557 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 6, 1830

I am experiencing much anxiety, my dear son, not having received as yet any news from you since your departure from Bordeaux. Father Lalanne, on arriving at St. Remy, wrote to me and doesn't say a word to me about you, and in my answer to him, I called his attention to the fact. It seems, in fact, that I am indifferent or insensible. I am glad to believe that you have arrived in St. Remy and that, if you have been the victim of some sort of accident, however slight, someone of the establishment would have had enough charity to notify me about it. That is what leads me to write to you.

During your stay in Bordeaux, you were able to notice how much in want the General Administration of the Society finds itself. You have seen how dried up were the resources on which I had a right to count and which had been the motive for which I had borrowed money. Could I imagine, for example, that the *boni* of Gray would be reduced by 500 francs? I am not speaking of the other establishments. They have also more or less experienced losses or accidents. That of St. Hippolyte, of which the administration has been so faulty, gave me at least the consolation of honest and detailed admissions on the part of its chief head, Father Rothéa, who himself recognized in his expenses those that were excessive, those that were useless, those that were unwisely undertaken or handled, etc.

During your stay in Bordeaux, I would have much desired that we had entered in far greater detail into the temporal administration of St. Remy, but you know only one question occupied us, a question that could have been treated as well and even better by correspondence, at least in the condition in which it was.[1]

I have a secret sorrow in my heart that so precious a time was not employed, first in the sanctification of our souls, and then in taking the means of reform in the spiritual life of the members of the Society. After that, so many other practical questions on the maintenance and future fate of our different establishments!

Although all these questions occupy me very seriously, and I am working at their solution the most possible, I am not, for that reason, putting less interest in the improvement and perfecting of our Constitutions. I often say to myself: These Constitutions will never be of any service except to those possessed of a truly religious spirit, or who will have at least the good will to work at the permeation of themselves with it. We have never been without Constitutions or at least without something similar, which contained both the same spirit and the same obligations. And see what certain members of the Society amount to! What seems to interest some heads of the Society particularly is what concerns its organization and government. Those who do not seek to permeate

[1] This is doubtless the question of the Constitutions.

themselves more and more with the spirit of poverty, chastity, and obedience, with zeal for the salvation of souls and devotion to the Most Holy Virgin, will always find reasons to rationalize and to criticize the articles of organization and government: 1) Because in the application of principles there always enters what is arbitrary; 2) Because self-love may find itself more or less annoyed. In what concerns the organization and the government, I have always in mind approaching as much as possible the organization and government of the Catholic Church. The more we will get away from this plan, the less will there be solidarity and stability in the Society.

In taking up the pen to write to you, I did not have the intention of speaking to you about the Constitutions, but I willingly let myself go along, led by the mutual confidence we have in one another and also since I am not writing to Father Lalanne, because you will be able to pass this letter on to him.

The principal end, my dear son, I proposed to myself in writing to you, and which you have been able to suspect by the short sketch at the beginning, is to exhort you to fulfill the functions of your charge as perfectly as possible: 1) the economy of the establishment; 2) the management or administration of the properties; 3) the general visitation of our establishments in the north of France. I shall follow one after the other, each of these three articles.

1) Economy. I understand by bursar, what in certain communities is called property manager and in others, treasurer. This office has the administration of all the receipts and expenses of the establishment. It does the marketing, concludes bargains, etc., in a word, it takes care of all that we designate as the temporal or material of the establishment, including the repairs necessitated by ordinary maintenance. As regards extraordinary repairs, which are a matter of simple convenience, or ornament, or of choice, he is not to make them nor consent that they be made, without a special and express permission from the First Superior of the Society.

> Brother Auguste has again missed this essential point and thrown himself, or rather thrown us, into new embarrassment. I have said a word about it, I believe, to Father Lalanne in my last letter.

I have not dared, my dear son, to question you about your manner of administering the finances this year, when I saw that you had so little of reserve funds. Your year has been quite good, both as regards your number of boarders, your normal school candidates, and as regards your sources of revenue. Nevertheless, you just about made ends meet. In other words, there must have been superfluous or badly devised expenses. I do not ask that you answer me on this last observation, for there is no longer question of the past, rather of the future. You would not only be failing against your vows of obedience and poverty, but you would be even sinning against justice and from there, what disturbing consequences! I have just made, if not the definitive suppression, at least the suspension and transfer of the novitiate of the Daughters of Mary on Mazarin Street, and I am arranging for the rent of the house at least for three years, but the details of all

these affairs are useless to you. I am making these reflections just to fill you with a deep sense of your obligation in regard to the first of your functions. Let us pass to the second.

2) Management or administration of the properties of St. Remy and of Marast. It is clearly understood, my dear son, that it is in this administration, well conducted, that the Society is to find its principal source of support, especially in the situation in which it finds itself, and as long as these calamitous times will last. The revenues must not be confounded with what the establishment will be able to give.[1] The costs of farming, clearing land, the allowance of Father Bardenet, are to be taken from the revenues, while all that serves and is consumed by the community is to be reckoned and paid with the funds of the establishment. In you, the bursar and manager are to be as two different persons. The one gives an account to the other. The clearing of the land and the improvements of the properties must be made gradually, with wisdom and moderation, in such a way as to use a very moderate sum, the more so because of the pressing need of revenues. The revenues and the *bonis* of the establishment with the blessing of the Lord will do all that Providence has in view for the maintenance and support of the Society.

3) General visits, etc. These visits may be necessary, but they will have to be made only when really necessary because of the expenses involved in traveling and also because of the harm often brought about by frequent absences. Each of the establishments of Alsace will be, I hope, supervised at close range by St. Hippolyte. Orgelet, Courtefontaine, and Besançon will remain. At Orgelet, Brother Olive is exact enough in his little administration. I think the same can be the case with Besançon. Brother Bousquet also seems quite exact. You need to supervise Courtefontaine more; Brother Galliot works with great care, but he lets himself get preoccupied easily.

I am writing to you at considerable length. It is to be feared that our correspondence has slowed down. Political affairs are going from bad to worse. Always get along with Father Lalanne. As much as possible, enter into his views. If you are not at times in accord with him as regards expenses to be made, respectfully make him your observations, represent to him your obligations as well as mine, the urgent need we have for being economical during these difficult times of which no one can foretell the outcome.

Remain closely united. Our strength will be in our union because the good God will bless it. He will bless it especially if it has as principle, charity and humility, which are the first fruits of faith. I want to write an answer to Fathers Brunet and Chevaux. I desire that Father Lalanne finds in this letter, as in that I wrote to him lately, the ardent desire for our sanctification and the perfect accomplishment of our respective duties. I am embracing you very tenderly, my dear son, and I am with an entirely paternal devotedness. . . .

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[1] The net revenues, or *boni*, with the gross returns of the establishment.

Let us here insert a letter to the pastors of parishes neighboring the abbey of Ebersmunster.

558 – TO FATHER KELHETTER, PASTOR OF EBERSMUNSTER,
FATHER RAGUE, PASTOR OF KOGENHEIM, AND
FATHER SPITZ, PASTOR OF EBERSHEIM

Bordeaux, beginning of November, 1830

Reverend Fathers: I had Father Rothéa buy the old abbey of Ebersmunster solely because of the interest, which as I was often told, you put in the idea the Society of Mary withdraw from profane hands this beautiful edifice until this time consecrated to religion, to make of it a religious establishment which might become a great advantage to the parishes of Ebersmunster and the suburbs, and in time, the utility of which would be extended throughout the province. The letter of last October 12th, which I had the honor of receiving from you, is a very satisfactory confirmation for me of this interest which you have so clearly manifested.

You may be sure, Fathers, that I shall enter into your views to the fullest extent possible to me. However, you know to what an extent difficulties have increased and are continually increasing each day since this fine acquisition. Any unwise measures or imprudent steps might easily hinder our projects, and so, let us not hasten their execution. I have the matter too much at heart not to do all that will be possible and that as soon as the condition of things would prudently permit it.

Reverend Fathers, I beg of you to help Father Rothéa with both your counsel and your means, to release him from the commitments he has contracted. The crises may still get worse, but what will have been done will at least be that much to the good. It would seem to me advisable to speak very little and cautiously about what we might want to do, or about what we could do, in the whole matter. It is, nevertheless, rather much already that the acquisition was made fully in accord with the requirements of law. I am with profound respect . . .

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559 - TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 9, 1830

My dear son: I am answering Brothers Egignard, Brunet, and Fridblatt. I am leaving the letters unsealed, so as to wrap them up better. You will be able to seal them before delivering them, if you think the Brothers would prefer it that way. I am also writing to Father Chevaux, and particularly expressing to him the regret I feel at not receiving any news about Brother Clouzet. I immediately answered, my dear son, the little letter you wrote me at the time of your arrival in St. Remy. I also wrote a few days later, a very long letter to Brother Clouzet to make clear to him the duties he had to fulfill in St. Remy, as he had asked me and as I had promised him to do.

On the eve or on the day before your departure from Bordeaux, I had received a sample copy of the new prospectus which you had had printed for St. Remy. I did not speak to you about it, since you believed you did not have to speak to me about it yourself. It is not from St. Remy that I received it. If you wish that God showers his blessings on the establishment which you are called upon to direct, do not introduce into it any kind of novelty without first taking counsel with proper parties.

In your last letter, I believe you were telling me that you were going to send Brother George Loetsch to Bordeaux. I answered nothing in regard to this matter. Doubtless, you interpreted my silence as consent. Already several times since, I was on the point of writing to him to let him know the conditions on which I would receive him. But you have surely made up for that.

I am almost up to date with all my affairs and my correspondence and even in a position soon to occupy myself with our Constitutions and our methods of teaching. The three months that have passed since the first revolutionary crisis have been very busy, although without any great fruit. I am not yet quite certain as to who will bring about the change in the ministry.[1]

See among the young folks in St. Remy those who are eligible for military service. Let me have their enlisting papers, duly filled out, and please do the same for Besançon, Orgelet, and Courtefontaine. This year, let us try not to be too much behind in our work. I am going to write to Alsace and to the Haut-Pays with the same object in mind. I often pray for you, as I should for a dearly loved son. On your part, pray for one who will always be your Good Father.

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[1] As the result of a popular uprising, calling for the death of the former ministers of Charles X, October 18th, the moderate members of the Lafitte Cabinet had retired and had been replaced by some partisans of the “movement” on November 3rd.

560 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 15, 1830

I have received your letter of the 13th, my dear daughter, and by this letter undertake to answer it. The news that little Aimee herself gave was very pleasing to her family. I shall have Father Caillet write to the good Mothers of the North.

I imagine, my dear daughter, that you have had Mrs. Belloc and Miss de Fisson summoned, that you spoke to them, that you got them to the point of appreciating your reasons, in a word, that you succeeded in consoling them.[1] Remain in peace and in close union with them, and also through them, with the sodalities, as much with the young ladies as with the mothers of families without, however, forgetting the Third Order. I am not attributing to any bad intention your haste in talking to the archbishop, but you have probably learned what we commonly call a good lesson.

You may give the holy habit on the Feast of the Presentation to Clementine Peronne and to Anne Bassan. As to Madeleine Lavigne, we shall have to wait quite a long time to see if the light of faith can penetrate her heart and make her understand that not only is obedience preferable to sacrifices, but that she must love this obedience, which always offers to God the sacrifices he likes the best. You know, my dear daughter, that faith is not to be only a simple conviction of the truth, but that it must inspire love.

After the death of our pious and beloved Madame de Trenquelléon, Father Lacoste had offered to write her life.[2] His offer was neither accepted nor rejected.

Father Collineau then spoke to several persons who, in his opinion, were likely to do a better job. However, nothing was done. I still have all the memoirs in hand. At this time,

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[1] We are ignorant of the misunderstanding referred to here, that which had occurred between the convent and its faithful friends.

[2] Immediately after the death of Mother de Trenquelléon, Father Chaminade had effectively busied himself with having someone write the life of this spiritual daughter. See above, letter of Mrs. Trenquelléon, mother, January 9, 1828. In the council of the Society, held on September 2nd of the same year, the names of several writers were proposed, among others that of Father Lacoste, one of the most devoted friends of the Institute of Agen; Father Lalanne; Miss de Batz de Trenquelléon, a relative of the Foundress. . . . The project was not realized and it was necessary to wait until 1861 to see the appearance of this life of the Reverend Mother de Trenquelléon . . . with her spiritual counsels and her letters, by a Benedictine of the Congregation of France (Paris, Polme). The author of this work, Dom Pradie, had used to this effect the notes prepared by the Reverend Mother Mary Joseph de Casteras, cousin of the Foundress and third superioress of the Institute. A notice about Mother de Trenquelléon appeared in the *Univers* in 1869, signed by Leon Argineau and was reproduced in Book II of the *Servants of God* in the 19th century (Lyon, Vitte). In 1921, following prolonged researches and with the aid of unedited documents, Father Rousseau published a complete biography of Adèle de Trenquelléon, Foundress of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

Father Lacoste is not very busy and perhaps he might like to start the work. I shall have all the papers I have passed over to him, but Father Lacoste must not look upon this invitation as a last resort.

Always take courage, my dear daughter, and spare your health. You must not look upon this care of your health as an opinion or an invitation that I would be giving you, but rather as an order that I think it my duty to give you.

May the spirit of faith, my dear daughter, take deep root in all the hearts of the Daughters of Mary and may it reign especially in yours!

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561 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 16, 1830

Your letter of the ninth, my dear son, came to me today by way of Paris. Brother Memain has not yet put in his appearance. From Besançon, he went to Orgelet to see his brother, according to what Brother Bousquet has written to me.

I am somewhat mortified at the annoyances which I am having you experience, but I assure you, it is not with any definite purpose. Nothing could be further from my mind. Since you still have Brother Bouly, I shall write him a little letter to encourage him. I think you will do well in not letting him take definitive vows in the Society, not even vows of long duration.

I have begun the review of the Constitutions and shall try to hasten the work. Later, I shall speak to you about it in greater detail, at the time when I have it more advanced.

You are having me reflect upon the very observations, my dear son, which I thought it my duty to make to you. My thanks to you for it. I was already well persuaded that I was full of defects, and of defects far greater than those my duty obliged me to reproach in others. Today I am acquiring a new and stronger conviction of this fact.

I was anxious about not receiving any news either direct or indirect from Brother Clouzet. Father Rothéa wrote to me from Colmar that he spoke to him during his trip to St. Remy. Perhaps Brother Memain has been given charge of some letter. I greet you most heartily. Your Good Father.

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562 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 20, 1830

I have finally received a letter from you, my dear son, dated the 6th of the current month and handed to me by Brother Memain. . . . I am thanking God that your trip has been quite a happy one. When you were in Rouen, the papers announced troubles in that city, and not receiving any news, I regretted very much having given you that commission.[1]

I am astonished that for so small a number of boarders and candidates, so large a number of professors is necessary. The Revolution may well diminish the keep and assistance in certain regards, but not in all. On the contrary, the St. Marie Boarding School has had a satisfactory admission of boarders and half-boarders, according to what I have been told. I am afraid that the diminution in St. Remy has been brought about by the means being taken to prevent it, and on the contrary, to render the house famous.[2] The real Christians will fear to send their children, because they will not see there in St. Remy, or at least think they do not see being given there, the Christian education they had reason to expect. The people of the world will not send their children there because they will not find in St. Remy, or at least think they do not find there, an education of a sufficiently worldly character. I understand well enough that for the time being, you can't do much about it, and you'll have enough to do to oppose all superfluous expenses. Nevertheless, given the time and place, you or someone else among the heads might be able to find some happy moment or circumstance to make some useful observations to Father Lalanne.

You must have received, a short time after the departure of the letter to which I am answering, a very long letter in which I recall, and with great detail, all the principal duties of your office. Although the letter hasn't the form of an order, it has all the force of one. . . .

Father Lalanne some time ago remarked to me that he had put Brother Fridblatt in the place of Brother Olivier. I wonder if the latter's departure has been delayed, for I have no direct notification that he had gone. I did not risk sending to Noailles his rule of conduct. The obediences should be carried out promptly, otherwise there result more disadvantages than one would think.

St. Hippolyte is indebted to the extent of 3,000 francs, 500 francs more than was believed. You must understand, my dear son, how many thorns I have in my feet which prevent me from walking. Nevertheless, there is a lessening of the suffering caused by those of St. Hippolyte in the consideration of the Rothéa brothers, as regards the griefs of which they are the occasion, albeit unwillingly. Father Rothéa is altogether unrecognizable, and to his great advantage, since the last trip he made to Bordeaux.

I am, my dear son, yours with complete paternal devotedness . . .

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[1] Brother Clouzet was to settle a money matter.

[2] The allusion is to the new prospectus edited by Father Lalanne.

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The following letter is of the highest interest, as much for the exposés of the views of the Founder on certain essential points of religious life—formation of the postulants and novices, proper character of the government of the Society, conduct to be followed by the religious in times of persecution—as by the energetic expression of his faith in the future of the Society, the work of Mary.

563 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, November 22, 1830

I am working, my dear son, with a sort of subborness at our Constitutions. Current affairs are numerous and are often complicated by the difficulties of the times. No matter, I have attentively reread all our Constitutions with your observations close at hand. Most of the time, I could leave things as they are. Your observations gave place to others which I duly noted down as they occurred to me.

I gave the seven paragraphs indicated by the number 107[1] to several of our older religious, with the request that they make new observations their experience might suggest. All that is interior is, in general, the most difficult to regulate, and it is also that which concerns the greater number.

As regards your observations about article 314 and those following it,[2] it seems that we have never come to any satisfactory agreement. The Society has need of novitiates, but she also needs houses of study. We have always believed it our duty, in imitation of the oldest and holiest orders, to bring up some children adaptable to training in the religious state, according to the will and fortune of their parents, and also according to the means at hand or that we could procure for ourselves. We have always called these children little postulants.

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[1] The Article 107 of the Constitutions of 1829, edited by Father Lalanne under the direction of the Founder (See Letters 474, 475) and was thus worded: "The community rule or way of life takes in all the exterior acts of the religious, and all the material things which may influence them. In these are comprised: 1) the division and employment of time; 2) the relations of the religious among themselves; 3) the relations with the outside world; 4) the lodging; 5) clothing; 6) the food; 7) the care of the body in health and in illness."

[2] Here are the articles alluded to: "314. The postulants who are still in need of studies will be sent—as soon as aptitude and vocation will have been recognized—to houses of study, which are called Little Communities for those who could be trained for the priesthood, and boarding normal schools for the laymen destined for the schools. 315. The Little Communities and the boarding normal schools, being only postulates or houses of second probation, do not follow the regulations of the novitiate, but have a particular regulation, by which the exercises of piety allow more time for literary studies. 316. Classes are not always held in these houses. The pupils may be sent from there to neighboring colleges, but only for class time and without having any other relations with the pupils of these colleges. Things are so arranged that the student who would have several classes to attend does not stay during the entire time of his studies in the same house. He is made to go from one house of study to another, for the better accommodation of his character to all sorts of persons and regions. 318. The studies of a postulant may be interrupted to have him enter the novitiate, when it is judged proper. After leaving the novitiate, he resumes his studies."

When the Society began to grow, I made St. Laurent into a novitiate. St. Laurent was, at the same time, novitiate and house of studies. The need for dividing the subjects, novices, and students was felt, and as soon as we were able, we bought house No. 3.[1] and the separation was started. At about the same time, St. Remy was acquired, and a novitiate was started there, in principle about the same as the one at St. Laurent.

These novitiates have not entirely corresponded to our views: 1. on account of the lack of good novice masters; 2. because the piety of the young men often enough has not been sufficiently developed, their faith has not been firmly enough grounded; studies put an obstacle in the way of piety; often also, the need we had for subjects obliged us to employ them before they were adequately trained either in the religious life or in the work of teaching. In this state of things, we thought it our duty to decide that the two years of novitiate be divided into two parts, one, of strict novitiate, in which the young men would occupy themselves in instructions and religious practices, and once they would be seen to be solidly constituted in the virtues of their state, they would be occupied according to their full novitiate term. Finally, that the really pious little postulants would not yet begin their novitiate, but as postulants, pass into the studies with the novices, or even with the professed students.

Are distinct houses of study and novitiates needed? Without having need of houses of study, could we not send the postulants and student novices to the boarding schools or colleges which the Society would direct? I answer: 1. If we want that the novitiates be well run, there must be a sufficient number of them, and all the time that the Society will admit only a small number of novices, the students, whether little postulants, regular novices, or even professed students be left there. These students are supposed to be in their first fervor and in that way, very helpful to the novices properly so called, and even to the little postulants, should there be any. All this would not prevent that, if there happened to be a too great number of students, or if there should be other difficulties, either for some classes or some types of knowledge for which teachers could not easily be secured, they could be sent to other establishments of the Society, where they could make their studies according to their need, always taking it for granted that there would be no danger to the fervor and piety of these young students. It would be up to the superior to judge of the matter according to the reports of the novice masters.

I had made an exception for Alsace. The difficulty of the two languages, the nature of the Alsatian character, and other considerations made me decide upon instituting a house of studies in St. Hippolyte, under the name of normal boarding school, but entirely composed of postulants, novices or of professed of the Society, but not of a novitiate properly so called. The regular novitiate was to be in St. Remy. It is so difficult to find good masters of novices, that it was already much to have two novitiates, one in St. Remy and the other in Bordeaux.

[1] Later, Nos. 8 and 10, Lalande Street, alongside the Madeleine, see Letters 146 and 183.

It is a great treasure for any order to have one or two good masters of novices. An order degenerates very quickly and falls into relaxation when it can no longer find subjects fitted for this office. Being in St. Remy and busying myself with this important matter, I thought we might succeed in training Father Chevaux for St. Remy and Brother Gaussens for St. Laurent, and I named them in consequence. I have had frequent interviews with Father Chevaux during the remainder of my stay in St. Remy. Would he have succeeded if things had turned out as they had been planned? I think he would have succeeded at least up to a certain point. I saw him at work somewhat, and I saw he wasn't doing badly at all. There were difficulties to be overcome in St. Remy, but we saw the means with which to overcome them and, for the time being, that was sufficient. Never will an institution be fully organized, as it were, overnight, no matter how small it may be. The good God wanted to console us in presenting to our view the whole work of creation. First we see only chaos, then successively we see it all disentangled according to the admirable plan laid out by his eternal wisdom.

I had another design in mind in the formation of the novitiates, that of having older religious return in proportion as they could be replaced, in order to complete their religious or even their literary education. Also, to have those return who might have lost their first fervor. We have had some success in Bordeaux from this last point of view.

As regards the novitiate properly so called, and the novitiate of the students, the distinction is not very striking: 1) because of the small size of the place; 2) because the masters of novices are not yet up to the efficiency called for by their office. We are trying to make up for this by a great regularity, by frequent conferences, and finally, allowing the subjects all the time they need, even at times to the prejudice of their studies, to devote their attention to the exercises of piety of which they have a personal need, and this is working out all right, up to a certain point.

The little interest, my dear son, which I saw you put into the novitiates of St. Laurent and the Madeleine, and even in that of St. Remy, made me think that we had not come to any kind of agreement, and doubtless it is my fault. Last year I should have made sure before we separated that we did agree, especially after having named you superior of the beautiful establishment of St. Remy.

You might then retouch somewhat the chapters of the Constitutions which treat of the postulate and the novitiate in the sense that I have just spoken about, which is exactly the plan arranged with you in Gray, but doubtless in too great haste, since we were not agreeing on the same things. You will still have time to pass these chapters over to me before I have finished everything. I am right now examining the observations of Brother Gaussens, which are very numerous and drawn up from a point of view different from that which guided or suggested your observations. I am coming now to two important observations which you have made: 1. On my dispositions of last wills; 2. On the chapter of the Superior General. As regards the first, although it presents quite a number of drawbacks, I shall conform to it because it can also have many advantages and, surely, the

application will have been made before this long letter reaches you. As regards the second, write it up as you understand it yourself. It is difficult to take more precautions without casting some odium on the Society that would be taking them. When I gave you notes on the government of the Society and the General Administration, I had in mind the government of the Church. All goes well as regards the bishops and even the pope when care is taken in the choice of worthy and capable subjects.

I still have to answer a note which ends all your observations. You tell me that a stipulation is constantly being asked for which would regulate the division of properties in case of dissolution.

This request, my dear son, surprises me much. Does it come from you? Does it come from somewhere else, because I can't imagine that it comes from a great number. It seems impossible that it should come from you. You are here, doubtless, merely as the intermediary of at most a small number who would be ashamed to make such a proposition. But you, why have you not explained to them the difference that there is between a civil and a religious dissolution? That the civil dissolution was really only a dispersion, but did not essentially affect the religious union; that, dispersed as reunited, the Society of Mary's members were always religious, that if they could not then conduct themselves according to the letter of their Constitutions, they were to conduct themselves according to the spirit and that no matter where they happened to be, they were to be ready always to carry out the orders they would receive from their superiors.

But all this seems to me not to answer the question. Have they no rights as regards the properties of the Society? They have a right, then, in the dispersion; that is to say, to assistance more or less great, according to their greater or less needs, and according to the means of the Society. These aids are not given *ex aequalitate*.[1] They are not given even according to the merit or talents, or even according to services rendered, but according to needs. All those who might be able to secure places for themselves by their talents or their know-how should assist their Brothers who might be deprived of means. If the dispersion were prolonged and that the poor of the Society would not be able to survive without any other kind of means, then the properties would be sold, so as to be able to come to their assistance. In this, we would be imitating the Church.

Those who would have contracted bonds of some kind with the Society, or rather with God in the Society, only in the hope and even in the certitude of never lacking anything, would be very little worthy of God and of the Society which would have received them. Little by little, I shall try to feel out the sentiments of those with perpetual vows, and if I find among them pusillanimous and disinterested ones, who, in making the vow of poverty did not abandon themselves entirely into the hands of divine providence, shall look into what there is to be done, but I don't see how such could be chosen for the combats of the Lord.

[1] That is to say, in equal parts.

The Revolution will be in the hands of the Lord, the sieve he will make use of to sift out and cast aside those who call themselves his servants.

I am not speaking here, my dear son, of the annoying and unjust consequences that a temporary division of properties might have, either for the present or for the future. It would be necessary to go into the details which prudence and charity must necessarily silence.

The considerations which your little note obliges me to make are going to cause me some uneasiness as regards the new legatees I shall have to choose, because, finally, if my legatees consider a civil dissolution as an absolute dissolution of the Society, would their first operations not be such as to bring about a division? And again, would they not make a family division? Perhaps, blinded by their merits, they would believe themselves justified in claiming and keeping the greatest part. . . . I hope that the most blessed Virgin will protect the Society which glories in bearing her name.[1]

In spite of the need there is in Agen of Brother Memain, I am retaining him a few days here in Bordeaux to examine with Brother Gaussens the method of primary teaching, to try to settle upon it and to introduce it in our schools. Mutual teaching is what is asked for. In Marmande, the Brothers of the Christian Schools were sent away because they did not want to follow the method of mutual teaching. You may know what happened in Colmar. In Agen, up to the present time, our so-called mixed method seemed to satisfy everybody.[2]

Right now, I am very seriously occupied with all the aspects of our physical and civic existence, but I think I must put an even greater interest in procuring for my children all the means for advancing in virtue and of sifting the wheat from the chaff. Pity the straw! Pray for me, my dear son, so that the Lord may deign to grant me the lights and the courage that I need to fulfill my duty in these difficult times, so that after having preached to others, I may not myself become a castaway.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with very paternal tenderness.

