them. It has sometimes given orders in their regard and protected some of them, such as the one in Strasbourg, but which are run haphazardly and by people whose sole interest is to hold on to the place which provides them their salary. Mr. Rendu has not based his policy on actual facts.

Somme, December 3, 1823; Brothers of Christian Instruction, said of the Sacred Heart, at Paradis, near Le Puy, March 10, 1825; Society of Mary of Bordeaux, November 16, 1825; Brothers or Clerks of St. Viateur, January 10, 1830. No other authorization was given until 1850.

I am stopping again, as the time for the departure of the mail approaches. I shall write again to you very soon. Once more, I am embracing you very tenderly.

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In the midst of these serious negotiations current affairs were not standing still, and among these, the works of charity to which he was accustomed. Count de Marcellus, Bordeaux Deputy, Peer of France (1776-1841) to whom is addressed the following note in favor of a poor businessman of Tonneins, was at this time, one of the most sincere and intrepid defenders of religion. To piety he joined a rare benevolence, and to him are attributed traits recalling those of Fenelon. To these qualities of heart were added a vast erudition and a marvelous memory, thanks to which he knew thoroughly Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Spanish, Italian, and English. He has left diverse works in prose and in verse.

507 – TO COUNTE DE PARCELLUS, PARIS

Bordeaux, March 5, 1830

Honorable Count, suffer, I beg of you, in the midst of your so great and important occupations that I transmit to you the request of an unfortunate father, Mr. Poitevin, the victim of the misfortunes and evils, the report of which must certainly have reached you one way or another. He has learned that you are in need of a cook and offers you his son.

Mr. O'Lombel, who will have the honor of presenting you this note, will be able to communicate to you the letter which Mr. Poitevin has just written to me on this subject. It is as agreeable to me to propose to you this good work, as it is at the same time to renew the assurance of the respectful remembrance with which I am, Honorable count, etc.

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508 – TO FATHER LALANNE, PARIS

Bordeaux, March 8, 1830

I hope, my dear son, that this letter will find you still in Paris, and that perhaps the desire to make a memorandum, such as I would desire it, and to leave one or two copies of it in good hands, may have kept you there a little longer. You may also be working out a plan of instruction in religion. You have seemed to me to understand very well what I would desire, as much by your circular to our Lords the Bishops, as by the prospectus to the Rectors of the Academies and to the Prefects, but there is not only question of putting in perspective the Christian instruction and education to be given as you would not find any teacher capable of putting your perspectives to work.

I have read the circular to our Lords, the Bishops. You have grasped perfectly well what there was to be said to them on the subject which there is question, only the circular seems to me too long. I have also read the prospectus. It would seem to me, that it could not be sent indiscriminately to any rector and to any prefect. You have rectors and prefects who are, so to say, anti-religious and such you would be pushing farther away from you than bringing them closer. It could happen that according to the direction in which the wind was blowing, they would, nevertheless, say nice words to you, without, however, manifesting to you either their real ideas or their real sentiments, but then, what interest in the thing could we hope for? In a prospectus sent indiscriminately to all the civil and academic authorities, the goodness of the methods of teaching would have to be very specially insisted upon, as well as upon a special agreement of the Grand Master of the University, given after due examination.

The memorandum that I had had in mind was only for the minister and for some persons who might gather around him. Without precisely admitting that the minister has what we call piety, I believed he had a fair mind, that he sincerely desired the reform of France, and that if he believed in the efficacy of a general means, he would take the means for applying it. Now, it cannot seem doubtful that normal schools in all the departments and at least in all the academic provinces, formed as we understand them, would succeed in regenerating the majority of the children, and in sustaining in the country communes the respect all must have for religion and for the civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

It seems that His Excellency has already understood the first part of the question, that is to say, the necessity of establishing normal schools everywhere. There is no longer question only of their form and the manner in which they are to be equipped and directed. This manner of doing things would almost be the secret between His Excellency and us. He seems to be favoring us only on account of our methods, not to run up against too much contradiction on the part of the principal members of the university, because we must not bind ourselves, for a great number of its main members have no sane ideas as regards this object. It seems, furthermore, that the congregations which would be able to furnish subjects capable of directing normal schools, not only were not excluded but were even invited by His Excellency, always with an understanding with us to make sure of uniformity of execution.

In the Ordinance of February 14th, it is not too clear that under the expression of "model schools" are understood normal schools in which the subjects, known as candidates, are in a position to be formed.[1] This is not the meaning of "model schools," neither in the literal nor the usual sense of the term. The Brothers of Christian Doctrine[2] have several model schools. These model schools among them are nothing else than

[1] The Ordinance of February 14th read as follows: "Art. 10. Besides the primary schools properly so called, preparatory model schools will be established, destined to train teachers. There will be at least one of these schools per academy."
[2] The Brothers of the Christian Schools.

schools to which young people may go to learn how to teach schools, but who are day scholars. I even think that by their statutes, they may not take boarding students.

I would be pleased to know that you are returning to St. Remy only after having gone over our establishments in Alsace, and after having personally seen your new methods in actual operation. In Alsace, you have a difficulty to overcome, which is not found elsewhere, that of the two languages. You have a sufficiently alert mind to see what would be of too difficult or too complicated execution, and would in consequence have to be either suppressed or at least changed. You must not be content with what the brothers in particular might seem to understand and adopt in the methods, but you must see them actually at work in their classes, etc. Nor must the article relating to the behavior of the children be neglected. This behavior in Colmar left much to be desired, although praised by everybody. I have learned from letters that the dismissals are now being conducted in far better order, following various counsels that I had given. All must positively be settled and carried out according to your orders and directions, so that an end to all the fuss may be in sight. Keep me informed about everything, and I shall continue to give you my ideas. Take care of your health. It has been written to me, not only that you are not taking care of it, but that you had seriously exposed it in the very severe cold weather you have had recently. I am always embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

Father Lalanne had come back to St. Remy. Some days later, he there received new reflection from Father Chaminade on the subject of the projected reorganization of the Ste. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux.

509 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 20, 1830

A little is always better than nothing, and so, my dear son, not to put too much delay in our correspondence, I shall answer with a few words about those things which will need less development. Affairs, in these parts, are piling up.

I have read the proof sheet of the prospectus. The suppressions have been suitably made. It seems to me, I shall have some observations to make. I gave it to Father Collineau so that he could make, apart from the printed matter, all those he might want to make. He has not yet returned the copy to me.

I have made a first proposal to Father Collineau, as regards our project of organization of the Ste. Marie Boarding School, but without speaking to him of the role he would have to play in it. From the first, he attributed what is wrong to the disrepute of some professors borrowed from the Madeleine. To that I could answer easily. It is he and Brother Auguste who had asked for them, and badly placed them, contrary to my observations. . . .

Father Collineau would have wanted that we quietly end this year, and that we await next year to judge of the necessity of the proposed measure. It was not difficult to make clear the urgency of the matter . . . Father Collineau would then have wanted that due notice be given to Brother Auguste, who seemed far from expecting it, and who looked upon the boarding school pretty much as his own. He had made agreements with his professors, that, . . . It has been decided that considering the urgency of the matter, I would carry out the project as soon as . . . I would clearly see that morally speaking, there are chances for a happy success and that, in consequence, nothing should be spoken about, either to Brother Auguste, or to anyone else, until all shall have been definitely decided and settled.

In the present condition of the boarding school, brother Auguste can pay nothing of his back debts, all he can do is to add the expenses to the arrears. That's about how things are. You tell me, if you were loaded with debts, you would have to look for means to mortgage them. That is correct. Brother Auguste would not give in any other way, and . . . and . . . there is difficulty but I don't believe an impossibility. At another time, I shall come back to this article. Brother Auguste and Brother David, doubtless without any bad intention, have done all that was needed to render me powerless, but the good God is for us. Father Collineau is rather poorly disposed. I shall speak to you of it at another time. If to obtain an entire institution for the Ste. Marie Boarding School[1] you need a new plan of studies, I see no obstacles in the way. All the harm would be either in announcing it or in realizing it all at one time and in the beginning. However, I doubt not that you will succeed in obtaining great success if the steps you take are really prudent. The results wills speak for themselves and publish the plans or give occasion for their public action without danger.

Make a note for me of the professors that you believe you can secure. I would have several to give, but very few as a start. St. Remy must not be deprived of what is necessary, and even of what is suitable. I shall have my list passed over to you. An honest sufficiency would also be necessary for St. Hippolyte . . . Brother Clouzet would do very well in Bordeaux, but he would be too poorly replaced in St. Remy by Brother Jules, and by that other brother whose name I can't recall right now . . . Let us make a careful study of everything before announcing anything.

I am stopping here . . . But no, still a few words. I don't know why Brother Clouzet said and even wrote that Brother Gaussens was in Courtefontaine at least all this year. I really had the intention of calling him to Bordeaux this spring as I have written but I should have wanted that before his departure, he would have been with you sufficiently long to get a good idea of the methods of primary teaching, as much in the little schools as in the normal schools, and to bring along copies of these methods. I shall write to him about it. Try to arrange with him the earliest possible time when you two could come together for this purpose. When I know that he is ready to leave for Bordeaux, I shall send some

[1] That is to say, to obtain for the boarding school the title of institution with the right of having the upper classes.

additional help to Courtefontaine. Brother Galliot is too weak a character and lacks initiative. I shall send, at least for this year, Brother Gobillot, the actual head of St. Laurent, with a helper, the young Brother de Valicourt. I shall explain everything by the next mail, both to Brother Gaussens and Brother Galliot. Now, my dear son, I am stopping for good, and embracing you always with the same tenderness.

P. S. I have received quite apropos, a check for 500 francs. I would have great need that Brother Clouzet give me a much bigger one, for is he not supposed to reimburse me for the traveling expenses of Brothers Bouley, Meyer, Fridblatt, etc.? As I had promised you on the 15th of the present month, I sent a French tailor to replace the Alsatian who is so homesick and whom Brother Rothéa wants so badly. It is the young Lemonerie, who knows his job well, is very fervent, very regular, and especially very pure. Some time before knowing he was to leave for St. Remy, he asked me to make a vow of perpetual chastity. I granted him the favor, but for ten years. On the day selected for this he carried two formulas, one he left with me and the other that he was to keep. As they were written in red, I suspected that they had been written in his blood. I asked him about it. He answered very simply. Yes. Recommend him to Father Chevaux. I shall also say a word to him about the young man. I am having a sacristan for Colmar leave with him. Brother Clouzet did not write to me that he was disposing of one, but from the indications I have received from him, I was under the impression that it was not suitable and that Brother Clouzet was very glad to be rid of him, which is not nice to say the least.

* * * *

Let us again slip between two letters to Father Lalanne some specimens of this endless detailed correspondence, which Father Chaminade found the means of sending on all sides. The following note is a delicate thank you to the address of one of the most fervent sodalists of Auch.

510 – TO MRS. de LAGRACE, AUCH

Bordeaux, March 23, 1830

Your affairs are in good order, my very dear daughter, and I bless the Lord for it. I thank you for the offer you make to me of the apartment which you so kindly call mine . . . Well, in my quality as father, I shall say: My apartment in the house of Mrs. de Lagrace, my oldest daughter in Auch. Nevertheless, I am not yet able to promise occupying it, especially at a time when I don't happen to be in your city. The youth of the major and minor seminary make me contract or assume obligations by the fervor and confidence which they show me. As the time of my departure draws nearer, I shall have the honor of notifying you. Nevertheless, I would surely like to come to your house, in the first place for yourself, but also for your young lady, who is also my daughter and granddaughter who doubtless merits to be favored.

I am not aware of the passage of His Eminence, the Cardinal[1] in Bordeaux.

The books which are here are for Mr. Larrieu and not for Mr. Melhon. You must have been misinformed or mistaken about them. I shall have them put on the stagecoach, as I don't foresee trouble or inconvenience of any kind.

I wish you, my dear daughter, as a good father, the peace of the Lord and the joy of heart that results from it. I am expressing the same wishes to your young lady, my granddaughter.

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This is another letter, following the one Father Chaminade wrote two weeks before to Count de Marcellus. In it will be remarked the politeness and consideration which the Founder uses, regarding even the most insignificant correspondents.

511 – TO MR. POITEVIN, SENIOR,
MERCHANT AT TONNEINS

Bordeaux, March 23, 1830

As soon as I received your letter, Sir, I wrote to Mr. de Marcellus. I had my letter put into his own hands by Mr. O'Lombel, my zealous correspondent. I have the honor of transmitting to you a copy of his answer, which gives me ground for hope.

If your son is really wise, constant and discreet—and he will be all that if he lives as a Christian—and if besides he renders himself capable of filling so good a position in such a respectable home, his good fortune is assured. I shall be delighted, dear Sir, if his success measures up to your desire.

I am completely your humble servant.

* * * *

A family letter follows.

512 – TO MRS. ROSE LAVERGNE, LAUNET

Bordeaux, March 23, 1830

[1] Joachim John Xavier d'Isoard (1766-1839) member and then dean of the Tribunal of the Rota in Rome, was named Cardinal in 1827 and promoted in 1829 to the Archiepiscopal See of Auch. He showed sympathy for Father Chaminade and his works, and later rendered him valuable services, especially at the time of the steps taken in Rome for the approbation of the Constitutions of the Society of Mary and of the Daughters of Mary (1838).

I have received, my dear niece, your letter of the 19th of the current month, and I am answering it immediately to make up for my past delays. It seems, anyhow, that you got my last letter.

Lately, I had a heart-to-heart talk with Vergnon,[1] and I was quite well pleased with his simple and honest proposals. It would seem that he has a greater inclination toward medical science than toward any other career. We have postponed to another time the second examination there remains to be made before trying to foresee all that we shall have to prepare. I should be very much pleased were you to come at the time of the feasts[1] or shortly thereafter, but I did not want to admit this to you, so as not to influence your determination as regards the situation in which you find yourself. I shall pray for the restoration of the health of Mrs. Durand.

I am very sincerely your good uncle.

* * * *

513 – TO THE PREFECT OF THE SODALITY
OF ST. HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, March 26, 1830

Mr. Prefect: Your letter of March 10th came just at the right time to increase the joy that reigns here since the feast of St. Joseph. I am still more touched by the piety and the religious sentiments that your letter breathes, than by the wishes and greetings you offer me for the occasion of my patronal feast. Continue to walk in the beautiful paths of virtue and religion, for it is only there that you will find the wisdom which you will make your inseparable companion. In becoming the interpreter of my paternal sentiments in the midst of the sodalists of St. Hippolyte, have them clearly understand that real wisdom is always found with virtue and religion.

However busy I happen to be, Mr. Prefect, I have not been able to withhold expressing to you on this occasion, the completely paternal tenderness with which I am again adopting the little sodality of St. Hippolyte as a distinguished part of my great family. I am here giving to its prefect, to his two assistants, and to his secretary for the entire sodality, in all the effusion of my heart, my fatherly blessing.

[1] Vergnon is a familiar diminutive for Lavergne. There is here a question of L. B. Lavergne, son of Rose Chaminade, wife of Lavergne, then boarding with Brother Auguste.
[1] There is reference to Easter.

P.S. Among the signatures, I noticed that of Mr. Breitel. I am asking him, please to give the assurance of my respectful remembrance to the honorable mayor and his assistant.

* * * *

We are coming back to Father Lalanne and to the great affair of the normal schools. We shall notice the discouraging attitude of Father Collineau and Brother David, who, not seeing the realization of their views about the Society, seem to give up all interest in everything it would want to undertake.

514 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 31, 1830

I have already acknowledged reception, my dear son, of the prospectus for model schools, of which you sent me the printed proof sheet. Here are the first impressions that the first reading produced in me. Those of Father Collineau and Brother David become worthless because they would tend toward the suppression of any prospectus. They have written nothing of any consequence. So as not to speak disparagingly or to calumniate, I shall not throw back their general observations. I shall hold to those that present themselves to my mind. 1. It seems to me that the prospectus, said "of the model preparatory schools," should rapidly present what a young man should become after he has been well directed and led during three years, less a month of vacation for each year. It should then present the means which the Society uses to render him such, the study of the teaching of religion and of the profane sciences, which ought to be in accord with the teaching which they themselves will have to do. I would like to amalgamate what you call accessory subjects with the essential studies during the entire course of studies, but I would not want to go into too much detail regarding these accessory subjects. It seems to me, they are too detailed in your prospectus. Certain parts of education, properly so called, cannot be too much emphasized, be they Christian or civil. As regards the subjects that have relation to the principal acts of civic life, their customs or usages, certain laws relative to wills and testaments, donations among living persons, sales, loans, rents, leases, etc., on the forms of these little contracts, private seals, etc., to know how to keep accounts, to make bills, pay bills, etc., before my departure for Paris, last year, I had given this work to be done to a young lawyer who had understood my idea. I have not yet asked him for an account of his work. In a word, I would want to train in these schools, men and Christians who would be able to regenerate their communes, and for that, they would have to be enjoying a certain influence and consideration by the knowledge they have to pass on to their pupils, and by the zeal which could make them really useful to the families composing these communes, etc. Very well, if they know the names of the herbs and plants most commonly met with, but this does not form any part of the courses. Such things are learned, as it were, in recreation. I am saying the same thing in regard to some physical knowledge or information necessary to explain certain trades or arts, certain tools or machines or machinery, specially employed in their respective communes or Departments.

2. A second observations would be that the first part of your prospectus seems to me only like some reflections one might make, particularly to certain ecclesiastical or lay administrators, on the movements of a normal school taken as a whole. Outside of that, all seems quite good to me.