P.S. Father Muhe, the uncle of Mr. Durr, deprived of the salary the commune used to pay him, asked me as a favor that he no longer be obliged to pay tuition for his nephew. I answered him that from now on, we would no longer ask any from him, but that he should at least do what he can to supply something for his daily maintenance.

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[1] Father Chaminade had, by a holographic testament, dated January 14, 1830, made Father Caillet his universal legatee. Father Lalanne was asking that the transfer of goods of the Society "be made rather by sale than by testament, the ownership of each building being acquired by two Society members." Father Chaminade, as has already been seen, at first acceded to the anxious desire of his disciple. The final note of Father Lalanne made him hesitate. He modified nothing for the time being in his dispositions of his last wills, and waited until 1835 to have the property of St. Remy pass to Brother Clouzet, and Brothers Louis and Charles Rothéa.

[2] See Letter 472.

* * * *

As is seen by the preceding letter, in the midst of his serious preoccupations relative to the Society, Father Chaminade found time to occupy himself with the method of teaching. The following letter is very instructive. It missed the destruction of the correspondence with the Brothers Rothéa and with Alsace. Along with precious counsels for the direction of the religious communities are to be found very provocative views on the delicate question of bilingual teaching in Alsace.

564 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, COLMAR

Bordeaux, December 3, 1830

I have received your letter of last November 26th, my dear son, with the two little letters that were included.

Before answering it, I want to let you know that I have finally settled upon our methods of primary teaching. Brother Memain left today for Agen. He is going to implement them. I shall prescribe them only after they have been put to the test on a large scale, as it is relatively easy to do in Agen, where there are more than 400 pupils in the schools without counting those of the special school. If things go on exactly as planned, and I have reason to believe they will, Brother Memain will go from Agen to Villeneuve, where he will do the same things as at Agen, then to Moissac and then to Laugerte.

In the meantime, I am going to settle upon a little method of moral and Christian education, especially for the smallest children. I noted that in none of our schools do our teachers, even the best educated, know how to go about forming or training the mind and the heart of the little children.

Our methods are the same as the old ones, but much improved. I shall not lose sight of our Alsace establishments, nor of some others, like Orgelet, etc. . . . I shall send someone who will be able to do in the North what we are beginning to do in the South. It is to be presumed, especially in the North, that there will be several subjects little qualified for teaching who will have to be replaced. From now on, we shall destine for primary teaching only those who are really apt to become good teachers.

Alsace offers one more difficulty to overcome, that of teaching the two languages. The methods may be the same, but there are some questions to be asked, to which I would be very glad to have an answer from you.

With which one of the two languages would it be the best to start? Or can they be taught simultaneously? We divide our classes into three parts, that of the beginners, of the intermediate pupils, and that of the more advanced ones. That of the more advanced is the

one we call the big class. I would be of the opinion that only the German language be taught in the beginners' classes and in all those of the intermediate pupils. My reason is that ordinarily the children of the beginners' classes are so small, that in wanting to have them learn the two languages at the same time, they only get hopelessly confused. Furthermore, how do we expect to train their minds and hearts by speaking to them in a language in which they are, for so long a time, unable to think or reflect? We ordinarily think in our mother tongue, and it is only after a long-standing habit that thinking can be done in a foreign language. When the child begins to speak French, for a long time he will do no more than translate his German thought into French. At the end of the intermediate classes, French can be started either by reading or writing. The big class would be especially for French reading and writing. In it German reading and writing would only be improved. The same would be the case for arithmetic and linear drawing. Catechism would always be learned and explained in German, but in the big class it would have to be translated into French.

There might be another means I would even like a lot more, above all for the children who presumably would not be destined for purely mechanical kinds of work. It would be to teach only French, even to the smallest children. At the end of their classes, only a short time would be needed to train them well in the German language. During the time of their French classes, they would have learned to read German almost by themselves. In the big class, the French pupils are trained in several kinds of writing now what would prevent their being trained in the German style? If the children were taken from the age of five or six, and if a teacher spoke only French to them, they would learn much more easily to pronounce it and to speak it easily. They would soon understand it sufficiently to receive instructions suited to their level; they would think, one might say, a lot more in French than in German and, nevertheless, they would always preserve great ease in pronouncing German well. That is about what I had thought was to be done when I sent Brothers to Colmar for the first time.

In my visits to Alsace, I noted that there are places where only German was wanted, and where there would be very few pupils for French. We might well get along with all these differences and tastes, but we would have to be notified in advance as to what would be expected of us, and as to what we might be able to do. The teachers could rarely be the same. Those destined to teach French ought to be French, and for teaching both German and French, Germans who had learned French would be needed. As regards this, you would do well to consult the pastor of Colmar and thus all would be determined and settled in due time.

As regards the methods, I believe them so good that you will no longer fear being questioned about mutual teaching. If this should happen, nevertheless, all you would have to do would be to invite the authorities asking about it to judge for themselves as to its better and more rapid results. Most certainly, they would accept such a challenge, unless they definitely had in mind creating difficulties for you.

I received the observations of almost all of our older teachers and members about the edition of the Constitutions gotten out by Father Lalanne. I am now in a position to give it the final touch, and the work is advancing.

I shall now return to your letter, with that of your priest-brother, to whom I shall have only a very short letter to write, as to Brother Weber.

I am going to draw up a little report for Mrs. Desfeuilles.[1]

I am going to send to your address, and by speedy carriage, the goods and chattels of Mr. A. Bernhard. Father Caillet, to whom the matter was referred, was not in favor of this, considering these belongings as a very small compensation for the expenses of maintenance that we were in no way obliged to assume. You will see what, in an amiable and diplomatic way, you can do with Mrs. Bernhard, his mother.

It is very well that St. Hippolyte is being helped in getting rid of its most pressing debts, but, moreover, we must try so to arrange matters that the place can be self-sustaining, able to pay its debts and pay back your loans. When at the end of last year, you drew my attention to the bad condition of the finances at St. Hippolyte, when Brother Xavier, your brother, wrote to me in the name of your entire family about the absolute incapacity of the priest in the management of temporal matters, I promised them to remedy the situation and I then decided by myself to send you there with complete authority over all that concerned the temporal matters. Since then, Father Rothéa seemed to me to have such confidence in Brother Robe as regards order and economy, that I no longer thought of anything but to have you watch him and to see if in reality, he was doing well. But it seems, to judge from his letter as well as from yours, that he did not know how to use him as effectively as his ability seemed to warrant. A Head, who has no head at all, knows neither how to foresee nor to judge things even if he had more people with him, while, on the contrary, a good Head, with very little help, even of mediocre quality, is always able to manage affairs suitably and promptly.

It is said proverbially that a good horseman would be able to make a wooden horse walk. You will then go, my dear son, to direct and lead these poor little temporal matters. It is not because you have asked for it, my dear son, that I am sending you there, but a lot more because I had the intention of doing so as I have just said. Always remain quiet and composed! Nevertheless, as the Reverend Pastor of Colmar would not like to see you leave Colmar, you will still continue to have the title of head of the establishment of this city, and you will go there from time to time. In the beginning, it will be suitable to go there and spend

[1] The mother of a young religious, belonging to one of the most distinguished families in Colmar, who had just died in a holy manner on May 17, 1830, in the novitiate of St. Laurent. “Prosper Desfeuilles was the nephew of a deputy,” writes Brother Dilvain in his memoirs, “and had renounced, not without the opposition on the part of his family, a big fortune and a brilliant future. After his death, Father Chaminade often spoke to us of the means which this young man had taken to die in union with our Lord Jesus Christ.”

at least one day each week, and perhaps even more on certain occasions, perhaps less on others. I shall send Coustou a little certificate to make him subhead, or replacing the real head.

I shall observe to you, my dear son, not to make any changes, neither in the one or in the other establishment, without there having been well considered and matured—in St. Hippolyte, with Father who will keep the title of superior—in Colmar, with Brother Coustou, sometimes even with several or even with all your other Brothers. When you find that your opinions differ from those of the persons you consult, withhold your decisions. I am making you this first observation, my dear son, because, in general, you are inclined to act too hastily. You have to come back on your first orders, and that produces a bad effect by diminishing the authority of the head or at least the confidence that he should enjoy in the minds of all.

2. When there is resistance on the part of some subjects, or when you surprise them in some faults, begin by controlling yourself, and never exasperate or drive them to any extreme. The more they might be guilty, the more you have need of complete self-possession. There are subjects whom it is inadvisable or even dangerous to reprimand in the presence of others. In a little private interview, the subject, ordinarily, soon enters into himself and makes it a sort of duty to repair his fault in the presence of those who might have been scandalized by it.

3. Your hastiness, your intensity, and sometimes your fits of passion harm you much. The same defects also harm the priest, your brother. In general, all the religious, Alsatian or French, esteem both of you, but they have little love for you both, and for you in particular. You sometimes have recourse to extreme severity. You admit it, but the harm done to hearts is not all cured. I am limiting myself to these three observations. In due course of time, little by little, I shall make others to you.

In St. Hippolyte you might start a little store to provide all the things that the pupils habitually need. You would sell them at retail prices to the pupils of St. Hippolyte and furnish them to the heads of the other establishments wholesale. These objects must not cost more to the pupils than they would cost in the ordinary stores of the city where the establishment happens to be. It would even be good to undercut a little the prices of the city merchants. I shall not go into other explanations as you will know how to conduct this little business to the best advantage.

It is to be presumed that when there will be order in St. Hippolyte as regards the food, the supervision, education, in the pupils' bills, I say it is to be presumed that the number of boarders will increase, there being only primary teaching.

It seems to me in St. Remy there have always been more subjects than were actually needed. When there are so few pupils, why would not the same teacher combine upon several kinds of instruction? It is really direction on the part of the heads that is lacking. How many boarding schools with greater enrollments, where there is really only one teacher, with at most only one helper! I could cite examples that are, so to speak, under my very eyes, but your good brother can't get himself to observe, to reflect, to foresee and put things together. It is unfortunate, but we must remain patient.

When you arrive in St. Hippolyte, you must undertake the reforms or changes that you would deem necessary with great circumspection. If you failed to act wisely, the only result would be a storm of protests against you and an increase in the existing evils. It would be a good policy before undertaking each change or reform, to have it approved by your brother and by all those who are interested in it. In this way, doubtless, you will be advancing somewhat slowly, but you will be walking on solid ground. Pupils who note the change for the better will write to their homes about it, and the reputation of the house will be reestablished even in the city of St. Hippolyte itself. Do not be anxious, but be wise, mild, moderate although firm. When you see some danger in the removal or change of certain things, or even in their proscription, stop a moment, remain patient, consult, and don't risk all kinds of danger until it has been well and clearly seen that the risk must be taken.

In Colmar give Brother Coustou enough latitude and liberty to accustom himself to the work of government. If you don't accord him this latitude and liberty, he would get no liking for it, he would not accustom himself to serious reflection and he would acquire no experience. If he happens to make a few trifling mistakes, you will see that he will promptly correct them and be the wiser for the experience. You won't even have to call them to his attention, as he will correct them himself, otherwise he would be lacking in good will, and as a result would not be very able to become a good Head. As regards the little cash box of the establishment, it is always you who holds it, who is concerned with feeding it, and who is in charge of the funds.

If Brother Colin in Ribeauville could be replaced, it would be good to send him to me in Bordeaux. I hope that he will change for the better in not too much time, especially if he gets to recognize the self-love that dominates him. Furthermore, he could be trained in all our methods and sent back to you before long. You are proposing Brother Houlni to replace him. The Reverend Pastor who would want to have him is much displeased, since he hasn't the brains required in the head of an establishment. It will already be a great deal if he makes himself docile and obedient. Try, really, to have him replaced, but suitably. It would have been very good for Ribeauville if your brother had won his confidence and had gotten him to the point of wanting to cure himself of his self-love.

Brother Cholet[1] has made several mistakes. The first, he went to his home without permission, and this fault is serious. In the second place, he took it upon himself to pay a sum of money, and in this he acted directly against his vow of poverty. How can anyone who has nothing and who can acquire nothing, take it upon himself to pay? If he had taken upon himself these commitments in view of something he might inherit later on, he might have been able to get authorization for what he did. In the third place, his creditors must be pretty ignorant, since his commitments have absolutely no value. They are what we call oak leaves. If by that, he meant to force us to pay them, the wrong would be only the greater. I told him that we really could not do it, even if there were question of a less considerable a sum. He must surely know that we have not since increased our sources of revenue, but that on the contrary, since the Revolution, our measure of want is about as high as it can ever be. Brother Cholet has made still a fourth mistake, that of depriving himself of the hope of our being able to come to the assistance of his brother. In fact, I would have had the intention of helping this family, if we had been able to get beyond our own needs. Now, if I had the imprudence of withdrawing one of these bills or of giving some partial payments in advance, I would be giving them a hold on me, not only for what remains for later on. Judge for yourself if I would want to expose myself to such serious drawbacks. In the fifth place, if he intended meeting his commitments by the funds he would make in the establishment of St. Marie, he would be much mistaken, for: 1. The establishment must pay its own debts by means of its savings; 2. Is it suitable that the savings of this establishment be used to pay debts foreign to the Society, while other establishments also have debts to pay? 3. Finally, and this is the strongest, Brother Cholet would seem to be obliging me to keep him as head of the schools of St. Marie-aux-Mines until he has finished paying his debts. Now you know that I have the intention of replacing him as soon as I can do so conveniently, and I shall do it a lot sooner if like relations with his family continue.

Write to Brother Cholet nearly all I am telling you, basing yourself on the information you gave me about the commitments he made during this vacation. Within a reasonable time, let me know if he has withdrawn his commitments, whether he is really repentant over his faults and what he intends to do in the future.[1]

I was, last evening, this far with this letter when I opened one from Brother Colin. I think I ought to send it to you, and you will then communicate it to your brother, and you and he will act in regard to Brother Colin as if you had not known anything about it. I am giving you this communication just as a lesson. What a use, or rather what an abuse your brother should be making of his superiorship over our little establishments in Alsace! If the heads do not conduct themselves well, to bring them back to a sense of duty, why not first make use of all the means of instruction and of insights that reason and religion offer? If these means are powerless, then those based on authority are to be used, and then penalties applied with wisdom, charity, and justice. A professed should never be menaced

[1] Director of the establishment of St. Marie-aux-Mines.
[1] There was more ignorance than malice in the case of this poor director, who had acted only after having taken the advice of counselors little qualified to give any.

with the threat of being expelled. If there is a lack of docility, insubordination, then the matter is to be referred to the Superior General. In giving reprimands, a superior must never use injurious expressions, etc.

Your brother, in imprudently recounting what he has seen or heard in Bordeaux, has exaggerated if he spoke as told by Brother Colin. Whatever the case may be, I am going to write to the latter a little letter to dispel the bad impressions he may have received as a result. Ask your brother to point out to me in detail the diverse failing of Brother Colin. Until the present, I have learned of nothing serious exteriorly, and you must have found out by this time how difficult it is to please and satisfy him.

Brother Clouzet lately sent me a letter that your brother Xavier wrote to him. Xavier surely was out of his ordinary character in writing such a letter. Brother Clouzet, on his part, also makes his mistakes in his manner of answering the requests for funds that Xavier has been making to him since the acquisition of Ebersmunster, but he does not have the failings that Xavier reproaches him with so dryly and ironically. Whatever the case may be, I am going to pass over to Brother Clouzet an authorization for borrowing the entire sum which is due to your brother, if that is possible for him, and which he hopes really is. Doubtless, Brother Xavier must have written to Brother Clouzet as he did only to get him to make efforts, and possibly he has achieved his purpose. Brother Clouzet has really made up his mind in the matter, and I shall uphold him in his determination. I am only sorry that an affair begun and continued as a really good work is ending so badly.

In rereading the article in your letter in which you speak to me of Ebersmunster, you tell me that Brother Clouzet showed you a letter in which I forbade him to do any borrowing. Most certainly you must not have read, in the letter he showed you, such a prohibition. When your priest-brother had seen the Reverend Pastor, creditor of Brother Menet, according to all his promises, after all we had either said or promised, your priest-brother thought he was soon getting amounts close to 10,000 francs of which he thought he would pay the first quarter, leaving it up to you to provide for the remainder. After several letters in which the hopes were entertained, I wrote to Brother Clouzet to quiet him about the loan, which I thought was not possible since the Revolution.[1] If it is possible in the departments of the Upper-Saône and the Doubs, it must be that financial matters are not as troubled as they are in Bordeaux. This affair of Ebersmunster has not been managed according to the same plan and, doubtless, that is why it has failed. The lack of success, as usual, must be ascribed to me.

How is it that Mr. Walliser, Sr., is not buying back his son for 300 or 400 francs?[2] How is it that the son doesn't have his father pay this sum on what will eventually come to him? Whatever the case may be, I shall have a certificate made for him by the baker of the

[1] See Letters 537-39.
[2] At this time, a young man called to the military service, when having obtained a bad number on the conscription lists, could "buy himself back" by paying a substitute.

Misericord, under whom and with whom he has worked, and the same with Dubarry, who is really a baker.

Before sending the bill to Mr. Desfeuilles, I would like to know whether the money order for 200 francs, which Miss Desfeuilles sent for her brother, should be deducted from the bill. Don't forget to let me know as soon as possible. May the Lord give you prudence and courage.

I am embracing you with an altogether paternal tenderness.

* * * *

565 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 10, 1830

I don't want to let the long letter I am writing to Brother Clouzet go to the mail, my dear son, without saying a word to you about my work on the constitutions.

I have considered with care and order all the observations that have been made to me up to the present time. In the careful and attentive reading of the second book, I thought I should make another edition of the four principal chapters, one on the categories of persons composing the Society, one on the college of priests, a third on the educated members, and the fourth on that of the working members. I am changing nothing. I don't think there is anything to be changed even in the general plan.

I thought I should start my work on the second book, because of the influence that it can have on the first and third books.[1] The work of the first book won't cost me much, I think, with the exception of a certain number of points, of which the articles are too meticulous and must be transferred to the third book.

The Constitutions will have to be accompanied, at least in part, by a manual of direction, which will be made up almost entirely of notes on the articles of the Constitutions that will be in need of explanations.

I am stopping here, my dear son, because the mail is about to leave, as well as because I am not as yet fully decided as regards the dispositions I would want to make, those that I imagined and about which, nevertheless as regards the form, I shall consult Brother David, or if he is not available, some man skilled in law. I am writing to Brother

[1] The first book, entitled *Of the Means*, treated of the religious profession and of Christian education; the second book, entitled *Of the Organization*, treated of the persons and government; the third book included the particular regulations. See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 828.

Clouzet to send me the extract of the purchase contract of St. Remy. Greetings, my dear son, from heart and soul!

* * * *

Brother Olivier arrived in Noailles. Father Chaminade immediately addressed to him detailed counsels for his conduct in the delicate situation in which he found himself, and which, in the thought of the Founder, was only temporary, awaiting the realization of the grand projects planned before the Revolution.

566 – TO BROTHER OLIVIER, NOAILLES

Bordeaux, December 12, 1830

My dear son: I have received your letter of December 4th. I had received the preceding one which announced your arrival in Noailles. Hardly had you left Bordeaux, when I received one from Sister Stanislas, who was writing to me in the name of the Reverend Pastor and the object of which was only to urge your return to your post. My answer was thus unnecessary, you having already left. Please assure the Reverend Pastor of my respectful remembrance and Sister Stanislas of my hearty greetings.

I wrote, as I told you, to the Count of Noailles. I told him that you would be alone until further orders, that you would busy yourself only with some Noailles children, that you would train as Mass servers for the ceremonies and chants of the Church and that, in this way, you would be in charge of the lectern. I settled everything regarding the expenses I had in sending you to Noailles, and I set your salary at 600 francs. Regarding these matters, here is the Count's answer in his exact words: "Brother Olivier will be able to take in his service one or two children. The wages will be for the instruction he will give them. I am allowing him 50 francs a month, each year a cask of wine, wood for carpentry, with a vegetable garden all his own. He will have presents in kind from the parents of his pupils, and perhaps even steady and regular pupils." The traveling expenses have been repaid to me in Bordeaux.

Here you have, my dear son, my reflections on your new position. Hold on resolutely to what we have agreed to verbally, and for your regular class, take only children belonging to the parish. You can count among the children those who would be up to 12 or 13 years old, and by some exceptions, judged as such by the Reverend Pastor, up to 14 years. Young people of 18 to 20 years of age can no longer be classed as children. Nevertheless, all the young men who might desire to be better instructed in religion, you might receive several times a week, and if there should be any among those who would want to profit by the occasion of their meeting with you to learn or even to write better, you might place yourself at their disposal. However, never lose sight of the fact that religious instruction is the essential point and that at least one half of the time the meeting must be devoted to it. You will read this part of my letter to the Reverend Pastor, talk the matter over with him, and see

if this does not suffice to arrange everything satisfactorily. If among the youngsters you have dealings with, there should be any with a beautiful voice, and, at the same time, modest and pious, you can have them with your chosen lads, either for lessons in singing or for the church ceremonies. In all this, my dear son, you have plenty to keep you busy, but there is not too much for your natural activity and your preference for these kinds of exercises. Furthermore, each thing must be well regulated, and all exercises kept within their just limits. Always reserve for yourself ample time to make your own religious exercises well, and let it be literally true when it is said that you are living in Noailles as a solitary.

Live frugally, but let your food be sufficient in quality and quantity to keep you in good health. No sensuality nor social invitations. Never eat outside of your place of residence. If the Reverend Pastor urges you beyond measure in certain circumstances, you might accept his invitation once or twice, but asking him, nonetheless, not to invite you because of the fact that your customs and regulations are against your eating elsewhere than at home.

Pay no visits, except such as propriety or necessity might require. Never be familiar with anyone, neither with your pupils nor with young people in general. Be good, kind, obliging but not talkative. Put no more time into any particular exercise or tasks than is necessary to do it well. Avoid all private meeting places, either with your pupils or the young people who frequent you. Never receive any woman into your private room on whatever pretext, not even religious Sisters, but if some one of them desires to speak to you, it would have to be in a place open to the sight of all going or coming, with doors always open. If you have to go to the Sisters, you must stop at the door and have the one called to whom you want to speak, but in general, do all you can not to have any need of going to the Disters or of having them come to you.

You will acknowledge the reception of this letter and tell me at the same time about the arrangements you have made in order to conform to all that is therein contained. If there are difficulties you are unable to surmount, all you have to do is to tell me about them. May all be so clearly stated that at each hour of the day I may know what you are doing, as well as if I were actually seeing you.

Keep your little account of receipts and expenses. Make all current and necessary expenses without scruple. If there happens to be an exceptional one to be made and not foreseen, let me know of it. Take no money from anyone for services you might be able to render.

You may accept presents in kind, but never ask for them, nor leave the impression that you are expecting them. Be sure you do not tire the steward or his family. I am now closing this first letter in exhorting you to advance steadily in virtue, to repress self-love at all times, and to live as a real solitary. I am embracing you paternally.

* * * *

Brother F. X. Weber, after his flight from Agen (See Letter 551), had come back to his home and busied himself with putting his conscience in order. Father Rothéa, to whom he had opened himself—it seems through the intermediary of Father Rittling, his pastor—consults Father Chaminade about what to do in regard to the poor fugitive. The answer of the Founder will be read with interest.

567 – TO FATHER ROTHÉA, ST. HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, December 13, 1830

The vows made in the Society of Mary are only simple vows, because to confirm them, there is no authentic authorization on the part of the Roman Church. Nevertheless, we act generally, as if they were so solemn: 1. because, from the beginning, the sovereign pontiff was indirectly informed about it in telling him of the formation of the Society and in asking for various favors, among others that of a plenary indulgence at the time of the profession of perpetual vows; 2. in view of the constant intention maintained, of asking Rome for an authentic authorization and the manifestation to the apostolic nuncio that we had delayed making this request only to not compromise the Holy See with the French government.[1]

As regards young Francis Weber, he was not asked at the time of a serious illness to make his perpetual vows. On the contrary, it is a favor which one of our priests, Father Collineau, thought he ought to grant to the requests and to the tender piety of the young invalid. Since that time, during several years, the young religious has always blessed God for his holy promises. Several times he has asked to renew them and has in fact renewed them. Brother Francis Weber relaxed little by little. He has little by little given entrance to the passions of his heart, and especially to an extreme self-love. You know who has ended by leading him astray. I consider him as a real apostate.

I am not complaining about all the troubles he has caused us by his sudden and clandestine leaving, but he will not reenter the Society even if he should ask to do so, unless he has as much edified by his repentance, as he was able to scandalize by his conduct previous to his apostasy, as by his apostasy itself.

I know of no sufficient cause for dispensation, nevertheless, if he conducted himself in a Christian manner at his home, I would be of the opinion that he was dispensed from the vows of stability and of teaching, that, as regards the vows of poverty and obedience, their practice would be reduced to the rules given by the sovereign pontiff to the religious obliged to leave their couvents by the first Revolution. As regards the vow of chastity, you

[1] It is known that since the Revolution, the law no longer recognized the vows of religion.

have nothing to remark to Father Rittling, as dispensation from it is strictly reserved to the pope.

You could copy this entire part of my letter as your answer to Father Rittling, but make no complaint against the young man, and do not speak in writing about Father Weber, who is perhaps even more guilty than his brother. Nevertheless, fact-to-face, you might speak of it to Father Rittling, because this young priest may be very harmful to the Society in the new place that has been assigned to him, and in this last case, you would not speak to him about it, only insomuch as he would give you his formal promise never to compromise you. Father Rittling will be very glad to learn from others what, at first, he will have learned from you. It is very annoying that he has been placed precisely close to the university.

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568 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 16, 1830

My dear son: I am far from having the assurance of obtaining the ordinary exemptions from the military service. I have been very careful to take the precautions needed to assure myself of it.[1] When the time will have come, I shall send, in the ordinary way, my nominative state[2] by the hand of the rector of the Academy of Bordeaux, if he is willing to take charge of the matter. A subprefect of the Upper Rhine has refused to legalize the signatures affixed to such engagements. He even indignantly threw away some that were being presented to him. No difficulty was put in the way of matters in the prefecture of Colmar in the matter of legalization. As regards Brother George Loetsch, it would be good to get in touch with the diocesan authorities of Strasborg.[3] You may avail yourself of the services of his priest-uncle in handing in your request.

A prospectus could well be the effect of your transfer to St. Remy, but the form of prospectus was not a matter of indifference, especially in revolutionary times. Several persons have spoken to me of your speech at the distribution of prizes, but no one gave me a copy of it. I shall always be interested in receiving all your observations as regards the Constitutions. As regards the detailed account of the expenses and receipts in the College of Gray, it now becomes entirely useless.

[1] As a matter of prudence, by reason of the political situation, Father Chaminade thought he had better remain silent and avoid all proceedings, awaiting, in the meantime, the course of events.
[2] The religious, called by age to military service, and dispensed from it by means of the engagement to serve for ten years in the work of teaching.
[3] Brother Loetsch was to be dispensed, since he was an ecclesiastical student.