3. I need not say that the distribution of the courses over three years, such as you indicate it, would not be in accord with my plan. To have you better understand what I

mean, I shall say that all learn everything, and that divisions or grades be formed after the style of what we all classes.[1]

4. We are asking that the candidates remain three years in our schools. Generally this is not too much. Nevertheless, there could be this or that subject, who would have received a first education, who would have virtue, piety and intelligence. Such a one could make two or even three classes in one year. Another, a young rustic, although with a good eye, but quite boorish, impolite, knowing next to nothing, though proud of knowing as much as the village teacher, perhaps would not have enough with three years. He might even have to be made to double some classes or be kept in one division, whilst others pass on to the upper ones. For such a one, evidently, more than three years would be necessary.

5. The end of your prospectus, pages 5 and 6, contain excellent views. All it would need would be to be recopied with some differences or alterations to conform to the manner in which the first parts of the prospectus were drawn up.

6. Such a prospectus is only a practical list, if we may so speak, of the principles developed and proved in the memorandum of which we have already spoken a great deal. After all, what is the purpose of the memorandum? It is to prove that, by the methods of instruction and education employed in our normal schools, capable teachers are to be formed, on the one hand, to train well the pupils that are, or are to be later confided to them, and, on the other, to stop, as much as possible, the spread of the errors of the passing generation. If these happy results can be attained in a department by a well-equipped and well-directed school, it will be possible to attain them in all the departments, where similar schools will be put up, etc. . . .

7. The boarding normal schools will differ from the normal schools for day pupils only in this, that in the former, piety and religious instruction will be developed to a higher degree or to greater perfection. I would have wanted, my dear son, to speak to you at this time of the great projected work,[1] but I shall await your answer to my last letter addressed to Gray. On my side, I foresee a few more means of execution. The matter will not be able to advance as rapidly as you seem to have desired, but it can be attended to in sufficient time to have an excellent result. I shall write to you again . . .

May the peace of the Lord, my dear son, be always with you!

* * * *

Father Lalanne was going to leave for Alsace. There, there was question of starting work for the realization of the great project, and to prepare the establishment of the normal school of the Upper Rhine. The project of the prospectus to which allusion is made in the

[1] Father Chaminade seems to recommend in this way, the “concentric” method.
[1] Without doubt, the restoration and improvement of the Ste. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux.

preceding letter, will be read with interest. Father Lalanne had given it already to the printer, since he had sent a proof sheet to Father Chaminade. The text was, nevertheless, to a large extent retouched and rearranged, as will be seen from a letter, No. 521, and in the end the Revolution stopped everything. The expression model schools replaced that of normal schools to conform to the text of the Ordinance of February 14th. (See Letter 508.)

PROPSPECTUS OF MODEL PREPARATORY SCHOOLS,
DIRECTED BY THE SOCIETY OF MARY

The most important quality of a teacher is that which most surely guarantees his morality, and no better guarantee of good morals is known than a background in religion, solidly based on enlightened knowledge of the duties of Christianity and on a long acquired habit of practicing them.

The first duty that a model preparatory school, a school for the training of the teachers, is, then, that of Christian education, that is to say, to train the mind and the heart in the doctrines of the Catholic faith, and according to the rules of Christian morality.

Such is the basic and all-dominating principle of the schools of the Society of Mary. It is expected that they be essentially houses of Christian education for the young people who have in mind taking up the important functions of the teaching profession.

In order to attain this end, it was thought there was not precisely a question of submitting the young people with a rigorous exactitude to pious practices, nor of addressing them more or less frequent exhortations. Rather there was question of an education taking in all the actions of life and attained much more by example than by precept, that they might be able to live with religious men in the intimacy of daily intercourse. There, as in the bosom of religion itself, separated for some time from the world and sheltered from its dangers, they might accept, as it were, insensibly and under a mild influence the morals and virtues that Christianity inspires.

And thus are pupils received in the schools of the Society of Mary, only as boarding students. The Society is persuaded that the teachers, even if they were the most zealous and the most influential, would not be able to accomplish the education of a pupil whom they could not reach by all the points, who could at every moment get away from them, to be under some strange influence, as would be found in a city of day pupils. A school for day pupils can serve only for instruction.

To be admitted to the school, a lad must be at least 17 years old and give proof. by attestations worthy of confidence, of having all along conducted himself well. It is rare that subjects who with fiery passions and light minds, having already given sighs at this age of evil inclinations, are likely to acquire, in the long run, the qualities we like and which are required of a primary schoolteacher.

Having once been admitted to the school, the pupils leave only after they have completed their course of studies. They, nevertheless, have a month of vacation each year, and efficacious means are taken during this time to preserve them from the dangers of idleness and dissipation. All the means that are taken in education prepare for the success of the means of instruction, because in placing the need of instruction for a teacher below the moral qualities, we have not concealed from ourselves on this account the importance, as well as the necessity of a solid and suitably extensive education. Without good morals, without Christian morals, a teacher is in truth more than useless, he is dangerous, and thus to fulfill functions such as those of the teacher, the most honest man in the world, without instruction, would be about worthless.

In the Society, it is not thought that there would be much to gain for religion as well as for morality, not more than for the arts, by cutting down to the narrowest limits the instruction of the people. It is believed, on the contrary, that the people today cannot be brought back to the faith and to the virtues of which it is the basis, but by a greater degree of development of their intellectual faculties and an increase of instruction.

To this effect, at the head of the course of instruction for teachers is placed a methodical study of the history of religion, of the fundamental proofs of the faith, and of the indefeasible titles to authority on the part of the Church, as on that of the State. In our day, if one doesn't have clear-cut ideas on those important points, it is almost impossible to men who do not live together in the woods to preserve themselves from error, and in the case of a man who, like the teacher, has an immediate, habitual, and inevitable influence on youth, error in all these points would be an evil with the most baneful consequences.

At the same time, proceeds an orderly course of studies that takes in all the knowledge that can be expected of a primary teacher to have. It lasts three years, and the studies it includes are distinguished as essential and accessory. The course is arranged as follows.

The first year, supposing the pupil can already read and write, he is improved by good drills in these two arts and notably in writing, of which he is made to know all the kinds. He employs the rest of the time in the study of French grammar, including spelling and theoretic and practical arithmetic.

The second year to the writing exercises are intermingled alternately, exercise in linear drawing, including the making of plans in India ink. Geography replaces French grammar, then there is practical geometry, especially applied to surveying, as a course to follow arithmetic.

The third year is devoted to accessory knowledge, which means bookkeeping, the general theory of agriculture, the application of geometry to the arts and business, the parts of physics relative to the explanation of meteorological phenomena, and botany as

understood by the herbalists. It is also permitted to the pupils who have the aptitude for drawing, properly so called, as well as the vocal and instrumental music, the harpsichord only, to take lessons in these arts.

The courses of this third year being considered as only accessory, it is not necessarily required that there be pupils to follow them. Neither does the Society oblige itself to give them in all its schools. However, since this knowledge, although not indispensable to the institute, may be of great utility either for itself, for the commune it inhabits, or for the children it instructs, the youngest of the pupils are exhorted to take their third year, and their means for doing so are made as easy as possible.

The one inconvenience which might have a great influence on so many matters and a less serious one on others is not lost sight of. It will not be difficult, as little as might be wanted, to inculcate into these young men during the entire course of their education, the ideas entertained by the wisest men in a modest defiance of their lights. For what remains, the exact discipline to which they are subjected, as well as the spirit of Christianity with which we constantly try to penetrate their souls, will efficaciously preserve them from the stupid pride which engenders insubordination.

Finally, to end all that refers to instruction in the training of teachers, the end which they propose to themselves, that of knowing how to teach was not to be forgotten.

Since knowing, and knowing how to teach are two different things, that is why it is desired that to each model school a primary school be connected, one in which the teachers might themselves see the precepts and methods practiced and applied which are being taught to them. Because of the lack of this primary school, they have among themselves each week, under the supervision of the professors, a kind of fictitious class in the diverse matters ordinarily taught to children.

There they are taught and brought to appreciate the diverse methods, which have been used in these later times with some success. Their ideas are centered with greater emphasis on the best of these. The methods proper to the Society of Mary and which it uses in its primary schools with no uncertain advantages, and to the satisfaction of all authority are made known to them.

In the model schools which the Society of Mary has established until the present, it has not limited itself to the training of new teachers, but to bring about a more prompt and general restoration of the older ones by bringing them together during the vacation time in the school itself, to give them counsels in regard to the methods of teaching and the running of schools, as well as to inspire them with religious sentiments. The salutary effects which these meetings have produced, encourage the Society to reproduce them in all the establishments that will be confided to them, as much as the civil and ecclesiastical authorities will permit and be willing to lend a hand in whatever matters that may directly concern them.

For reasons of public economy and also for the greatest facility and security of education, the Society will establish its schools preferably in the country or at some distance from the cities. In regard to this matter, it will be remarked to the authorities that are especially charged with the providing for the establishment of the model schools, that in the country land is cheaper, tuition can be brought to the lowest moderate figure, and what most interests the Society, the pupils are there far less distracted.

The price of tuition and of other accessory conditions will vary according to places and localities, and will be indicated, after arrangements are made with the local authorities, in the particular prospectus of each school.

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515 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, beginning of April, 1830

I have just received, my dear son, your letter of last March 25th, when mine of the 31st was about to leave. I am really very much occupied, but all cannot be done for the Ste. Marie Boarding School without first preparing and disposing all things and persons. It is to be presumed that we shall have gained all that we are after, if all is ready, brought together and put before the public before the end of the school year, and for this, there must be no loss of time, we must bluntly go ahead. Furthermore, it seems that providence has not yet sent all the subjects that we shall need. Make your list, as I have indicated to you, of all the subjects who might be needed here and at St. Remy, for complete courses of studies, of course, choosing what might be best for this place, but leaving an honest sufficiency for St. Remy. Besides this general list for both establishment, make two lists of the subjects who will occupy each post. I told you that I would be able to furnish some good ones and that I would be able to add to each of the two lists.

Will this letter reach you before your departure for Alsace? You want to use the Easter vacation to make the visit of our establishments. I don't see very clearly what you would gain by choosing this time. Easter time is about the time when you have the greatest need of being in St. Remy to reanimate there, more and more, the spirit of religion and piety. Whatever the case may be, I am entirely of your opinion. Brother Louis Rothéa is not the man fitted to be head of the establishment of Colmar. He is aware of this himself, although at times he seems to doubt it, but it does not seem suitable to me to be making important changes at this time.

Nothing prevents you from making all the necessary amendments in the methods of teaching, and from thoroughly instructing and exercising the teachers. If in your plan you need Coustou as head, train him first as ordinary professor and then as principal head. Do the same with Louis Rothéa, and even if he does not succeed well, have no worry because

he will never be a good professor and still less a good head, but anyhow, it is very well that he knows enough to hold on at least for the time being. What I am saying about Colmar must be applied with all the more reason to all the other establishments more mediocre than that of Colmar, but act in such a way that the methods are appreciated and esteemed everywhere, heartily upheld, and carefully drilled into those expected to use them.

It might be a good and useful idea not to introduce each of them at the same time, and that the general public gets to know of them only by the good results they would be producing. . . .

As regards the normal school in the Upper Rhine district, I shall write to St. Hippolyte and to Colmar. It is to be presumed that I shall arrange definitely that the schools be in Colmar. That was arranged already three years ago, with both the mayor and the prefect. It was the mayor who wanted to make the expenses, but successively, after having had the special schools built. It is not through bad will, if we have not worked at the normal school. After having had the special school built at the time of my last passage in Colmar, I remained in agreement with the former prefect that he would occupy himself with it very soon after. The pastor of Neuf-Brisach, by himself, was to pursue the affair but I had not yet left Colmar when a successor of the prefect of the Upper Rhine was appointed. In the letter that I wrote lately to the prefect, to let him know of the exemptions from military service for two young men, I spoke to him of the interest which his predecessor put into a normal school directed by the Society of Mary, etc. It is to be presumed that he has been told that it was in Colmar that it was to be established. At other times, I had conferred about it with some persons of distinction, like the Secretary-General, Mr. Paulin, lawyer and counselor of the prefecture. I visited the house of the brothers. There is suitable place without any prejudice to the free or special schools. It will only be necessary that the hospital stop hanging up wash in the garret, which is on its side, and that can be done with no difficulty at all, since the mayor and the prefect want to arrange these garrets into a kind of dormitories for the candidates.

In less than no time, I think I have understood that a great number of former schoolteachers could be brought there together for retreats. You will be better able to make sure of that. I had also understood at the time that there could be three courses, one for each section of the establishment. As regards suitable enough garden, if it is not absolutely necessary, one could be found at a small distance from the city. St. Hippolyte is too small for us to be able to unite the normal boarding and day schools and the regular boarding school even by building what could reasonably be built there. There is already more than enough difficulty, so that the normal boarding school has no other communications with the regular boarding school than are judged necessary. This normal boarding school will

increase in proportion as the day normal school progresses.[1] The difficulty will be to have a good personnel everywhere. We shall not speak of that at the present time.

I am not losing sight of Belfort.[2] I am not astonished that in a little war town, there is neither yard nor garden. The college of the city hasn't any. Since the rooms for the classes are large, we shall try to provide for a yard, especially if the front of the house is fairly spacious and free. . . .

I have just received your last letter of March 29th. The mail is about to leave. I was able to read of it only the beginning and the end, to see if there was anything really pressing. I shall close this one, for fear that it may not reach you before your departure for Alsace, and then read yours at leisure. Besides, I have some good news for you. I shall write to you in Colmar.

I am embracing you with great paternal tenderness.

* * * *

516 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, at the beginning of April, 1830

My dear son: I have not written to you for a very long time. I have often thought about it, and I have not for that reason bothered less about all that you were able to write to me. Now I shall go rapidly over your two letters, those of January 31st and March 15th.

You know how the poor affair of Rheinackern ended. You also know, perhaps even better than I, all that concerns the new convent of Acey.

It seems that Father Bardenet would want that St. Remy or the Daughters of Mary or myself assume what are called the initial expenses of an establishment. The superioress general of the Daughters of Mary made clear to me the utter impossibility on the part of all their convents to make these expenses. She went into great detail to prove the fact to me. St. Remy and I are really only one. Has Father Bardenet any idea of the expenses of which St. Remy is still the occasion? I find very great difficulty in maintaining what already exists and to meet the urgent expenses that new establishments have to make, and that, in spite of all the precautions I am able to take. I have not let Father Bardenet know of this fact.

[1] Judging from what precedes, Father Chaminade's thought was to leave in St. Hippolyte the boarding normal school or religious scholasticate with the regular boarding school and to put in Colmar the normal day school for schoolteachers, alongside of the special school and the primary school.
[2] See Letter 531.

Someone has written to me, I no longer recall who, that I could give at least the 3,500 francs that I had offered to end the Rheinackern affair.[1] We are making a mistake. When Father Lalanne wrote from St. Remy expressing his astonishment at the offer I was making, I answered him that, yes, I had my reasons. I really had them, but I was not to tell them. At bottom, I had a moral assurance that the affair would never come to terms.

It would be more than useless to come back on the details of the course I had to follow. It suffices to know that there was nothing of a disedifying or unjust nature on the part of the sisters; that they are beyond reproach in all their conduct; that no black at all can be cast either upon them or upon me, and finally, that their departure has been regretted, and that their return to Alsace was looked upon with great pleasure. You are able to say, nevertheless, that I was pleased to see being brought to Acey the ten beds that were available in Gray. If there are in St. Remy any articles of furniture that are not needed, you could also have them brought to Acey.

Since we are upon the subject of money, I need not tell you again to procure as much as you can, and to add it to the amount of some accounts for which you owe me account. It would also be a matter of justice to reimburse me for the voyages of those whom I sent to St. Remy. Because I have not sent you Brother Perrin's bill, it does not follow that I have no pressing need, no more than if I have delayed in writing to you, I had nothing to tell you. In fact, my dear son, I am taking effective means to clear the Society of debts, and it can be presumed that this will not take six years as it was at first thought. I hope that before summer I shall be able to give you satisfying results. The order that we are trying to put into our different establishments, and the savings we can make in them would not suffice of themselves alone by reason of the rapid rate of daily expenses and the high rates of interest that have to be paid. You, better than I, can make the bills for what those owe you whom you have sent to Bordeaux. Most of those are scattered, but I shall write to them all that you will judge suitable that they tell their parents. . . .

I have never lost sight of Ebersmunster.[1] I am directly treating the affairs of Belevaux[2] with the Reverend Pastor of the Madeleine and Brother Troffer. It is taking shape. Once all is suitably ended, I shall give you information.

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[1] In the course of the negotiations relative to Rheinackern, Father Chaminade, pushing condescension to the extreme, had consented to pay 3,500 francs for the little house which had first been offered to the sisters. See Letter of January 12th.

[1] This is the first mention of the famous Benedictine Abbey of Ebersmunster, in the heart of Alsace not far from Silestat, which after having been disaffected by the Revolution, had just been put up for sale at the price of 30,000 francs. It was to be bought by the Rothéa family and offered to Father Chaminade, who established there in 1833, the house of formation for the Province of Alsace.

[2] There was question of confiding to the Society of Mary, which already ran workshops and classes for children in the St. Jacques Hospital, the workshops and classes for children kept in the prison of Bellevaux, just as in Besançon. "We know," wrote the Founder to the pastor of the Madeleine, Father Vieille, "the ardor of your zeal for the glory of God and for the salvation of souls. Furthermore, we doubt not that you will go, at the earliest possible moment at the call of His Excellency the Archbishop, the Honorable Prefect, Mayor, Chaplain, and the Administrators. . . ."

I wrote to Father Lalanne all that he had to do for Courtefontaine. I have reason to think he told you about it . . .

I have no doubt that the absences of Father Lalanne will harm St. Remy. This alternative of superiorship evidently does not work out satisfactorily. I hope, nevertheless, that the advantages of his absences are superior to the inconveniences, and that a better arrangement of affairs will be made without much further delay.

Brother Seguin[3] cannot as yet go to St. Remy, but you will lose nothing by this delay. He is training three apprentices. He has much extended the locksmith shop, both inside and outside of the wine press house. He has almost completed the making of a large machine with which a single workman can do the work of five or six. This machine is expensive enough, because it called for a lot of cast iron and iron. It is already understood that the cast iron will be paid by jobs done by the machine. I hope the same will be the case with regards to the iron. Our intention is to work for the merchants. The place that you have picked out for the locksmith shop was entirely insufficient. Without the newly invented machines, we could not handle jobs from the outside, nothing could be earned and the workmen would always go out of their way to wait for work. Instead of that, in this way, they hardly ever need even to go out of their shop.

I have just had an oven constructed in a cellar of the house on Lalande Street, No. 3,[1] I had all done that was necessary, all works well, but almost nothing is paid.

Brother Seguin lately proposed to me to have a mill for grinding wheat constructed, to add to the savings we get from our oven. The same machine that runs the locksmith shop outfit would operate this mill. One such has just been constructed for the new hospital, where the grinding is done for all the hospices of the city. The only difference there would be is that the hospital mill is run by steam, whilst ours is run by horsepower. You see that we are losing nothing in remaining patient in the hope that Brother Seguin will go to St. Remy and even with a good workman.

I am very sorry for young Pelleteret.[2] Is there any chance of his getting better?

Young Fischer is writing to me for the third time, and says what he had also said to me at the time of my passage in St. Remy, that the job of porter that he still has is very annoying to him, as much because of his mediocre virtue as of his feeble health. I really

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[3] Head of work at St. Laurent.

[1] Since then, it is Nos. 8 and 10, a house to the right of the Chapel of the Madeleine, where the seminary of the Society used to be.

[2] Brother F. X. Pelleteret (1810-1830) entered on June 2, 1827 at St. Remy where he died on Mary 6, 1830, as the result of a chest malady. A manuscript of his has been kept, entitled: “Collection of Different Points on Which the Brothers, as Religious Persons, Aspiring to a Higher Perfection, Must Often Examine Their Consciences.” He was well prepared for death, “wrote Father Chevaux to Father Chaminade, “his death was edifying> I believe his already an inhabitant of heaven.” June 4, 1830.

think he is right, and that it should not be a child to be kept constantly at the door. He could easily be trained for the schools in Alsace, and his health might also improve there as the doctor seems to have told him. I am writing him a little letter, however, without as yet deciding anything in case there should be some inconvenience of which I am not aware.

I am going to send you this little pack of letters in the envelope of the minister and to the address of Father Lalanne, but if Father Meyer has received his diploma as Head of the Institution, I will be able henceforth, to address to him directly all the letters for St. Remy.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with an entirely paternal affection.

* * * *

Here is the little letter addressed to Brother Fischer, announced in the preceding one.

517 – TO OUR DEAR LITTLE BROTHER
FISCHER, ST. REMY
Bordeaux, in the beginning of April, 1830

My dear son: I have received your letter of last March second. You tell me that it is the third you have been writing to me, but I have no idea of having received any others besides this one. I know the weakness of your virtue and nevertheless, your good will. I would also be of the opinion that you should be in St. Hippolyte. I am writing about it to Brother Clouzet. On your part, talk to him about it and do what he will tell you to do. If he is of the same opinion, and if he has no special reason for retaining you in St. Remy, let me know of it or ask him to let me know of it by letter, and I shall commit you to the hands of Father Rothéa. Always do whatever you can to become a true and very regular religious. May the Lord deign to grant you his benediction.

* * * *

Father Chaminade had well foreseen the future of his "dear little brother." Brother Bernard Fischer (1810-1858) born in Schliebach, Alsace, made his profession at St. Laurent and died at Ebersmunster, after having founded or directed the schools in Ammerschwir, Saultz, Kientzheim, Soufflenheim, and Issenheim. "In the diverse posts which he occupied," write Brother J. B. Hoffman, "he always distinguished himself by a great spirit of order and regularity. His favorite occupation was to give religious instruction to children and, above all, to prepare them for their first communion. His zeal and his devotedness to the Society of Mary were shown by a great attachment and a respect without limits towards the founder of the Society, Father Chaminade. He did not fear, although feeble in health, to undertake on foot the voyage from Colmar to Bordeaux to receive the counsels and advice of this Good Father, and he often repeated that he would willingly give his life for this holy old man. Brother Fischer is one of these good brothers who knew how to persevere in their vocation, in spite of a thousand obstacles they had to overcome during the first years of the Society in Alsace. Among many other difficulties, they had that of often being obliged to do double work to keep up the existing establishments, considering the penury of the subjects. At the beginning the same brothers who held class had, at the same time, to take turns cooking. And in these times classes were a lot more difficult than today. It was not unusual to see classes with 130 and 150 pupils."

518 – TO FATHER LALANNE, COLMAR

Bordeaux, April 12, 1830

My dear son: Brother Auguste seemed to admit his mistakes. He has just made his Easter duties. In one of the long interviews that have preceded, I let him know of the intention there is of changing the boarding school into an institution as soon as the Society would have the suitable number of subjects available, and that at that time, I would release him of the heavy burden that weighs him down, and that the Society would take upon itself

all debts, adding that his real place should be as head of the normal schools in St. Remy. He seemed satisfied with everything, but he does not believe that anything is being done about the matter at the present time. . . .

Father Collineau has been living in the boarding school for the last two or three months. He is doing some good there, but without settling on anything definite. Since his return from Villeneuve, he has always wanted to be more free. Since the last retreat and his contradictions with Brother Auguste, he is in the Society, so to say, only as a friend, etc. He does not renew his vows at the time of retreat. I have let him know that I could not employ him in any important commission, until such time as he will have openly and definitely let us know just where he stands. In great part, I told him what you proposed for him in your last letter. Our interview was very friendly, but it settled nothing. You will see if you would think it suitable to write to him, but only as if it were of your own initiative and not at all prearranged. Besides, we must pray much for him, for I even have reason to fear for his salvation. . . . He still does a lot of preaching, he preaches every two weeks without counting in days on which fall particular feasts.

I think I shall be able to furnish you four or five pretty good professors. Two of these are already subdeacons, professors already in the boarding school and doing well, but their entry into the Society is not yet definitely settled.

The greater number of our properties in Bordeaux are burdened with mortgages. I have hope of having them unburdened next month with very large sums. My reckoning goes up to 50,000 francs.

In taking over the boarding school, you will doubtless have a lot of debts to pay, but you will be able to furnish mortgages in proportion. Let us work with very pure views for our good master and his august mother, and we shall not be abandoned.

It must not be lost sight of that all our actual combinations are in the supposition that the Boarding School Ste. Marie is to be set up as an institution. In spite of the favorable attitude of the king, we are not sheltered from the danger of annoying experiences.

I see Brother Clouzet in the same relations as yourself. Let us always be on the lookout for a subject fit to look after the temporal affairs of St. Remy. He will be as hard to find as the strong woman described in the Book of Proverbs. What he needs above all is much virtue, in order to join a certain firmness, both to ready compliance and to the respect he owes to a first head.

I am writing you this letter to Colmar. I do not know if my last one found you in St. Remy. In any case, I think your letters are being sent to the places where you happen to be. I

am wishing you the twofold peace which our Lord wished to his apostles on that day of his resurrection.[1]

* * * *

The following letter is doubtless addressed to one of those auxiliaries of Ste. Marie Boarding School, of whom Father Chaminade was speaking and whom he hoped to win for the Society.

519 – TO MR. SENIGON, PROFESSOR IN THE
STE. MARIE BOARDING SCHOOL, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, April 19, 1830

Dear Sir: Your letter of the 14th of the current month pleased me by the candor and frankness which characterized all you said. I shall await the second letter that you announced to me. I have every reason to believe and to hope that I shall be able soon to count you among the number of my children.

May this answer, preliminary to the definitive one, be for you sir, a first token and assurance of my tender affection.

* * * *

In the meantime, a note to Brother Laugeay, the founder of Agen, whom he has just withdrawn from Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, and whom he is recalling to his own place of residence.

520 – TO BROTHER LAUGEAY, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, April 15, 1830

I see, my dear son, quite an advantage for you and also for the Society, in your joining Brother Gaussens to make the voyage to Bordeaux. I say an advantage for you in the supposition that you will work better at your interior reform than you did last year at the time of your pleasure trip, because otherwise, it would be better to await in St. Remy the new destination you might well receive.

So many voyages, especially in the midst of the great want of everything we are suffering is a great inconvenience, but in the first place, it seem to be your intention of making them on foot. In the second place, we must count as little, a few more expenses when there is question of the interest of our salvation and of our soul.

[1] The letter is dated on Easter Monday.

I shall stop here all other reflections. Before leaving, settle everything well, as much with Brother Gaussens as with Father Lalanne, especially as regards the theory and the practice of the methods of primary teaching, as much for the little schools as for the normal schools, so that finally, there may be complete uniformity in teaching and also in the maintenance of the schools. Brother Gaussens is charged to take along copies of all the methods, and you are solidly charged with him to the same duty.

I am much embarrassed as regards finding someone to replace you in Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, but I shall take the matter in hand. I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

521 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 9, 1830

My dear son: I have received, one after the other, the project of the prospectus, and your letters of April 8th and the 17th is the same as that of the 8th, but continued in Colmar. . . . You have doubtless written directly to Father Collineau. It is already three or four days ago that I received the letter of April 29th in which you tell me of it. He is not speaking of it, but he is quietly and almost secretly making preparations for his departure. He is to leave, so says Brother Auguste, on the 17th of the current month. On the eve, he will preach in the Madeleine for the feast of Our Lady of Martyrs.

We must surely take great care, so as not to let St. Remy go to pieces. In trying to build it up, we thought we were entering into the view of God. Our calculations up to the present for the Ste. Marie Boarding School have been altogether human, although made with the very best intentions. The good God might well not want to make use of Father Collineau, and nevertheless, want to build up the boarding school without prejudice to St. Remy. Let us adore the profound judgments of God, and let us make new calculations in his presence.

Take good care of young Delcamp. He was a little angel when I sent him from St. Laurent. It must be admitted that our young men, in general, are very badly take care of. I hope that with time and patience, we shall be able, little by little, to remedy this annoying situation. I shall regard Delcamp as available.

Jules Chaminade has quite a good heart but a bad head. Anyone who will know how to win his confidence will be able to make good use of him, but he will also have to attach him, so to say, to his belt.

Nor have I here, my dear son, any people to act as counter police. The occasion that gave rise to this idea in your mind is just the matter of a slight misunderstanding. . . .

As soon as I had received the new project of your prospectus, I read it, passed it on to Father Collineau, asking him that he give me in writing his observations about it. They seemed to me quite reasonable. It seems to me, my dear son, that for work of this kind you would do well, after having put them down on paper, to come back to them several times, and at different times. Then you are in a condition to touch up yourself whatever can be improved. It is very difficult to make a good prospectus of this kind, especially if beforehand, one is not entirely decided and settled as regards what is to be announced. In this case, a lot more than in the case of poetry must it be said: "Twenty time on the anvil, put back your work, etc."

I am having our rough sketch given back to you, and the notes of Father Collineau, after having made copy of these for myself . . .

It is your wish, my dear son, that when I want to name subjects for some particular place, I take information from the establishments where they already are. I have always done so from the beginning. But is it the same when I know the subjects well and what they are doing? Must I still ask the heads if they have other views as regards the subjects? Does it not suffice that I have them replaced in the functions they are exercising. Take note, on the one hand, that ordinarily I already put a lot of time discussing the suitability and the purpose of these changes. On the other hand, that I should write that I should consult the heads, that I should await their opinions, my, what time that would require, then the very reason for the changes would disappear, and I would never be able to take hold of new requests which often require immediate attention. If I give in to this, it is to be presumed that whoever is going to replace me will not give in to it. It would seem to me in better order, that the heads change nothing without first notifying the Superior, otherwise there will be great risk of compromising him in many ways, and that might easily have very sad effects. What unfortunate examples we have of this in the Ste. Marie Boarding School. A Superior, no doubt, may be mistaken, for he may be receiving false or misleading information, lacking suitable subjects he may be employing quite unworthy ones, etc. However, all these annoyances cannot counterbalance the great inconvenience of making the Superior a mere slave of all passing opinions. . . .

I have to finish this letter rather bluntly, for the last minute indicating the departure of the mail is about to ring. It is May 9th today, and during the office, I am embracing you very tenderly, without rereading what I have written or making a duplicate copy . . .

* * * *

Father Chaminade decides to speak openly to Father Lalanne regarding the dispositions of Father Collineau, but only to permit Father Lalanne to cooperate in the saving of this soul in distress.

522 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, May 10, 1830

I wrote to you yesterday, my dear son, a very long letter, and in the same envelope, I included your project of prospectus and the notes of Father Collineau. I had all passed over to you by means of the envelope of the Minister of Public Instruction and sent to your address in Gray. I shall have this one mailed directly to St. Remy, so that it may reach you sooner.

This morning I had a very long interview with Father Collineau. He came to tell me that his places in the stagecoach to leave for Paris on the 17th had been taken. His father has been bothering him for a long time about accompanying him to Paris, just to see this capital city. His absence would last about six weeks.

He asked me for commission to look after, because he is afraid of being bored after several days spent in visiting the interesting sights. We have fallen on the request to be made to the ministry for the purpose of raising the Ste. Marie Boarding School to the level of a full-fledged institution, but this matter was subject to an agreement that would have to be made with you, as regards the motives to be put forward and emphasized, as well as regards the head to be presented. This head could be none other than yourself, and in your arrangements, it was necessary that he be Superior of the establishment of St. Remy, at least until there could be trained in the Society a subject capable enough to be granted this degree of confidence, so as to replace him . . .

We agreed that from Paris he would go to see you in St. Remy, without actually taking any engagement for St. Remy, that I would write to you this evening, and that you yourself could write to him in Paris, to the address of Mr. O'Lombel at whose house he would get his letters. I understood that his father would go and lodge in this quarter.

Father Collineau did not tell me that he had received any letter from you. You tell me, nevertheless, in your last one that you are writing to him. I did not think I should ask him about it . . . Father Collineau seems to me settled on nothing. I think he would leave the Society, if he were offered some important post. He still preserves the desire to do good, and even much good, but a good which he can choose for himself and such as can be done by folks distinguished for their talents. He needs the help of the throng. His is no consistent work, no settled undertaking, etc. You already know him, but this certain esteem which we have for ourselves, and which leads us to believe ourselves superior to many others that are praised and who have pretensions, has made great progress with him. I have to be very moderate with him if I happen to be talking about your talents,
etc. . . . there would seem to be in him what is called jealousy. When I was in Gray and at St. Remy, you know that he wanted that you should come to Bordeaux and that he would willingly be the Superior in St. Remy, etc. A little later, he accepted the superiorship of the boarding school, but that was a matter of his own choice. Today, it is you who seem to designate him for St. Remy, and it is you who will do in Bordeaux what he did not

do . . Perhaps, I am interpreting too severely, but I thought it my duty to inform you. Pray much. May the Holy Spirit enlighten you and make you say and do whatever may lead him back to God. Always busy, I finish by embracing you.

* * * *

In spite of his worries, the Founder seemed encouraged by providence to continue his vast designs. Now, one of the most influential men of the time, Count Alexis de Noailles, begged of him to take on the organization of the normal schools in the departments of the center of France. The terms entering into the first interviews are not known to us, but his second letter has been preserved. It runs thus under the date of
May 5, 1830.

Reverend Father Superior—the affairs with which I have been burdened for several days prevented me from answering as promptly as I would have wanted to do, your letter of April 12th. I am overwhelmed at the reception you have given to the assurances of my long-standing and respectful friendship and to the desire which I have of working with you for the glory of God and in the service of religion.

I have well understood, Reverend Father Superior, what you yourself understand by the term normal school. I want to have taught in it all that you point out so well, and it is for the formation of this institute that I have the assurance of obtaining an allowance from my general council. Not less would I also want a primary school, according to the system of the House of the Sisters of Providence, which I already have in Noailles and that the youth in my entire commune should receive religious and primary instruction. These two things may almost walk abreast. That they be together or separated, we shall recognize in whatever steps will be taken only your will and your orders, for it is you who will direct us with paternal authority.

Neither shall I be restricted as to the number of brothers to two, as I had at first designated. I shall be entirely satisfied with the number you judge fitting. I really like the ideas about the meetings of the schoolteachers, and of the useful retreats at certain definite periods. All this suits me perfectly. The building, already quite big, will be susceptible to considerable enlargement, and my purse, helped by my General Council, over which I have presided for the past ten years, will be ready to complete all that your holy customs and edifying rules will dictate to us.

It is exactly according to the plan of the Ordinance of February 14th, that I had thought over for a number of years what I intend to go ahead with: a normal school paid by the General Council of the Correze, a primary school run at my expense, a building put up by me and maintained with funds from the department in connection with myself.

I do not hesitate to repeat to you, Reverend Father Superior, that I shall gladly take my little part in the care of your brothers, that I shall neglect nothing by way of helping and encouraging their pupils, and giving my attention to the examinations and to cares of all sorts. They will find our village and our church very edifying. Our good sisters have already so well seconded our respectable pastor, that the usage of frequent communion has increased among our people and that the genuine spirit of religion is growing ever stronger among us. The presence of your respectable brothers will complete our first institutions,

and little by little, we shall increase our establishments in such a way that our home in Noailles will become a sanctuary for piety and a place of recollection and prayer.

Let me know if you can accede to my wishes! I take it upon myself, in exchange for this benefit, to become your business man in these parts, and to solicit all that may be useful and agreeable to you. Shall I have the happiness of installing your excellent brothers this summer during my stay in Noailles? Do give me this hope and consolation! All will be ready at the end of June.