You have presented Brother Stignard for the subdiaconate. Doubtless, you have thought him worthy of it. He must know a little theology. Doubtless, the Holy Spirit must have enlightened you as to what policy to follow in regard to Brother Fridblatt.

Your position, my dear son, in my regard, must really be for you rather painful. You believe you receive from God the mission of afflicting and annoying me. You add that you have no place in the ordinary ways of obedience and of religious dependence, but that it is I who have taken from you all possibility of walking in them. Pray then, my dear son, the good God to enlighten me so that I may sufficiently correct myself, that it may not be necessary that he give you such a disagreeable mission, and also that you may not be obliged to walk on a road so dangerous for salvation.

Brother Clouzet had transmitted to me the complaints and threats of Father Bardenet, as regards the Sister Superior of Acey. I have given him a little answer and I asked him please to try to come to an understanding with you.

I think that the Sister Superior of Arbois is mistaken, as regards the presentiment she has that the superioress general wants to withdraw her from Arbois. The superioress general only expressed to me her grief over the fact that the spirit of faith was not the ruling power in that convent. What causes her still greater grief is the fear that the novices are not being well trained. She has the same fear with regard to Acey. Her correspondence with Arbois does no more than let her see purely human views. That is about what I was able to make out. Since my last visit to Agen, the entire community, but especially the superioress general, seemed to understand very well what a religious Sister is supposed to be, what it really means to live by faith, and what the government and direction of the superioress general is expected to be. The two confessors of the community are filled with the same sentiments. The time of the vacation was made use of to work upon the superiors of Condom and Tonneins, as well as upon some of the principal Sisters in view of their further religious development, and we have the satisfaction of seeing that these communities, as a whole, are really living by the principles and sentiments of genuine faith.

I have just received a letter from Brother Clouzet. I shall send him some words in reply. I am always yours with an altogether paternal affection, etc. . . .

P.S. Happily, my letter did not leave last evening, and I received the promises of Brother George, with all the signatures legalized by those in power. This will now end the affair, provided these promises are accepted.

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569 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 16, 1830

Your letter of the 7th of the current month, my dear son, and posted on the 11th, came to me on the 16th, and I am answering it immediately, in fact, right after having written to Father Lalanne.

It is in these same fears that you have that I am taking all the possible precautions to save our entire family and to provide in the best way possible for its continued existence. It is in these same views, above all, that I am telling you to retain the revenues of the properties of St. Remy and Marast and to make them reach as far as possible, etc., etc.

Today, you propose to me the formation in St. Remy of a model farm. I also have some ideas about something of the kind, but as there are several ways of going about it, let me have your plan with all suitable details. I don't think, however, that we shall have the time and the means of realizing the idea in its entirety, and still less of having it approved by the Government, but it is already quite a bit to have a well-conceived plan and the execution of which has already made a start.

Strengthen yourself, my dear son, in the practice of true virtue, and especially in the practice of mental prayer, of faith, and of self-abnegation. I am embracing you tenderly.

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The same attitude of firmness and moderation, but also of sadness and resigned awaiting of better times in the following letters of the Founder.

570 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, December 22, 1830

On the day before yesterday, my dear son, I received the little case of books in which were enclosed the long letter you wrote to me, the engagements of Brother Guillegoz,[1] and

[1] Brother Stephen Guillegoz (1810-73) from Gouhenans, Upper-Saône, entered in St. Remy in 1828 as a pupil. There he became a postulant and novice, made his first profession in 1830, and was there employed as professor, succeeding Brother Clouzet as director in 1851. For more than 20 years, he was the soul of this big house, which he governed with the aid of four subdirectors: one for the secondary boarding school, or the Château; one for the community of working brothers or of St. Joseph; another for the Farm-School of which he has been named director by ministerial decree of February 25, 1853; and, the one for the Mill of Faverney, acquired in 1863.

Beneath a rather cold and authoritative appearance, Brother Guillegoz was a religious of profound faith, of solid virtue, with practical judgment and a strong attachment to the Society. At the time of the difficulties of the Society in 1865, he played an important and pacific role. "What everybody claims," he wrote to Father Lalanne on November 23, 1865, "is: 1. Concord; 2. The study of the question; 3. The cooperation of the higher clergy; 4. Or rather, above all else, the protection of the Most Holy Virgin. Do we not call ourselves her children? Is it not up to her to do all for us, especially in this painful circumstance? If my prayer were worth anything, I would ask her one only thing, union. In the sight of men, union makes for strength, and also before God." Brother Guillegoz, having fallen sick, was sent to Besançon for better

a note for Brother David. The case had been opened, although in good condition inside. Transport cost 10 francs, 10 centimes.

I shall be careful, my dear son, about answering your observations on the same article, in my letter of last November 22nd. I believe that it is only with the best in mind and to tell the truth, that you express yourself for some time, in such an astonishing manner in my regard. If your correspondence were with someone other than myself, I would believe it my duty to have you take notice that, when past acts are referred to in order to condemn them, the times, places, persons, and other circumstances should be left out of consideration. However, I am not to judge in my own case in the same way I would judge in the case of another, because there is in me such a great fund of imperfection and such a want of light, that all that I do proclaims the fact. Nevertheless, I am not discouraged, in the hope that the divine assistance will help me find a middle way between an ideal perfection and a practical perfection in the institution of the novitiates and houses of study. An old proverb says that each should measure himself by his own standard.

I am now passing to No. 20 of your observations, where you say: "I have not asked, I believe, that any notable change be made, as the local powers seem to me well enough balanced, etc., etc." Nevertheless, in a letter you wrote to me at the house, Saturday at 3 o'clock, you devote two pages to protest against the articles which determine the authority of the superior general. I have seen few criticisms more biting, and you pretend, nonetheless, always to have a light coming directly from God.

The last three pages of this same letter are still worse, independently of some annotations made at the end of your remarks. You tell me in No. 21 to which I answer "that there were no bad intentions involved . . . that there was also inadvertence." I do not easily attribute bad intentions to anyone, with all the more reason to you, but three pages of a letter which you wrote as a guarantee for the designs of a great number of others, and in which you express on your own account great threats, it must be admitted that this inadvertence is of a very peculiar kind.

I am not saying anything in fact about one of your observations relating to those who are not employed in primary teaching or who would be employed in secondary teaching, but I had this well in mind when I rewrote the chapter on the organization and the three chapters on the three collèges.[1] I did not send them back to you, because in retouching them as a whole, I might want to come back to them. Besides, I shall perhaps find another expedient, because another thing is to prove the need of having the Society composed of priests, teaching brothers of all grades, of artists and working brothers. Another thing is to have establishments of secondary education. This seems of less consequence today,

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care; he died there piously on March 5, 1873. See in *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 510, the letter of Brother Guillegoz to Father Chaminade on the eve of his perpetual profession.

[1] The three collèges of the priests, teaching brothers, and working brothers or artisans, expression borrowed from the edition of Brother David of the Constitutions of 1818, and which was not kept by Father Chaminade.

when we have only the boarding school of Ste. Marie and that of St. Remy to defend. The one and the other are anterior to the approbation of the Society by the Government.[2]

I am thanking you, my dear son, for the satisfying details that you give me about St. Remy. I pray the good God to accord you the lights and the strength to direct this establishment according to the designs of his mercy.

I had the notes which you sent to Brother David immediately passed over to him. I am always busy with the Constitutions in spite of the constantly rushing torrent of affairs, but I am sometimes interrupted in order to solve some difficulties that arise here and there on questions of morals or canon law.

I have had Brother David told by Brother Auguste of the means I would want to take in order to assure St. Remy to the Society by an act of sale, without prejudice to the means already taken, but I have had as yet no answer. I would have needed the contract of sale, or at least a well-made extract of it. I asked Brother Clouzet for it. If he has not yet sent it to me, ask him please not to delay any longer. Surely, Brother David will ask for it if he has in mind drawing up the action that I would want to take.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with great paternal tenderness.

P.S. This letter did not leave last evening, for I had the intention of sending along with it two little ones, and today, the mail brought me your speech under separate cover as you had told me you would send it. I read it from start to finish without delay. However elegantly written this speech seemed to me, I admit to you, my dear son, I was unable to defend myself against a painful feeling from the beginning down to the end of the reading of it.

This speech shows real talent and even some genius on the part of its author. It also gives evidence of virtue, of faith, skill and courage, but I doubt much that it would be approved by persons, serious and of sound sense. You suppose to be true and certain, principles which will forever be contested, and it would be the greatest of evils if they were, in fact, generally accepted. I believe that it was in the purest of views that you composed it, you thought of finding the means of recalling the ideas and the need of religious virtues, but how will you succeed? You are so far from understanding by liberty, what the leaders of liberalism understand by it, or what the daily papers and the rank and file of their readers understand by it! Liberty and equality, such as you understand them, would not be that powerful food that makes all heads turn, which is the most powerful weapon of impiety, etc. . . .

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[2] These lines are rather obscure because we don't have the observations of Father Lalanne to which they refer. Apparently, they seem to indicate that Father Chaminade hesitated to speak explicitly of secondary teaching in the Constitutions, for fear of drawing upon himself disagreements on the part of a Government hostile to religion and more obstinate than ever in the maintenance of the monopoly of education and teaching.

I do not read the *Avenier*[1] but from the little that I hear about it from time to time, this newspaper pushes principles too far and is bound to do more harm than good. I am not at all astonished that the bishop has forbidden it in his diocese.

I wanted to say only two words, and I see that I have said more than four. Pity me all you want for having none but old fashioned ideas!

* * * *

The discourse to which this letter makes allusion has been preserved to us. It is a pamphlet of some 32 pages bearing the title "About religious education considered as the surest guarantee of public liberties, discourse pronounced at a literary exercise of the Institute of St. Remy (Haute-Saône) by Reverend Lalanne." Paris, to be had in the bookshop of Gaume Brothers, Pot-de-fer-Street, No. 5. The forward includes this declaration of principles, by which Father Lalanne—not without some pride—poses as a partisan and almost a precursor of the ideas of the Correspondent *(1824) and of the* Avenir *(1830):*

"The opinions which the author expresses in this discourse have not been imposed on him by the force of circumstances. In 1827, before the distinguished writers, who make so noble a use of their talents and of their knowledge in the Correspondent*, before this sublime word, 'God and Liberty'*[2] *has resounded all over France and which will be one day its very salvation, this man, doubtless, drawn along by his sincere love for religion and for this country, had voiced the same doctrines in a writing entitled 'Appeal to public opinion, for the justification of the clergy of France and their reconciliation with all Frenchmen,' with this epigraph: Strike but listen! He then wanted, and even had to remain anonymous. However little one may have of good sense and prudence, one is not so easily protected against a certain fear, when venturing alone on a new and perilous road . . ."*

The discourse itself, enlivened by a fine inspiration, is full of generous ideas, but too much mingled with overly utopian schemes and errors that were then brewing in the minds of the young Catholics of the liberal school. We shall cite the more significant passages. Father Lalanne says in principle that, in a free state, a liberal education is necessary.

"Close all your religious schools is going to be yelled from all sides, because it is known that they are totally opposed to all liberal ideas." Unjust accusation, gentlemen, and it shows that the human heart and the needs of the people are as little known as the spirit of religion. From here, on the contrary, I shall cry out and I shall repeat with an accent of profound conviction: "Do you want the public liberties? Do you wish that this work, which you believe to have been brought to its end by so many generous efforts, by such heroic

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[1] The *Avenir*, a paper founded in October 1830 by the Abbé Lamennais, with the collaboration of Gerbet, Lacordaire, Motalembert, and other Catholics of the liberal school. It went into such excesses of language and of doctrine that, in November 1831, further publication was suspended and ended in its condemnation by the encyclical of Gregory XVI, *Mirari Vos* of August 15, 1832.
[2] Slogan of the *Avenir*.

sacrifices, be preserved? Do you wish that this liberty, the conquest of which you exalt, be always for you a subject of joy and glory? Well then, friends of liberty, do not hesitate, open everywhere religious schools!

What, in fact, is public liberty, that of which divine Providence offers us the priceless benefit? Allow, gentlemen, that here I descend to a definition of principles, so as the better to bring home a truth that most people ignore today, but of which your children, I hope, one day, will see the triumph. . . . It is incontestable that among us, since the July Revolution, the liberty of the people is nothing else than their sovereignty. It is the right that a great nation has claimed, to receive neither laws nor magistrates, but such as are of its own ranks. This is a magnificent attitude and the proudest that a civilized people has ever taken. The big thing is to preserve it!

However, if an almost divine wisdom is needed by a single man to accomplish all the duties incumbent on sovereign power, can it be imagined that millions of men, who all, more or less, participate in the government of the State, will exercise both their power and their rights with neither tumult nor disorder, if they are neither wise nor virtuous?

Well then, gentlemen, these virtues, our only salvation, our surest guarantee, the indispensable condition by which liberty can be safeguarded and maintained, these public virtues, if we don't have them, who will be able to give them to us? If we have them, who will be able to preserve them for us? For great sacrifices, for constant virtues, more powerful, more elevated, more universal motives are needed than those that would be dictated in the uncertain light of a philosophical torch . . . Gentlemen, when men no longer see sovereign in any other man, then, for them, I no longer recognize but one master, and that is God. It is a check, it is his law, it is a bulwark, it is religion. . . .

In the enthusiasm of victory, some friends of liberty would have wanted that France be constituted into a republic. The imprudent fellows! Do they really know on which condition a republic can subsist? Listen to Montesquieu, for he is worthy of confidence in this matter, his is the language of a man who has refound the lost titles of the liberty of the human race.[1] Not much honesty is needed so that a monarchical government or a despotic government be maintained. The strength of the laws in the one, the ever-lifted arm of the prince in the other, rule and control everything, but in a popular state, one more force is needed, and this is virtue.[2] Nevertheless, I shall not fear to affirm that, if the French, in hoisting the standard of the republic embrace, at the same time instead of lowering it, the august sign of the Christian religion, there is little likelihood that a republic, however severe, however absolute it would be wanted to be, would be a real calamity. Let us reproduce, in effect, the portrait of a good citizen, such as I have already described him

[1] "The human race had lost its titles," said Voltaire, "Montesquieu has found them again and returned them to it."
[2] *Spirit of the Laws*, book, Chapter 3.

from the pen of Montesquieu, and let us see if the real Christian would not be a striking image of him. . . .

It is not that I ignore or that I hide from myself so many presumptions, let us rather say, so many irritations, which arouse today such indignation in the hearts of many free men against the authority of religion. But, do not be mistaken, dark clouds have often hidden the sun from our eyes, but often an hour, a moment, sufficed to bring back all its brilliance. Such are the destinies of religion and, far from imagining fears that I consider valid, I seem to see in the future, the triumph of truth. Yes, gentlemen, the truth which is a source of light, needs freedom to spread itself in the darkness, and it is in the truth that, finally, at the end of their earthly pilgrimage, these misguided men but who are in good faith, now going about in the whole world, will seek happiness and peace. Peace! Ah! I am only too sure that neither the families nor the states will know where to find it, but in the shadow of religion, not to see, from here, arriving at the feet of the old altars of the Christian faith, all those who love peace and who truly seek for it, altogether free from passions and prejudices. . . .

In some notes placed at the end of his discourse, Father Lalanne furnishes some interesting details of his thought. He writes:

"From all this, it must not be concluded that the right which the government has of providing for its present and future security carries that of reducing education to a kind of state management, of which it has the monopoly. Very far from that, my thought and my opinion of this matter agree with those of all the sincere friends of liberty. If it is not wanted that liberty be an affair of decision, then the rights of the government must never be extended to the detriment of those of individual liberty. Now, one of the most indefeasible rights of individual liberty is that of having one's children reared as it seems good and useful to each one. That the Government should exercise a certain policy with regard to the schools, that in them no kind of political discord be abetted, is something that may not be refused to it. That it should even have its own schools, colleges, academies, and even boarding schools, may be an actual need on its part and for the nation a real benefit. But that, directly or indirectly, no matter, it should oblige all the citizens to have their children frequent its schools, under penalty of ignorance of helotism (slavery), that would be, at the same time, a dishonorable avowal of the weakness and unpopularity of its public institutions and a crime of *lesè-liberté* toward the governing power. Education is inseparably united with religion. To put obstacles in the way of educational liberty is to attack, in a special way, freedom of religion. To exclude from college degrees all those who have not attended classes in the royal or communal colleges is like forbidding the professions of lawyer, doctor, all public functions or charges to whoever does not go to confession or who does not perform his Easter duty.

I wish neither evil nor harm to the University. Far from being its enemy or even having been such, as has been said, I passed in its service three of the best years of my life, and I am ready to do for it all the good that lies in my power. But, full of ideas for the amelioration

and development of secondary studies, desirous, at the same time, of finally bringing into liberal education required by our times, the saving principles of religion, I would like to put myself in a position where I can realize in all liberty and freedom, what observation, experience, and perhaps a touch of genius have made me conceive. Now, if this is not accorded to me, I shall ask, in a loud voice, where is liberty, where is the love for the fatherland?"

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571 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 1, 1831

Your letter of last December 23rd, my dear son, lets me know still more with regard to the rector of the Academy of Besançon than I had imagined. Your prudence will know how to take all the precautions to diminish the animadversion he has against you, and of which the establishment of St. Remy could well feel the effects. As soon as I had received your letter, I sent an obedience to the head of the normal school.

In a marginal note you say: "At the moment of closing this letter, I am receiving one from you, in which you tell me how much I afflict and annoy you. God knows my intentions!" I do not believe, my dear son, to have told you, purely and simply, that you afflict me nor that you annoy me. I answered, following the supposition you were making yourself, that you really felt you were afflicting me. Your supposition is very correct, but I did not complain about it. I have already told you that I ascribed to you no bad intentions at all, and so it is useless that you should call God to witness in the present case. . . .

You add that a serious man that you knew at the sacred tribunal has scorned your scruples. You are then free to say and to do all that you want, even in regard to the opinion of a serious man pronounced in the sacred tribunal. The same thing has already happened in St. Remy. Brother David, sent with the first group to found the establishment of St. Remy, following only his ideas and even believing himself obliged to do it, pretended to be quite at ease in cutting, slicing, deciding this and that, on the plea that it was the advice of his confessor. He even went so far as to name him.

Father Collineau and Brother Auguste very much disapprove of your pamphlet. Both the one and the other look upon it as a great evil. If it were so, that would be quite a stain on our reputation. They also fear the wrongs that might come to the Society of Mary as a direct result. The day following the one on which I told you I had received a copy of it, Brother Auguste came to see me. I spoke to him of your discourse. He manifested a desire to read it and to make it known to the professors of the boarding school. I allowed him to communicate it only to Father Collineau and to Brother David. He did not have to tell them about it, as Brother David has a copy of his own. You see, my dear son, that one can do a great deal of harm even with the best intentions. If our young people of St. Remy have

adopted your ideas and your sentiments, that is an additional misfortune. I am astonished at such a grand silence on the part of this establishment at the end of the year. I think it is the first time the thought of the proximity of the first of the year has come to no one. It may also be that some package of letters has been delayed somewhere in transit.

My heart is much restrained and oppressed, my dear son, by all sorts of circumstances. The affairs of the Revolution don't bother me so much, but I can, nonetheless, say to you that there is in my heart neither gall nor bitterness, and that I am wishing you in all sincerity, as well as to all those in St. Remy whom I can still consider as of my family, a happy New Year and the abundance of heavenly blessings.

P.S. I think I should include in the Constitutions two chapters: one on faith and the other, devotion to the Blessed Virgin, perhaps, even a third on several other devotions, otherwise, there would never be a real correspondence between the Constitutions and the Manual of Direction, and also with the Regulations of the novitiate and the master of novices.

* * * *

The last lines of the preceding letter reveals to what degree the Founder was afflicted. Did he know if he could consider all the religious of St. Remy as belonging to "his family"? He felt some relief at the reception of their New Year greetings and good wishes.

572 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 14, 1831

Answering your letter of last December 27th, my dear son, I start by thanking you for the good wishes you offer me and for your prayers to the Lord for me at the beginning of this New Year. You are deeply engraved in my heart and I can say that there is in it, as it were, a continual sigh that you obtain eternal life, for which, doubtless, you entered the religious state. But, my dear son, let us not lose sight of the fact that if our life were not really religious, it would be for us no motive for expecting eternal life.

I have just learned about your trip to Colmar. You have settled all your debts with Brother Xavier. His brother Louis Rothéa seemed to notice in you a bit of temper. It grieved him all the more because Brother Xavier had just made known to me his good dispositions as regards St. Remy, as a result of the reproaches I had made to him about the letter you had written to him. I answered yesterday that you were not really guilty of the delays that you had left to your own release, after all that had been said and done, and that all was now ended and should now be left alone and forgotten. . . .

You are doing well in taking care of the poor workmen of the village of St. Remy and to have them work when the weather permits. I am not saying anything to you about the misery that reigns in Bordeaux and of the ever-increasing cares and worries in which I find myself. You are aware of it and so, all is said.

I wrote at the beginning of this year to Father Bardenet as much for the occasion of the New Year as for letting him know of the grateful sentiments of the Sisters of Acey and Arbois, and at the same time, my observations about the somewhat inopportune change of the superioress of Acey.

I had someone ask Brother David for a copy of the deed of sale at St. Remy. I have not, as yet, received an answer.

I am going to write a few words to Father Lalanne and to Father Meyer. I ask of you, please to give them their little letters and to receive my tender embraces.

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573 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 14, 1831

I received today, my dear son, with sweet tenderheartedness the New Year greetings and good wishes which you and our children of St. Remy have offered me at the feet of the good Lord. My only sorrow is that I have provoked them, and in that way, more or less obliged you to write sooner than you would otherwise have done.

You are not satisfying yourself, my dear son, with wishing me happy New Year, you are still trying to make it the best one yet. In fact, it really depends only on you to make me better. The Revolution and its annoying aftereffects are much less painful to me. I shall pray the good God with a good heart, it seems to me, to have you know what would be for me a better year. I am keeping perseveringly busy with the completion of our Constitutions, directions, and general and particular regulations. I would not want one part to appear without the other.

May the Lord, my dear son, shower upon you and all our children of St. Remy his most abundant blessings!

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Of the letter to Father Meyer, which was joined to the two preceding ones, there remain only the following lines:

574 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 14, 1831

You are right, my dear son, to believe that human reason often replaces the spirit of faith which should dominate more and more in our more important establishments, and therein lies one of my greatest sorrows. The Revolution which has come will have served as the winnowing fan of the Lord. Only the good grain will remain.

* * * *

Now, the University is contesting the rights of the boarding school of St. Remy and for grades on the part of its head. Father Lalanne prepares to leave for Paris to arrange the affair and immediately writes to Father Chaminade about it, in the following letter.

575 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 20, 1831

I have received today, my dear son, your letter dated on the 13th of the current month, but the departure of which is dated only on the 15th. I am answering it by return mail.

Your departure for Paris is urgent, but it is annoying. Anyhow, we must adore the dispositions of Providence and submit to them. And so, leave for Paris as soon as possible. Before your departure write to Father Rothéa to be ready and with his certificate, but let him wait until you write to him and that in the meantime he should say nothing. Give him your Paris address.

You will do well to go and see the Count Alexis de Noailles with confidence on my part. I have no doubt that he will do all he can to help you, but his credit must be mediocre with the new government. I am somewhat anxious in his regard, as also in that of his agent in Bordeaux. Both of us have written to him about very serious matters. I have sent him a promissory note of a major debt, a debt of some 7,000 or 8,000 francs, without including in it the interest for one year, and it is now over a month that we have had no word from him, from him who is usually so prompt with his mail. His debt was owed to Mr. O'Lombel, who left it with me when he left for Spain. It is from Mr. Berryer, Sr., a famous lawyer. His son, Mr. Berryer, is Deputy, and very well known to Mr. Alexis de Noailles. You may have noticed that Mr. Berryer was the defense attorney for Mr. de Kergolay.[1] Mr. Berryer, Sr., lives at 22 Rue Sainte-Anne, and the Count Alexis de Noailles lives at 95 Place du Palais Bourbon.

One person who might perhaps become more useful to you might be Mrs. de Montesquiou and the priest who lodges at her house. I have forgotten the name of this ecclesiastic as well as his address. I know that Mrs. de Montesquiou knows me. Between us, be it said, if I did not go to see her whilst I was in Paris, it is because she had been the governess of the son of Napoleon, today the Duke of Reichstadt. Her being closely linked with the former governess of the Duke of Bordeaux, I did not think it suitable to see Mrs. de Montesquiou.

A letter of recommendation for some one of the deputies of Besançon or of Vesoul would serve you more directly, but if you cannot easily procure one, go ahead without any worry or anxiety.

Before leaving, make your arrangements in St. Remy that all may be at peace during your absence, which I take for granted will not be long.

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[1] A determined Legitimist, against whom the government had launched a press campaign. Legitimists were supporters of the elder branch of the Bourbon dynasty removed from the throne by the July Revolution of 1830. They were opposed by the Orleanists, who supported the regime of the July Monarchy in power after the 1830 Revolution.

We are in the midst of so new a world! I am in France almost like one in a foreign land. I seem not to know any longer what to say or do. For my part, I am waiting for events to come my way instead of going forward to meet them. I have no other policy than that of having daily recourse to the Blessed Virgin.

I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and I pray the Lord to shower upon you his most abundant blessings.

* * * *

Ssome words of encouragement to Brother Clouzet on the subject of temporal matters.

576 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, January 25, 1831

My dear son: I have received your last messages, which you forgot to date. I congratulate you for having so easily found a loan of 6,000 francs in Besançon. On the 8,000 francs due to Brother Xavier Rothéa, you are paying 4,000 from your savings. On the one hand, I am pleased with it, because St. Remy thus pays off its debts and our worries over Ebersmunster diminish and the same for St. Hippolyte. But, on the other hand, Bordeaux is being left pretty much to its worries and sufferings.

It is altogether good to clear up St. Remy more and more. You will there find the double advantage of occupying workmen, who would doubtless find themselves without work if you had nothing for them to do, and that of augmenting the revenues for this year. It will also be good to have the breaks in the enclosure walls fixed up at least by next spring. Nevertheless, figure out the expense, because the entire job need not be made all at the same time, even if there were sufficient funds in reserve for it. St. Remy is about our only source of revenue, not only to keep us going but also to pay many debts. It will not be the same, I hope, in some years. We were much in want before the Revolution, but since then our wants have become much greater. However, I am not complaining about anyone, but my duty is to take rigorous precautions, although always mild and honest.

The idea of establishing a factory of finished farm tools would please me much. Nothing would seem more suitable to St. Remy.[1] I cannot give you either Brother Seguin or

[1] In a letter of Brother Clouzet to Father Chaminade dated March 5th, we are extracting these details about the initiatives of the active and devoted director. “We are going to have the workshop enlarged in such a way as to be able to place in it at least six vises, a tower for the iron and the copper, and two fireplaces. . . . Our farm implements are acquiring fame, the plow especially is without forecarriage and works marvelously; from all sides, folks come to see it work. The horse-hoe and the extirpator also call for admiration. . . . I have just built up a limekiln. We shall be using fire in it at the first fine weather we have.”