I beg of you, as I offer you my very best wishes and ask you to be assured of my respect, affection, and devotedness.

To which Father Chaminade answered.

523 – TO THE COUNT OF NOAILLES[1], PARIS

Bordeaux, May 14, 1830

Honorable Count: It is with special pleasure that I see by your letter of May 5th that we shall always be in perfect agreement when it comes to doing good in Noailles and in the entire department of Correze. We shall surely be able to do the same for all of France, and here is how.

God has deigned to inspire me, now some years ago, with the desire of working for the maintenance of religion in our unhappy country. To be able to do it more efficaciously, I asked for the faculties of an apostolic missionary and obtained them.

The first means to accomplish my mission was the institution or establishment of sodalities. One of the second means with which God deigned to inspire me is the establishment of normal schools. If there were one in each department or one in each province of the Academies of the University, maintained according to the plan I have drawn up, we could renovate the whole rising generation, which will soon replace the present one.

I could well give models of these normal schools for the three departments, namely: that of the Doubs, the Haute-Saône, and that of the Jura. These establishments are not yet just as we would desire them to be, although they are already realizing much good; but if I have a department in which I can be permitted to do all that I think necessary, and in which I can have sufficient aid, we would have a school that could truly serve as model to all those that would be established in France. His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction, seems convinced of the necessity of these establishments. He is disposed and ready to favor those which would be held and directed by the Society of Mary. You must see, Honorable Count, from this short sketch, how much your benevolent

[1] About the Count de Noailles, see Letter 50.

mediation might be able to contribute efficaciously just in striving to do good in Noailles and in the department of Correze.

To this effect, I shall arrange to send to Noailles, in the course of the month of June and at a date we can arrange later, the head of a normal school[2] with whom you can arrange everything as regards locations, furnishings, lodging, and maintenance of the primary and normal school teachers, as well as of the candidates. We call candidates, the young men whom we train to become schoolteachers in the diverse communes of the departments. Usually, these young men are not able to afford the entire amount of tuition. The best ones off are ordinarily those who pay one-half or one-third of it. The Council of the Jura department voted last year 3,100 francs in burses for the normal school established in Courtefontaine. As this Council is very well composed, it left us complete liberty in the disposal of this money. This year, instead of creating burses, I created only half-burses and in this way, I was able to double the number of young men to be accommodated, and of such as are ordinarily more civilized than those who bring nothing.

This preliminary, if it is not absolutely necessary, at least seems very suitable to me. If the normal school is equipped at about the same time as the primary school, less subjects will be required, as the same person could be the head of the one and of the other. It is very possible that I shall let you have as head the very visitor whom I intend to send to you. That will really be a gift, and so to say, a sacrifice that I shall be making in virtue of our old friendship. I called him to Bordeaux, nearer to me, to replace a head of the novitiate and of the normal boarding school.

I shall be very much obliged to you if you give me your Noailles address, so that I can continue my correspondence with you. I shall send a copy of our correspondence until today to the visitor of whom I have just spoken, with some special instructions. He is, at the present time, head of the normal school of Courtefontaine in the Jura and will continue as such until I can satisfactorily replace him. I am, with very sincere and respectful devotedness, etc. . . .

P.S. You will not delay in noticing, Honorable Count, that the religious, whom I shall have the honor of sending to you to visit the establishment, is also just as well-instructed in all the branches of teaching as he is solid in the practice of religious virtues.

The answer of the Count was not slow in coming.

My heart beats with joy in thinking, Reverend Father Superior, that my wishes are being accepted and that you will form in Noailles an establishment of the kind of those which most please you! I beg of you, make use of me as of one of your brothers, and depend upon it that we

[2] Brother Gaussens.

are giving you complete liberty of action, according to the impulse of the spirit from on high with which you are filled.

I am very glad to tell you that it is even at the Ministry of Public Instruction that I was again prevailed upon to address myself to you. I do not know of any other work more useful and more applicable to the time in which we are living, than that with which you are occupied!

I am leaving Paris tomorrow. I shall regret very much not being here to receive Father Collineau. I am asking you for instructions, in order to continue, at the time of my return to Paris, the affairs he will have started.

My address in Limousin is at Noailles, Correze. I ask of you to notify me five or six days in advance of the arrival of your visitor and that will suffice for me. I shall be at my home or at least close by during the entire month of June.

I beg of you to advise him to come to Noailles, neat Brives, between Brives and Souillac. There are stagecoaches between Bordeaux, Perigueux, and Brives. If I am notified on time of his coming, I shall send someone to Brives to meet him. We shall pass the time of our negotiations in piety and Christian conversations.

I have in mind this summer making a run to Bordeaux, both to see you and to look after some affairs requiring my personal attention.

I beg of you to accept the homage of my respect, devotedness, and inviolable attachment.

* * * *

The affair, so well started, was unhappily stopped by the Revolution of July, and only the primary school could be opened. This work itself was of but short duration and had to be abandoned in 1835.

At Besançon, Father Chaminade had accepted in principle the direction of the work with the young prisoners of Bellevaux, but he insisted on not starting until the conditions were such as to assure a certain measure of success.

524 – TO FATHER VIEILLE, PASTOR OF THE MADELEINE, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, May 26, 1830

Reverend Father—I have received the letter which you did me the honor of writing towards the end of last April. I delayed answering you, not only on account of my

numerous and almost endless occupations, but also on account of the difficulty in settling the interesting affair of Bellevaux. All well considered, Reverend Father, it doesn't seem to me that we can sufficiently isolate the prison children in Bellevaux, as well as the teachers who would instruct them and direct them in their labors.

Here are two propositions that I shall take the liberty of placing before you, so as not to abandon a work that we really have at heart.

1. Why could we not do in Besançon what is done in Paris for the same object? For a long time, the administrators made to the brothers of St. Von or to those of the Christian Schools, the same propositions that are made today for Bellevaux. The Brothers of the Christian Schools have never accepted them. Finally, the administrators procured a big house for them, and there are sent to them all the prison children who still offer some chance of profiting by their education, and all has been succeeding well for several years.

2. If the administrators of the hospice of Bellevaux don't think they ought or can provide a house big enough to isolate this institution, would it not be possible to keep two more teachers in the House of Charity, adjoining the Hospital St. Jacques? Every day they could go to Bellevaux to give all the necessary instruction to the children.

It is useless to speak of the different instructions that they would have to give them, but it is evident that that of religion and morals must be the main one. Since the days of my early youth, Reverend Father, I have often felt and appreciated the truth of the axiom I have often heard repeated: The good must be done well. I think that you are also of the same opinion. Let us do only what we shall be able to do well.

I am, Reverend Father, with entire devotedness, etc.

* * * *

525 – TO BROTHER PERIGUEY, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, May 28, 1830

You have done well, my dear son, to write to me again. Brother Troffer should not have had anything in the letter you were writing to me, he should not even have read it. What did you want to tell me about the hundred pistols?

I am really aware that there are necessary changes to be made in the Charity of Besançon, even if we were not to take Bellevaux. Tell me honestly if Brother Bousquet would not be a good head for this establishment of the Hospital St. Jacques, especially since he enjoyed such a great facility in communicating to me all the difficulties. Brother Bousquet is one of the oldest religious. He was a religious[1] before the first meeting

[1] Of the *État* or State of the Sodalists living as religious in the world. See Letter 355.

which formed the Society. I shall then try always to keep someone in the establishment who knows well how to run the classes.

Supposing this change, it would be necessary that you remain there a bit longer, because it would be a somewhat doubtful policy to change almost everybody at the same time. Besides, I would gladly see you at the Ste. Marie Boarding School, although I admit it to you, I always regret to believe that for the remainder of this year you would there work out your salvation better than at Besançon. Remain quiet. I hope never to lose sight of you. I shall always be your Good Father.

* * * *

Always harassed by financial embarrassments, the Founder speaks again of them to Brother Clouzet, his ordinary confidant and also his helper in this matter.

526 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, June 12, 1830

My dear son: While looking at my list of letters to be answered and taking up my pen to write to you, I was astonished to find a letter dated May third still unanswered. I reread it, and I am now answering it. . . .

You know, my dear son, that for a very long time I have been looking around to find black and chestnut-brown cloth of good quality and as cheap as possible. After many trials, I decided to give my confidence to Mr. Casse-Bigeon, a big merchant draper of Bordeaux, whom you surely know. He is a good enough Christian for me to be able to excite his zeal in serving us as if he were doing a good work. It was understood that when he went to the factory, he would select for us all we would need, as much for ourselves as for the Daughters of Mary, and that we would pay him the factory price, plus a very small commission. In fact, 15 to 20 days ago I received from Paris a large package containing the different kinds of cloth asked for. Some day later, he himself came to Bordeaux. I asked him for his bill. It amounts to 1,755 francs, 10 centimes. I was about frightened. At the same time, I am pressed for the payment of different bills, pretty heavy ones too, which would together amount to more than 1,700 francs.

There I was pretty well stuck and trying to be patient, when I received a letter from Father Lalanne which asks to have constructed in St. Remy, a hotel to receive strangers and that 3,000 francs are available to make a start. If I have not permitted it, it is not because I had need of the 3,000 francs. I explained the matter to him very frankly. Even if I had not had any urgent need, I would not have permitted it because prudence seemed so plainly opposed to such a project. But, nevertheless, I praised God interiorly for the care that his providence had again taken to come to my assistance in all the need to which he permits me to fall. Such a case is often repeated. Providence, doubtless, wants to accustom me always to have complete confidence in it, and never

to consider anything but its own interests. Henceforth, may God be forever blessed in all the dispensations of his providence!

I am very much worried and grieved over the condition of health of Pelleteret. If his chest were not attacked, there might still be some hope in the suitableness of the regime we would have him follow.

You would do well to send young Fischer to St. Hippolyte.

I am sending Brothers Gobillot and Silvain to Courtefontaine. With this help, Brother Galliot will easily be able to look after everything, or else he must be absolutely without a soul. I am no longer thinking of Brother Fridblatt for Courtefontaine.

If Father Lalanne has not let you know about the mission I am giving to Brother Gaussens, the latter could explain it to you himself, because I have just received a letter from him in which he tells me he is leaving for St. Remy.

The project of Father Bardenet for the transfer of the normal school of Courtefontaine to Lons-le-Saunier is excellent in itself, but it will harm the establishment a great deal if it is put off too long. All the repairs, either for Miss Coudre or for the Reverend Pastor have been immediately stopped, and it had cost us so much to have them finally put in order. . . .

I have written to Brother Gaussens to come with Brothers Py and Delcamp and also with Brother Poux. Since Brother Gaussens is to go to Noailles by way of Brives, I had thought that he could separate himself from his traveling companions at Limoges. It is believed that there is a direct route from Clermont to Brives, and then Clermont would be the point of separation. You will be able to tell him so. He will see the thing itself on the map and take counsel in consequence.

Father Lalanne announced to me that Brother Roux would be leaving St. Remy on June 8th; reckoning on this word from him, I am having Brother Soleil leave after tomorrow morning with Brother Silvain on foot.[1] They will go together as far as Gray. At Gray they will separate, and each will go to his own destination. In Soleil you have a good religious, but one whose health needs extra care. As an aid to his health here, he had permission to suspend his work for a quarter to a half-hour when he felt the need of it, but he never abused the privilege.

Your brother does not at all expect that you will accept the invitation he has made to you.

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[1] "Brother Roux, shoemaker, wrote to me quite a good letter. He is satisfied with St. Remy, but he is always wearied by the visits of his relatives. He is always asking me to come here. Brother Soleil, the older, our master shoemaker in Bordeaux, has the same desire as Roux. He asks me very often to send him far away from his relatives. There is only advantage in satisfying these two young men, who have the good spirit of their state. They will mutually replace one another. When once you have told me that Roux has left, then I shall have Soleil leave in his turn."—Brother Clouzet, April 1830.

Always put much interest, my dear son, in the cultivation of the landed properties of St. Remy and of Marast.

My dear son, I am mentally extending my arms as far as St. Remy, and I am embracing you tenderly, pressing you to my heart.

* * * *

Brother William Silvain (1811-1890) is one of the most unusual characters in the history of the Society. He was from the diocese of Agen. He entered St. Laurent in 1827, and after his profession in 1830, he was employed in St. Remy and then at Courtefontaine. He was gifted with an exuberant nature and an unflinching faith. Father Chevaux thus described him to Father Chaminade: "Where Brother Silvain is really precious is in the office of zeal in the midst of his pupils. If the establishment of St. Remy is getting along so well in matters of good morals and the good spirit, we do not fear to admit that for this, we are indebted to Brother Silvain. But his zeal has to be directed, for alone, he would be guilty of any number of blunders. However, directed, he obtains the happiest results." Unhappily, Brother Silvain was named director of the boarding schools of Orgelet and Cuiseaux. From this last place, during the night, he transferred himself with pupils, teachers, and equipment to the neighboring town of Lons-le-Saulnier, where he gave his work a new start (1852). Director in Cordeax and in Beaumont-de-Lomagne, he started both of these establishments, but having imprudently and without permission accepted to serve as bail for a manufacturer in need, he saw himself suddenly loaded with an enormous debt, which the Society neither could nor wanted to take upon itself (1868). Nearly 60 years old, Brother Silvain left for American, without any knowledge of English, put himself in the service of the Bishop of Wheeling, West Virginia, who after two years ordained him priest and put him in charge of a small mission. In course of time, by dint of hard work, Brother Silvain earned enough to satisfy his creditors, and finally free from the financial load and his mission, he returned to France (1884) to his dear Society and passed the last years of his life in Courtefontaine, edifying his brothers by his piety, his patience, his good humor, which nothing had ever been able to change, and his attachment to the Founder, for whom he professed the most profound veneration. Brother Silvain has left interesting notes about the Founder and the first years of the Society.

Brother Celestin Poux (1806-1869), a native of St. Lothein in the Jura, had been named teacher in Courtefontaine in 1827. When the first religious of the Society established themselves there in 1829, he was impressed by their virtue and made up his mind to join them. After his novitiate, made at St. Laurent (1830), he was sent to Agen, where he made his perpetual vows in the hands of the Founder (1831). Employed as professor, then as director, in diverse schools of the South and Franche-Comté, he was everywhere a model of regularity and devotedness.

In his youth, a firm will based on solid convictions made him the conqueror of all the dangers and perils that a community drifting away from its ideals presented, and of which the head was betraying his duties before leaving the Society. Having become director, his zeal only increased. Always with his community, always the first as a man of faith, he invariably put the spiritual in the first place, never omitting a single exercise of piety and not suffering that any of his brothers should omit any either. Very simple in his person, his habits, and his language, he was a real father to his religious. The organization of the Society being still incomplete, the initiative of the head was to supply for all that was still lacking. Brother Poux understood this well. He often took his brothers in private interviews, especially the younger ones, to train them, to encourage them, to help them in every way. He established in Salles, near Bordeaux, a system of

emulation that obtained a real success. Notes were regularly marked and approved, serious examinations were passed in each class three or four times a year. Besides the weekly compositions of the class, he had the pupils of a higher course compete with the strongest ones of a lower course, or his best pupils with those of another school. He thus attained surprising results in a region where education was not appreciated by the families.

When he died at Courtefontaine, worn out by work and infirmities, the austere Brother Fidon could announce his death in these words, which in the mouth of such a one have the value of a funeral oration. "Our good Brother Celestine Poux has gone to receive the reward of his forty and more years of service in the Society of Mary. He has always been regular and devoted."

Here is the letter by which Father Chaminade accepted the foundation of Salins, a small city in the diocese of St. Claude in the Jura Department. However, the foundation was delayed and really took place only three years later.[1] The Society of Mary directed in Salins until 1903, a school and a boarding school which accomplished much good.

527 – TO FATHER COLIN, PASTOR OF
SAINT-ANATOILE, SALINS

Bordeaux, June 17, 1830

Reverend Father, In answer to your letter of the third of the present month, and desiring to enter into your benevolent views regarding the instruction and education of the children of the city of Salins, I shall supply you with three good teachers around All Saints Day.

You may take possession of the part of the former house of the Ursulines, which is for sale. It would be good to have the whole house, as much on account of those who might occupy the unsold part as for providing more place for the teachers, so as to extend as much as possible the good they would be able to do to the youth of your city. As a result, instead of only three, we could place four or five to teach the principles of the arts and crafts, attracting there and without confusion the majority of your young artisans.

In all the establishments, we always provide a room to serve as a chapel, where the Eucharist may be reserved with the authorization of the local bishop.

If food products continue to be at the present rate, the salary of 400 francs per head will be entirely insufficient to cover food, maintenance, and many accessory expenses. I hope that the city will take care of the most ordinary expenses, such as firewood, remedies

[1] See the letter of September 29, 1833.

and medical care, should some illness arise, etc. The traveling expenses to go to Salins will be looked after by the city, and they will be as low as possible. I am with great respect, etc.

* * * *

528 – TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, June 18, 1830

My dear son, I received your letter of the 5th of the present month, and I was edified. I certainly rejoice over your submission, because it will bring you many blessings from God. I am temporarily appointing Brother Bousquet head of the establishment. Get along well with him, be as it were his right arm, and thus all will end well with help from on high, and in which I have the most complete confidence.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with an altogether paternal tenderness.

* * * *

The following two letters are a proof of the care which the Founder took to keep away from the Society subjects unfit for religious life.

528 (#2) – TO THE REVEREND SUPERIOR OF
MAJOR SEMINARY OF MONTAUBAN

Bordeaux, June 18, 1830

Reverend Father Superior: Every day I wanted to answer your letter of last May 2nd, which I passed over to young Bories who was accompanied by Mr. Jauvert.

In one and the other young man, I noticed a great difference in the states of life which they said they wanted to embrace. In short, young Bories has to go into retirement as the result of an illness, and Jauvert insists that he came in order to continue his ecclesiastical studies. I understood that at first sight, but he admitted it only after certain letters had fallen into our hands, which explain the secret steps he was taking and of which, doubtless, he expected the very best result. I told one and the other to come back only after having written to me and after having received my answer.

Brother Lacomme had been mistaken as regards the plans of his cousin. Mr. Jauvert, on the other hand, is little apt for further studies. All his life he will be handicapped by the deficiencies of his early education.

I am very sorry, Reverend Father Superior, that these two young men are not turning out as you would have desired. I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

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528 (#3) – TO REVEREND GIGNOUX, SUPERIOR
OF THE SEMINARY OF BEAUVAIS

Bordeaux, June 25, 1830

(See Letter 487)

My respectable son: The beautiful portrait that you give of Mr. Valadou and the reverse of which you let me catch a glimpse, throw me into a sort of uncertainty which prevents me from coming to any definite conclusion.

You tell me he is an illegitimate child, but this is an obstacle to admission which a dispensation could set aside. Has he his dispensation from Rome to enter the ecclesiastical state?[1]

His means are very mediocre, and he is only in philosophy. With means so mediocre, what would he do in physics?[2] It seems he would need at least five years of study before the priesthood, and as you say, he wouldn't be able to pay more than 300 francs for a first year. On what conditions have you admitted him to the Seminary of Beauvais? I don't presume he is in your seminary with any particular burse, since he is not of this diocese. Why wouldn't Mr. Valadou not enter into the lay religious state if there are too many difficulties with his intellectual and pecuniary means?

If these difficulties cannot be worked out by correspondence, when you come at vacation time and if you bring him along with you as far as Bordeaux, perhaps we three, after having invoked the Holy Spirit, could come to an understanding as to what ought to be done.

Receive, my respectable son, the very affectionate assurance of my sincere friendship.

* * * *

The following letter is interesting, for it shows the efforts of Father Chaminade to complete the work of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary by a Third Order Regular, efforts which were to bear fruits only some years later.

529 – TO FATHER BARRERE, PASTOR OF

[1] The text of the Constitutions of 1829 bore a number of incapacities from which the Superior could dispense if they were compensated by serious good qualities, the fact "of being born of an illegitimate marriage or of a family affected by an hereditary disease." Art. 299
[2] One of the years in philosophy then had this name.

BARRAN, GERS.

Bordeaux, June 25, 1830

Reverend dear Father: In announcing my visit, Mother Emmanuel has interpreted my sentiments, but she was not supposed to do so.

There is hardly any indication that I was to go to Barran during the course of visits that I am going to make in the letter that I had the honor of writing to you, and to which you did not answer, doubtless because you have no one whom you can put up as superior of the community, and this would be a necessary condition for the establishment of the Third Order of the Daughters of Mary, and for making of it an affiliate of the same order.

Furthermore, Reverend Father, you would have the time to go and take the baths before I can arrive as far as Barran. I shall not be able to leave Bordeaux until after the last elections, which will take place on the third of next month. I shall be held quite a long time in Agen, where I have many affairs to look after. I may perhaps go further before going to Auch. If the union of the Third Order with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary would have had to take place, I would have been able to treat of it with the Superioress General and to prepare the Constitutions and regulations for our religious in Barran.

I am with respectful remembrance, etc.

* * * *

Outside of the Institute of Mary, Father Chaminade preserves numerous relations, and on all sides recourse is had to his zeal, his prudence, and his experience. As a proof, the following letter.

530 – TO SISTER AUMAILEE, URSULINE IN
LANGON, NEAR TONNEINS

Bordeaux, June 30, 1830

My dear daughter: I shall do what I can in going to or coming back from Agen, to go and see you, as well as your good Mother of the entire community. I shall take up immediately the principal object of your letter. You ask me what your respectable mother and your entire community are to do in regard to Sister Ursula, called in the world A.M.

At first, I would have been led to tell you: Do what your respectable superior desires, because I don’t think he gives any orders.

The Reverence Chaplain of the Incurables is, I think, also right in requiring her to enter into her community, but note the fact that he is only her confessor and that he can well prescribe a law for her but not for your community.

Sister Ursula would be guilty of a crime of apostasy if previously she had not had the authorization of the archbishop to withdraw. Again, not having profited by his authorization, still remaining in the convent during the space of two years and renewing her vows, it is very uncertain that this first authorization can exonerate her from apostasy.

I still observe that according to your letter, it is not the apostate religious who is asking to enter, but that it is only her confessor who is acting in her place, doubtless with her consent. However, this does not seem to me a sufficient guarantee for you to bring about her entering. It seems to me that she should have asked you herself, that in the meantime she should bemoan and do penance for her horrible misconduct, and in the world lead a truly religious life, etc. . . . Nothing of all this, at least you say nothing about. You have the experience of the past, you know her character as well as her defects. She is a cause of sorrow and scandal for the community. The archbishop has surely relieved her of her vows, or he will do so if she asks him to do so. I am persuaded that His Excellency will advise the community not to readmit her. On my part, I am convinced that your Reverend Superior, to whom I have the honor of presenting my respects, will not insist on the readmission of this Sister. For my part, I congratulate you on being rid of her.

I don't like to hear this affair spoken about. Anyhow, since you told me about it, I did not risk talking to Father Roux, to Miss Chagne, or even to His Excellency, so as to have no one to contradict. Moreover, from me you have but a simple word of advice, since I have no further authority over you but that which your confidence is willing to give me.

As regards you, my dear daughter, who are always really my daughter by your spiritual birth and by a very special adoption, conduct yourself as a true religious and prepare yourself seriously for a happy death, especially since your continual infirmities constantly warn you of its approach.

Receive here, both for yourself and your superioress, my paternal blessing.

* * * *

The foundation in Belfort, begun in the beginning of April, is soon to be ready.

531 – TO REVEREND CANON LAURENT,
PASTOR OF BELFORT

Bordeaux, July 5, 1830

Reverend dear Father: In a very few days, I am going to send the three teachers that I promised you. I am saying in a very few days, because the observation which you have the goodness of making to me regarding the firmness required in the head of a school, obliges me to choose the head of a somewhat distant establishment.[1] The second is also well experienced in running a school.[2] Both will be very useful to the young soldiers who will not yet have made their First Communion, or who might want to be better educated in view of greater chances for advancement. I shall permit them to devote an hour each day to the young soldiers they will be able to attract. If they succeed, the firmness they will have to use toward the children will not compromise them so soon with the soldiers. However, they will do nothing without first taking counsel with you. All is in the hands of God.

The third teacher is a very pious young man but somewhat timid.[3] He is destined particularly for the smaller children. I recommend them all to your zeal and to your goodness.

P. S. Mindful of the memory of the honorable mayor, I have the honor of offering him the assurance of my respectful attachment, and of asking him always to continue the interest which he takes in the establishment of schools. I hope that this interest will always give him great satisfaction.

* * * *

The three religious who had been announced eventually arrive in Belford, but two weeks later the July Revolution broke out and under their windows were heard the yells and cries: "Down with the Brothers!" Frightened out of their wits, they abandoned the city. The Society was to come back in 1875 and to open there the Institution Ste. Marie, which still exists.

532 – TO FATHER VIEILLE, PASTOR OF THE MADELEINE, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, beginning of July, 1830

Reverend and dear Father: We have not as yet come to a complete understanding. By your letter of June 7th, which Brother Troffer has just passed over to me, you desire that the two teachers who would be destined to give the young prisoners of Bellevaux the instructions they need, would only sleep at the Hospital St. Jacques and pass the entire day in Bellevaux, and even take their meals there. That is not the way I understood the matter, but that twice a day, morning and evening, they would go to Bellevaux to give the instructions suitable to the young prisoners, and that's all there would be to it.

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[1] Brother Memain, the elder, then director of the school in Agen.
[2] Brother Memain, the younger.
[3] Brother Claverie. See Letter 433.

Brother Troffer told me that the Administration was in a position to make the repairs and put up the buildings necessary for the complete isolation of the child prisoners. If it were so, all then we would need would be a little patience, and we would soon fully equip the entire institution. It was very necessary that Brother Troffer should come and pass some time in Bordeaux. I am with profound respect . . .

* * * *

533 – TO MR. O'LOMBEL, PARIS

Bordeaux, beginning of July, 1830

My dear son: Father Lalanne writes to me that M. Baron Baron was asking for the teachers I had promised, but he gave me no kind of address. Is this respectable gentleman in Paris? To whom must the three teachers be addressed? I think it was for the month of August that I had promised them or rather that he had asked for them.[1] They are all chosen and ready to leave at the first signal. Have the kindness to answer me, my dear son, at the earliest possible date. Right now I am only waiting for the arrival of Father Collineau, before starting on my visits to the South. I expect to go to Condom and see there your two young ladies.[1] Before my departure, I would have wanted to send the three good Brothers, whom I am giving to M. Baron Baron. Is this gentleman a baron in his own name and owning a barony? Then one would have to say M. le Baron Baron.

Please share, my dear son, with Mrs. O'Lombel and your oldest daughter the assurance of my affectionate remembrance.

* * * *

The following notes show us with what paternal solicitude, in the midst of the most serious responsibilities, the Founder followed and encouraged each one of his sons.

534 – TO BROTHER MULHAUPT, ST. HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, July 9, 1830

My dear son: I receive letters from the greater number of the members of the Society. I answer them, more or less promptly, according to their needs and circumstances, but I never get any from you. Nor do you ever receive any from me, although I often think of you, because I find great difficulty in writing and sending the answers expected from me.

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[1] See Letter 505.
[1] The two youngest daughters of Mr. O'Lombel, pupils in Ste. Marie Boarding School.

And how are you, my dear son, as regards your interior and as regards your occupations in the establishment of St. Hippolyte? Are you still in your theological studies? I am much interested in everything that concerns you. I have been given to understand from some letters that you are hardly more satisfied in St. Hippolyte than you were in St. Remy. I hope that you will write me a fine letter, one which will clearly explain all that concerns you, including all the worries and cares you have met with in St. Hippolyte. After all, where are such things not to be found? But ordinarily there are more in some places than in others, and we thought there would be less for you in St. Hippolyte than in St. Remy.

I am embracing you very tenderly, my dear son. Doubtless, you are aware of the affection with which you have inspired me.

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535 – TO BROTHER GENG, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, July 9, 1830

My dear son: I have learned that Father Rothéa had just given you a mark of great confidence, that of sending you to Ebersmunster to watch that nothing be taken from that fine house and that nothing be spoiled in it. I am sure you will know how to keep busy there, be it with the garden, cleaning house somewhat, and with anything else, in keeping with your sphere of action and competence. Do not neglect anything, although you are alone, especially do not neglect to make all your spiritual exercises. This long retreat, or rather solitude in which you find yourself, may well become advantageous to you, if you know how to profit by it.

I wish you, my dear son, the peace of the Lord.

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A word of encouragement to an économe, with a counsel full of faith and shrewdness on the practice of charity among the confreres of the diverse provinces.

536 – TO BROTHER FAREY,
ECONOME IN ST. HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, July 9, 1830

My dear son: You don't always have to wait for answers to your letters before writing new ones to me. I easily understand that on several occasions, to take good care of and sometimes sending your bills, you would need to know German. If your superior thinks it suitable, you might get the help of Brother Hunolt, at least every time that German might be needed.

I have had the occasion to notice all this year that the keeping of accounts is made into a matter of great importance at St. Hippolyte. The economy no longer a very big problem when one is not preoccupied by it. But in the end it is necessary that this classical year be brought to a close with as little harm as possible.

Always tell me whatever you may have at heart. Always remain at peace with Brother Mulhaupt, as with everyone else. Economes are rarely well-thought-of in communities, even in the most holy ones. Nearly always, there must be someone to murmur and to find fault. Do your best not to provide any occasion for it. You must be just and honest with everyone and then remain quiet, letting matters take their course.

I was not of the opinion that the superior had in mind removing you from your employment. I am always speaking to him with the idea of your continuing in it.

Right now an idea has come to me as to one cause for the majority of your disagreements, namely that you have not known the general character of the Alsatians. They are good, surely, and most of the time even better than the Frenchmen, but it is certain that there is a great difference between them. What then is to be done? The thing to do is to apply the universal remedy, the one used in all the countries of the world, that of humility, charity, patience, mildness, and honesty. Then use this remedy, my dear son. I shall never lose sight of you. I already foresee that perhaps I may have you come to me, once the year is ended.

I embrace you with effusion of heart and as your good father.

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Toward the 15th of July when the Revolution began to make itself felt, Father Chaminade had left for his annual visit to the Haut-Pays, and pursued with serenity his vast plans of apostolate.

537 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, July 24, 1830

My dear son: It is from Agen that I am answering your letter of the 6th of the current month. I received it in Bordeaux before my departure. I sent to Mr. O'Lombel in Paris both your letter and the prospectus to be given to Mr. Rendu, the one and the other to be put into his own hands and also to have the prospectus printed, as soon as His Excellency will have affixed his authorization. If, at the beginning of the month of August, the minister has not yet given his authorization, Count Alexis de Noailles will then look after the matter and bring it to a happy end, but it will be necessary to tell him about it in advance.

I am not against sending a prospectus at least to most of the prefects, but if we don't do it, I don't believe it will be because of human fear. In the meantime, we shall see what happens during the first days of the month of August.

The prefect of the Gironde wants to establish a fine normal school in Bordeaux, but the election affairs prevent us even from seeing each other. He gave me the task of figuring out an estimate of the expenses that would be involved. I gave him a copy of our second-last prospectus.

The visit of Brother Gaussens will cause some displeasure on the part of Count Alexis de Noailles. I had sent him instructions supposed to be for Brother Gaussens, but so that the Count would read them and think them over. There was not in Noailles, by a good deal, what we wanted should be there, but the Count has these works so much at heart that the good God has inspired him with a project which offers all the means of execution

for a normal school, not alone for Correze, but for the departments of the Lot, the Dardogne, and the Cantal. He came to Bordeaux on purpose, almost immediately before my departure, to make me accept his new offer. I accepted it. He went back to Noailles to make a survey of the objects he is offering us, so that we on our part, following this survey, can figure out all the repairs that will have to be made. I shall enter into greater details when I shall have received the survey from Noailles.

The Count left for Paris. He has again been renamed deputy for the Electoral College of Brives. In spite of his great reticence and modesty, I noticed him to be the owner of a far greater fortune than I had imagined. His devotedness to God and to religion is nevertheless greater than his fortune, but I don't think that his credit with the government is very high.

Once I have come back to Bordeaux, I shall speak to you of our Constitutions. Here in Agen, at the present time, I am occupying myself with those of the Daughters of Mary and with everything that may be of interest to this institute.

Nor shall I neglect the schools and all that may concern them, although it is practically impossible to take care of all of this before the vacation. Before leaving, I read some pages of this method. I found some good things in them, but there are some that will have to be changed. I shall be able to talk to you more about it, once I have read it through and compared it with our old method, besides having tried it out with some simulated classes. You could easily make such a trial in the normal school in St. Remy.

Father Collineau arrived from Paris feeling tolerably well. Two days before my departure, he had a slight attack of fever. He is my substitute in Bordeaux. The bulletin I received yesterday let me know that last Sunday he was unable to say the first Mass, that of the sodalists, but that he had been able to say the second and to preach in the evening. It is to be hoped that his indisposition will soon be over and without harmful consequences. Before my departure, I let him know all the good you said to me about him in your letter. He was deeply affected. I have reason to believe that Brother David will arrive in Agen tomorrow to terminate the affairs of a religious Sister. Always ask of the good God for me, patience and wisdom.

I have no doubt, my dear son, that the good God will not fail to inspire me not to permit the expense that you were asking for.[1]

The demand for the 8,000 francs which Mr. Xavier Rothéa loaned to St. Remy must not worry you, not that I mean they should not be paid back, but that it is possible to make arrangements, and I shall know to what degree of urgency the partial or total reimbursement has come.

[1] See Letter 526.

The acquisition of Ebersmunster should not be at the expense of St. Hippolyte, nor to that of St. Remy or of any other establishment. That the 8,000 francs lent to St. Remy should be placed in Ebersmunster does not mean at the expense of St. Remy. To pay one's debts, to cancel annuities, does not mean impoverishing oneself. How are we to pay for the major repairs of this fine abbey? I wrote about it to the Rothéa brothers, but you know that they do not like delays, for their imagination is a source of worry, first to themselves and then to those with whom they have dealings.

I am somewhat astonished that Brother Clouzet, knowing that I was in need, should be so cold and send me no money in proportion to his ability. He should at least let me know what he can or cannot do and what his receipts and his expenses are, both ordinary and extraordinary. I beg of you, please let him know of my astonishment.

The Soleil[1] whom I have sent to you is not very bright as regards intelligence, but is very warm in all matters of the heart. He is of a good sort and most docile, but of feeble health, and he does not like his trade. Nevertheless, since the fifteen to eighteen months that I had permitted him to interrupt his labors for a quarter-to a half-hour in order to get fresh air, he has no longer been obliged to go to the infirmary. Nor has he ever abused these permissions. I thought I had written to Brother Clouzet or to you about this, and so when he left, I told him I would surely make it a point to do so. Finally, if he has already left again for Bordeaux, all has been said. I am saying as much for Delcamp. Doubtless, you have reflected upon all that I have told you in his regard.

I cannot take Edel, as he is not sufficiently trained. We are in no need of a sacristan. I have always been surprised that this child was accepted in St. Remy, but Father Rothéa asked for him and wanted him so badly in St. Hippolyte in order to form him! I even think that he complained to me about it in several letters.