Brother Etignard,[2] at least for some time. The machinery is far from finished. Anyhow, I don't think that there will be much further delay in beginning to dispatch certain jobs, while awaiting its completion. The suppliers of iron, of lead, and of coal are asking for partial payments in advance on what we owe them, and this is as much as 7,000 to 8,000 francs. They will be paid in works. As for workers really able to work, we hardly have any others besides Brothers Seguin and Etignard. The four others are only apprentices, and of the four, there is hardly one who has enough virtue that we may even expect to keep him. Nevertheless, don't be disconcerted as regards your farm tool factory, because the very idea of it is excellent. . . .

The old relatives of Father Rothéa are asking me for Brother Geng.[1] These gentlemen tell me that all that belongs to their own relatives will surely be given to the Society, and that it is just to come to their aid in their old age and that, besides, etc. . . . Mr. Xavier now seems decided to give up the idea of marriage. I don't want to give you the impression that I have decided to give them Brother Geng, but you understand that it would not be prudent, in the many requests that come in, to send him to St. Remy, at least not at present.

If this letter finds Father Lalanne still in St. Remy, you will please tell him that I have had sent, from the beginning of this month, the nominative state of our young people who are asking their exemption from military service. I had it passed over to the rector of the Academy of Bordeaux, just as had been prescribed for me last year, or rather two years ago. The Reverend Rector promised to send it immediately. This is about all I know. It is to be presumed that it will be accepted. This is about all I can say to quiet the anxieties of those interested, as well as their parents.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with an entirely paternal tenderness.

* * * *

Father Lalanne was not obliged for the time being to go to Paris, since the university was showing itself more conciliating, but Father Chaminade did not the least foresee the necessity of acquiring the diplomas, and he recommends to Father Lalanne to concern himself with the matter.

577 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, February 9, 1831

Your letter, my dear son, dated in Besançon on the second of the current month, came to me yesterday. The hassles created for you in Gray will have produced the good effect of a kind of reconciliation with the rector of the Academy. It will not be difficult for

[2] Louis Etignard, carpenter, and brother of Father Augustine Etignard.
[1] See Letter 441.

you to find some occasions for interviews with him. To the noisy reports of general war,[2] the new authorities, capable of reflecting, will be little inclined to torture those they govern. The Statutes of the Society of Mary state clearly the primary teaching of the three degrees asked for by the university. They also state the formation of normal schools. The subjects must be licensed, without examination, on the mere showing of their obediences. The rector seems to be picking a bad quarrel with you. His predecessor did no wrong at all in admitting the normal school of St. Remy, as well as that of Courtefontaine. I do not mean by this observation to invalidate the one you make, namely, that subjects must be prepared.

You will always do well, my dear son, to prepare yourself to pass an examination. It is widely assumed that whatever liberty the commission gives to teaching, grades will always be maintained, and if these new laws are abrogated, others will be passed in which the heads will have to show titles of legal capacity.

You must know that the new Minister has maintained the burse and the half-burse for the Normal School of Courtefontaine. The prefect of the Jura has also written that he was going to have a vote taken at the first General Council for funds to maintain this establishment.

The Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs and of Public Instruction has just written to me on the occasion of the nominative state of the subjects who are asking for exemption from military service. He asks me for some information, as well, about what he calls novices of the Society, as about the bonds which attach them to the same. Brother David is taking care of the answer. Although he is sick and bedridden, he has times when he suffers less and can do a little clerical work. If this correspondence brings about anything, I shall let you know of it, for the questions seem to be insidious.

Lately, Father Collineau had Brother David tell me about an answer that you had given him to a letter he had written to you in reference to your last publication. I had not seen the letter, I did not even know he had written to you, but your answer did not please me. I am asking the good God with a good heart, it seems to me, to enlighten you and that he not permit you to abuse the talents he has given you after the example of Father de Lamennais.[1]

Father Chevaux has just sent me the state of the personnel of St. Remy. It would have come in good time to answer the Minister of Public Instruction, if its state were not purely moral. I shall not be able to answer, except in a way quite vague. Have someone make for me, as soon as possible, an accurate and complete list of names of the subjects

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[2] It is known that, at this time, Europe, undergoing the countereffect of the July Revolution, was in an exceedingly troubled situation.

[1] Let it be remarked that, at this time, Lamennais was far from being condemned. The *Avenir* was not to cease appearing until the end of the year, and the Pope was not to condemn its tendencies until the following year.

of the Society who are in St. Remy, names, forenames, place of birth, property pointed out by the civil districts and departments, dates of birth, capacities, health, condition of the parents, dates of their entry, their work and rank or status in the Society, as well as the dates of these, and if there happens to be any matters of particular interest, have them mentioned. I shall answer Father Chevaux a little later.

If I happen to be forgetting something, my dear son, I shall supply it either tomorrow or the day after while writing to Brother Clouzet, but do not lose sight of this state of the personnel, made out as I have just mentioned and such as it was to be inscribed in St. Remy. It seems very likely that Brother Clouzet must have it in his inscription register. May the Lord always deign to shower upon you, my dear son, as well as upon your labors, ever new blessings!

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The letter announced for Brother Clouzet is short but full of meaning.

578 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, February 12, 1831

Every day, my dear son, I am awaiting some letter from you, which will bring me some commission or charge . . . It would be difficult for anyone to get an idea of the difficulty of my position. I am not saying this to complain, I even speak of it very little, for I always adore the secret designs of Providence. I have been particularly touched over the fact that it inspired Mr. Galliot to pass over to me 700 francs at two different times, to which the Brothers of Besançon added 150 francs. With these little sums, I quieted down, at least temporarily, some creditors more heavily in debt themselves . . .

Two or three days ago, I wrote to Father Lalanne that the actual Minister of Public Instruction had maintained in Courtefontaine a burse and a half, created by Bishop Geutrier.[1] It is simply Father Chevassine, pastor of Courtefontaine, who wrote about this to the new Minister in his capacity of chaplain of the normal school of the Jura in Courtefontaine.

I have to answer the Minister of Public Instruction on the subject of the exemption from military service. Brother David has been working on this answer all week and has not yet been able to finish it. I am very much afraid that it will come too late. Recall to Father Lalanne the list that I asked of him in my last letter. The central house should have an exact knowledge of all the subjects who are in St. Remy, and also specific information about all that is happening there. The order would be calling for it all the time, but much more particularly during a time of revolution.

[1] Bishop of Beauvais, Minister of Public Instruction under the Martignac Ministry (1828-29).

I am embracing you very tenderly, my dear son, and wish you the peace of the Lord.

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Here are two little letters addressed to religious of the Community of the Orphanage of the Hospital St. Jacques in Besançon.

579 – TO BROTHER GOBILLOT, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, February 23, 1831

Finally, my dear son, I have received a letter from you, dated last December 24th. In it, you tell me all about your past troubles, since and including your departure from Bordeaux. Providence has placed you in Besançon. You have occasion to do much good there, and you possess a good will. Continue in peace until it shall please the Lord to order otherwise. Always reanimate and encourage your Brothers, and give good counsels to Brother Bousquet. May peace and union reign among you all!

While instructing the pupils well in religion according to the capacity of their age, work always at refining them. An education in refinement always helps much in Christian education. Pray for your Good Father who loves you tenderly and who is in an awkward position in the difficult times in which we are living.

P. S. I am learning from the letter of Brother Bousquet that your health is not good. Without any worry, take the cares and remedies that may be necessary to obtain its complete restoration.

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580 – TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, February 23, 1831

I have not forgotten, my dear son, the promise I made to you last year,[1] but I am asking you whether you believe before God that it would be prudent to make so important a change in the critical times in which we are living these last six months. If you knew better what is going on, you would be the first to thank me for not having changed you when you were actually asking for a change. Far from asking now to keep my promise, remain quiet, my dear son, and continue to fulfill your duties well. Only in Besançon will you find the happiness which you would be seeking elsewhere in vain, until it shall please the Lord to order your change.

The desire to become better makes you look upon Besançon as an evil and Bordeaux as a good. You are putting yourself under a great illusion, my dear son, and besides, don't you know that there is no real happiness here upon earth, other than in the accomplishment of the will of God? Now, my dear son, the will of God is clearly indicated that you remain in Besançon until it shall please him to order otherwise.

[1] See Letters 416, 493, 504, 528.

You must not entertain within yourself the thought of leaving Besançon, as this thought does nothing more than give rise to trouble and anxiety in you. It must also do much to prevent you from advancing in virtue and preserving an entire peace of soul.

As regards the inconveniences that you might find in the nearness of your parents, they will soon disappear, if in the first place you take a strong resolution to change only on the orders you may receive.

I shall carry out my promise, if you wish. You could be employed in the boarding school, but, I repeat, I do not think you will be able to live as easily as a good religious as at Besançon. You would not find the same means of working out your salvation. I am speaking above all of the times in which we are living.

As regards your parents, don't bother about any other affairs except such as affect you personally. End them even with some little sacrifices, if possible, and they will leave you undisturbed.

May the Lord deign, my dear son, to grant you peace of soul and the courage you need to disengage yourself from all worldly cares and entanglements.

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581 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, March 2, 1831

I have spoken to you, my respectable son, of Mr. le Chevalier de Rubelles, about two and a half years ago, at the time I was in Gray. Perhaps you got to see him during your stay in Paris. He always expressed the desire he had of entering the Society, but attachment to the world and possible secret passions have always prevented him from generously making his decision. He was employed in the ministry in making a short analysis of the works that appeared and in giving of them a prompt and summary idea to the ministry that employed him, that is at least what I understood in the matter.

At the time of the Revolution, being without a place, he was accepted in Saint-Cyr as secretary with General Richemont. He attended and took part in the service celebrated in St. Germain l'Auxerrois, the consequences of which were so vexing.[1] The General, having known that he had assisted at the Mass, told him it was out of the question to keep him, considering that his presence in the church was an act of hostility toward the government.

[1] On the occasion of a funeral service celebrated in the Church of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, on the 14th of February, anniversary of the assassination of the Duke de Berry, the crowd rioted, plundered the church, insulted the priests, tore down the crosses, pillaged the Archbishop's palace. That was the point of departure of a renewed outbreak of the popular passions, of which the counterstroke was to be felt in Bordeaux, as is shown in what follows in the letter.

He is now in Paris with no place to go and no means of livelihood. He remembered me and wrote to me. I am answering him with this mail. You will have, at the end of this letter, a copy of this answer. His address in Paris is: Madame Dupuis, St. Joseph Street, No. 10, to be given to Mr. Alphonse. You will do, my respectable son, all you believe to be wise and prudent, and you will do nothing at all if all seems to you against wisdom and prudence.

Following the serious disturbances that have taken place in Paris and which I was unaware of at the time, I had a very impressive visit.[1] All happened within doors and quite properly. Outside, the common people occupied Lalande Street all day, I am told, to the number of three to four hundred. Nothing really came of it, except of having the window glass of house No. 3 all broken with stones and blows with sticks, because as I was told, an officious neighbor had furnished a ladder and sticks. The visit inside lasted only three hours and a half. Some days later, I was called upon as a witness in the affair of Mr. Estebenet, who had been arrested as a result of a visit made at the same time as that which I received. After much questioning, which lasted two hours and a half, the Judge of Instruction declared to me that I would not be called anymore and that I could make use of the passport I had taken the day before to go to Agen. The Judge of Instruction was always fair and honest. When you proposed to me to go to St. Remy, I had just gotten my passport for Agen, where I have really important affairs to look after. Your invitation, nevertheless, served me. I said to the Judge of Instruction that I had just received a letter which told me that my presence would be useful in another establishment and that I had to decide which place would mark the end of my first trip. And whatever might be the utility of my presence in St. Remy, I am always more inclined toward Agen, simply because it is closer. I am not saying that later I shall not, in fact, undertake this long trip. In the meantime, devote yourself generously to the sanctification of all those about you and begin with yourself. You are well enough instructed, all you have to do is to guard yourself against illusions, and I see with pleasure that you like the Gospel maxim: *Porro unum est necessarium*. I believe that the more the times are bad and difficult, the more we must give ourselves over to real prayer and in a way that faith constantly grows within us, and I believe that the Most Blessed Virgin, by her powerful protection, will bring back peace and order to us. Let us pray to her earnestly and with perseverance.

I shall say nothing now, my dear son, about the individuals you describe to me, as I am leaving all to your zeal and wisdom. I have answered you in the letter I wrote to Brother Clouzet in regard to the three subjects whom you have and who are in the recruitment class.

I am always embracing you with new affection.

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[1] February 18th. *The Life of Father Chaminade* has related the details of this coming of the police and of the troubles of the day at the Madeleine and at St. Laurent. The calm and composure with which the Founder tells Father Lalanne of these incidents will be remarked. He had certainly seen many others like it at the time of the great Revolution!

582 – TO THE CHEVALIER ADOLPHE DE
DE RUBELLES, PARIS

Bordeaux, March 2, 1831

I am sharing, my dear son, your hard position. It is perhaps the last warning on the part of Heaven to make you break all the ties that still bind you to this world. You are happy in your misfortune, if this misfortune is but a means whereby God intends to draw you closer to himself.

If we cannot reproach you for any other thing against the government, my dear son, than having assisted at that Mass in St. Germain l'Auxerrois, I am going to try to find you a place, but be really honest and do not expose us in any way. I have as a principle that nothing must ever be done against a government already established. It is in this way that, by the application of this principle, I have passed safely through all the revolutions, in occupying myself only with my ministry and being of service to my neighbor.

If nothing else can be brought up against you, although General Richemont is not wrong, the government knows well that in general all those who assisted at that Mass had no hostile intention and still less any idea of provoking public troubles or disturbances. By this mail, I am going to write to the head of one of our establishments where you could be employed advantageously. You will receive directly from him a letter which will tell you all you need to know. I am giving him your Paris address. It is possible that there may be some delay to make sure that you are not being sought or looked for by some police agent.

In the meantime, see whether before God you really want to assure for yourself the possession of the crown of immortality by a detachment from all things created and, consequently, by penance and the mortification of your passions.

It is with pleasure, my dear son, that I have received these last marks of your confidence. I beg of you to believe me, etc.

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The Chevalier de Rubelles remained in politics and went into journalism and was incarcerated (see Letter 565). Following the events in Bordeaux, Father Chaminade chose the part of disappearing from public view for some time and to go to stay among his religious in Agen.

But this absence from Bordeaux, which in his mind was to be but for a few weeks, was to be prolonged for several years, until the fall of 1836.

Volume 3, Part I

FATHER CHAMINADE IN AGEN –

THE CONFLICT OF ST. REMY, BETWEEN
FATHER LALANNE AND BROTHER CLOUZET

(MARCH 1831 – FEBRUARY 1832)

Having been in Agen since March 11, Father Chaminade resumed his correspondence with St. Remy, where, with each succeeding day, things were taking a more disquieting turn.

At the time of his last visit to St. Remy, Father Chaminade named Father Lalanne superior of the house. At the same time he left the responsibility, not without cause, for all temporal matters to Brother Clouzet, appointing him Head of Temporalities. And as a mark of confidence, he had given the latter the function of Visitor of the northern establishments.

This arrangement, imposed by the needs of the work, could not succeed without difficulties.

Soon enough, misunderstandings arose between Father Lalanne and Brother Clouzet because of the vast reorganization projects conceived by the impatient genius of the Director, which the Econome, encouraged by the continuing reminders of Father Chaminade, too often found himself obliged to oppose.

From the domain of facts the matter was not slow in moving into the realm of principles, so much did Brother Clouzet and Father Lalanne invoke their rights, even coming to the point of disputing the very regulations of the Society on which they pretended to base them.

Furthermore, to these basic matters of argument were added the differences in character of these two men—both very religious-minded, to be sure, equally devoted to the work and much attached to the Founder, but also at times seduced and drawn along by self-love.

For nearly two years this conflict was a heavy cross for Father Chaminade, and he needed the utmost patience, prudence, and affection to uphold basic principles and to reconcile the misguided disputants, as will be seen in the course of this long and sad correspondence. In all this, his invincible faith in God and in the protection of Mary shines forth.

These letters, happily preserved by those who received them, provided Father Chaminade many opportunities for expressing his mind regarding the spirit and the government of the Society, and they are especially interesting for this reason.

The first letter, addressed to Brother Clouzet, gives some details about the ironmongery which Father Chaminade had had constructed at St. Laurent and that Brother Clouzet wanted at St. Remy. It insists, with new force, on the critical situation of the Society and on the requirement that everyone practice the strictest economy.

583 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, March, 18, 1831

I have been in Agen, my dear son, since the eleventh of this month. I received a copy of the letter which you wrote to me in Bordeaux. In it, you speak of a bill for 250 francs for the travel of the young men I wanted to send to you, for all the delays that will oblige us to interrupt the work of the ironmongery.

Concerning this, you make the following observations:

1. If you can keep the young men only three or four months or even a year, it would be better not to send them, since the expenses of their travel would exceed what they would gain by their work. I foresaw this difficulty, but it does not stop me because it is without foundation. But if you still hold your opinion, I will proceed as if we had said nothing.

2. You imply that it would be better to set the machine up again at St. Remy. There was thought of it when I gave the order to stop the manufacture and to take it apart – it is made in such a way that it can be taken apart – even the big flywheel, as its shaft is made up of six sections. Several reasons made me delay, if not stop definitely, the plan to transport it. In the first place, considerable expense would be entailed. The big wheel alone weighs at least 600 kilograms. In the second place, still more expense would be needed to put up a shop big enough to install this machine. In the third place, there would be additional cost for completing its construction; and in the fourth, we have rather heavy debts on everything connected with this machine. (We were expecting 6,000 francs to be paid in jobs done with the aid of the machine.)

As regards the fourth reason, I understood that you might be able to meet these debts by reserving money made on work to pay them. I believe, my dear son, you really mean this, but I do fear that other future plans or projects would make you lose sight of the fact that we are at a standstill. You know our painful situation, especially since this last revolution, and you seem very little concerned about it. Father Caillet noted this at the time he sent me a copy of your last letter. In leaving Bordeaux, I told Father Caillet that he should pay, from what he found in my desk, four hundred francs to the grease-merchant and three hundred to the butcher, as partial payment to each on the large bills that are due them. If Father Caillet had done this, he would have had only twenty-five francs left to maintain three houses, etc.—concerning this, Father Caillet tells me that you say nothing about sending him anything for his current expenses. You know that we had to face a deficit of three thousand francs at St. Hippolyte and eight hundred francs in other deficits in Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, etc.

But even when the fourth difficulty is obviated, the first three remain in full force. I have been told that the transportation expenses would not be considerable, but I was not told what they would amount to. As you may have noticed, the machine doesn't run by itself. We found, even without looking for it, a medium-sized horse, about five years old and fully trained, which needs no one to command it. I had agreed, my dear son, to the manufacture of this machine, at first with great hesitation. I withheld my consent for more than two months, and Seguin and the hardware merchant, who were so persistent in asking for it, left me in ignorance regarding what developments we could expect from it. It is easy to foresee that, if it could be kept working all the time, it would maintain, almost by itself, quite a large novitiate once the initial costs are paid.

I am very glad, my dear son, that St. Remy is getting to be more and more productive. I shall also be pleased to see the erection of a fine farm-tools shop. Without any trouble, I could see the hardware-machine being sent there, but I would not want all the revenues and all the profits to be used exclusively for improvements or new projects and still less, that money be borrowed to make these last possible, with the result that all the revenues and profits would have to serve to pay back such borrowed capital. As I have already told you, there is need, and urgent need, that the strictest economy be practiced in all the establishments, that expenses be reduced to the barest minimum, that as much as possible be done for the central house. It should not be forgotten that this is an obligation before God, even if, by the aid of divine Providence, we have been able to keep everything going up to now. Those who want God to perform miracles for the maintenance of a work are not less guilty if the work is not maintained because of a lack of practical interest on their part.

May wisdom, my dear son, reign in all your enterprises. I was told at first there will be another deficit this year at St. Hippolyte, but this was the result of faulty calculations. By the observations I made and by calculations gone over by Brother Rothéa, the latter found that there was, in fact, to be some profit and that 360 francs could be assured to Father Rothéa as Mass stipends. It is astonishing that, by the way, at St. Remy, where there always

have been two or three priests, there are not Mass stipend accounts, as has been the custom since the beginning of the Society.

By the time you get this letter, you will surely have received the ten-year teaching certificates of your three young men.[1] For speedier delivery, Father Caillet immediately sent them on to you from Bordeaux.

Father Caillet is sending me by today's mail, a copy of the letter of the rector of the Academy of Bordeaux. The letter sends me, by order of the Minister, the five certificates I asked for. These are the same certificates which had originally been sent to the Rev. Rector but which he could not deliver to me, except on conditions which I could not or would not meet. These conditions were contrary to our Statutes. I wrote to the Minister a very well-reasoned letter. At the same time, I answered, by another letter, the questions that he had asked about the Society. Both letters arrived in Paris at the time of the great three-day upheaval there. The order given the Rev. Rector is their answer. Our new edition of the Constitutions will explain the true meaning of the Statutes and will put the Statutes and the Constitution in exact agreement with each other.

This letter is very long, although I am overburdened with affairs, so do I desire that you and the other Heads of St. Remy adopt the proper habit and attitudes. All will go well if we remain strongly united, and especially if we remain entirely faithful to God, to whom we have consecrated our life and our labors.

Let us not forget, furthermore, that we have in heaven an all-powerful Protectress, the ever Blessed Virgin Mary. Let us not forget that we also have St. Joseph, whose feast we shall soon celebrate. I am embracing you tenderly.

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Nevertheless, the University was again threatening the existence of St. Remy (See Letters 575 and 577). On March 16, the rector of the Academy of Besançon wrote to Father Leo Meyer, head of the establishment: "The Minister of Public Instruction charges me to inform you that the Royal Council has decided that there was not reason for granting you authorization to teach rhetoric and philosophy . . . The Minister tells me, at the same time that . . . the delay which had been granted so that you could meet the requirements for the grades, has expired . . ."(See Letter 480) The following day, Father Meyer, with Father Lalanne, arranged a compromise by which the former ceded to the latter the direction of St. Remy. Both prepared to defend the cause of the threatened Institution.

Father Lalanne intended to write to the Minister: "I am disposed to conform to the laws which will be passed on the matter of teaching. In the meantime, considering all the

[1] Teaching certificates for ten years, in view of dispensation from military service.

Statutes and Regulations abrogated by the Charter of 1830, I shall hold to what this same Charter decrees by one of its supplementary articles, which promises liberty of education."

In making his intentions known to Father Chaminade, Father Lalanne added: "There will be a struggle and a lawsuit. Either we shall win and that will be a great advantage, or we shall lose, but with a luster which will be worth as much as a court victory."

It was at this very time that, in Paris, Lacordaire, Montalembert and de Coux, were going to undertake the famous "free school lawsuit."[1] *Here is Father Chaminade's answer.*

[1] On the part Father Lalanne played in these first fights for the freedom of education and his dealings with the General Agency for the Freedom of Education, see the *Apôtre de Marie*, XXII, pages 51 and 89.

584 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, March 25, 1831

Your critical position, my dear son, is rendered more serious by the short time you allow for a reply. Yesterday, the twenty-fourth, I received your letter of the sixteenth, after the mail for the North had departed. I received, at the same time, a short letter from Father Collineau. He writes me to answer you, and since he is in a great hurry to make use of the first mail, he gives only an imperfect analysis of your letter and of the answer that he is going to give it, promising to send me a copy of both by the mail going to Agen. Whatever the case may be:

1. I would have preferred simply to write the rector, telling him you had received his letter and that you were going to write to His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction. When I say you, I mean Father Meyer. That is the approach I took regarding the conditions he imposed on me by the intermediary of the rector of the Academy of Bordeaux, for the deliverance of the certificates. The case, doubtless, is not the same, but they are very much alike.

2. It would have been well, had there been a possibility of seeing, in the meantime, the rector of the Academy of Besançon and of speaking to him of the misunderstanding and mistake of the Royal Council of Public Instruction, of softly excusing your own nonappearance to pass the examination for obtaining the diplomas of Master of Arts and Master of Science,[1] as excuses are but natural, etc.

3. I have always been surprised that you could only get your diploma[2] in Paris or in Strasbourg and not in Besançon. If this is a positive fact, I have no more to say about it, but I have seen others go to Besançon to obtain such a diploma, needed for the exercise of certain functions. The more unmanageable the rector of the Academy of Besançon is, the more we must resort to wise and honest precautions, so that we may have him understand well that we have absolutely nothing against him.

4. You know, no doubt, that M. Barthe is no longer Minister of Public Instruction. M. de Montalivet has replaced him. Whatever the case may be, Father Meyer could have written a letter to the Minister of Public Instruction, excusing himself for not having passed his examination because of the mutual concession that he was to make, or actually did make, with you, etc., that it is a long time that the assignee was in a position to leave for Paris, to go and pass his examination and obtain transfer to him of the head position, that he was unable to do it because of the serious disturbances then going on in Paris, and that several other important circumstances had delayed him up till now, adding that he is

[1] At that time, these two were required of the heads of institutions.
[2] That is to say, as institution head.

always ready to leave, unless his Excellency should permit him to take his examination in Besançon.

5. We must always be careful as regards what might be called “a lawsuit” as much because of the old proverb that the jug should never bump against the iron pot as because of the judges who, it seems to me, are at the same time, judges and litigants. There is an endless number of university laws that have never been properly revoked, and it is very difficult, in spite of one’s attention, not to find oneself in the wrong. Father Meyer, furthermore, must protest against both his submission to the laws and your own.

6. If you happen to have anyone in Paris, anyone capable of upholding your cause, you could send him a copy of the letter which Father Meyer will write to the Minister of Public Instruction and ask him to find out who it would be best to see. The affair is very simple and not at all likely to go sour, provided it is handled dispassionately and not hampered by annoying incidents.

Besides, all is in the hands of God and those of the very Blessed Virgin, of whose protection we are very mindful!

I was going to write to you when your letter arrived. What is included, that I was writing to Father Bardenet, was already dictated when I received yours. You will be kind enough to complete the address and to give it all the support it may need. I am stopping now, for lack of time, and embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

Father Lalanne has left for Paris. During his absence, Father Chaminade continues his remarks to Brother Clouzet.

585 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, April 10, 1831

My dear son, I received your letter of March 31, with its check for 250 francs, in Agen, where I still am. I immediately endorsed the check and sent it back to Bordeaux.

At the same time, I gave orders for the three best locksmiths to depart, that is to say, Brothers Seguin, Etignard, and Pesant. It is possible that, in the near future, I shall send you another group, but as bad luck would have it, Brother Saumade, who is capable enough to work with a master, has just come down with measles. The two others are too young to be sent alone. The carpenter also, although a very strong fellow, seems very young to me. I shall see what happens once Saumade is well again. I am told that there are no lingering ill effects to his malady, and he is being well cared for. Furthermore, Saumade is a fairly good

painter and dauber. He also knows how to cut and install panes of glass and has his own glass-cutter. As you see, I am very anxious to accommodate you.

I am surprised, though, at your amazement that new workers did not arrive in St. Remy in time for Easter and that you had been in a hurry to announce their coming at this time. I had told you—and it was true—that we did not have the wherewith to advance any traveling money. Remember the reflections you made to the effect that, should they remain a year at St. Remy, they would not earn what the trip to and fro would cost.