It is now going onto about two weeks that Brother Weber is no longer with me. He is in Agen, replacing Brother Memain, the elder, who left for Belfort, as head of this new establishment of a primary school. I presume that he should arrive there tomorrow. His two associates are going there on foot. These are Brothers Memain, the younger, and Claverie. The one who is writing at the present moment and who accompanies me on my visits[2] is M. Guyon, whom bad health has forced to interrupt his studies. He was making his rhetoric at the Royal College. I would be saying something in praise of him were he not the writer of

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[1] John Soleil and Justin Soleil, from Eymet, Dardogne, entered into the Society in 1826. The first, of whom there is question here, was a shoemaker by trade. The second, a student, became professor at St. Remy and in St. Hippolyte. See Letter 526.

[2] Father F. Guyon of Bellevue, from Lanzun, in the diocese of Agen, entered in 1828 at St. Laurent, where he made his profession in 1829 and served as secretary to the good Father for several months. He could not remain in the Society, but he always remained heartily attached to it, and in 1900 even asked to spend his last days within its bosom. After having exercised for a long time the function of chaplain to the Daughters of Mary in Agen, he was named canon of the Cathedral and died piously in 1902 in the retreat house of the diocesan priests. In 1853, he had published a work titled The Christ as Mediator, Universal Synthesis.

this letter, but I can at least tell you that he is full of good will, ever ready and willing to enter and to walk more and more into the beautiful paths of the religious state. I am permitting him here to greet you, and he is doing it with respectful devotion.

I would willingly believe that the Diploma of Institution Head of St. Remy implicitly includes the institution itself in this establishment. The rector of the Academy can be assured, more than anyone else be convinced of it, since he was present when the Minister of Public Instruction, Monsignor de Montbel, added a postscript to my petition and took note of it in his registers. And, in fact, how would Father Meyer exercise his functions as teacher and head of instruction in St. Remy, if St. Remy was not looked upon as an institution? If the rector had had some doubts, it seems to me it would have been better that he himself would have written instead of you. The rector risks nothing in looking upon St. Remy as an institution. He has more than he needs to defend himself, if ever he would receive some slight reproaches. He can and he is to receive the young men who will have had their courses in St. Remy, to make them pass their examinations for the baccalaureate, etc. . . . Doubt is annoying, always and everywhere. If, nevertheless, he were not able to overcome this doubt or scruple, there isn't any doubt that it would be again necessary to appear in Paris, but that would be annoying, since the rector, you, and I, have the assurance that the boarding school in St. Remy has been raised to the rank of an institution and that to this effect the one named as head was obliged to take a teacher's diploma.

I shall perhaps be able in another letter to tell you something about Jules, about Carrere, and our normal school. I am closing in order to go and give a conference. Let us be, my dear son, really of God, seeking but him in all things. Let us pray constantly, one for the other. I am embracing you with an altogether paternal tenderness.

* * * *

Brother Andrew Edel (1813-91), of whom there is mention for the first time in the preceding letter, born in Colmar, entered as postulant at St. Hippolyte in 1827, made his novitiate at St. Remy in 1828, and was attached as head gardener to the Community of Working Brothers, of St. Joseph, so-called.

Since he otherwise had a good general education coupled with genuine culture and solid religious knowledge, he was sent to St. Die in 1842 to teach an elementary class, composed at that time of 125 pupils.

In 1849, he offered himself to accompany Father Leo Meyer, who was leaving for America. "The advance guard of the missionaries is on the way," he wrote, "may the Blessed Virgin guide and protect them, and grant that I may myself soon have the happiness of joining them, so as to have a part in their sacrifice! For some time, I have been experiencing sentiments that recall to me those that I used to experience 22 years ago when I left my parents to enter the Society of Mary. I have broken away from something I naturally love, my dear parents, my country, on account of something I love spiritually, the

service of God. I am sometimes affected unto tears, and when I ask myself what is the matter with me, I find that I am weeping with pleasure out of joy at soon being able to leave not only my parents but even my country for the love of our loveable master. May this new sacrifice be soon realized and be agreeable to Jesus and Mary. May I never become unfaithful!"

And on the eve of the departure: "I have just read a letter in the Annals of the Propagation of the Faith, in the last number of September 1849. I can no longer wait! My heart is leaping! Let us leave, yes, let us leave with the 250,000 European emigrants who land each year on the shores of America, most of them poor. For these poor, churches and pastors are needed. So much for the clergy, but for their children instruction is needed, Christian education. So much for us!"

Having arrived in America, Brother Edel opened the first school of the Society of Mary in the parish of the Most Holy Trinity in Cincinnati (1849). Then he went to San Antonio where he laid the foundations of St. Mary's College, starting point for the works of the Society in Texas (1852). Finally in 1869, he was recalled to Nazareth, motherhouse of the Province of America, where he again took care of the garden and lived twenty more years.

Brother Edel has left the memory of a religious full of faith and generosity, of an honest and enlightened piety, of a character, at the same time prudent and full of initiative. He is revered and venerated in America as one of the founders of the Province.

AFTER THE REVOLUTION OF JULY

General history tells us what the "Revolution of July" was. On the days following the 27th, 28th, and 29th of July 1830, which had seen the flight of Charles X and the coming of Louis-Philip, the antireligious passions, suppressed with difficulty under the government of the Restoration, broke out anew with violence, first in Paris, then in the provinces, and a renewal of the scenes of the Revolution of 1789 was greatly feared.

The repercussion of these events was not long in being felt in the Society, leading to the closing of the novitiates, creating a financial crisis, and casting trouble into souls. It was a period of sad experiences for the Founder, but which gave new brilliance to his faith, his patience, his courage, and his complete abandonment to Providence.

At the moment when the Revolution broke out, Father Chaminade was in Agen, in the course of a visit in the Haut-Pays. On August 2nd, with Bishop Jacoupy at the election of Mother St. Vincent as second Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary,[1] and after

[1] Mary Magdalen Cornier de Labastide (1789-1856) daughter of a lawyer in the Bordeaux Parliament, entered the Institute of the Daughters of Mary at Agen on June 28, 1816, took the name of Mother St.

having proceeded on August 11th to the nomination of his assistants, he returned to Bordeaux.

It is from there that he addressed to Brother Clouzet the following letter.

Vincent, and there spent all her life as Mother of Work, Vicar General at the time of the death of the Foundress (1828), and then as Superioress General. Under her generalate, the history of the Institute points out three facts of real importance: the institution of the Third Order Regular at Auch (1836), the approbation of the Institute by the Holy See (1839), and the foundation of the houses in Corsica (1840). Prompt and hasty by nature, this was for her, in 1832, the occasion for a painful conflict with the Founder, but gifted with a profound faith and a solid piety, she rendered great services to her religious family by her administrative talent and by her efforts to develop within it the characteristic virtues, with special insistence on faith and humility.

538 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, August 21, 1830

My dear son: I was in the course of my visits when your letter of July 20th came. The political crisis surprised me in Agen. A few days before, I wrote to Father Lalanne, but I am not certain whether he has received my letter. I would be much embarrassed if I had to make up for this letter, as I do not keep any letter once I have answered it, and then for greater promptness in expedition, I keep very few copies of the letter I write. I recall, nevertheless, that I talked to him about the payment of the 8,000 francs to M. Rothéa for Ebersmunster and of the 3,00 francs that he had said were available for me.

As regards the 8,000 francs, I don't think that there is any great urgency. At most, 4,000 francs would be needed by mid-November around the feast of St. Martin, and the other 4,000 a year later. If provision cannot otherwise be made, I shall write about it to Father Rothéa. As regards the 3,000 francs, it is only from your letter of July 20th that I learn that he is to get them only at the end of the school year and that they make up the profit or *boni* that he acquired in Gray. It will be absolutely necessary that I get them. This need existed already before the crisis, but it has since become a lot greater. On your part, you will do, I am sure, all you can. Provisions are considerably more expensive this year. That is what is being said on all sides, and it is one more reason for our remaining solidly united.

I am obliged to stop here. In Bordeaux, there are always big things doing. I am giving you and the entire establishment my paternal blessing.

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A new letter to Brother Clouzet; Father Chaminade takes account of the seriousness of the situation and gives his sons his first directions.

539 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 3, 1830

My dear son: I have not answered right away your letter of the 21st of last month, which was passed over to me by your brother, because I had written to you just a few days before. If you had not received this letter, you would have to tell me about it. Until the present, all has been quiet in Bordeaux, that is to say nothing annoying has happened to any of our establishments.

All the news I have been getting from Alsace until the present let me know that all is quiet in our establishments, with the exception of Belfort. You doubtless have received

news before me.[1] The Brothers Louis and Xavier Rothéa have lately written to me on the subject of the pitiful administration of their brother, the priest. We shall definitely bring this matter to an end next year. I have written to them, but for the time being, I am drawing all their attention to bear upon the first quarter to pay in mid-November for the acquisition of Ebersmunster. I am telling them how they are to unite their efforts, how they are not to count upon you for a very considerable supplement to what they might be lacking, that I am of the opinion that the 8,000 francs placed on St. Remy should be transferred to Ebersmunster, but that you would not be able to rely on this sum, not even on the half of it without borrowing, and that, at this time of crisis, there was no indication that you would find a place to borrow, even if you had a procuration to this effect from me. I do not recall, my dear son, if in my last letter I asked you for a model of the procuration which you would need, as I had the intention of making one, but I do recall very well that I had asked you for the 3,000 francs available to start to build a hotel for the strangers. I good-naturedly thought that these 3,000 francs were a reserve of St. Remy. How could he consider as available the funds he was to get from Gray, since it was already understood between us that they were destined for Bordeaux as additional aids and help? I am always more and more astonished that the needs of the central house are so easily lost sight of.

The affairs of the times are, I think, a lot more serious than they seem to be. It is almost impossible, as yet, to figure out what will be the results. What seemed clear to me until the present time is that we should continue as we have been doing in the past, to have ourselves spoken of as little as possible and to place ourselves in evidence as little as possible. I have been told that the rector of the Academy of Besançon had been changed. It is also possible that the inspectors were changed. Come to a perfect understanding with Father Lalanne. Never has union among all the members of the Society been more necessary. This union must be constantly strengthened, first by the spirit of faith and then by charity, piety, and zeal.

You have remarked to me in another letter the utility of a trip to Bordeaux. I would have wanted to propose it to you myself, because I am very much of the opinion that in the first place it would be very advantageous to you, then to the Society, and in particular to St. Remy. Nevertheless, I don't dare say anything at this moment of serious crisis, a moment which may get to be very long. Anyhow, it is possible that while it lasts, there will be some stagnation. May God be blessed in all things![1] Patience and submission in the midst of the terrible dispositions of divine justice.

I am going to write to Brother Memain, the elder.[2] Father Lalanne had seemed to disapprove the retreat of the brothers to St. Remy, but 1. It is possible that calm is being restored in Belfort and that the brothers will be recalled; 2. Would it be suitable or desirable

[1] Because the brothers of Belfort had taken refuge in St. Remy. See Letter 531.
[1] In effect, Father Chaminade had not only Brother Clouzet come to him, but also and in the first place, Father Rothéa and Lalanne, as will be seen later.
[2] The director named for Belfort who had taken refuge in St. Remy.

that all, even those farthest away, return to Bordeaux? We must not look only to ourselves. I am not writing to Father Lalanne, as I know you will let him know the contents of this letter.

I am also going to write two little words to Jules Chaminade. Ask Father Lalanne to be the bearer of my paternal sentiments in regard to all my children in St. Remy. Let him tell them how I bear them all in my heart, how much I am interested in all that concerns them, how very much I desire their spiritual advancement, etc.

I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and I wish you the peace of the Lord.

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540 – TO FRANÇOIS LALA, SARLAT

Bordeaux, September 3, 1830

My dear nephew: I received your letter of August 8th at the time of my arrival in Bordeaux. I had received the one previous to it in Agen, after the different circuits it had made. The reading of the letter of the 8th really moved me to gratitude. I was delaying from day to day to answer it, seeing, and again not seeing, sufficient cause for accepting your generous offers.[1] I see things hardly any better today, but I wanted to tell you for fear that you should be anxious and worried at not receiving any answer.

When the time comes, you will be kind enough, my dear nephew, to recall to me the commission you gave me at the time I was in Agen.

Say, I beg of you, the kindest things of your dear Sophie and to Firmin, and receive my tender embraces.

* * * *

Without troubling himself, the Founder continues to give his directions and to preoccupy himself above all else, to assure religious life to his sons.

[1] Perhaps Mr. Francis Lala had invited his uncle to take refuge in his home during the troubles of the Revolution.

541 – TO BROTHER MOULINIE, DIRECTOR
IN MOISSAC

Bordeaux, September 16, 1830

VACATION REGULATIONS

Your vacations must become useful to both soul and body. To the soul: 1. In recapitulating each one of the faults of the year, seeing their causes and including them in your annual general confession; 2. In making additional spiritual reading, conformable to the needs of your soul, extra meditations and spiritual conferences. Each one may also devote more time in finding out the needs of his soul and in discovering what he ought to do in order to become truly virtuous. Each one of you, after various examinations, will be able to write me a letter, in which he will try to represent himself such as he is and such as he ought to be.

As regards the body, you will be able to give it a little more rest, a half-hour more of sleep for example, some quarters of an hour more of recreations, but always of religious recreation; some walks, more or less long, each week. If all is done with wisdom, I hope that at the end of the vacation period, you will have greater strength and courage to start the year well.

The one replacing Brother Oeuvard will bring you different writings on the subject of instruction, which will become very useful to you, especially if you all have good will. I shall inform Father Collineau of the desire you might have of seeing him in Moissac.

I wish you and your two confreres all sorts of blessings.

* * * *

The letter which follows, reveals a first symptom of the agitation which was soon to break out as regards the new edition of the Constitutions, elaborated by Father Lalanne but promulgated by the Founder.[1] *The most cruel trial for Father Chaminade was going to be, not the Revolution and its annoying consequences, but the lack of union among his children, the defiance and disaffection of certain ones in regard to the Society.*

[1] See Letters 474 and 475.

542 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 17, 1830

My respectable son: It is surely in the critical moments in which we find ourselves at present that we would have great need of an active correspondence. I have received odds and ends of letters from Brother Clouzet, but which say next to nothing and even leave me uninformed as to whether the letters I have written for two months have actually arrived at their destination.

Since his arrival in St. Remy, Brother Memain, the elder, has written me two letters, neither of which is of any consequence in regard to what concerns St. Remy, but he wrote one on the 6th of the present month to Father Collineau, which has not been communicated to me until today, but which is of the gravest consequence, under pretext of consultation. In it, he takes for granted that you have made him great communications, and in particular, that what he wants is to call the new Constitutions, establish the separation of the priests of the Society, and from there, three big pages of writing. All I am answering him is that most certainly he must have badly understood what you told him.

Father Rothéa will be able to explain to you how things stand at present. He will stay only a short time in St. Remy, because it is very urgent that he gets back to Alsace.

The oath of fidelity must have been asked of Father Meyer.[1] I think that you will have helped him make up his mind to take it, after all the explanations that have been given about it until the present. Doubtless you are showing resolution and taking a firm stand. Let us receive all evils as coming from the hand of God. He will not permit more than we are able to stand. Let us not be frightened. Let us ward off the blows until the last moment. Only let us be very prudent and do nothing that might provoke difficulties or misunderstandings. All that I have said and repeated to Brother Clouzet as regards the help I was waiting for is as if I were saying it to you.

I am writing to you by the hand of Father Rothéa, so as not to let my ordinary secretary, Brother Guyon, although he is very discreet, in on what I am writing today to St. Remy. I would want to be in the place of Father Rothéa when upon arriving, he will have the happiness of embracing you.

I can do it from here only from my heart and, in fact, I am doing it with all my heart.

* * * *

[1] The oath of fidelity to the new government. Father Meyer was to take it in his position as head of the institution in St. Remy.

As we have just seen, it is Father Rothéa who had acted as secretary to Father Chaminade for the preceding letter. The Founder had called him from St. Hippolyte to himself, and he was going to send him back to his post, after having given him his instructions for the Communities of Alsace.

543 – TO FATHER ROTHÉA, SUPERIOR OF
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ST. HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, September 18, 1830

It is desired, my respectable son, that your general supervision of the Upper Rhine becomes more active than in the past.

1. You will see to it that the regulations made for the teaching Brothers be exactly observed.

2. You will also keep informed as regards all that concerns the more particular observances, as Confession, etc.

3. The various establishments are not to visit one another, nor are they to conduct there a part of their pupils or to receive such groups.

4. If you should see that some such abuse is being introduced, or any of whatever nature it may be, you will check it temporarily, at least until you have been able to notify me about it.

5. You will also keep an eye open to see that nowhere are too many expenses made, and that the heads be always in entire agreement with the one in charge of such matters. In everything, my respectable son, act with zeal, mildness, firmness, and prudence. Believe in the sentiments of my tender friendship.

* * * *

To Brother Louis Rothéa, Director of Colmar, Father Chaminade recommends prudence and prayer in the difficulties of the present hour.

544 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA,
DIRECTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, September 18, 1830

What good things, my dear son, your good brother will have to tell you about his stay in Bordeaux! If we have not treated of everything, indeed very little must be left. We spoke especially of the interior life that a good religious is to lead, of the manner in which he is to form his subjects, and to discover those whom the good God destines for us. Then, we came to the personnel and general equipment of St. Hippolyte. We also cast a fairly attentive glance on all the other establishments of Alsace. I explained to him what I had just written to you on the subject of payment for the part of Ebersmunster that we acquired. I hope that all will be well, apart from the persecution which seems to be imminent. For the present, I don't see that we have anything else to do than: 1. To conduct ourselves with extreme prudence, do what we have always done, but otherwise not to render ourselves conspicuous by anything particular; 2. That at least two or three remain in each establishment during the vacation months to bring the children of the city together on Sundays and Thursdays, as I think I have already told you about, for it is thus that things are done in the establishments of the Midi; 3. This Revolution is evidently a chastisement of God from France. We must pray in the name of all, because we have all put our share in the cup of the justice of God, we are all guilty, we all deserve to be punished.