If you had gone more promptly, you or we would have gained about a month of work.

I am of the opinion that at St. Remy the financial returns must be very difficult to get in, as seems to be the case all over France; but for us, not only is there difficulty in getting them in but also a considerable lessening of resources, as for example, in Agen. There are also rather considerable losses. Before yesterday, I learned about the loss of about ten thousand francs in Alsace, etc., etc. I am not explaining to you the particular reasons for this. Of course, the general one is the Revolution, and it alone. Nevertheless, things are going fairly well. We are being maintained by a visible protection on the part of the Most Blessed Virgin.

If I have spoken to you with a kind of severity about economy and reserve, it is because it is my duty to do so, at all times certainly, but more particularly during these critical times, so that we may not be tempting Providence. In the world, even the most well-to-do persons deprive themselves in one way or another. If those you live with, whose livelihood you provide for, do not understand this, then why not make them understand with mildness and suggestions?

From the postscript of your letter, it seems that Father Lalanne returned from Paris to St. Remy, and that surprises me. Why are you so laconic? Why not give me some news, either good or bad? Three letters must have come to St. Remy since the start of the Educational Certificate affair, two addressed to Father Lalanne—the first written from Bordeaux by Father Collineau, the second by me in Agen, and the third sent to your address and also from Agen.

May the Lord, my dear son, deign to shower upon you all abundant blessings! I hope that He will do so. May He be served in spirit and in truth.

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586 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, April 15, 1831

Your prompt return to St. Remy, my dear son, consoled me and edified me at the same time If you had been thoroughly persuaded of my lively and tender sentiments of interest, you would have written me upon your arrival at St. Remy, and even on leaving Paris. I take it for granted that you went to see the rector of the Academy of Besançon, although you tell me nothing about it. This little point of politeness takes on, in the present case, the character of a duty.

Your petition, my dear son, to the University, seems to me well taken. The circumstances are favorable enough. As you surely know, the University has a very serious lawsuit to back and sustain. It concerns nothing less than a million and some hundreds of thousands of francs on annual collections from the pupils of its boarding schools and collèges.

You do not tell me if you got to see M. de Montalivet, who is now Minister of Public Instruction. Doubtless, if you did not, you have let him know you wanted to, even though his Excellency was too busy with affairs of much greater interest to him.

M. de Rubelles' indecision does not surprise me. He does not yet realize what it means to be obedient to the voice of grace. The way he is I cannot take him on as secretary, especially during these critical times, which are likely to become still more critical.

As regards the two requests, my dear son, that you think I have not answered, there is really only one that was made to me, one concerning your need for some subjects to replace some co-workers who do not please you. I recall that I did not answer:

1. because I had answered already several times a similar request. You could easily see that our position, far from bettering itself, kept growing more and more serious.

2. because I do not cease recommending to all our establishments to keep on going the ordinary way, to do nothing that might draw public attention. I am permitting only indispensable changes.

You will do well, my dear son, to follow this line of conduct. It is no small thing to know how to remain patient, to know how to close one's eyes in certain circumstances and on certain occasions. In time of revolution, many things are permitted that would never be sanctioned in ordinary times. Nevertheless, I have no intention of saying that disorders and abuses must not be stopped, insofar as wisdom and prudence permit.

As for the second request, it simply wasn't made to me, at least not as far as I can remember. It seems to me that Brother Clouzet spoke to me of the admission of the three candidates you speak of, but never in a settled manner, all the while asking me if I wanted and could receive them as novices. Finally, you have received and placed them in the full-fledged novitiate that you immediately started in St. Remy and to which you gave a suitable set of regulations. You will please me much if you see to it that a copy of this is sent to me.

The last three lines of your letter, my dear son, surprise and afflict me. You tell me that St. Remy is not getting along so well, that Brother Clouzet is in your way, that my relations with him serve only to nourish his independence. Such general and vague expressions are as injurious to Brother Clouzet as they are to me. If Brother Clouzet does not carry on as a true religious and if he disedifies the establishment, why don't you let me know this in detail? I suppose he has really neglected to yield to the mild and spirited exhortations you must have made to him. How can you suppose that my relations with him only serve to give greater force to his disorders and his independence? If you think me capable of anything of the sort, it would be mighty easy to convince you that you are mistaken. My correspondence with him, ordinarily, has no other subject than to let him know his duties, whatever they may be. He must be entirely subject to you in the accomplishment of all his duties, and you are his superior for no other purpose than to have him do this strictly. If he does not understand them, it should be found out whether this is due to ignorance or to some misunderstanding. You should then explain things to him, and if he does not accept these explanations, then I should be notified. I have confidence that if you take Brother Clouzet as is suitable and proper, you will see him promptly enter the beautiful paths of religion, virtue, and submission from which he may have wandered.

At least this time, my dear son, you will not say I have failed to answer, and immediately, your entire letter of the sixth of the current month, of which I received a copy in Agen. There now remains for me but to embrace you, and I do so very tenderly.

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A word between times to Brother Perriguey, who is continuing to ask for his change.

587 – TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, BESANÇON

Agen, April 15, 1831

I have received in Agen, my dear son, the little letter which you wrote to me on the fourth of the current month in Bordeaux. You surprise me greatly in saying that you did not receive your answer to your last letter. I have a moral assurance that I have answered all your letters. I am still more surprised that each day spent in the establishment of Besançon is for you an insupportable burden—this is the way you state you situation, so great is your feeling of misery! Well, my dear son, do you then believe that in your leaving Besançon you will be relieved of the heavy burden of your miseries? Since it lies within you, you will be bringing it along with you wherever you happen to go; and this yoke will become so troublesome that you will finally come to the point of throwing it off by yourself. Actually, this cross is a great grace that God is granting you, and the feeling you have concerning it—far from rendering you guilty—will only purify you more. If you want to bear it with ease, unite yourself with Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has carried the same burden, along with the

miseries of all sinners. The spirit of Jesus Christ will enliven and fortify you and make you find sweet and light what you now consider very bitter and burdensome.

You are right in believing, my dear son, that if you had arrived in Bordeaux, I would have received you—because your reasons are good, even though there is in them an element of illusion.

Why do you not remain quiet, since you are in the place where God wants you to be and where, in consequence, you will find your sanctification? I was not really thinking of changing you, as long as we are in the throes of this revolution. At this critical time I am making only such changes as are indispensable. I shall, nevertheless, write to Brother Bousquet.[1] If he is of the opinion that your change will be of advantage to your sanctification, I shall immediately take steps to bring it about.

I always embrace you with great tenderness.

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588 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, April 30, 1831

Your last letter, my very dear son, dated the nineteenth of the current month, which you wrote to me in Bordeaux, I received in copy form in Agen. From reading it I understood that you had not received my answer and that my letters passing through Agen seem to get to you later than those going through Vesoul. That would be something to take notice of. Ordinarily I answer your letters in the interval between one mail and the following one.

Since the eighteenth of the present month, the difficulties connected with the sending of subjects have increased, especially for the normal schools. On the eighteenth of April, a day quite remarkable by reason of the discussions of the Chamber of Peers, an ordinance appeared which somewhat vaguely prescribes that every primary teacher, whoever he may be, pass an examination before persons yet to be designated, to obtain a certificate. It was noticed that this ordinance was directed against the Brothers of the Christian Schools. It can well be surmised that it is also aimed at Brothers of other Institutions. Today I wrote to Bordeaux the principal motives which suggest I write to the Minister of Public Instruction, to expose before him the great inconveniences which would follow if this law were carried out without exception, especially in the case of the normal schools. I shall very soon come to a decision.

[1] Director of the orphanage in Besançon.

I have never intended to have you accumulate titles which would have an effect in the order of civic administration.[2] But, as you have noticed, I hardly ever make a decision like this until I see there is no other way. If Father Chevaux cannot be accepted as head of the normal school and you have in mind someone sufficiently mature who can pass an examination for a certificate of the first degree, you would please me if you pointed him out to me. I would find it hard to select a subject capable of being head of the normal school who would know primary education to the first degree, who would be, for example, a master writer. The same difficulty is going to confront us in Courtefontaine. But sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

In regard to general councils of the departments, nothing prevents the constant pursuit of votes for candidates who will vote subsidies, in Besançon as in Vesoul, for the normal school of St. Remy. This normal school is legal and recognized by the University. It has always been, as such, inspected both by the rectors of the Academy of Besançon and by the general inspectors specially sent by the Minister of Public Instruction, Mr. De Vatimesnil. Even the Minister furnished burses and half-burses there, just as at Courtefontaine. The foundation of the burses of Courtefontaine has been paid for this year on the simple request of the chaplain of the establishment, and I have always been surprised that St. Remy did not ask for the maintenance of these burses. This winter the Prefect of the Jura said he wanted to support the establishment of Courtefontaine and that he would talk about it at the General Council. I shall write him with this in mind.

I surely have another worry over the National Guard Law. All our young men who are not ecclesiastics may be called upon—it has already been done at St. Laurent—to register. At present, I see nothing better than writing to the Minister of the Interior.

It is to be presumed that the farther we go, the more our worries will increase. May God be blessed! Let us do all we can to serve him well. Let us try to avoid all imprudences, and let us remain quiet. I think that, in general, we must move very little, make only indispensable changes, limit ourselves to sustaining whatever already exists and in the same manner as before the Revolution. There is somewhere talk about the time of the patience of the saints.[1] I don't know if that reference is to the present time, but what do we risk in seeing it that way?

You end your letter, my dear son, with these expressions: "My mind is tired and my heart is sad." You would have me understand by that a connection between the weariness of your mind and the sadness of your heart and that the fatigue of the mind is produced, to a large extent at least, by the sadness of the heart. This little revelation of your soul has given me great freedom in the answer I have just given you. We must not grow tired writing

[2] In the eyes of the Government. There was, doubtless, question of placing Father Lalanne nominally at the head of the normal school at the same time as he was head of the secondary boarding school.
[1] Apocalypse XIV, 12.

to one another, especially in view of the critical times through which we are passing. I always embrace you with a new tenderness.

P.S. I shall soon have to write to you again about other matters or to Brother Clouzet, whom I am greeting heartily.

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We must note the delicacy of these last lines destined to provoke in Father Lalanne still greater openness, no questions, no reproaches. Father Chaminade patiently awaits the moment of grace. Alas! This moment was still a long way off.

589 - TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 7, 1831

We have believed it our duty, my dear son, to send Brother Pelleteret to St. Remy.[1] In a general way, this is a wound made in our hearts, but his head, always absorbed, prevented him, on the one hand, from advancing his studies, and, on the other, from making any progress in virtue, above all in the virtue of religion. At this late time of the year he has done nothing in physics, the class he was following at the Grand Seminary since the beginning of last November. The same was the case last year in logic and nearly the same the year before that in rhetoric at the Royal College. Otherwise, he is exteriorly quite regular. He understands his trouble and does justice to himself. He did not murmur about his censure and asked only that he be put in the service of the house or assigned to work on the farm. It did not seem suitable to put him at the disposal of the boarding school (Sainte Marie) where he was a student for four years, and a good one at that. There is no farm work to be done at St. Laurent. He asked to go to St. Remy. I saw to it that he be given permission to present himself there, and I told him I would write in his favor but that it would not be possible to give him an obedience. See with Father Lalanne whether you cannot give him another chance, either as teacher or as farmer. He is, otherwise, very submissive, and what we usually call a fine fellow. He left three or four days ago, alone, on foot, with a good recommendation, for Vesoul. Two other subjects must have left either yesterday or the day before—Brother Etignard and our young carpenter. Brother Etignard is still far from being a master locksmith. Nevertheless, he will be able to be of great service to you, as he has a distinct bent for mechanics and is strong and skillful. The young carpenter is rather weak in carpentry, although he has gone through his apprenticeship. He improved somewhat at St. Laurent, particularly under Brother Etignard, who directed him in the more difficult jobs. Brother Bousquet is asking me to send him a carpenter to replace the one they have there, who is a stranger to the Society, but I don't think the young carpenter is as yet in a condition to be at the head of the workshop. In time, he may get to be good enough in his trade to accept the post. He is a small young man, very gentle and very submissive, who has real piety. I would be very glad, from the start, that he go to Besançon, but the old master would still have to be kept or another be sent who would be the real head man at least for some time. I am told that you have two such who are brothers but that one of the two is quite strong in his trade. I am answering Brother Bousquet by this same mail.

Brother Seguin is always ready to leave. We were hoping to obtain the permission of the civil authority, when a new incident came to shake our hopes or at least to make us fear a great deal. It seemed the Government intended putting the young men of St. Laurent in the National Guard. With this in mind, their family and forenames were taken as well as their ages. They were asked if they had served or if they had been exempted, etc. We are to wait for some new decisions, in order to present our claims and to write to the Minister of the Interior if it seems that these claims are not being recognized as is their due.

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[1] See Letter 438.

Herewith included is a normal school principal obedience for Father Chevaux. According to the law of last April 18, every teacher who wants to obtain a certificate must pass an examination before a duly authorized person. But since the law does not specifically mention teachers like ours, who have been specially exempt from these examinations (they were to receive their certificate upon presentation of their obedience), I don't think I ought to take the initiative and write to His Excellency the Minister of Public Instruction and of Worship. If further difficulties arise, I must be immediately notified with all suitable details. If Father Chevaux is asked to pass an examination, he would do well to submit to it, at least for the parts of primary teaching he is most familiar with. He should state that he has as many teachers of writing as are needed, etc., and that the head of the school of such importance can't be trained only for primary teaching (even with a certificate of the first degree)—he would not be able to exercise authority over the normal school candidates.

You will communicate, as I'm sure you know, this part of my letter to Father Lalanne, and you will even do well to show him the entire letter. The greatest mutual understanding must reign between you two. I am awaiting a good letter from you shortly. It seems that you are always afraid of being too lengthy in your letters, and you omit details which it would be useful for someone in my position to have.

Father Lalanne must have received a letter which I recently wrote to him in answer to the one he wrote to me a few days ago.

Greet him for me as well as all my children at St. Remy. And as for yourself, receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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Won over by the approach of Father Chaminade, so full of mildness, Father Lalanne decided to speak up and explain his complaints about Brother Clouzet, whence the following letter of Father Chaminade.

590 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, May 10, 1831

My dear son, I have received your explanatory letter of last April 25. It almost broke my heart, it distressed me so. Although there is no question of relaxation or disorders in the conduct of Brother Clouzet, there is, according to your letter, a Christian and religious immorality[1] which must be offensive to God.

[1] Father Chaminade simply wants to say an absence of moral perfection.

There is surely a kind of independence in the Office of Econome that is to be allowed just as there is in that of the manager and administrator of the property of St. Remy, but not one of these titles makes him Superior or gives him any authority over you. To accept the subjects, unless they be destined for work,[1] to test them, to retain them—all this belongs to the domain of the Superior. The same with regard to the distribution of employments.

The food must be good and wholesome, the bread of good quality. Its whiteness is not always perfect, but that often depends on the quality of the wheat and the soil in which it is grown. The increase in the tuition price may well be an insufficient reason for introducing changes in the food, proportionate to the increase. This year, there was a general rise in the price of provisions. Already last year, there was a great increase in expenses for food.

In both the old and the new regime,[2] I have found very few communities in which no one complained about the Econome. I have, nevertheless, seen some who were much esteemed, even by those who were complaining or who had complained. In my opinion, it is the most thankless and disagreeable trust that can be exercised in the community. Sometimes, great virtue and fortitude are needed to fulfill it conscientiously.[3]

I have seen a certain number of communities in which the title of Superior was kept by the former one, so that, at the door, it had to be explained to the caller which one was wanted, the new or the old, but I have seen none in which the old one pretended to dominate the new one.

If from Bordeaux, it was written to Brother Clouzet that "you will see with the other Heads what you will have to do," this, without doubt, shows that there was some uncertainty about the matter under question, and that it was good that it be brought up for consideration in Council. If Brother Clouzet took this expression as a recognition of his being really Superior and entirely independent of the actual Superior of St. Remy, he was greatly in error. That idea did not come from Bordeaux.

There was also great wrong in compromising you, in not letting the religious servants be regarded as domestics, from the time that you had declared them such, in order to exempt them from service in the National Guard. He took over a real function of Superior, although he could have and should have let you know that there was no slight difficulty in having them pass as domestics. You would have done well to tell me in detail what had happened when the request was made to register those capable of doing the service in the National Guard. The same thing happened to us at St. Laurent, as I told you, I believe, in one of my last letters.

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[1] On this special point, see the precision given in the following letter, No. 3.
[2] Before and after the Revolution.
[3] Father Chaminade was then speaking from personal experience.

You indicate to me the principle of evil, and that is very wise. An evil cannot be cured if its cause remains unknown. You tell me: "Brother Clouzet is persuaded that he is no less Head in his Office than I am in mine, that, not having his obedience from me, it is not to me that he is accountable; and even, that his Office having been confided to him on his personal responsibility, he has the right both to act without consulting my intentions; and when he considers these prejudicial to his Office, to decline my orders when he does not approve them; and even to oppose them, if I insist."

1. I notice, in this passage of your letter, or in this exposé of the principle of evil, that, in fact, even if his official title were such as he understands it, he could never infer from it that he has any kind of superiority. But this is what he seems to be doing, from what you have stated above and what we have just observed, and this would already put him definitely in great wrong.

2. As regards the principle itself, it is announced in an equivocal manner. Each part of a whole is properly situated only when the whole is preserved intact. The colonel of a regiment is also really colonel only when the camp marshal is camp marshal. The colonel does not hold his commission from the camp marshal. The inferior officers must always be submissive to the superior officer, and the superior officer always has the right to require the inferior to give an account of his manner of fulfilling his particular office. It is true that the superior officer may not arbitrarily change the kind of office, except in case of unforeseen conditions, when immediate action is so urgent that no recourse can be had to the one who was given the office.

As regards all that concerns matters of order, I shall write to Brother Clouzet a few days hence. I shall again explain to him his Office and I shall send you a copy of my letter, in order that you may be able to maintain everybody in due order and subordination. Prudence, goodness and humility, which have been characteristic of your conduct in the past in regard to Brother Clouzet, give me the assurance that you will act toward him only in accordance with the recommendation of St. Paul: "*Non tanquam dominantes in cleris.*"[1]

I have corresponded directly with him concerning matters relative to his Office, for that seemed to me but the natural thing to do. For example, Brother Clouzet was always asking me for Brother Seguin, and several times you have also asked me for him. From his last request, I got the idea that it was prudent to suspend the manufacture of the hardware machinery. In that way, I saw the means to send him not only Brother Seguin but several of the workers in the locksmith shop. I offered them to him on certain conditions at the time I answered his letter. It is altogether right that, although Head of Temporalities, he takes on nothing new without having your consent. It is also very suitable that I order nothing new, and even that I permit nothing new, however little it may be, without having your reason for it.

[1] Watch over the flock, not as a tyrant. The text is from the first Epistle of St. Peter V, 3.

You tell me, my dear son: “You have begun by exhorting us to live well in mutual understanding. We understand one another, I believe, as equal with equal.” I see truth in your principle, only insofar as equality in views and sentiments is supposed—in a word, an equality of goals. Now, I certainly suppose these equalities, although your respective Offices do not presume an equality in the kind of action you both undertake to arrive at the same end.

Further on, you add: “In the following letter, you put us all in a single category. We all eat the bread of St. Remy—that is, those who live with Brother Clouzet and those whom he keeps alive.” I am not able to reply to this remark, because I can in no way recall what I said in that letter nor what the occasion was. The expressions you quote are not sufficient to refresh my memory on the matters involved. For a very long time, as I have already told you, I have not kept copies of the letters I write. I shall, nevertheless, have a copy made of this one, in case the short explanations I am giving you are not sufficient.

You would prefer to suffer in silence all the annoyances you experience rather than explain them. I asked you for these explanations and you have done well to exercise a bit of violence upon yourself in order to give them to me. Brother Clouzet is not Head of the establishment at St. Remy and must not pretend to exercise the authority of the Head. You alone are the first head and you are to be considered as such. Brother Clouzet was Head before you. It is he who, so to say, built up the place. He did what he could in the way he thought best. He has had success in very difficult times. Most certainly, you will realize and admit that he deserved consideration. And when, in principle, I invited you to live in compete mutual understanding, I did not believe I was doing anything out of the way, and even now I am certain of having done no wrong.

I do not doubt, my dear son, that you have great reasons for patience in your present situation. I would be happy to diminish your difficulties as much as possible, and it is for this reason that I shall write in a few days to Brother Clouzet. It will be only after a few days, so that he will not attribute the instructions that I will give him to complaints. These instructions may not, at first, be sufficiently detailed. I succeed only in upsetting him did I not first prepare his soul, if I took the tone of a Superior rather than that of a friend and father. I know of no other state more difficult than that of Superior, especially when the acts of superiorship are to influence the salvation of souls.

It seems to you, my dear son, that the lively and tender sentiments which I bear toward you exclude those of confidence. No, my dear son, they do not exclude it. This sentiment of confidence is deep in my heart even when I do not express it, either verbally or in writing. In its turn, this lively and sincere confidence does not exclude the sentiment of confidence in other connections, which I can manifest to Brother Clouzet as well as to other Heads.

It is, my dear son, with all these good sentiments brought together that I embrace you and wish you the peace of the Lord.

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Profiting by the first occasion which current affairs furnish him, Father Chaminade gives Brother Clouzet, with his habitual delicacy, the instructions promised in the preceding letter and has them given him by Father Lalanne.

591 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 27, 1831

In sending you Brother Etignard, my dear son, I was sending you, at the same time, a young carpenter. In fact, on the same day, I wrote Father Caillet to have them both leave. After receiving my letter, Father Caillet did not think he should let the carpenter leave without the consent of his mother. She easily gave her consent, but at the same time she told Father Caillet of the illegitimate origins of this young man. . . . Father Caillet wrote me about all the distaste he had for illegitimate children and that, besides, despite the young man's piety, he had no natural qualities sufficiently superior to merit dispensation. I permitted Father Caillet to return the young man to his mother, which he immediately did and asked Brother Etignard to leave alone. I did not know of the illegitimacy of the young man. His mother reared him in a very Christian manner and, although very poor, she made the sacrifice of her son, at the time when he was beginning to earn, for fear he might go astray in the world, and the son corresponded quite generously to the views of his mother.

Two other locksmith apprentices must, at this time, have left Bordeaux for St. Remy—Brothers Saumade and Pesant. Brother Pesant[1] has always conducted himself well—there has never been any complaint about him. If this young man is well instructed, he could become a good religious. Brother Saumade has changed much, but in his favor. He needs hard work. If your machine shop is not able to occupy him sufficiently, you might give him work on the farm. I can tell you that he is a painter, that he knows how to mix his colors; but, when all is done, he must not be much occupied with painting, as that is ordinarily harmful to his health. The locksmith trade suits him well. Besides that, he has always had a taste for carpentry but has as yet had little practice in it.

You are waiting for me to speak to you about Brother Seguin. I have an inconceivable grief over the blundering way his case is being handled in Bordeaux. When I sent the order for him to leave, I consulted Brother David, as his military status was still not entirely clear. Brother David was of the opinion that he could not leave without the greatest imprudence but that he would try to obviate the difficulties in the way. Time and again, I have asked what these difficulties were and it is only in the last four or five days that I finally know them. The National Guard affair seemed to them a new difficulty. I asked in what way Brother Seguin had been on the list given to St. Laurent, but what I was asking for was not understood. I wrote again, and I can assure you that I shall not lose sight of this little affair. When I wrote to you that I would come to your assistance until we would be assured of no more worry about the matter, it was in all sincerity. But, my dear son, if your mechanic is not to stay at St. Remy, and if Brother Seguin is to be sole boss of your workshop, would there not be real harm in having it equipped? Your shop would fail completely if Brother

[1] Bro. Gregory Pesant, born in La Hérie, Aisne, October 11, 1811, entered the Society at St. Laurent in 1828, on the recommendation of M. O'Lombel and died piously at St. Remy on June 16, 1832, his death much lamented by Fr. Chaminade.

Seguin left. And if he did not leave, the Bordeaux shop would fail and I have already told you of all the harm that would entail: ten to twelve thousand francs completely lost and a superb machine that would be of absolutely no use, except to give cause for much worry.

Take care, my dear son, of the way you work out your affairs. I take this opportunity to make the following observations:

1. In the Society the principal Heads[1] have a real authority—which corresponds to their title—but from this fact it must not be concluded that the main Head is to be left out of the functions relative to each Head. The main Head or Superior always has the right and the duty to see if each one really fulfills his functions well.

2. When the principal Heads find difficulties in the exercise of their functions, the Superior is to be consulted and the affair considered in Council. In this last case, the Council makes no decision, but the report containing the opinion and advice of all the council members is sent back to the first Superior of the Society.[2] Without the observance of these rules, union and subordination among the various Heads would often be troubled, and this would not be the only drawback resulting.

3. The Head of Temporalities has a direct relation to all the "materiel" of the establishment and an indirect relation to the personnel occupied with this "materiel." The first Head or Superior has a direct relation toward the entire personnel of the establishment and an indirect one, though real, towards all the "materiel." I shall not develop this principle, since your experience, with what has been said above, will have you understand it sufficiently. Nevertheless, should difficulties arise, tell me about them and I shall try to resolve them.

Formerly, my dear son, you were main, active Head. Today, you are but the honorary first Head, and I am to congratulate you on the fact, if we think as Christians. The first active Head has a direct responsibility before God and in the eyes of the Society as regards all the persons who make up the establishment, starting with himself. The Head of Temporalities has the responsibility only as regards the management of the "materiel" that is sometimes called the temporal. Now, this "materiel" does not place before its Head a moral resistance, as the personnel might do to its first Head. Only a mere glance upon this appraisal is needed to find in it many motives for consolation.

You will have the kindness, my dear son, to see to it that I get the deed of donation of Courtefontaine or an exact copy of this deed, which Father Bardenet will give you . . .

[1] The religious, in the large communities, charged with the Offices of Zeal, Instruction and Temporalities.
[2] The Society then counted but a small number of houses and was not yet divided into provinces.

Father Caillet writes to me that he does not know what to do to meet the financial obligation that fall due at various dates during the month of June and to give at least some advance payments to the suppliers, whose bills are very high.

I am always embracing you tenderly.

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592 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, May 29, 1831

My respectable son, I have used the occasion of the transfer of several young men to write Brother Clouzet. I begin by talking to him of the order and subordination that must reign among the Heads. After having read the letter, you will kindly seal it and give it to him.[1]

You will do well to tell each one of the members of the Society that the seal of active and passive correspondence with the first Superiors in inviolable, that it has always been a formal exception to the rule which prescribes the communication of all correspondence to the Superiors of the establishments. If this exceptional rule were violated once or twice, there would remain in the individuals a certain fear and defiance that might become very harmful to them. I have seen an example of this in another order, with disastrous consequences, and I know of others.