I am stopping here, my dear son, and embracing you very tenderly, as likewise all my dear children of Colmar and of the other establishments.

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How ardently would Father Chaminade have wanted to reestablish, during these difficult times, the union of minds and hearts!

545 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 19, 1830

My dear son: The stay of Father Rothéa has become very useful to him, even by reason of what was naturally to be harmful to him. He is now more firmly attached than ever to the Society of Mary. He was able to assure himself and by himself, of the motives behind the opposition of Father Collineau and Brother David to the wording of the Constitutions of the Society of Mary. He saw them, he went with them, he spoke to them about the subject.

This morning I had occasion to have a serious interview with Father Collineau about his journey to St. Remy, about his communications with Brother Clouzet, etc. All this is but an affair of wounded self-love, and wounded by imaginary reasons, or more exactly, by an interior opposition to the abnegation of the religious life, and of this I have had a great many proofs. Nevertheless, our interview of this morning must have done him some good. I tried

to make him understand that I could not follow, as regards the Council, any other line of conduct than that I have been following all along.[1]

Father Rothéa will stop in St. Remy only to have an interview with you and especially with Brother Clouzet, who has done him quite enough harm at the time of his last journey. He will also be able to have an interview with Brother Memain. The latter has good qualities, but his self-love had greatly increased in Agen. It is very annoying in these times of revolution that we are not all perfectly united.

I am always, my dear son, in the same paternal sentiments.

P. S. If Brother Deshayes is hardly of any use to you, you might send him to Brother Rothéa, who would take him along to St. Hippolyte.

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In the following letter will be found with admirable evidence of the Founder's spirit of faith, very useful counsels for the formation and employment of the subjects in the religious communities.

546 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, September 23, 1830

You have written two letters, my dear daughter. The first one consoled me, for it gave me an idea of the general condition of the Community with regard to meditation and the frequentation of the sacraments. The second one, that of the 17th of the present month, does little more than express to me the worries of the two superioresses of Condom and of Tonneins. If you spoke to the two other superioresses, of Arbois and of Acey, they would surely be repeating the same story.

For Sisters but little advanced in virtue, a surcharge of work may well be a cause of relaxation or of delay in the spiritual progress they should be making, but I doubt very much that were you to multiply the subjects in the Communities in view of diminishing the workload of each one, you would be diminishing the evil which frightens you. When I was informed that you were having the two superioresses of Condom and Tonneins come to you, I believed that you would profit by this reunion to direct them well in the spiritual

[1] It is impossible, due to the lack of documents, to know exactly what were the grievances of these religious. But it is easy to conjecture that they pretended to govern the Society in their own way, and that considering their dispositions and their ideas, little in harmony with the spirit of the foundation, it was impossible for Father Chaminade to let them have a free hand. And yet, with what consideration he surrounded them! His letters show it.

guidance of their subjects, and in that way prepare them for the retreats which we think Father Serre[1] might be able to give them.

How have you come to forget, so to speak, that faith is the assured means by which the Institute of the Daughters of Mary will never cease to exist and by which, on the contrary, it will become ever more long-lived and edifying? If all make meditation well, as we have said, if all receive fervent Communions, if all try to prepare themselves well for meditation, if often placing themselves during the day in the presence of God by fervent acts of faith, if they try to do during the day actions of purest faith, reform will not be long in making itself felt, for they will become humble, charitable, and obliging toward one another. They will love silence, even the work of teaching will be sustained by the zeal which, far from distracting the teachers, will ever reanimate them to even greater efforts. The same zeal will sustain these who are in care of temporal matters or in domestic work, since they all have the same motive relative to the glory of God and the sanctification of souls. Let faith ever make greater advancement, and I can assure you that no one will ever complain about having too much work, and all will be brought to exclaim with St. Francis Xavier: “Still more, O Lord, still more!”

By this, my dear daughter, I do not want to say that they should be left overcharged with work in such a way that they are not able to perform well all their spiritual exercises. Therein lies the wisdom of a superioress, to know how to distribute the jobs and the work according to the ability and capacity of each one, in such a way that each one has ample time to fulfill the functions that are assigned to her. But someone will say the subjects are not able to do much. Then, my dear daughter, you will say: 1. That the subjects in many cases are inferior to what they are expected to do, only because they have little faith, too much self-sufficiency, too much confidence in human talents, very little confidence in the grace which goes along with their assigned tasks and with all acts of obedience. 2. Nevertheless, that those who have greater talent are often made to teach subjects which those with less talent could handle as well, and on the contrary these latter are often made to teach matters which ought to be assigned to those better educated. As much could be said proportionately in regard to manual labor. 3. Why not procure sufficient time to train or to have trained, the subjects who are susceptible to such training, by giving additional work to those that are no longer able to make any further progress in human knowledge? This way of proceeding is doubtless painful, but it can be made to procure excellent results. We have, my dear daughter, some time ago explained each one of these considerations. I am only recalling them here.

Your good superioresses of Condom and of Tonneins, who would want new subjects, will at first be little satisfied that you give them only principles of wisdom. It is up to you, my dear daughter, to have them duly appreciate these. New subjects could exteriorly remedy the harm in the beginning and perhaps for some time; but your principles of wisdom will remedy the harm interiorly, little by little, and in due time, permanently.

[1] Chaplain of the convent in Agen.

Furthermore, where are these new subjects? You know as well as I that they do not exist. Why then tire ourselves by wanting more than we actually have? Would they be found in a new distribution? It can come about that some changes become necessary, but we must always be moderate in making changes, as they often produce bad effects and always involve expenses that would be better avoided. A superioress, well mistress of herself, would know how to make the best use of all the subjects she has, and the new distribution would fall rather on things than on persons.

Mother Gonzaga had thought to have understood from the letter you wrote to her that you had in mind discontinuing the novitiate in Bordeaux. But even in doing that, you would not be attaining the object you would desire. You know how it is made up. The question of the dissolution of this novitiate might even be proposed for other reasons than that of actually having subjects.[1] I shall speak to you of this in another letter.

I have confidence, my dear daughter, that if you follow the plan that we have proposed, you will succeed, even if it be with difficulty. The good God will bless your labors and especially your faith. If it is not in the designs of God to preserve the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, all the other means would serve, so to say, only to hasten its end. But I believe that no matter what kind of agitation it may have to go through, it will survive, since God has inspired us with the idea of giving it such a solid foundation, that of faith.

Tell the two good superioresses how much I would have desired to go and see them. Beg them to be the bearers of my sentiments with their respective communities, and you, my very dear daughter, hold fast to the plan that we have agreed upon, and we shall always be able to develop further in proportion as the needs arise. I wish you the peace of the Lord.

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The new Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary received this letter with profound respect and gave of it the commentary in strong terms which were, by her order, reproduced in the register of the Councils of the Institute, as can be seen in the Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 199.*

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547 – TO BROTHER OLIVE, DIRECTOR OF ORGELET

Bordeaux, September 24, 1830

[1] Because of the political situation and for reasons of economy. This is, in fact, what took place, as we shall see in Letters 553 and 555.

My dear son: I am not sure whether my letter will still find you in Orgelet. You have as yet said nothing about what happened in your city as a result of the Revolution that has just taken place. Doubtless, all has been and still is quiet, you still have your good mayor and your good pastor, and your schools are still moving along at the same happy pace. I would like to give an excellent place to Brother Morfaux,[2] one that would be suitable to his character and to his condition of infirmity. I would like to put him in Noailles, Department of the Correze. The parish is so small that a single teacher is sufficient. I have taken and shall still take all the measures necessary, that he may be perfectly fine there. Besides, I shall tell him all that might interest him and also the line of conduct he is to maintain and follow. The pastor of this parish is a holy priest, a former confessor of the faith. Would his health suffer from the trip? I think, on the contrary, that it would be improved. The mild and easy work which he would have in this place, with the care he would receive, might well end in his happy recovery to perfect health. His trip will be made by stagecoach, and we shall take care of the expenses. Let me know immediately if he is ready to leave. By return mail, I shall send an obedience.

In case this letter does not find you in Orgelet, I shall send a copy of this article to St. Remy. In all of our establishments, we are giving this year only the month of October as vacation, and even then one or two Brothers remain to bring together the children on Sundays and Thursdays, those who are in town, to take a look at their assignments of schoolwork, which they do in the meantime, to bring them to church and to give them wholesome catechism lessons.

May I count on the 1,000 francs, which you have given me reason to expect? In case you may be obliged to remain in Orgelet, I shall have you copy the little rule of conduct, which your Brothers will observe during the vacation in their respective establishments. The arrangements to be made for this place in Noailles are the main reason for the delay of this letter.

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548 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 24, 1830

The principal object of this letter, my dear son, is to send you a copy of the one I wrote to Brother Olive in Orgelet, for fear that on account of the delay of this letter, he may already have left for St. Remy. The last time I wrote to you was through Father Rothéa, who

[2] Former teacher who knew the Society in St. Remy, doubtless at the time of the retreats of the schoolteachers, made his novitiate at St. Laurent in 1828, was employed at St. Remy and at Orgelet, and then left the Society. If Father Chaminade consented, provisionally, to place a religious alone at Noailles, it was by reason of the exceptional services which the Count de Noailles had rendered to the Society and still proposed to render. The trial was not a happy one. See Letter 555.

has a very urgent need to go to St. Hippolyte, and so he will make only a very short stop in St. Remy.

Brother Louis Rothéa wrote, telling me that Father Lalanne was being awaited in St. Hippolyte to give the first retreat during the opening days of October. I immediately answered him that there did not seem to me to be any inconvenience in Father Lalanne's giving this retreat, that each establishment head should remain at his post as much as possible in these disastrous times, that otherwise these retreats were to be made without solemnity, etc., that I had explained it to his brother, the priest.[1]

I herewith confirm, my dear son, all I have told you in my preceding letters, especially as regards the need for funds. Our distress is every day getting greater, creditors are calling for their payments, etc., etc.

My kindest regards to Father Lalanne, to Father Chevaux, and to Father Corot,[1] and to all my other dear children, although I am not naming them here. All of you pray for the extreme needs of France; let us exercise toward heaven a holy violence, to stop the effects of the terrible justice of God. The evils which we feel seem to be only the preludes or forebodings of the chastisements of God.

May the peace of the Lord be always with you.

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On the date of October 11th, we find a letter written by Brother David and looked over by Father Chaminade, destined to warn the new prefect of the Gironde of the danger to which the political circumstances might expose the Society. What followed proved that these apprehensions were only too well founded.

549 – TO THE PREFECT OF THE GIRONDE,
BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 11, 1830

Honorable Prefect: There exists in Bordeaux a benevolent society of which we have the honor of being members. It has been instituted by Royal Ordinance and busies itself

[1] On October 12th, Father Rothéa wrote to this effect to the Brothers in Alsace and invited them to go to St. Hippolyte for the morning of the 15th. "We are in a time of calamity," he wrote, "the retreat will last only five days, it will be more silent than usual. We shall have the instructions in the Superior's room, and at the end of the retreat, we shall renew or pronounce for the first time the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and stability in the Society of Mary."

[1] Father Corot (1800-76), native of Chassesy, Doubs, entered the Society in St. Remy in 1828. He was not slow in causing concern through his unhealthy imagination, and finally had to withdraw in 1837. Some years later, in 1841, he took the direction of a little boarding school in Miramont near Agen, where in 1875 the Society of Mary replaced him.

with the spreading of primary education. In this city, which is its central seat, it devotes itself only to the training of the teachers needed for the attainment of its object. Its larger schools are all in Departments at quite a distance from it: the Lot-et-Garonne, the Tarn-et-Garonne, the Upper-Saône, the Jura, the Upper-Rhine, etc., have received the greater number of them. We thought that the unfortunate events that have occurred in the office of your prefecture before your promotion had been able to destroy, wholly or in part, the constitutive titles of this Society, which the Ministry had given it in time. It is for this reason that it has seemed to us in order to draw the fact of our legal establishment to your benevolent attention. If you thought, Honorable Prefect, you ought to grant a particular audience to one of our secretaries with the purpose of obtaining for yourself more precise notions of our meetings and of our labors, we would accept the indication as an assurance of your high protection. You grant this on all sides for useful purposes, and among these you will kindly permit that we place ourselves at least in the last row.

Please accept the assurance of the profound respect with which we are, Honorable Prefect, your very humble and very obedient servants.

The Secretary General The Superior General

P.S. The Superior General, who has not left his apartment for more than a month, apologizes for not having presented to you his greetings in person.

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It was doubtless as a result of the retreat of St. Laurent, about which we haven't the slightest detail, that Father Chaminade gave to Brothers Keller and Hoffmann obedience for Alsace.

550 – TO MY DEAR SON, BROTHER ANDREW KELLER,
BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 19, 1830

At the reception of this obedience, my dear son, you will leave for Colmar, Upper-Rhine, where having arrived, you will receive under the direction of Brother Louis Rothéa your destination for one of the establishments which the Society of Mary has in Alsace.

I am going to give a similar obedience to one of your confreres, Brother Hoffman. You will travel together, and you will take along with you the young Brother Peg, whom you will lead to Besançon, through which you will pass on your way to Colmar.

Given in Bordeaux, under our private seal, October 19, 1830.

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Brother J. B. Hoffman (1812-85), originally from Colmar, entered in 1826 at St. Remy as postulant, and two years later, in 1828, went to Bordeaux on foot to make his novitiate under the eyes of Father Chaminade. After a term of probation in Agen, he came back to Alsace and was placed in the school of Ribeauville, the existence of which was henceforth to be confused with his own. In fact, for more than forty years (1830-73) he devoted himself there first as professor, then as Director from 1839. During this long career, Brother Hoffmann knew how to win the esteem and the confidence of all, inside as well as outside the community. He was a man of duty, very much attached to the Rule, hard working, lover of poverty, very dignified in his bearing, of a jovial and agreeable humor, and devoted as a son to the Blessed Virgin. Thus in Alsace, he was surrounded by a universal respect.

When, at the close of the Chapter of 1858, were named the first Inspectors General of the Society, Brother Hoffmann was designated for Alsace, and he fulfilled this charge without ceasing to direct the school in Ribeauville.

Some years later, the Chapter of 1866, having decided on the nomination of an Inspector General as member of the General Administration of the Society, it was again Brother Hoffmann who was called to this post. But he did not remain there long because of his request. Having been relieved of his office by the Chapter of 1868, he retook the road to Ribeauville, where the whole population was calling for him.

The annexation of Alsace to Germany was to break these friendly ties. At the end of 1873, the Director, whose pride had not been able to bow under the yoke of the new masters, was brutally expelled from Ribeauville. Some months later, Brother Hoffman took the direction of the boarding school in Marast.

In 1878, a congestion obliged him to abandon this post and to retire to Ebersmunster. He died there in 1885 at the end of long and cruel sufferings, courageously and heroically supported in the most Christian manner.

Toward the end of his life, Brother Hoffmann was mixed up with the difficulties which were then trying to THE Society. In these, he bore even a quite active role, which he soon had to regret. He had brought to it at least a great uprightness of intention, and having reached the end of his career, he could as his apology write these lines, stamped with legitimate pride: "I have never breathed but for the good and the prosperity of the Society. It has always been the sole object of my affections, the only end of all my labors, and it is not now that I am getting old, that I have been used up in its service, and that it has more than ever need of faithful servants, that my fervor in its regard will grow less."

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Another manifestation of the trouble into which the Revolution had thrown people's minds. Brother F. X. Weber, former secretary of Father Chaminade (1829-30), whom the Founder had placed, toward mid-July, at the head of the schools of Agen (Letter 537) urged

by the insistence of Father Weber, his brother, abandoned his post. To hasten his departure, the family had not even feared to bring the interference of the Minister of Justice. This is what called for the following letter of Father Chaminade to the Procurator General of Colmar.

This letter is to be placed solely on the ground of legality. A later letter (No. 567) shows us how the Founder judged the case from the point of view of conscience.

551 – TO THE PROCURATOR GENERAL OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, October 25, 1830

Honorable Procurator General: On the 16th of the current month, I received the letter with which you have honored me, and I hasten to answer it.

I have never put anything in the way of Mr. Francis Weber's returning to his parents. However, I may have made observations to him as regards the duties he had to accomplish from the conscience point of view, and as regards the real position of his family. He must have in hand several letters from me in which I tell him formally that he is free to withdraw and that the petition of the priest, his brother, presented to me was altogether improper and out of place, since the law always left him free to withdraw, allowing nevertheless, for some notification in advance.

Young Weber was so convinced of his freedom that following a new letter from Father Weber, he unexpectedly left Agen, where I had placed him as head of the primary schools. In abandoning this establishment as he did and without notifying me, he severely exposed it to ruin, especially at the time for the reopening of the classes.

Mr. Francis Weber had entered the Society of Mary only with the consent of his parents, at the request of Father Weber, their oldest son. Besides, the young man, at the required age, had committed himself to serve in primary teaching for ten years in the Society of Mary and this, with the formal consent of his father. His cp,,ot,emt had been accepted by the Royal Council of Public Instruction. It has already been for some time that the young man has attained his majority.

I am limiting myself, Honorable Procurator General, to a simple statement of the facts which can have you know the situation of Mr. Weber in regard to the complaint of his parents, which was sent to you by His Excellency the Minister of Justice. I am here suppressing all complaints that in all justice I would have a right to make in the case of like proceedings. It suffices for me to prove to you that in regard to the young man as well as to that of his parents, I have done only what I could do and what I felt it my duty to do.