I was this far, my respectable son, with this little letter, when I thought I should interrupt it to write Father Chevaux. I am having the letter to Father Chevaux also sent to you unsealed. Do with it as you did with Brother Clouzet's. As you see, I am also speaking to him of Brother Clouzet. This way seems to me very mild, to bring Brother Clouzet to the respect and submission which he owes you, and I am expecting that, in your charity, you will always soften for him the practice of these two duties. It is possible that, sometimes, he will not fulfill the duties of his Office with the ease and dignity that you might desire, but you need not worry too much on this account, provided he really fulfills them. I have seen very few houses of any consequence in which there was no occasion to cast some blame on the economes, suppliers, etc.—the name matters little—who had to fulfill the same functions as Brother Clouzet, especially when they wanted to fulfill them honestly and conscientiously. We are, above all, in so critical a situation—and it can always become more so—that there would be great imprudence on our part were we not to cut down or rather cut back on all expenses that are not indispensable. Since the start of this Revolution, I am quite generally requiring two things: 1. that the least possible changes be made, whether of persons or of ways of doing things, and 2. that everywhere only such expenses be made as are strictly necessary. Almost everywhere we are losing the very means of existence.

[1] See Letter 594.

You have answered me nothing about the letter I wrote to Father Bardenet, and he has not answered me either. It must have arrived at St. Remy after you had already left for Paris, but you should have received it at least when you returned.

May faith, my respectable son, be our source of strength and consolation in the midst of the sorrows and contradictions that we experience! I am embracing you with a very appreciable tenderness.

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593 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, June 3, 1831

On the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth of last month, my respectable son, I wrote long letters to Brother Clouzet and to Father Chevaux. I addressed them to you with a little letter I added for you.

I am very anxious that these letters may establish the union and subordination so necessary in any establishment and, with all the more reason, in that of St. Remy.

You have done well to continue to prepare yourself for the bachelorship in science[1]; but you had forgotten to tell me that your other work was ended and that you had nothing to do but prepare for an examination. The month of July can be very hot in Paris, and the great heat often leaves the head very little free for the passing of examinations.

I shall not question, my dear son, whether it is possible for you to make out a little sketch of your plan of reform of the present system of teaching that you have been thinking about, as you tell me, for some ten years. However, I would fear for the success of such a prospectus as you have mentioned, if it were made public at the end of this year. In reading over, in your letter, the article about the prospectus, I believe I understand that all classes would follow their ordinary courses but that you would apply your reform plan only to children ten to twelve years of age who would be confided to you and whose education and instruction you would follow from year to year. In this regard, there would not be the same drawbacks, and I am ceasing my observations on the first point of view. In due time, you will do well to send me a copy of the prospectus project, before having it printed and published.

[1] Father Lalanne had been received as a bachelor of arts in Bordeaux in 1810. He was received as a bachelor of science in Toulouse in 1840, as master of arts in Besançon in 1847, and as doctor in Paris in 1853.

The enterprise is a tough one, but it is worthy of a stout heart, one altogether devoted to the welfare of religion and the fatherland. The proposition that you are making to me does not much surprise me, as I know your character. It is, nevertheless, possible that it is untimely and that you will find it so yourself before the end of the year.

Because you thought I might consider your proposition untimely, you make a series of reflections, which we can hardly discuss in a letter. I thought I understood that you looked upon the Revolution pretty much like Father de Lamennais. In this, my dear son, there is no agreement in our views and that, in itself, is very annoying. From the present chaos, you tell me, there can come a new world. Without doubt, the Almighty can make a new world out of this chaos—has he not formed Christianity in the bosom of idolatry? But this is not the same as he has done with the physical world, in drawing it out of the chaos he had first created. That the Society of Mary should be called to concur in this happy regeneration, is, as you well know, the most ardent desire of my heart, but *omnia tempus habent*.[1]

I now pass to some other points of your letter. If the Council of revision gives its decision, you will kindly let me know of it right away. There is none, as yet, in Bordeaux for St. Laurent.

I have experienced, as I say to Brother Clouzet, much sorrow over the fact that Brother Seguin was detained for reasons that, I believe, could easily be overcome. I have written to Father Caillet about every week to learn why he was being detained. Father Caillet just wrote a few days ago that Brother David had told him expressly that he was not to tell me! You see, my dear son, with what ardor you must ask the Lord to grant me patience. . . . On the other hand, Brother Clouzet has always sounded the praises of his mechanic, and it is only in his last letter that he speaks of him quite disparagingly. If I had believed things to be the way you tell me, none of these young men would have left. It must be a rather severe trial for Brother Clouzet that he may not undertake anything serious either by way of new projects or of increased activity in present projects without taking your advice about a very clear and detailed plan to be communicated to me. As regards the young men who have left, consider in your wisdom and with Brother Clouzet the means by which you can keep them and have them advance in virtue. You will no longer receive any men—or only insofar as Brother Clouzet fulfills the formalities.

Your little summary of rules for the novitiate is very satisfactory for the people you have there.

I am still in Agen, where I really have many matters to look after, both for Agen itself and for all our other establishments, but I am far from settling down here. So to speak, I always have a foot lifted, ready to move on. I often turn my eyes in the direction of St. Remy, but . . .

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[1] Each thing in its own time.

The precaution you took to send Brother Etignard immediately to make his disposition will, I hope, relieve your anxiety.[1] You have there a little bit of ground to walk on. Those who have not seen the first Revolution have much difficulty in forming for themselves a real idea of this one. Take note for me of all the consequences of this trifling but vexing incident.

In embracing you tenderly, my respectable son, I ask the Lord to grant you the fullness of the gifts of his Holy Spirit.

* * * *

Persevering explanations and the outpouring of a paternal heart . . . There will be found, in the following letter, some very interesting views on the spirit of the government in the Society, on the method of primary teaching and on the movement of de Lamennais and the liberal school.

594 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, July 5 and 7, 1831

From day to day, my respectable son, I was looking for a free hour, in which I could answer, at my ease, your letter of last June 10. My affairs are multiplying instead of diminishing. Anyhow, I will hastily take up my pen. I shall, nevertheless, have you notice that, there is haste outside, there is a little even on the inside. In delaying my answer to you, I had hoped to receive replies from Father Chevaux or Brother Clouzet. Here we are up to July 5, and the strict silence continues.

When I wrote to you and when I sent you unsealed my letters to Father Chevaux and Brother Clouzet, it was not that you should read them and then discuss the contents with them. My principal concern was to bring back Brother Clouzet, in a mild way, to the obedience he owes you as his Superior. I wrote to Father Chevaux only with this object in view. I was very glad that you had knowledge of everything, so that, with both of us using the same language, we might the sooner arrive at the desired end. It is possible that, in explaining his duties, I may have used expressions that were too vague and susceptible of distinctions. I did not want to say everything at once, in view of the consideration we must have for him.

Brother Clouzet has sound judgment—at least, so it has always seemed to me—and he doesn't bother much with subtleties. I wished in the last instance to make clear to him that his Office submitted him to you as his direct and local Superior as well as to the Superior of the Society who appointed him to this Office. He is your inferior so that he may

[1] There is probably question of the National Guard.

exercise his Office suitably and religiously. Further explanations from you would only confuse the question, and you surely seem to have, at least, thought so yourself, since you quote an interview we had in Gray about the relations that should exist among the principal Heads themselves and toward the first Superior.

I then blamed, as I should still blame today, a certain confusion which might result from the too distinct exercise of each Office, but I do not blame the intrinsic authority of each Office. It is, as it were, absolutely necessary to the three general officers, who have to consider themselves close to the Superior General, as his Assistants. It is more or less necessary in the large establishments, where it is rare enough to find Superiors who are equally fitted for the administration of temporal matters, spiritual matters, and literary and scientific studies. It is rare to find some who have enough knowledge and prudence to direct efficiently all the Offices toward the principal and primary end of the Society. When the Superior has a capacity of exercising by himself some of the Offices, or when there is need of forming subjects, then this Superior takes as Heads of these Offices of Superior, Head of Zeal, and Head of Instruction. You are Head of Temporalities in your capacity as Superior. These were my ideas at the time of the editing of the Constitutions just as they are today, and it is for this reason that I have made but two appointments in St. Remy, that of the Superior and that of Head of Temporalities. It would be a bad explanation to say that it is a lack of confidence in a Superior not to give him the particular administration of each Office, but only the general one. Such a viewpoint would have to suppose that a Superior is everything and equally fit for everything. I am not going any farther, as I do not want to wound your modesty.

In the government of the Society, all these views and all these needs must be attained—otherwise it would be defective. Another plan could be adopted, but it would not be worth ours, at least as far as we ourselves are concerned. In a Society, all must be coordinated to its spirit and its ends.

My dear son, it is only to answer your letter that I am offering you these short reflections, because it is a matter of prudence not to discuss these kinds of questions until Providence has strengthened the ground on which we are walking. You must surely be aware of the great instability of that ground. No change, no innovation, nothing which might draw attention to us—here you have my way of acting these past eleven months. I have the satisfaction of seeing that, quite generally, all our establishments of men as well as those of women are following the same course.

May each man, in silence, exercise himself in piety. I have said or I have written to most of our establishments that the Revolution was the winnowing-basket of the Lord which he took in his hand, and, in fact, several of our subjects, just as straw, have flown into the world and even now all is not yet pure.

Nevertheless, I do not cease occupying myself every day, at least before God, with our great work, the revision of the Constitutions. I am working especially on the subject of

Direction, properly so called. This part is extremely vast and delicate. Often pray for me, for, without the particular assistance of the Holy Spirit, I shall be writing nothing worthwhile.

I have also been occupied and, from time to time, I still occupy myself with the method of primary teaching. The work is about finished. The method you drew up helped me very much, but it did not reach the end that we are to propose to ourselves.

1. The teaching was not really simultaneous, even in the same class. All the forces in question were not working at the same time.

2. It could not be suitable to the pupils of all classes and, in consequence, would never give us a model school to present to the candidates of the normal school.

3. It caused our old method to almost completely disappear, and such a change was not of slight consequence.

4. Our teachers are sent to a rising generation as missionaries, and so they must enlighten and develop these weak intelligences and form these young hearts to virtue. This method must necessarily bring this about and, so to speak, not say anything about it. I think that we have succeeded in our purpose. Besides, all goes with as much, and even greater, speed than in the system of mutual teaching. We already have, in favor of this method, the testimony of a former magistrate, a great administrator, who has attentively examined it. I shall first have it learned by the teachers I have here with me in the school of Agen, and then put it into practice, little by little, elsewhere and finally decree it for all our schools.

I shall conclude, my dear son, where you yourself finish, but where I really wanted to begin. I want to let you know of my complete satisfaction that you are reading de Lamennais, and, above all, that you are not adhering to his doctrines. It was great prudence on the part of the king of Sardinia to forbid the entrance of the *Avenir* into his States. Some passages of your letters seem to indicate that you espoused the same principles, and I was afflicted over the fact, without daring to have you share my sorrow. I don't want to say that there is nothing good in the *Avenir*, but he is really a very weak theologian, though with high pretensions. His reputation at first commanded attention, and some ecclesiastics, though a small number, who have merit to a certain degree, were at the start really enthusiastic over him. I have met several of these who could not sustain as much as a half-hour of half-serious discussion. But this is enough, because you are keeping watch for yourself, against what he calls his doctrines. Although the *Quotidienne* and the *Gazette de France*, in general, have more mature and better reasoned views, even here, one must know what to

accept and what to leave aside. I know little enough about the *Correspondent*.[1] It seems to me that you qualify it by one word: it is a young man of letters, who professes to be a Christian.

I am surprised that Father Bardenet, otherwise so good, does not answer business letters except by a few dry words. In the letter which I wrote you on this subject, it seems to me I fully informed you about it. After all, here is another opportunity woefully missed. . . . From the correspondence between the Convent of Acey with Agen, there seems to be no evidence of the discontent of Father Bardenet.

This good man is greatly mistaken in thinking that we claimed to put Mother Gabriel at the head of a boarding school because she is the Superioress of the Convent of Acey.[1] It is as if it were said that the Mother of the Sacred Heart, Superioress of the Convent of Condom, is at the head of the boarding school of Condom. When Sister Léocardie entered the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, she was at the head of a boarding school of some twenty-five young ladies. It is she alone who started this boarding school, and you can easily understand how much her departure was regretted. If Father Bardenet clearly explained his intentions and if he did not insist on judging by himself the aptitude of the subjects, if he believed in the precautions that must be taken in the time of revolution (which, from day to day, may become more annoying) things would go much better. However, with some words of discontent to the right and to the left, he would simply paralyze his work. The Superioress General has no very great confidence in the success of the Convents of Arbois and Acey. She finds that too much attention is being given to purely human views. She may be unduly frightened, as the golden mean is often difficult to uphold.

My dear son, I am recommending to you the young men who have shortly arrived at St. Remy from Bordeaux. I told Brother Clouzet that he would be doing a good work in suggesting to each one that he write me a little letter. Since I started this letter, I made up my mind to send Brother Anthony Mémain, whom you had placed in Orgelet, right back. If Brother Olive asks you for a substitute, send him. I beg of you, one of the three novices[2]— not necessarily the smartest, but the one with the best character.

Here you have, my dear son, a very long letter, however shortened I had intended to make it. I am closing it embracing you always with the same tenderness.

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[1] The *Correspondent*, founded in 1829, by some young Catholics for the defense of religion, disappeared in August, 1831, eclipsed by the *Avenir*, reappeared in 1843, and has become one of the important Catholic papers.

[1] In the Convents of the Daughters of Mary, the Superioress of the community was often distinct from the Directress of the boarding school. In Acey, the Superioress was Mother Gabrielle Waller, an Alsatian religious of great merit, but who was displeasing to Father Bardenet, particularly because of her Alsatian accent. The Directress of the boarding school or Mistress of the Boarders was Mother Léocardie Voirin, the future superioress of the Third-Order of Auch.

[2] Recently received in St. Remy by Father Lalanne.

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595 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 7, 1831

I wrote to you, my dear son. I also wrote to Father Chevaux, putting the two letters in a third, to Father Lalanne. The last-mentioned acknowledged the reception, by his own letter of last June 10. He adds: "I would risk telling you frankly, that, after having read them, we haven't been able to see more clearly into our differences than before." Before answering, I delayed several days, awaiting some word either from you or from Father Chevaux. If I did not succeed in having you understand the nature of your Office and of the duties which it imposes upon you, why not openly tell me so in writing? When there is question of duties, everything must be made clear. It is also necessary that you and Father Lalanne understand things in the same way, and it is for this reason that I communicated to him the two letters in question.

I am sending you, my dear son, a letter for Mme Perrin.[1] You will see there all that you have to say to her. After having read it carefully, you will seal it and deliver it to her. I feel quite humiliated that this letter did not come to me sooner. The need we have for money is very extreme. I am trying to keep our creditors patient by issuing promissory notes due in the not too distant future, and you realize that we are exposing ourselves even in this. You may put on Mme Perrin's bill the tuition for the other year, which is to end in September. You have the exact date on the account I sent you. You will send me, as soon as possible, the settlement of the bill, and you will add anything you have been able to secure or save up to now on the properties of Marast or St. Remy. If you do not see your way clear to realizing all of this, send me whatever you can spare, without prejudice to activating the other payments, and sending the latter on to me as they come in. You may endorse the bills of exchange in the name of Father Caillet and address them to him directly. Every delay can be prejudicial, so we must avoid delays as much as possible.

I harbor no illusion about the worries I am giving you, but take courage! The good God permits it, so why would we not permit it? Or rather, why would we not adore the designs of his Providence, and why would we not put to our personal profit the sorrows he send us for our greater good? What a consolation always to be able to say in the midst of the most bitter affliction: God permits this only for my good!

I would be glad to have news about all our young arrivals in St. Remy. You might possibly do them good and please them by suggesting they each write me a little letter, which they could seal and you could send on to me. I am writing Father Lalanne and commending them to him, but I am commending them also to your kind solicitude.

[1] Mother of a postulant at the Madeleine, who had followed Father Chaminade to Agen.

Receive, my dear son, the tender embraces of your father, who loves you so sincerely!

* * * *

The good Brother Perriguey opened his heart to Father Chaminade, telling him the main reason which made him ask for a change His soul, too sensitive to the tokens of affection from the children of the Orphanage, found in them an occasion for troubles.

Father Chaminade's answer shows us how kindly he received the confidences of his sons and how his solicitude for their spiritual good came before everything else.

596- TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, BESANÇON

Agen, July 8, 1831

Your letter, my dear son, of last May 30 filled me with compassion. It would have been much better to let me know sooner your present state. You did tell me something about it, but I had reason to believe that you had overcome the afflictions that were tormenting you.

It would be difficult to find a place where you would have no relations at all with children. There are, nevertheless, three possible houses of the Society: St. Remy, St. Hippolyte, and Courtefontaine. At St. Remy, as porter, but then you would have to learn the bonnet-maker's trade, because you could not remain all day with your arms crossed or at prayer. This post could be, so to say, perpetual. At St. Hippolyte, where I have received persistent requests for a cook and a baker. At Courtefontaine, where Brother Dornier is overloaded with work, as he has to do everything. More than a year ago I sent him a little helper; but if there were two of you, things would go better. You could live, as it were, in solitude, carrying out your occupations, which would not be excessive, in the presence of God and in silence; but you would have to know fairly well something about plain cooking. It would also be good for you to know how to bake bread. And if one of these places became unsuitable, we could easily find another, e.g., St. Laurent and or the Madeleine, where there are no longer any children and where silence is strictly observed all day. See now, my dear son, what your heart tells you and what you can learn most easily. At the Hospital, you can learn either the bonnet trade or how to cook and bake bread. Arrange these things with Brother Bousquet. If you need time, you can take it because of the impossibility or at least the inconvenience of sending someone at the time of the wool sale. When once you have made up your mind, I shall send someone before you leave, who will take all the information that is wanted or necessary.

In the meantime, my dear son, try to treat cavalierly, as we say, and with greater unconcern these diverse tokens of friendship. The more seriously you take them, the more you will be bothered. Without ceasing, give your heart to God, and despise what might go on in your nature. I counsel you the practice of the three Hail Marys at your rising in the morning and before you fall asleep at night. Many persons have made use of this practice

and have thus acquired the tranquility you are seeking. May the Lord, my dear son, deign to accord you his peace and his benediction!

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Brother Perriguey was sent to St. Remy where he lived piously until his death.

597 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 19, 1831

I received, my dear son, your tardy letter of the twelfth of the current month, with the copy of the papers concerning Courtefontaine. From what you told me of them, I had reason to doubt that they were in order, and now after reading them I am still fearful about this. Nevertheless, for the time being I shall say nothing, but shall confer with the Convent Councilor, as he is considered the best legal mind of the region.

Some time ago, I wrote to you, my dear son, and you will see by this letter that I delayed my answer to Father Lalanne awaiting a reply from you. I shall not review its contents, because by this time you must have received it.

I understand, my dear son, from the few remarks you make, that you have understood me well. The same for Father Chevaux. You realize your duties and you accomplish them with courage and fidelity. Courage is not opposed to humility; nor is humility opposed to courage. Always preserve the peace of your soul, and may your answers to Father Lalanne always be wise and modest. We must believe that Father Lalanne seeks only what is good. Let us hope that his pretensions will be no more than a passing illusion. Only it is annoying that these clouds are gathering at a time when we should remain so quiet and so united, but God permits them and this one thought must make us humbly adore the dispositions of his Providence, although they seem to contradict our nature and our ideas. I am still insisting on making no changes, except such as are indispensable. Just keep on following your ordinary way. I have no illusion as regards the bitterness of your position, but it can become very meritorious before God, and even in the sight of men if you conduct yourself religiously. Ask Father Chevaux to help you derive great profit from this situation. I shall, nevertheless, never fail to tell Father Lalanne the truth whenever the occasion permits.

Father Lalanne has not spoken to me about the separation of the farm shops and the normal school from the boarding school. Perhaps he will do so when he answers my last letter. We would have to come to this point, if he could not open his eyes to the entire merry-go-round. What is always amazing me more is that this disturbance and this disunion should come precisely at a time of revolution. But let us close our reflections and take things as they are and as God permits them to be.

Father Chevaux is right in telling you that you owe me an account of everything. I shall always support you in the wise and humble exercise of the Offices that I have confided to you: mildness, patience, and the friendly hints you might be able to use with Father Lalanne will never alter the authority you need to accomplish your duties. Otherwise, they would no longer be for you duties of justice and conscience.

It doesn't seem to me, my dear son, that you have, at present, any need of exercising your functions as Visitor:

1. Because the time is not propitious;

2. Because the establishments are getting along about as well as they can, considering these bad times;

3. Because I am carrying on a fairly active correspondence with each one of them. I am not yet altogether sure about the establishment of Ste. Marie-aux-Mines, although I have reasons to hope that it will hold out in spite of the persecution of the mayor, who is a Protestant. Nor am I entirely so sure about the maintenance of the one at Ribeauvillé. The salary of the Brothers at Colmar has been cut by one-fourth. Otherwise, this establishment, as well as the one at Ammerschwir, is well seen by the new authorities and by the rector of the Academy of Strasbourg.

Father Lalanne has not spoken to me of his actions or his plans for the subjects you destine for agriculture. You tell me that Father Lalanne insists a lot on being entirely free. This liberty would be badly understood if he intended to go counter to the established order. No authority, however absolute it may be, may be exercised in favor of disorder; and with all the more reason an inferior and dependent authority. Father Lalanne acts in this way only because he regards his own ideas as infallible and believes himself obliged, for that very reason, to carry them out. If his inferiors reasoned in his regard as he reasons with regard to his Superior, he would find enormous differences . . . I don't think there is anything else to do but:

1. To keep on going ahead with mildness, patience, and consideration;

2. To pray to the Lord for him and for me.

I invited Father Lalanne to tell all the members of the Society that they have entire liberty to write to me and to receive my letters without going through the Superior of the establishment. I am ever more surprised to be hearing so little from the majority.

I received a short letter from Father Bouly, in which he invites me to unite my prayers with those of the Prince of Hohenlohe[1] for his cure. I received his letter too late. Nevertheless, I shall not stop praying for him. Please give him this answer from me, as I shall not otherwise be writing him.

I am going to write a short letter to Brother Saumade. Have the kindness to give it to him. I am very much afraid that this young man will not succeed at St. Remy. He, nevertheless, was in excellent spirits when he left Bordeaux. If his confessor knows how to win his confidence, perhaps he will succeed in helping him triumph over himself and over the obstacles he will find at St. Remy. With him, a wise combination of mildness and severity is needed. Faith and reason often awe him.

Brother de Valincourt could succeed if he worked with a teacher who would keep close watch over him and require of him what is ordinarily required of workers in the world; someone, furthermore, who would speak, from time to time, the language of faith and reason . . .

I shall not come back to the article about finances, as there is nothing exaggerated in the pressing needs that I placed before you. They are, on the contrary, greater and more numerous than I dared tell you. I am finishing, my dear son, by embracing you tenderly and wishing you courage and patience.

P.S. A young man named Guey, a worker in the charnel-house in the Commune of the Fontenelles, Canton of Russey, Department of the Doubs, wrote me as if I knew him, but I don't know him at all. He is afraid of losing himself in the world and wishes to enter the Society of Mary. I answered him that only very rarely do we admit into the Society young men who have seen military service, but that, nevertheless, he should present himself to you at St. Remy, so that we may have more detailed and complete information about him.

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Here is a letter of direction, penetrated with the ascetical principles of Father Olier.

598 – TO BROTHER ETIGNARD, ST. REMY

Agen, August 7, 1831

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[1] Prince Alexander of Hohenlohe, 1794-1849, famous wonder-worker of the XIX century, belonged to a Catholic branch of the illustrious family of this name, who gave at the end of the nineteenth century a cardinal to the Church and a chancellor to the Empire. Ordained priest in 1816, he exercised the holy ministry in Bavaria, where God did not hesitate in granting him the gift of healing the sick. From Germany, from the neighboring countries, from all over Europe and from as far away as America, the sick came flocking to him or wrote to him and often declared themselves cured. From 1822, he lived in retirement in Vienna and led a life of faith, piety, and charity. He died in Voeslau, having assumed the functions of Dean of the Chapter of Gross-Wardein with the title of Bishop of Sardica. See his life, published by the Carmelites of Marienthal, 1892.

My dear son, you express very well, in few words, the state of your soul in saying that for you it is dreadfully more difficult to succeed than for others. No, my dear son, it will not be dreadfully difficult for you. It was not a bit more difficult for Our Lord to bring Lazarus back to life than to cure an illness, to cause a fever to cease, e.g., in the case of St. Peter's mother-in-law. You do not realize that faith includes in itself, so to speak, the almighty power of God. For our justification, our cooperation with grace is truly necessary. Our salvation is the work of God and of man, without doubt, but essentially of God. Our cooperation is really only letting God do with us what he wants, appreciating what he does, loving what he works in us, wanting that he inspire us with this or that sentiment, etc., etc. Furthermore, we have the source of all graces in Jesus Christ, who is in us, who belongs to us, and we have the means of drawing from this source. This means is precisely faith. We also have the means of increasing our faith, of rendering it always more active, and this means is good works. Good works have something long-lived in them, something proper to becoming the food of faith. When you once get to understand these first principles, you will no longer say: "It is difficult," and still less: "It is dreadfully difficult." That which makes your salvation seem so difficult is:

1. The great weakness you experience:

2. The false conviction that the forces of man are necessary in this work uniquely important for us;

3. Your note seems to indicate a third cause: The sickness of your nature, which you keenly feel and which you suppose to be vastly superior to that experienced by all others.

You are under an illusion, my dear son, and you have prejudices which greatly oppose whatever progress you might otherwise be able to make in faith.

1. What difference does it make to grace if you are weak? Is it not always all-powerful?

2. Not only do the forces of man count for nothing in the matter of salvation, but much more: to work at his salvation, a man must be thoroughly convinced of his absolute incapacity, of his complete powerlessness.

3. The corruption of our nature is complete.[1] There is in it a diabolical evil which could render it capable of all crimes. When I speak of human nature, I am speaking of all

[1] Father Chaminade reproduces here the expression of Father Olier and of the majority of the ascetical writers of this epoch, expressions which are inspired by the Epistle to the Romans and by the School of St. Augustine and put in strong relief the corruption of fallen man. "Be well persuaded," writes Blessed Grignion de Montfort, for example, "that all that is within us, is corrupted by the sin of Adam and by our actual sins." According to the doctrine commonly accepted in our day, the nature of man has not been completely vitiated in its route by original sin. It was only wounded and weakened, in the sense that it lost,

men—of you, of myself, of all well-meaning people and even of all the saints. If man does not do all the evil he is capable of, it is God who does not permit it. The fact is that Jesus Christ, who is in the baptized by faith, has purified and sanctified them and has withdrawn them from the sin that remains active in nature. Jesus Christ communicates to them his great, noble sentiments; and they, thus united to Jesus Christ, find themselves always in opposition to the nature that has not been similarly regenerated. Thence comes the continual combat between the flesh and the spirit which St. Paul speaks . . . I can only indicate to you, my dear son, briefly and rapidly these great truths, but I hope that the spirit of God will develop them in your mind and make you appreciate them.

Do not easily believe that there is any exaggeration in what I am saying to you, and that I do not understand you well. It is up to you, if you do not understand me, to question me; but, in that case, you would have to quote textually what I have said to you, because I don't have any extra copy made of what I dictate. To make a month's retreat, to follow the Exercises of St. Ignatius, is an excellent wish and a proof of your good will. What I fear, however, is that you will not be sufficiently prepared for that. You want to make it at St. Hippolyte, because Father Rothéa, who heard your general confession, might direct you during the course of these holy Exercises. I am not sure whether Father Rothéa has enough experience for this direction. The principal reason you allege for not making this retreat at St. Remy seems very feeble to me: "This," you tell me, "would make me seem a bit singular to our Brothers and especially to our teaching Brothers, that I should be spending an entire month without following the ordinary vacation timetable." Couldn't you suppose your Brothers to have greater charity? And, on your part, couldn't you get yourself to believe that they would be edified at your privation of the little relaxations that would be allowed the others? Have you nothing to fear at St. Hippolyte? Don't you have there perhaps too many acquaintances?

When the time for this retreat draws near, my dear son, and after I hear from you again, I shall perhaps be able to give you some general advice concerning this important retreat. Even the Exercises of St. Ignatius contain much personal advice under the title of annotations.

In the meantime, make many acts of faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ:

1. That he is truly the Son of the living God;

2. That he is our Lord and Master;

3. That he lives within us by faith;

4. That his kingdom is in our hearts;

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with sanctifying grace, the preternatural gifts that God has bestowed upon it in creating it in original justice, which constituted its nobility and its strength.

5. That he is not only our mediator of redemption but also of religion.

I have no room to tell you, my dear son, that I am embracing you very cordially.

* * * *

Father Lalanne got all the more excited as he ran up against an inflexible will, always showing itself most affectionate. He was coming to the point of losing his feeling of dependence on Father Chaminade and letting himself be carried away by the most chimerical illusions. A letter of recrimination brought him the following remarkable answer.

599 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, August 7-9, 1831

I pity you with all my soul, my dear and respectable son, when I see you so discontented and spiteful. Nevertheless, you are right to tell me the cause of your suffering. There is a little natural comfort in letting out some of the bitterness with which your heart is afflicted, and I know of no one besides myself before whom you can do it prudently. How I wish I were able to restore the peace of your soul! How I wish I could at least soften your pains! But it is only God who has this power. I am no longer even the instrument of his consolations for you, since it is my way of doing things that irritates you.

You put reason on your side, my dear son, and all its rights, rights so imperative, according to you, that you must abandon what you call the language of humility to give value only to reason. I do not believe that humility has to remain silent while reason speaks, for humility has both the right and the duty to be present everywhere; but, for the moment, let it go at that.

1. You speak to me about reason and its rights but, my dear son, whence come these contestations, this disunion, these lawsuits, etc. Is it not because each one claims to have reason on his side? Among the people of the world, arbiters are chosen, courts are formed, etc., while among us, explanations are given on the one side and on the other, matters are discussed with honesty and moderation, and so the process is continued until some kind of agreement is reached. If the matters are pressing, lines of argument are multiplied but expressed within the limits of Christian wisdom. Each one of the dissenting parties must think well enough of the party opposing him to believe that he will give in when he sees the truth.

2. Between us there is the question of a constitutional article, in a serious and practical matter. You tell me: “There is one new matter to which you must submit yourself: The old way is impractical.” I answer:

1. If there is now a new way, it is certainly not according to my intentions, since I acted according to the old way in nominating the Superior and Head of Temporalities for St. Remy. Indeed, I had not even read the new edition: I made these appointments while copies were still being made.

2. The new edition cannot have the force of law without first being authorized and proclaimed. Now the fact is there has never been either authorization or acceptance.

3. The old Constitution is not impractical: it has always been practiced and is still found useful; it is lived by the greatest number of houses.

4. In these critical times we must permit only such changes as are inevitable or absolutely necessary.

You told me you do not see much darkness in the Revolution. Without telling you how I see things—I who am at the helm—I must ask; am I not to handle the wheel according to what I see and in the way I think best? The passengers surely may make suggestions to the pilot, but in the end they must let him do his work quietly and undisturbed. Although the passengers find themselves comfortable on one side, they must nonetheless move to the other, even if it means some discomfort, if the pilot so demands.

My dear son, I am only mentioning these reasons so that you do not get the impression that all right reason is on your side and so that, by means of reason and religion, you may calm this irritation that torments you. It is the beginning of your letter that has called forth these first reflections. I now come back to that and answer one point after the other.

You ask me, my dear son, to fill two of the Offices of St. Remy, etc. . . . Father Meyer may well help you fill the Office of Zeal. You could even seek help yourself from someone you judge to have the aptitude, but it is you, my dear son, who are properly and ex officio Head of Zeal, responsible in the eyes of God and of the Society for the exercise of this Office. It is the same with regard to the Office of Instruction. It would be the same with the Office of Temporalities were there no one named to that Office, and you are not less the Superior of the Head of Temporalities, even though you have not properly named him. I say “properly” because he was effectively named only after several days of reflection and of discussion between us. You are properly and directly his Superior. I think I have explained this in another letter and, if peace returns to you (and because of your virtue, I hope it will), you will see it even better than I myself, because, when the eyes of your soul are not troubled, you see more profoundly than I.

But you may ask, why this exception? Is it not harmful to me? Is not a Superior to be essentially Head of Zeal, of Instruction and of Temporalities? Does not this arrangement show any evident lack of confidence in your devotedness, your zeal, your lights, and even your honesty, the most common of virtues? The one whom I call my father and who gives

me affectionately the title of son has permitted himself to be seduced by the calumnies of my enemies. No, my dear son, I have not allowed myself to be seduced. I do not suspect you, I have never ceased giving you marks of my confidence and my friendship, and there is no equivocation here: but you are going too far. Because we have all confidence in the honesty of someone, does it follow that we are also to have confidence in the success and good maintenance of what he has not been sufficiently trained in? Of that which he has not been sufficiently instructed? Of even in that to which he could not have had the time to give adequate and suitable attention? In a word, it is lacking in confidence toward someone not to regard him as an *Omnis homo*, a man who knows everything and can do everything? My dear son, to confide to you the title of Superior and also the Offices of Head of Zeal and Instruction, is that giving evidence of a lack of confidence, I ask you? To believe that God has not given you an equal aptitude for temporal matters and, so to say, material matters; or, if you prefer, to believe that they would be absorbing to you if you applied yourself to them and that you could not then attend sufficiently to your higher functions, is that anything like a lack of confidence? Will we easily find an *Omnis homo*? Is it not altogether suitable that a first Superior put to active use all the particular talents of some Society members to make up for what might be lacking in the Heads of the establishments? Not to do so would be a prevarication on the part of the first Superior, warned as he is by examples of ruin such as the boarding schools at Ste. Marie and of St. Hippolyte.

You know very well what happened at Ste. Marie Boarding School. As I knew the character and temper of Brother Auguste as well as his obligation to oversee the boarding school, I wanted to name some managers to watch over the repairs being made on the Razac mansion. I had the weakness to give in, because Brother Auguste did not cease wanting to look upon these appointments as a lack of confidence in him. You probably were not aware of this first cause of our troubles. Do you believe that if I had remained firm my confidence in Brother Auguste would have diminished? That misguided idea came into his head. I can say in all truth that in spite of all I have suffered for several years, my confidence in him has never changed, not for an instant.

In St. Hippolyte last year there was a deficit of three thousand francs. The parents of Father Rothéa were alarmed over it. Brother Xavier Rothéa wrote to me, in the name of his father and of his entire family, to ask me to name someone to take charge of all the temporal matters of this establishment. As a matter of honor, the family advanced the three thousand francs. I arranged matters so that Father Rothéa would no longer have anything to do with the temporal matters except as Superior. Although there are fewer boarders and fewer receipts than elsewhere, I have the consolation or the hope that at least there will be no deficit in all the account statements that are sent to me from time to time.

My dear son, you know the proverb: The burnt child dreads the fire. (The French words are: The scalded cat fears cold water.) It is somewhat strange to fear cold water. St. Remy seems to be the means God has reserved to us to bring us out of the abyss we have

fallen into, and so why not value this means? Since starting this letter, I have learned that our debtor for more than eight thousand francs in Paris was completely insolvent.

I notice that I am neglecting the other points in your letter.

It is my friendship for you, my dear son, and my profound sadness at seeing you so upset that have caused me to wander from the subject.

It is somewhat annoying that neither your petition nor your letter to the rector have been answered. At least you might have been informed that these papers were received. I presume that you have some kind of proof that they were received. Leave well enough alone, and don't ask for trouble.

Father Chevaux has done well not to present himself for the normal school certificate. He cannot go wrong, however, in quietly preparing himself to pass the examination. It seems to me that the heads of the normal schools and the professors who are employed in them are in a very different position from the primary school teachers.

The rector of the Academy of Strasbourg does not precisely require an examination of our teachers employed before the ordinance of last April 18 but rather testimonials from the mayors and committees. This is how our teachers in Ammerschwir and St. Hippolyte got their certification. Those of Colmar got the same from M. Ordinaire before he lost his job.[1] Our Ribeauvillé and Ste. Marie-aux-Mines teachers passed a short examination, in case the University should raise questions. The rector of the Academy of Cahors grants, purely and simply, certificates of ability (at least, he has promised in writing to do so) to all those who were employed before the sudden ordinance. The rector of Besançon has said nothing as yet in regard to Courtefontaine. The rector of Toulouse has said nothing either in regard to the two establishments under his jurisdiction. Without weakness, much flexibility is necessary: wounds must be borne with, so they don't become mortal.

Do not worry too much about what might be said against the St. Remy normal school, provided no action is taken against it. Neither should you worry over the great loss of candidates. Without changing the normal school into a primary boarding school, nothing prevents the acceptance of boarders. That is what has been done in Courtefontaine as a matter of self-support. It is in this way, my dear son, that we are able to sustain ourselves. Nor are we yet at the end of the line; far from it.

I agree that a primary school would be quite well placed in Marast. At the time of my last stop in St. Remy, I had the desire to make some kind of attempt at this, but I was turned away by lack of means and subjects, among other considerations. At the present time, let us not think of any change.

[1] M. Ordinaire had been removed from office by the new Government.

The good inclinations of the tonsured cleric of Besançon must be well cultivated. If he perseveres, I would want to have a description of him.

Yes, it was my intention that Brother Perriguey should be sent to St. Remy as porter, but not before he had a substitute sufficiently acquainted with the duties he had in Besançon.

Brother Anthony Mémain, in Orgelet, causes us much sorrow. He has just been claimed by the Prefect of the Gironde for military service. This young man has not much intelligence. The only way I could do anything with him was to put him always with his brother. It is to be presumed that Brother Olive, his director, will have to remain very patient until the vacation so as not to lose this young man.

I believe the St. Hippolyte child that you speak of is the nephew of a pastor who wrote to me about a year ago. This pastor told me he could not continue to pay for his nephew and that he was surprised that, considering the latter's good inclinations, he had not yet been admitted. As I knew of the honesty and piety of the uncle as well as of the inclinations of the young man, I answered him favorably, without paying too much attention to what I was saying. In the course of time, I had to inform Brother Clouzet about it. I am quite sure of having done the same to Father Rothéa. Since the Revolution, the pastor's parish, I believe, no longer gives him anything, and his mother is in his keeping—this is one of the reasons that has kept him from entering the Society of Mary. Whatever the case may be, while awaiting further information and developments, I don't like the idea of the child's being left as a beggar. There was also another child at St. Hippolyte whose father was a simple workman, whom I saw a moment in passing through the city. Especially in these present times, there is less work for his father to do.

It is not to Brothers Mémain and Gaussens that we owe the Method of primary teaching but rather to a series of conferences given in Agen, at which Brother Mémain, nevertheless, took part.[1] I shall tell you the whole story about this at some favorable time. Anyhow, I shall give my approval only after some general tests, and after having had the opinion of some persons of more than ordinary competence in such matters. What pleases me most about it is the means the teachers have for forming the minds and hearts of the pupils while teaching them to read and write. . . .

If Father Bardenet is not satisfied, he cannot obtain what would satisfy him or correct any misunderstanding by refusing to answer. I don't think I have written anything to him that might call for either correction or moderation so that he might feel justified in not answering.

However, it is possible that I do not know him well enough yet, but I certainly have not said anything that might wound or hurt him. . . . As I was dictating this last line, Brother

[1] See the *Spirit of Our Foundation*, III, No. 251.

Morel[2] called to my attention that I had a copy of the letter I wrote to him in Agen on last March 24. There is nothing in this letter but what is very friendly and Honest. . . . My dear son, not only would I have no anxiety, but I would be pleased to have you go to the Convent of Arbois to conduct the examination of the pupils and give a retreat to the good Sisters. I take it for granted that you will then calm your great anger and that you will have peace of soul, even the peace of the Lord, so necessary to be a faithful voice of his oracles. I am also adding the *positis ponendis*, in regard to public affairs, for you must not be exposed to unnecessary worries.

The desire for courses during the vacation is not too edifying in itself, but let us come to the facts:

1. I would have no objection to Brother Fridblatt's visiting his parents, but on condition that he would no longer return. Wherever he has been instead of bothering about himself, he is always bothering greatly about others. Above all, he likes to censure his superiors, to judge their conduct and, in that way, go find ways and means of excusing his irregularity. The desire that his parents manifest to see him, to embrace him, etc., must not be very strong, since it is so new. His father himself said to me he no longer wanted to see him; that the farther away from him he would be, the better he would like it. He may not have said so just in those very words, but the meaning was unmistakable. . . . Regarding what is at the bottom of these complaints, you must easily be able to form your own judgment. It is anyhow annoying that they have been made as far as St. Hippolyte and that some foundation is attached to them.[1]

2. Father Bouly. I have nothing to say as regards what has been determined, and I have a great deal less to say about the reflection with which you end your article. "See whither our defiances are leading us." All I can do is to remain patient.

3. Brother Etignard. I am answering his note inserted in your letter, and I have profited by the observation that you make about him.

4. Our Alsatian postulants. I believe that their parents would like to see them, as that is human nature, but I believe them, in general, wise enough to deprive themselves of this pleasure, if we acquaint them with the many good reasons for doing so, which are within the understanding of all and which it is good to have them give their own children. If they don't appreciate them themselves, that would be a bad enough omen. You add:—They

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[2] Father Chaminade's secretary.

[1] To explain the escapades of Brother Fridblatt, who became one of the most fervent and generous religious of the Society, it must be remembered that he had been a student in the universities of Germany and had entered St. Remy in a "student costume with splendid boots and two pistols at his sides" (Memoirs of Father Meyer). Although he had a rather strict novitiate in Bordeaux, under the influence of the troubles of 1830, the real nature of the adventurous student had reappeared. It was only much later, in 1839, that Brother Fridblatt, upon reading the great letter of the Founder on the vow of stability, submitted completely to the influence of grace. (See *The Spirit of Our Foundation* No. 487 and in the present collection, Letter 432.)

need fresh air.—You will admit that at St. Remy there is enough air for anyone to take, whatever be his capacity. The proposal that Father Meyer makes, to accompany them on this trip, may well diminish the disadvantages which might result; but it does not remove them all, e.g., the disadvantages as regards himself, loss of time, expenses for all, etc.

I am going to stop, my dear son, for I believe I have taken care of all the points you raise. I desire for you such great tranquility of soul as to see only what I wanted to say to you. I shall add only a word on an observation that I happened to slip in. You say that "algebra has cost you more than any one of the other sciences you have been occupied with until the present." The difficulties which algebra gives you may aid you a lot in getting to know the caliber of your mind.

I am embracing you very tenderly, my dear son, and wishing you, with all my soul, the peace of the Lord.

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At this date, we find Father Chaminade occupied with the drawing up of a rule of accounts between the Society of Mary and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. Until then, all had been done in family style. Father Chaminade being looked upon as "a father, as much for the temporal as for the spiritual order," according to the expression of the annalist of the Daughters of Mary. The new Superioress General, Mother St. Vincent, thought she should ask for the separation of the interests of the Institute, to which the Founder agreed without trouble. But the rule of accounts was not drawn up without difficulties, precisely because a regular system of accountancy had never been kept between the two religious families.

599bis – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 23, 1831

I have learned from Bordeaux, my dear son, that you sent Father Caillet two little checks for 200 francs each, to the Royal Treasury. You did not write me, but I imagine you are making efforts to send me a large check, knowing, as you do, the critical position we are in.

I am in a position to regulate all the accounts with the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. This work is already well advanced. I presume that our respective accounts balance pretty well. To end the thing definitely, I would need to know exactly what you have taken in at St. Remy from Sister Léocardie, known at the time of her entry as Sister Emanuel, the one who was in charge of the boarding school in Amance. Today she is in Acey. If you have had some accounts with Sister Geneviève Prêtre, will you tell me of the same. You will also give me the exact or approximate amount of the expenses you made for the Sisters of Rheinackern, transportation expenses concerned with having them transferred to Gray or

perhaps to Arbois. If you made any expenses for the Sisters of Arbois or Acey which have not been paid back to you, give me the bill and it will be paid as soon as possible.

I imagine that Brother Galliot has given you or Father Lalanne at least one copy of the important document that the pastor of Courtefontaine has just given him. It is an extract from the Registers of the Royal Council of Public Instruction and the minutes of the session of June 23, 1829, in favor of the normal school of St. Remy and of Courtefontaine. If Father Lalanne has not received it, let him ask Brother Galliot for it, as it is necessary for him.

I wrote to our poor Brother Saumade. This year, he is subject to the military call. This subject will be lost if he is badly treated. He is very difficult to lead. It must be done with a mixture of severity and mildness, of religion and friendship, which is certainly not easy to do. . . .

Imagine, my dear son, all that a fatherly heart could say to one of his older children, tenderly loved, then you will have the expression of my heart in your regard. I know your position and I am never forgetting that we are living in a time of revolution.

Father Lalanne had calmed down a little, but at bottom his ideas had not changed. Father Chaminade always treated him as he would a sick man, with infinite consideration and yet without weakness. He is writing to him in Arbois, where he is with the Daughters of Mary and where we learned he was to go.

600 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ARBOIS

Agen, September 22, 1831

My very dear son, your letter of the eighth of the present month came to diminish the anguish the delay of your answering had left with me. At the same time, I received your Program.[1] About this last, I shall say but one word. That is that reading it (though rapidly, as far as the geometry was concerned) pleased me very much. I imagine that I shall have as much pleasure when I get to read the second part, and then perhaps I can make a few useful reflections.

[1] At the end of the school year, during the days that preceded the distribution of the prizes and in the presence of the parents of his pupils, Father Lalanne had school exercises performed by these last, which enabled him to display his methods and their results. These were announced by a printed program, to which the beginning of Father Chaminade's letter makes allusion.

Right now, I shall concern myself only with your letter, written during the surrender of Warsaw.

You tell me, my dear son, "I cannot see things otherwise than the way they seem to my interior conviction, but I must reflect, and I believe I may be deceiving my interior conviction." The questions that have been occupying us for too long a time do not belong to the domain of interior conviction. The testimony of interior conviction is surely one of the sources of certitude, but only for all the interior modifications of our soul. If you look well into the matter, you will see that these questions are not of the same category as the testimony of our demonstrations. If you followed, my dear son, a closer line of reasoning, it would be easier to answer you, and we would not need, neither you nor I, to adopt a disagreeable tone.

You say: "I must reflect, and I believe I may be deceiving my interior conviction." I shall not examine whether it is possible to deceive one's interior conviction. Anyhow, that would always be a great misfortune. The interior conviction is one of the first motives we have for the certitude of our own existence and even for the existence of God.

You will perhaps tell me, my dear son, that, on one word, which clearly expresses your idea, I do not at all enter into the meaning which you want to give it. Doubtless, you want to speak of evidence. But, my dear son, who can have evidence for what is only systematic? The government of a house, of a society, as of the largest states is then worked out through a certain combination of ideas. To have your combination as the only true one, the people to be governed would always have to be the same with the same habits and customs, of about the same number, with the same ends in view, having the same available means, etc. Several systems may be very reasonable at the same time, and the author of a reasonable system hasn't the right to say that all reason is on his side. When a system of government is presented by a competent authority, then submission is of obligation. . . . I was afraid, at the beginning of our discussions, that you were moving in the direction of Father de Lamennais, and I indicated to you my satisfaction when you assured me of the contrary. One can be a great literary man, very erudite, have profound genius and still be a very poor logician.

I am not speaking my dear son, of what the lights of faith can add to those of reason. From the beginning, you seemed to want to hold on to reason, as if it had the same source as the lights of faith. I would have pointed this out to you then, but you did not seem sufficiently calm. You have spoken to me only about reason and, on my part, I have limited myself also to speaking only of reason. . . . When we obey, making the sacrifice of our reason, we do not, in that way, sacrifice our reason. . . . I am abridging my reflections as much as possible. Some thoughts of modesty and religion have restored calm to you, reading your letter inspired in me affection and concern for you.

Still a little word, my dear son. The intellectual penetration which sometimes goes as far as genius can lull those who are gifted with it into a certain satisfaction with their

ideas and conceptions, which prevents them from seeing the incoherence that is sometimes found in them. They then defend them with even more vehemence than a rich heir defending his patrimony.

I much approve, my dear son, your stand regarding the arrangements to secure the further progress of your establishment.[1] I have had as a principle ever since my youth that the fewer people employed, the better things work out. I tried it out. I tried it out until the first Revolution—at the time I was doing about what you are doing at St. Remy. I am not saying I was doing as well. But I do think the fewer people I took into service, the fewer professors and supervisors, the better everything succeeded. . . .

As regards what seeing "the twelve soutaines" meant for you[2] and of the discouragement which followed, I do not feel the same way.

1. They are not the only foundation of a religious institute.

2. Here it is well to say: *Non numerantur, sed ponderantur*.[3] However little we may find a real weight, when we get out of the Revolution—if in the designs of the mercy of God we shall ever get out of it—the smallest number will suffice to people the world.

3. If the Institute is the work of God, God will sustain it. We are wearing ourselves out with pains and labors only because we believe it to be the work of God. Let us then remain patient, but at the same time let us be careful not to oppose Providence. I sometimes say to myself: If it is the work of God, let us then work at it as God wants us to and inasmuch as he asks it of us! *Cogitationes mea non sunt cogitations vestrae*.[1]

To come down to some details, take care that Father Curot and Brother Guillegoz don't get discouraged but make real progress in virtue, otherwise you will lose them. As regards Father Jacquot, I don't know him at all. I don't even recall anything you might have said to me about him under any circumstances. I am leaving you to come to grips with Father Bouly. I know him well.[2] As regards Brother Georges, it seems to me you would do well to give him the idea of writing to me, to tell me exactly of all his sentiments and defects, and to ask that he come back to Bordeaux. We have only a few good subjects in Bordeaux—seedlings, as it were, but none really formed. Brother Fontaine is making real progress in virtue, although it could be more rapid. If nothing changes, I propose to have him presented for entrance into Holy Orders at Christmas. He is a fair theologian and is looked upon as such at the Grand Seminary. I think that Father Bersac will come around after the vacation. We shall finally have some subjects, but let us not eat our corn in the blade. [Editor's note: translation: to spend one's money before one gets it.] Spare Father

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[1] The organization of the classes of the establishment.
[2] The young ecclesiastics of St. Remy, which the letter is still to speak of.
[3] They must not be counted, but weighed.
[1] My thoughts are not your thoughts, says the Lord.
[2] Father Bouly was an anxious soul, a real cross to those who had his direction in hand.

Chevaux as much as possible. Act especially in such a way that his soul is not crushed. Often remember that it is ordinarily the sword that spoils the scabbard and not the other way around.

Finally, I come to Brother Fridblatt. He wrote me from St. Remy on August 15, in answer, as he says, to my letter of last January 29, when, as far as I can remember, he was in serious difficulties. He took the occasion to speak to me of his religious conduct. It seems, as you say, that he has been quite regular; but concerning progress in the virtues, in mental prayer and in the correction of his defects, there is no sign of anything. He was speaking about his visit to his parents. I answered immediately and was quite surprised to learn that, at the beginning of this month, he had already gone to Colmar. He doubtless had no more interest in awaiting my letter than in answering mine of January 29. After having given his opinions to Brother Louis Rothéa about the professors he could ask for, either in Bordeaux or in St. Remy, he added that only after having seen his parents would he go and spend a few days in St. Hippolyte. I wrote to Brother Rothéa what you had written me about him and what I had answered you. I said that if he went to St. Hippolyte, he was to be given only hospitality, unless he was supplied with a permission from you to travel. You tell me in one of your last letters, the one before the last: "Brother Fridblatt complained to several that St. Remy was a republic, since it had several Heads, each independent of the others. In this regard, Brother Rothéa is inviting him to come to Alsace, assuring him that at St. Hippolyte there is no such thing as a republic." I attributed this idle talk to his critical censorious character. But I see from your last letter that his unjust and disorganizing talk should not be attributed only to him but that it has come to be a sort of proverb in the house, from the priest down to the humblest servant. Apparently it is I alone who do not see this disorder! I thank you for your observation.

The chaplain of the convent of Arbois seemed to me, in fact, to be quite immature, judging from some of his acts which have come to my attention. I doubt that the few moments of interview which you can have with each Sister would suffice for what is usually called a good retreat. These moments might even serve to diminish the confidence they have in him.

I have already written to Father Rothéa to prepare himself well for giving the retreat in St. Hippolyte. You will see yourself that there is no sufficient reason for the exchange which you propose.[1] Father Rothéa, giving the retreat at St. Hippolyte, can continue its good effects throughout the year, and the same with you at St. Remy. Furthermore, the number of retreatants in both groups is very small. You will do well to make the retreat yourself whilst giving it, as apparently you haven't the time to make it separately. If your trip to Paris strictly prevents you from giving it in St. Remy, then Father Meyer would have to take over. For this purpose, he really can make use of some good books. . . . The trip to Paris is worrying you. I can assure you that I pity you a lot in having to make it and that with all my soul I would like you to be dispensed from it.

[1] Father Rothéa in St. Remy and Father Lalanne in St. Hippolyte.

The last point of your letter, concerning your interior life, has touched me deeply. If you are really determined to work at your sanctification and to make all the sacrifices God asks of you, I would very willingly write you in my own hand all that the Holy Spirit deigns to inspire me. But, first, I should want that there be complete calm within and without. If I could go to St. Remy, I would do it all the more willingly. Nothing in the world would mean anything to me more than aiding you to be all to Jesus Christ and to live according to his Spirit for the remainder of your days. All the time that you live in and for yourself, you have to be fearful of what a prophet said to the Jews at the time of the return from the Babylonian Captivity: "You have done abundant sowing, but your harvests are ruined."

The political news is more interesting every day, but take care.[2] As I was finishing this letter, I received your Prospectus. I should have believed that you would have limited yourself this year to the warning given at the head of your Program. It is sufficient, it seems to me, to start to work according to your plan. These changes of Prospectus, from one year to another, usually do not produce too good an effect on the general public. Neither should you forget that we are still in a time of revolution. These short considerations will not prevent me from rereading your manuscript more attentively and of sharing with you some reflections suggested by the reading.

I am closing this letter here, my dear son, in order to profit by today's mail. I shall also answer Brother Etignard's letter, which was included in the Prospectus manuscript. Brother Clouzet's silence, so long prolonged, is becoming very painful to me. I am embracing you very tenderly, my dear son, and I ardently desire that the Lord shower his abundant blessings upon you and upon your labors.