I thank you, Honor Procurator General, for your kind attention in giving me notice of the claims of the Weber family and of what I would have to answer. This affair seems to

have ended itself by the presence of the young man in the bosom of his family. I am with the most profound respect, Honorable Procurator General, etc.

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Mr. O'Lombel, the faithful representative or agent of Father Chaminade in Paris, was returning to Spain, the native country of his wife. After his departure from Bordeaux, Father Chaminade slips to him, in a business letter, interesting instructions as regards the entry of the Society into Spain.

552 – TO MR. O'LOMBEL, BAYONNE[1]

Bordeaux, October 27, 1830
[no city or date listed in the English edition]

You have enclosed, my dear son, the plan of the mandate, which you had the kindness to send me by mail. This matter, by the way, will also be arranged as well as possible. It will have to be copied on stamped paper with a view to 7,000 or 8,000 francs. The sums which Mr. Lanthois will place in my hands are said to apply to the tuition prices and furnishings belonging to your two youngest daughters.[2] It is understood that I shall give you an accounting of whatever may be in excess of these expenses and that I shall not ask anything of you in case the amount is insufficient. If the entire debt or at least a great part of it were to come in and you were not in any kind of need, from that time we could set the tuition at a higher rate and all the supplies in a stricter manner, and then this higher tuition and stricter charge for supplies would be regarded as benefits accorded to the Society of Mary with a view to its institution. In this way, everything will be found in the realm of sentiments of nature, justice, and religion.

You have forgotten, my dear son, to let me have your address in Spain. I beg of you, send it to me from Bayonne, whether we write to you by land or by sea. . . .

If, my dear son, during your stay in Madrid, your zeal finds a favorable occasion to obtain the authorization of the king of Spain for the Society of Mary in his vast domains, to profit by it, I shall send you an authorization in form which the former archbishop of Bordeaux gave to obtain the authorization of the government of France, and which in fact, as you know, had its effect. If there is occasion to pursue the good work, I shall have you get the 49 articles or statutes of which there is question in the authorization and which have already sustained so many different examinations. This single paper seems to me sufficient to make at least a start. The Society of Mary has seemed to me very necessary in France, but I dare say that it would not be less useful in Spain, perhaps even more so.

I beg of you, my dear son, to share the assurances of my inviolable attachment and devotedness with Mrs. O'Lombel and Miss Stefana.

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It will be remarked that, in thinking to introduce the Society of Mary into Spain, Father Chaminade was presenting it under its complete form, such as the 49 articles of the primitive statutes described it and not under the reduced appearance, as expressed in the 19 statutes authorized in France. (Letter 335)

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[1] "Retiring to the bosom of the family of his wife, Jerez de la Frontera." This addition was in Father Chaminade's hand.
[2] Left as boarders with the Daughters of Mary in Condom.

The return to Agen of the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary is now decided. Father Chaminade speaks about it to the superioress general.

553 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, October 28, 1830

I could have been able, my dear daughter, to decide upon sending you the core, as you call it, of the novitiate, if I did not see your entire determination of introducing among all our dear daughters, the spirit of faith and of governing them in the same spirit. For that, time will doubtless be necessary, but with constancy and prudence you will arrive at what we are after. The good God will grant you the favor of a complete reform before your death.

Sister Marie Thérèse[1] has renewed into my hands her resolution of working with a kind of stubbornness at combating her self-love, which is such an enemy to the love of God. Her greatest fear was that you despair of her vocation and that you would not want to bestow upon her your maternal cares. I think I have left her convinced that you ardently desired both her salvation and her perfection, that she was always to open her heart entirely to you, just as to Father Serre, whose direction was similar to yours, both full of the spirit of faith and waging open warfare with self-love. I need not, my dear daughter, tell you with what consideration this soul must be treated, this soul still so weak and so much of a novice in the practice of solid virtues; but, by means of encouragement she could be led to it little by little. . . . She wrote to me this evening that she and her aunt, Miss de Lamourous, wanted that she be permitted to write some notes on her interior dispositions, the same with other little weaknesses which cannot be of any great consequence . . . Mother Gonzaga has checked all her bills up to the present and supplied her with certain furnishings which she would have thought to be included in her board of 800 francs per year. We concluded that since she had not sufficiently explained herself, the bills would remain such as Mother Gonzaga had made them, but that henceforth all little furnishings needed for her maintenance would be included in her yearly tuition of 800 francs.

With Mother of the Incarnation, talk over the intention you might have of naming Mother Emmanuel, Mother of Zeal. She will be the first one to encourage you once she knows your motives, and Mother of the Incarnation, limited to the one office of Mother Work, will be better able to improve herself in the spirit of faith and mental prayer. This will not prevent that she receive for direction such as would have a real and precise confidence in her.

The niece of Marie[2] is leaving with the novitiate to occupy the bed which you had the kindness of having reserved for her. The means for her board and lodging according to her

[1] Miss Louis de Maignol, niece of Miss de Lamourous
[2] Marie Dubourg, the maidservant of Father Chaminade.

state will be duly furnished, but in money, she will be giving only 120 francs a year, as we have said. Marie is very glad that I am recommending her to you, and I am offering you her respectful remembrance.

At another time, I shall talk to you of temporal matters. I wish you the love and the peace of the Lord.

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Brother Morfaux, not having been able to go to Noailles, Father Chaminade sends Brother Olivier there.

554 – TO BROTHER OLIVIER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, October 28, 1830

I am giving you, my dear son, a means of exercising your zeal such as you have always desired. The Count Alexis de Noailles and his respectable pastor desire a religious of Mary to teach school to a small number of children who are in the parish of Noailles, and especially to train servers for Holy Mass. All is ready, and you may leave immediately. If you hurry a little, you may still get to meet the Count, but even if he should have already left for Paris, the Reverend Pastor and his business manager will furnish you with whatever you may need. I shall notify the Count, and I shall again write to you, but at greater length, after I get the first news that you have left. Noailles is about four or five miles from Brives, in the Department of the Correze. Be careful always to conduct yourself as a real Child of Mary.

P.S. From Clermont in Auvergne there is a direct highway route to Brives.

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The difficulty of Father Chaminade's position is better revealed from one letter to another. All the foundations of the edifice he has built up are shaken, and still, extraordinarily his confidence never weakens.

He has some of his principal helpers come to him, Fathers Rothéa and Lalanne, Brother Clouzet, the last two at the beginning of the month of October. He has succeeded in bringing back Father Rothéa to the ways of docility and generosity. Less fortunate with Father Lalanne and Brother Clouzet, whose stay in Bordeaux has been too short, he seeks to make by correspondence, what too few and too brief interviews were not able to accomplish. It will be judged by the long series of letters that is now starting, of what strength of soul and of what forbearance he had to give proof during these troubled days. He was obliged, at the same time, to keep track of the prejudices of Brother Clouzet with regard to the Constitutions, of the excessive confidence of Father Lalanne in his ideas of reform, as of his financial incapacity, and

finally, of the inevitable clashes which were to result from the joining in the same undertaking, of forces as incongruous as those of Father Lalanne and Brother Clouzet.

555 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, October 29, 1830

Finally, my dear son, I have received your little letter, dated the 19th of the current month. You say nothing about your transit to and your stay in Paris, nor do you say anything about Brother Clouzet.[1] Doubtless, you must consider me insensible or indifferent.

I am quite astonished that Brother Morfaux has made up his mind in the negative, if he has been spoken to in the language of reason and religion to which he was quite susceptible.

I haven't as much confidence in Olivier when it comes to remaining alone, as I would have had in Morfaux.[2] I am writing a little letter to Brother Olivier.

As regards the normal school, you may substitute Brother Claverie for Brother Olivier, as he is worth at least twice as much as Brother Olivier in such functions. If you have someone to replace Brother Olivier more suitable than Brother Claverie, I would be only too glad. I am not worried about Brother Claverie, because if we know how to take him, he can be made to walk on the most difficult roads. As regards Brother Memain the elder, I was about to send him an obedience to go immediately to Agen, when I got your little letter. Brother Weber, having received further letters from his brother, the priest, suddenly left Agen to return to his home. At about the same time, I received a letter from the Procurator General of Colmar which acquainted me with the claims made by the Weber family to the Minister of Justice, and asked me for strict and exact information as regards the manner in which the young man was connected with the Society. The sudden disappearance of Brother Weber will have little effect on Agen if Brother Memain arrives there promptly, because he was regretted. I had predicted several times to Brother Weber, and that more than six months ago, that some serious accident would befall him or he would have some enormous fall, if he did not better combat the self-love that was devouring him.

Hardly were you gone, my dear son, when I was informed that Brother Chopard[1] had quite a high fever and that no one knew what to do about it. It was dysentery. It seems that before

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[1] Who had just left Bordeaux and as regards whose trip he wanted to be assured.
[2] These affairs are not known to us. There was doubtless question of the interests of the Society to be safeguarded with the new public authorities.
[1] Father Louis Chopard (1809-92) born in Russey, Doubs, pupil, then postulant in St. Remy, made his novitiate in Bordeaux (1828) and was employed as professor at St. Remy, Layrac, Ebersmunster, St. Hippolyte and Besançon. When the Society gained its footing in Paris, he had formed part successively in the Institution Ste. Marie of Bonaparte Street (1852) of the College Stanislas (1855), and after his late ordination, took charge of the direction of the Little College Stanislas, then the Institution Ste. Mary of Monceau Street (1866-74). He then exercised the functions of chaplain in Cannes in Bordeaux (1877) and again on Monceau Street (1883), where he died. Father Chopard was small in stature, of a nature alive and alert, of a jovial character and distinguished manners. He led a very religious life, was animated with great zeal, and was very much loved by the children.

asking about it, you knew very little about his health. He is in need of great care. We even fear for him a complete collapse, especially because of this last year. I would have had you take notice of it, if I had not been so surprised at the manner you asked me about it, the same as regards Brother Bonnet.[2] I had already explained to you that it was Brother Bonnet. I have been very awkward in the answer I gave you as regards the request of these two subjects. I thought I should put a touch of severity in it, so as to have you feel how much under various reports it was opportune, and you saw in it only a certain considerable hardness. As it were to force myself to do what could have annoying consequences, and in fact very annoying ones, you practically told me I was under the obligation of altering the nature of the community by calling in auxiliaries, etc.—Most certainly for nothing in the world, I shall never put you under the obligation of abandoning your subalterns in the ways of piety and religion, or of being lacking in justice toward the parents who confide to you the education of their children. But, 1. I do not presume that all your classes are so numerous that you are not able to put two together without serious inconvenience. Besides, that would be only a provisionary measure which would not have any serious consequences. 2. You could call these or those auxiliaries who would not prevent the community from living in great regularity. Here for some time, in the little seminary there have been more or less auxiliaries, and regularity and fervor have never been ruined. I do not, however, hide from myself, that the matter is not without some embarrassment. The body of the Doctrinaires[4] formerly had completely changed their nature by having made use of, without enough discretion, what had been called hired men.

I am writing to you, my dear son, with my own hand, and so to say in trembling, in the fear of hurting you, and certainly I do not have this intention. You are doubtless very good, but I would want you better. Will you do me the favor of believing it? I think so. But you will not the less believe that today ideas are a lot more developed, more extensive; that, that. . . . From now

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[2] Brother Francis Bonnet (1808-35) came from Mauriac, Cantal, made his novitiate in Bordeaux in 1830, followed Father Chaminade to Agen and for some time served him as secretary in 1883. He was then sent to St. Remy, where he died as a consumptive. Brother Silvain, in his memoirs, relates the following story about him: “Father Chaminade often showed himself very severe in the trials he imposed upon subjects who seemed to him pretentious, before admitting them into the Society. One of them—it was Brother Bonnet—was sent to three establishments, which beforehand had received orders to receive him only with great difficulties. Father Chaminade—I don’t know just why—told me of this—telling me that he needed men, or young men capable of becoming such.”

[4] The Priests of Christian Doctrine, better known under the name of Doctrinaires, were founded in Avignon in 1592 by the Venerable Caesar de Bus (1544-1607) as a secular congregation with the one vow of obedience, for the teaching of Christian doctrine in the country and in the cities. They transformed themselves into a religious order, in uniting themselves with the Somasques of St. Jerome Emilianus (1616-47), and then became a congregation with simple vows, with a fourth vow of stability, and finally (1783), went back to their first form of secular congregation. The French Revolution destroyed their houses, which had reached the number 40, in three provinces: Avignon, Paris, and Toulouse. A trial of reconstitution for the congregation took place in the middle of the 19th century.
An Italian branch of the Doctrinaires united to the French branch in 1747 subsisted and its seat is in Rome, at St. Marie in Monticelli, where rests the body of the founder.

The history of the Doctrinaires is full of internal quarrels, without speaking of the ravages caused by Jansenism. The fact pointed out by Father Chaminade goes back doubtless to the period of this history, which followed the suppression of the Jesuits (1762). At this time, the Doctrinaires, without being prepared thereto, wanted to take and effectively took charge of several of the colleges abandoned by the Jesuits. “In these circumstances,” Father Chaminade wrote later, “the Doctrinaires, jealous to multiply and spread beyond all measure, wore themselves out.” (December 5, 1840).

on, my dear son, I shall be very careful not to contradict your ideas, however inadmissible I may find them from the practical point of view, because I am only an old man, one how can have only old ideas. . . . I shall limit myself to saying and because it is my duty: Take care! *Est via quae videtur homini recta, cujus extrema, etc.*[1] Self-sufficiency often makes one blind. However enlightened one thinks himself to be, it is very dangerous for anyone to be full of his own notions and ideas, but it is a matter of prudence to consult in difficulties, before making a serious statement of settling something of importance. One must always be diffident about oneself, or even about one's ideas. . . . If it is still expecting too much to recall old maxims, then one must fall back on patience. . . .

Alas, my dear son, we are in very bad days, and they will be getting worse, perhaps shortly! Let us hasten to do good, let us hasten above all to grow ourselves in the spirit of faith, which is itself the spirit of all the virtues! Let us save ourselves, whatever may be the price, let us also save the others! Let us tighten more and more the links that bind us together. Faith, hope, and charity are able to make us triumph, but the spirit of disunion can be the ruin of the Society and several of the members who have provoked it.[2]

So as to have a more convenient refectory, Brother Auguste has just had a separation made that Brother David judges will cost some two or three hundred francs, and the mansion is worth at least two to three thousand. He doesn't seem to have any worry about afflicting us and in some way exposing his creditors and ours. . . .

The entire novitiate of the Daughters of Mary, which is in Bordeaux, leaves tomorrow for Agen. The house is then to be rented . . .

I can hardly afford to send the younger Memain alone. His brother could take him in hand and bring him along to Agen. I shall write to tell him about it.

Father Rothéa in Hippolyte had asked me for Brother Deshayes and had even begged me to let him have him. He really has no one in whom he can confide. Come to an agreement with him, and to compensate him, send him Brother Bonnefoi,[1] whom you can do without, having Brother Clouzet. Do what you can by way of sending someone to Orgelot.

Sleep and weariness are overpowering me. I hope, nevertheless, to be able after All Saints to occupy myself seriously with the Constitutions. My dear son, I am embracing you very tenderly.

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[1]Such a way appears straight to a man, the end of which leads to death.

[2] That is to say, of its founders.

[1] Brother Charles Bonnefoi (1795-1855) from Gray, was drawn to the Society in 1826 by Father Lalanne, then principal of the Collège of this city, whom he served as secretary until 1833. At this date, he became particular secretary to Father Chaminade, then in 1835 he was named Secretary General of the Society. He was then charged to found and direct the works of the Society in Barsac, in 1841, Coubeyrac, 1849, and Villenave d'Ornon, 1855, where he died. Brother Bonnefoi left the memory of a religious of profound faith, great austerity of life, and unshakeable firmness. He had distinguished manners, he loved order, was deeply attached to the Rule, but he had a hard and absolute character, which later created difficulties for him with his confreres and even with the venerated Founder.

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A little word to the Daughters of Mary on the unity of direction, indispensable in the communities.

556 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 4, 1830

I had forgotten, my dear daughter, to speak to you of the article about the confessor, and because of an unsuitable or untimely preoccupation, my scribe[1] had been in a hurry to mail the letter. I am making up for it by writing a second one.

I would much approve that Father Baret would help Father Serre with the confessions. He could come to an agreement as regards the unity of direction, because—let Father Serre pay close attention—the great good he is called upon to do among the Daughters of Mary is in the unity of direction of which he has well grasped the principles.

This true spirit of faith, which leads to the perfect love of God and to the entire renunciation of oneself, once it is well instilled into the central house, will penetrate little by little into the houses of the Institute, and of this we already have ample and convincing proofs.

The distinction which you make, as regards professed, novices, or postulants, as regard the community and the novitiate, is good only to diminish the amount of work, but at bottom it would be harmful if there were not unity of direction. The direction of the novitiate is still more essential than that called for in the community, because the good spirit well inculcated in the novitiate may more easily be preserved in the community, unless the confessors habitually go contrary to the first directions given, something which is hardly even to be supposed.

Father Bouet, right here present with me, asks me to present to you the assurance of his kind remembrance, first of all to our travelers[2] and then to the entire community. Marie tells me the same. Once more, I am wishing you, my dear daughter, the peace of the Lord.

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[1] Father Chaminade had a new secretary, Brother Victor Morel. This young religious, born in Faimont, Haute-Saône, February 28, 1809, had entered the Society in Bordeaux, November 11, 1826, and had been employed in the schools in Villeneuve. He died in Agen on November 6, 1832.
[2] The religious sisters of Bordeaux who had just arrived in Agen.

The saddened soul of the Founder comes to light in these lines to Brother Clouzet, who had just left and whose sentiments do not satisfy the Founder completely.