* * * *

In the preceding letter, we find the first mention of Father J. B. Fontaine, one of the most sympathetic figures in the history of the Society of Mary. Born in 1807, in Beauvais, Father Fontaine followed the courses of the Little and the Grand Seminary, and, having manifested a desire for the more perfect life, he was directed toward the Society of Mary by Father Gignoux, Superior of the Grand Seminary and former sodalist of Bordeaux.

Father Chaminade received him into the Society in 1830, formed him to religious life and was not slow in appreciating the merits of this one whom Providence had sent. Raised to the holy priesthood by obedience in 1832, Father Fontaine was shortly after sent to St. Remy to succeed Father Lalanne in the direction of the boarding school in 1834.

[2] The last days of the Ministry of Casimir Périer had come. The Duchess de Berry, in Vendée, was still impossible to find, and the armies of France were forcing Holland to abandon Belgium.

The General Chapter of 1845 having named him Second Assistant to the Superior General, Father Fontaine followed Father Caillet to Bordeaux, where he took part in the sorry conflict that was to sadden the last years of the Founder.

In 1856, Father Fontaine added to his charge the foundation of the Collège of St. Jean d'Angély. Then, in 1861, when the Administration of the Society was transferred to Paris, he took up the direction of the Institution Ste. Marie of Berry Street (since transferred to Rue de Monceau). There he had just preached the First Communion retreat, when, attacked by scarlet fever, he died in the strength of middle age, on June 3, 1861.

Father Fontaine was of a somewhat larger build than ordinary. He had a rather full, regular, expressive face, with a clear and somewhat ruddy complexion, surrounded by dark hair, which was beginning to recede from the forehead and fell back in locks on the shoulders. His eyes were dark and sparkling, his nose straight and sharp, his mouth large, his lips strong and his voice sonorous and sympathetic.

Gifted with a robust constitution, he used it to work and to spend himself without consideration or cost: at St. Remy as in Bordeaux, after night prayer and quite far into the night, he looked for things to do in occupations that would have been beyond the capacity of everyone besides himself, because at St. Remy, with five hours of teaching each day, he added the work of spiritual direction, confessions, preaching, and still found time to write and to work out interesting dramatic compositions for the exercises connected with the distribution of prizes. It was also here that he edited, under Father Chaminade's direction, the last edition of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*, with its admirable pages on the grandeurs of the Most Blessed Virgin.

In Bordeaux, to the duties of his office he added courses in theology to the clerics of the Society, a considerable ministry of confessions in the residence and in the religious communities of Bordeaux, many sermons in the Madeleine and in the parishes. In Bordeaux, again, he organized conferences for the principal directors of the Society and gave them, in 1856, the manual of Christian pedagogy. In 1859, he received with honor his licentiate of letters and his licentiate in theology. His doctoral thesis in theology had just been accepted when he was overtaken by death.

During the vacations, Father Fontaine preached as many as three, four, and even five retreats. His talks were clear and full of thought, well-organized, rich in doctrine, animated with a warm and vibrant heart, sustained by large and powerful gestures. In them, one felt his own spirit of faith, his zeal for the salvation of souls. He spoke with much frankness and great freedom. No one since the Founder had had such an influence over souls.

Furthermore, Father Fontaine unceasingly maintained the strength of his thought and word by reading and meditation. In Bordeaux, he worked assiduously at the big library which Father Chaminade had built at the Madeleine. While traveling, even on his errands

across the city, he was invariably seen with a book in his hands, reading attentively. Above all, he read and reread the Gospel. At the end of a period of direction with one of our priests, he drew a little book from his pocket, no other than the manual of the Christian. “In your sorrows and in all circumstances,” he said to him, “read the Gospel and read it often. In it you will always find light, strength and consolation. As for me, I have it always with me, and as soon as I have a free moment, I read some verses from it. Above all, read the Gospel of St. John.”

In the direction, no one better than he knew how to open and win hearts. He surely merited this gift by his life entirely given over to work, zeal, and piety and by his open, ardent, benevolent character, as well as by his simple, cordial, and virile words.

Father Fontaine had habits of order, cleanliness, poverty and simplicity with regard to his person and effects. He was of exemplary regularity and of edifying piety, always kneeling while at prayer. He had the habit, when alone, of reciting the vocal prayers slowly, in a well-accentuated undertone. He kept this habit until his death, to such an extent that, in his last moments, Father Caillet had to insist that he should not impose that extra fatigue upon himself. According to the words of Father Caillet, Father Fontaine was a child through obedience. He also loved the Society with the love of a child, being always ready to spend himself for it, offering himself, around 1840, to introduce it into America, working with an industrious zeal for recruits. Thus he was mourned by the Society, which must continue to remember him as one of its best sons. His body rests in the vault of the Superior of Merles.

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The day after having written this long letter, Father Chaminade again takes up his pen and writes again to Father Lalanne.

601 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ARBOIS

Agen, September 23-25, 1831

It was only last evening, my very dear son, that I sent you a very long letter. It was addressed to you at St. Remy, because I forgot, at the moment, that you were in Arbois. If you had left St. Remy before having received it, you could claim it right away, although I am writing Brother Clouzet to send it immediately to you in Arbois in case it is still in St. Remy. In that letter I mentioned how painful I found Brother Clouzet's silence, and shortly after mailing it I received news from him.

I told you yesterday that I was going to reread your Prospectus manuscript with attention. I did so and I am writing again to give you some of my impressions.

First reflection: uselessness of the Prospectus. Although this Prospectus contains some excellent educational ideas, it is not useful after the warning you put at the head of your Program. This warning or caution is more than sufficient, especially joined to the Program, to show that you are following a method that is peculiar to you.

Second reflection: inopportuneness of the publication. A Prospectus by you last year, a Prospectus by you this year. Still a Program this year that can be considered as a Prospectus. Changes which, in general, are far from pleasing. Who will not fear a change for next year, if not sooner?

Third reflection: further inopportuneness in a time of revolution. Do we know how things will come out? And who really does know? And if by illness or some accident or even some unforeseen event, you cannot be at the head of this new institution, who would run it? Would it then not be necessary to publish another Prospectus? It would be otherwise if, little by little and without sounding a trumpet, you would quietly realize your plan. Little by little, professors will be trained, the plan will work out and will be authorized, experience will confirm it, etc.

Fourth reflection: dangers of publication. Dangers in many respects. For you, in the first place, and this must be considered; for an establishment which is already well known for the present pupils, for whom too sudden a transition might become harmful. If to these considerations you join the third reflection, it could be that this publication would prove not only useless and inopportune but even very harmful. . . .

You could undoubtedly find great advantages in it as well. Without denying these, I am falling back on a maxim of ordinary prudence, that of not rendering a serious affair risky or hazardous.

My dear son, I am in no way developing these reflections, because you do not need such developments. I nevertheless thought it good to make them because I know that you

like to be told the reasons for things. I could have added other reasons, drawn from the subject matter of the Prospectus, but that would serve no purpose.

I shall add only one more thing. I ask you not to bother Brother Clouzet about making repairs that are not urgently needed. The urgent ones are already considerable enough. Brother Clouzet tells me it is raining in everywhere, that the rain spouts are defective or out of order and that to fix them requires an outlay of some twelve hundred francs. Everything makes it a necessity for us to make only such expenses as are strictly necessary and to forget even about some necessary ones, i.e., those which can be delayed. You can easily appreciate the need for this measure.

If you can stand apart a little from the ideas you are concentrating on, I ask two things of you, my dear son. First, give no occasion for new expenses; and second, have nothing printed without the permission and advice of your Superior. The latter will never leave the matter to himself when there is question of the subject of manuscripts. Although the present subject matter of the new Prospectus pleased me little upon the first reading, I did not neglect to have another copy rapidly made and sent to Bordeaux. If I delayed getting it off, it was because of the force of the reflections I have just placed before you. But this is enough. It is even too much, at least for me, who would like to have only agreeable things to say to you. You would really find it hard to understand how it pains me to have to contradict or oppose you at times. To make up my mind to do this, I need all the influence of religion and friendship.

My dear son, live in close union, or at least in Christian charity, with Brother Clouzet. If he is independent in the exercise of his functions as Head of Temporalities, he is not so in the exact and religious manner in which he must fulfill them. All your men in St. Remy could understand this easily if you explained it to them without bias, but how do you want them to think otherwise than you yourself when you speak to them with your tone of assurance? And as a result, the great majority lose confidence in both you and me. Well, I want to finish now, and I certainly must, as I am very much pressed for time, but here is the end and I am keeping you tenderly in my arms.

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602 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, September 25, 1831

My dear son, three or four hours after having written to Father Lalanne, I received your letter of the thirteenth of the present month. How painful your long silence was to me.

On the sixteenth, I received a very long letter from Father Lalanne, dated the eighth, but which left only on the eleventh from Vesoul. He seems, to judge from this long letter, to lay down his arms—but only through obedience—in our long and painful discussions. Here

is what he tells me about you: “For some time Brother Clouzet has been conducting himself in such a way as to render my position tolerable. We are living like two partners who esteem, love, and fear one another. Here’s hoping it will last. . . .” With his letter I received the printed Program of the closing exercises of the school year. I answered everything on the twenty-second. As I was finishing my letter, I received the manuscript of the Prospectus that he wants to have printed immediately for next year. I am writing him at great length, by the same mail, in Arbois, where he is supposed to be at the end of this month. I am ending my letter this way: “I shall ask you not to bother Brother Clouzet about making repairs that would not be urgently needed, etc.” (The passage continues as given in the preceding letter.) Keep nothing to yourself. Always tell me everything since you have so many ways of getting letters to me. It is good that these discussions are mostly confidential. But Father Lalanne must be letting something leak out, since he tells me that everyone openly says that St. Remy is a republic. Whatever the case may be, always do your duty, such as I have made clear to you—without however, getting away from the principles of Christian and religious charity, which are of strict obligation. Nor must you get away from the principles of honesty, of care, of deference and even of submission you owe Father Lalanne as regards your religious conduct in the exercise of your functions and in view of keeping the peace.

If Father Lalanne asks for some expense, if they are small and will not entail any kind of follow-up even though they may not be so necessary, let them be made even gracefully. On the other hand, be very patient, but may this patience be profitable to you before God. The times are very bad and may even become worse. I am patiently awaiting the funds you are to send me—that is to say, I am trying not to be impatient over the delay, while the needs are becoming ever more urgent.

You tell me that you have made payments on the house of Arbois to the amount of 2,066 francs, but you don’t tell me whether you have been paid back and how much. Your trip to Rheinackern may have cost you from sixty to eighty francs, but were there no expenses when you had the Sisters come to Arbois? As regards Sister Léocardie, haven’t you received any furniture? What did you judge its worth to be? Haven’t any beds been transported from Gray, before and after the Sisters began to occupy the Abbey of Acey? How many have been taken there? What is the value of each bed? Didn’t you yourself look after moving furniture from St. Remy? What does this furniture consist of? What is its value? Hasn’t it been transported at the expense of St. Remy or of Gray, which in our way of seeing things, comes to about the same thing? Make out for me, I beg of you, an account of all these things. If you can’t do so in complete precision, do it at least approximately. I am in a position to end the liquidation between the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and the Society. This bill is the last. Send it on to me as soon as possible. At another time, I shall tell you more details on what this liquidation really is (...)

Spare Father Chevaux as much as you can. See that he gets all the help he needs.

Get yourself up to date regarding public affairs. It is necessary for someone in the establishment to know exactly and promptly what is going on.

For the time being, I don't think you should count on Brother Seguin. Maybe, after awhile we can arrive at something definite. He is working with his brother for the Grand Seminary of Bordeaux. In the meantime, you would do well to give me complete information about your workshop, regarding both material and personnel.

Brother Saumade is subject to military service this year. Means will have to be taken to get him dispensed from it. Having him named to the service of the normal school might perhaps be one way of doing it. All our unfortunate arguments prevent us from keeping abreast of current affairs and that is rather annoying. I shall give you definite information regarding Brother de Valincourt in another letter. In the meantime, assume all authority over him.

As the mail is about to leave, I shall come to an end. May our correspondence be ever more active. I am embracing you with the greatest tenderness.

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Brother Galliot, director of Courtefontaine, had informed Father Chaminade that a certificate of the first degree was being required of the Head of the Normal School, and that he himself, not feeling himself capable of passing the tests, had asked Brother Silvain to present himself in his place to the Inspector of the Academy. The Inspector of the Academy had answered Brother Silvain that he would do well to have himself backed by Father Lalanne, "that Father Lalanne was actually much esteemed by the Rector; that really, the Rector did not like priests too well, but that Father Lalanne was an exception to this rule, because he was an able man; that we have nothing to fear in confiding our needs to Father Lalanne; that he would do more with the Rector than anyone else." With these facts in mind, the following letters.

603 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, COURTEFONTAINE

Agen, September 29, 1831

My very dear son, in your letter of the seventeenth of the present month, you complain that I have not answered your letter of August 9, the one you sent me through Brother Mémain. I answered you almost immediately, on August 18, and I sent it to your ordinary address. I can't see why you did not get this letter. I did not keep a copy of it. Whatever the case may be, I shall answer the last one. In both letters, you speak of a resolution taken on June 23, 1839, by the Royal Council of Public Instruction, in favor of the normal schools of St. Remy and Courtefontaine. On August 9, you tell me that the pastor of Courtefontaine has just given you this important document. Tell me when and how the pastor of Courtefontaine obtained it. Send me an extra copy and send a similar copy, or even the original one, to St. Remy, while retaining one for yourself.

Concerning the certificate of the first degree that you and your staff certainly need, I shall write Father Lalanne and send him an extract of your letter—the one that explains the little discussion that took place between Brother Silvain and the Inspector, although probably you have already told him about it. Come to an understanding with him about everything, that all may be taken care of quietly.

In exchange for Brother Claverie, I shall send you Brother Bouveret, whom you know and who knows you, for you have been at his father's house. Brother Bouveret had taught and received his certificate before entering the Society. Since then, he has continued to improve himself and has had a fair amount of success in the classroom. For several years he has been teaching the large class in Agen. He is full of good will and can sing passably well, as his voice is good and strong. He can further improve himself under the pastor of Courtefontaine, serve him as a private teacher or coach, when the pastor judges it suitable and actually replace him should the need arise. He will bring you the Method we have worked at this summer. I did not want to make any further addition to this Method without its being tried first. That is what we are going to do now. A class of beginners, made up of one hundred fifty children, is just about set. The final touches are being put in place today. Brother Bouveret has witnessed everything. He is copying the Method and will himself handle this class several times so as to acquire a clear understanding of the application of the Method, etc.

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604 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ARBOIS

Agen, September 29, 1831

My dear son, and now a third letter, since your last.

This concerns Courtefontaine. You must complete the organization of this establishment. So as to send it on sooner, I am making a copy for you of the letter Brother Galliot has just written me and also an extract of my answer.

I shall make just one observation. Neither the rector of the Academy nor the examiners can require of the head of a normal school a complete mastery of primary teaching so as to show the same superior ability which would be necessary for the first degree certificate. Normal school heads should be mature men, who, in general, have made their secondary studies, and who, as an ordinary thing, have not sought to excel in primary teaching.

Otherwise, we would have to put young men in the normal schools who would not have enough authority to command the candidates there. . . .

The Minister of Public Instruction opposes many things in the Royal Ordinance of the Institution of the Society of Mary. We must give in to a certain extent until we can do the contrary effectively. Actually, a Minister can do nothing contrary to a royal ordinance, but in time of revolution people bother little about following the old principles.

I have many others things to tell you, my dear son, but they will have to wait for another time. I am embracing you very tenderly.

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605 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, October 4-6, 1831

My dear son, I have received your recent letter of last September 20, containing a plan of temporal administration for the establishment of St. Remy. I read it with pleasure, because, like all your other writings, it contains some fine ideas and breaks fresh ground in this particular line of work. I shall make use of it when coming back upon the articles of the Constitutions dealing with government and also in those observations relating to government in the Manual of Direction.

When it comes to the Constitutions, we must await some settlement in the Revolution. Why, my dear son, should we not remain quiet and closely united in mind and heart? Why in these stormy times introduce discussions that bring differences of opinion and so prevent us from working with all our strength toward the refinement and improvement of the Society? If there are abuses, especially in the morale of the Brothers, let us try to repress them with zeal and prudence, but let us make the least possible stir, that attention may not be drawn to us, and let us always be patient. This is what I have been saying and writing since the July Revolution.

But perhaps you will insist that there are great abuses in the administration at St. Remy. I answer that the abuses are not in the controlling body of this establishment but in the method of execution. You figure that things do not go well, and we love our ideas as one loves an only son: there can be nothing better, nothing more reasonable, nothing as wise and as well-ordered as this only son. Thus we see numerous abuses, thus everything becomes intolerable, then, etc.

The controlling body of St. Remy is good, even if I don't want to say that it could not be made better. The superior has a sufficient sphere of authority to maintain order to draw esteem upon himself and secure the respect and love of his inferiors, all of which suffices to do a real good.

But you might add that Brother Clouzet hasn't sufficient submission. I answer that the defects of an officer must be singled out and not be attributed to the Office. The duties prescribed for Brother Clouzet give him a constraint that is more than sufficient for the

order and harmony that must reign in the Administration. If Brother Clouzet lacks mildness, humility, docility, and submission in the accomplishment of his duties, work to have him acquire these qualities, not by the dominating authority of a superior, but by the gentle exhortations of religion, in your quality as Head of Zeal. You will see that all will go well.

The St. Remy Brothers would feel the same need of writing me as the other Brothers if we were to put them in a position to feel it, and especially if they were completely free to write me. Regarding the costs of postage, these would not have been considerably increased, if suitable precautions had been taken.

I am giving the retreat alone in the Convent of Agen. I am writing you only at brief intervals, each far enough apart from the others; but I have just concerned myself more particularly with you during the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament:

1. I thought I saw quite clearly that we would never be of one mind if you did not seriously enter into yourself, if you did not spend some time in real and serious retreat, a retreat entirely independent of the one you are giving, one for yourself alone. If you cannot easily make it at St. Remy, go to the Grand Seminary of Besançon, where there are some very capable men. If the season were not so far advanced, I would have invited you to come and make it right here with me. It is possible that you won't be able to make it before the reopening of classes, but when once everything is in running order, you might be able to get away. Without doubt, some unpleasantness will result from your absence, but that would be amply compensated for by the fact of your having become a new man. You should be very careful not to bring back any traces of the old man.

2. I knew that Brother Clouzet had fallen terribly from his first fervor, that really this is the principal cause of the evil we suffer from and that we ought to work with zeal to help him return to the right paths, from which he has so strongly deviated. From my end, I promise to do whatever depends upon me. I will give Father Chevaux the advice he things he needs concerning Brother Clouzet, and I trust the good God will bless our efforts.

3. I thought I saw, and quite clearly, that God was withdrawing his blessings from St. Remy, because he was not being sought there. The evil may be difficult to heal, but it will be healed. For the present, I shall not enter into any further details.

Brother Pesant is subject to call by the military this year. This coming October he will reach his twentieth year. He is a good fellow. If he is well directed, he will become a good subject, a kind all his own. Suitable precautions should be taken, in case his number is called.[1] I don't believe I should get into a fight with the Minister of Public Instruction, who is so directly and illegally attacking our Royal Institutional Ordinance—at least not yet. We are prepared for the class of 1831. There remain, as far as I know, only Pesant and

[1] At this time, military service was not of obligation for all, but only for those who in the drawing of lots had the lowest numbers.

Saumade, who may be claimed by the normal school at St. Remy, not as professors but as helpers, at least in such temporal matters as the general maintenance. If the both of them are not needed at St. Remy, you could put one of them at Courtefontaine. In an interview with the rector of the Academy, see the kind of engagement they have to take. I ask the Lord, my dear son—with a good heart, it seems to me—to shower upon you a great abundance of his blessings.

* * * *

Renewal of attacks on the part of Father Lalanne, renewal of patience on the part of Father Chaminade.

606 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, October 26, 1831

My dear son, the substitution of the expression "evidence" for that of "interior conviction" would not entirely take away the flaw in your reasoning, but let us end this discussion. I am very far, my dear son, from pretending infallibility and even of having the certainty that my decisions are the best possible. In fact, I almost tremble when I use my authority. The origin of our endless discussion is to be found in some principles you brought forward, which pained me not a little. At the beginning, I thought to be able to speak to you the language of faith; but you answered that you were no longer of the age when such explanations are necessary; that I was to remember that you were thirty years old, and that the lights of reason, like those of faith, come from God. You have always seemed to want to prove that the organization of St. Remy was contrary to reason. Sometimes you have even tried to base yourself on the Constitutions. Always coming back to principles, my answers only intended to prove that the organization was not contrary to reason, that it was where it was in virtue of the letter and the spirit of the Constitutions. The question we treated all last year is not susceptible to evidence.

I notice, my dear son, from your last letter even more than from the preceding one, that this discussion is degenerating more and more; and so, I shall not continue it any further. I shall only quote one passage of your letter, which you will surely repent of, either in this world or in the next: "I would like to know just what you want, but who can know it? How many diverse forms your ideas have taken, since you first expressed them to us; and we bound ourselves to them by youthful imprudence, with premature engagements, etc."

My dear son, you noted with pleasure the interest I was taking in your salvation, in my last letter. This interest is very much greater—at least I think it so—than I am able to express. You add that I can work toward it in no more effective way than by praying for you. Well, I hope to be able to do so, until my last hour. I thought it my duty to counsel you to make a private retreat. One of the effects of a good retreat would surely be that of bringing us into perfect accord, but the motive for counseling this retreat was not precisely to obtain

this desirable effect. Furthermore, I gave you this counsel only while giving it to myself also. I have just given two retreats in succession, and I am now taking measures for making my own solitary one. The shape of this world is passing away. We shall be welcomed in eternal felicity only in proportion as we shall have been conformable to our Lord Jesus Christ. These are truths of faith, which will infallibly have their complete fulfillment, whatever interpretation we give them. If you do not feel the need for making this retreat, to live and to die in conformity with the life and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ, it is better to postpone all further action. Meanwhile pray and humble yourself and meditate on the great truths of faith.

I understand that the way Brother Clouzet exercises his Office displeases you and rightly so if there seem to be two bosses, two Superiors in the same house. This weakness, serious in itself, is not due to the organization, but rather to the two persons involved. If Brother Clouzet is truly humble, if he enters into the sentiments of a true religious, then all will go perfectly well. But how will so valued an end be attained if you don't help me, my dear son, if we do not tread along the same path, that of conformity with Jesus Christ? *Hoc sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu.* (Phil. 2:5)

Not only is St. Remy not a religious house, it does not even have a religious atmosphere. Do you think I am always finding fault? Do you say I am an old man who knows nothing about the spirit of the age and of appropriate ways of attracting people? Say whatever you like—people always do—but I shall always try to fulfill my duty. *Opportune, importune, argue, increpa in omni patientia et doctrina*. I believe that St. Paul, instead of *increpa*, said *obsecra*.[1] I haven't the time to check the matter, but we understand one another. Now for some particular matters.

The Rothéa brothers should not have moved so quickly concerning the little establishment of Kientzheim, especially after my repeated urgings that we not accept any new establishments. But their zeal has been strongly aroused. The Council of the Commune, which Brother Louis Rothéa assisted at, has accepted all the conditions he requested; and the central Committee of Colmar has accepted Brother Andrew Stoffel as head of the schools and has presented him to the rector of the Academy of Strasbourg. Things have moved so rapidly, I did not want, as I wrote them, to add my blame to yours—even thought I did not approve what they did. Brother Andrew will really be only deputy or subdirector as needed. The head will really be Brother Benedict,[2] Head of Ammerschwir, very near Kientzheim. Taking on this little establishment, with the difficulties existing in Ribeauvillé[3] has forced me to send obediences for Brothers Colin, Villien, and Edel before writing you. I have given all needed instructions, so that Alsace may advance with peace and edification. The Rothéa brothers, by their haste and lack of reflection, give me, as we

[1] St. Paul writes: Obsecra, increpa (II Tim. IV, 2).
[2] Brother Joseph Enderlin, the former Brother Benedict of the Congregation of Father Mertian.
[3] The foundation of Kientzheim, projected in 1831, really took place only in 1848.

commonly say, much thread to twist—much trouble, in other words. I imagine you know the general character of the Alsatians and, in particular, of their particular district.

Herewith included is an obedience for Brother Clarverie, whom I propose to replace in Courtefontaine by Brother Bouveret, as I believe I already told you. Brother Galliot writes to me from Courtefontaine that he hopes to have thirty pupils for the reopening of classes. These will be boarding or day-scholar candidates, without prejudice to the poor children of the village. Brother Silvain has just obtained a second-degree certificate needed for his dispensation from military service.

The Rothéa brothers are very wrong in asking you and me for subjects. At least, they should tell us that they are both asking. This year and perhaps soon we must expect a squabble in St. Hippolyte.

My very dear son, I reread the last lines of your letter four times, especially this little sentence: "There is in my heart a real desire to belong to God and to do his holy Will." I believe this sincerely and I can say I have always believed it. But you know that in matters of religion and salvation the desires, even the real ones, are not sufficient. In the future you will be as you say and as I hope, more truly my son than you are today, although I look always upon myself as your tender Father.

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607 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, November 5, 1831

. . . I am ashamed to place our needs before you so often and perhaps you yourself say: "He never writes but to ask for money." If, my dear son, that is what you are privately thinking, why, in your answers, don't you give me the hope of getting some? When I do ask you for some, either you have it or you don't. You hope for some or you don't. Some is due you or it isn't. You owe some or you don't. You have crops to sell or they are already sold, rich gravy-soup in the house or nothing of the kind. Finally, give me some clear and exact account that will definitely clarify the meaning of the answers, which you rarely give me or which you give me so vaguely. Under these conditions how can I orient myself?

At the time of my last visit to St. Remy, I suffered more than I seemed to. I saw expenses that were really luxuries. Knowing your good will, I did not think I should raise this matter too strongly, so I limited myself to recommending that you make as few expenses as possible. It is not so much a question of need as of the cause which we have embraced. The building at St. Remy is already too conspicuous—if we had had to build it ourselves, we would have chosen more modest dimensions. Concerning needed repairs, these must be made so as not to give offense; but we must be careful, to the best of our ability, not to make them in the same way as the former lords of the château.

As one of my well-beloved and firstborn children, I must share with you a sentiment that has been dominant in my heart for a long time. It is an almost constant fear that God is withdrawing his blessings from St. Remy. This fear is constantly increasing because, as a matter of fact, I see that God is withdrawing himself progressively. I think we are still doing some good there; but what is this good before God if we do it seeking ourselves; if we do it for ourselves, for our glory, our own esteem, our own motives, etc., than really and solely in the interests of religion and of the Society? Are we not opening the door to many illusions? Yes, my dear son, I love you well, and I must be very devoted to you to open my heart to you this way. I thus receive solace, and it is up to you to console me further, because your Good Father's heart is really suffering a great deal as the result of all that is going on.

"I suffer," you tell me, "and I continue to suffer greatly in my position, especially in regard to Father Lalanne." You believe, my dear son, that I must know the human heart sufficiently well to have a fairly accurate idea of this. I have often thought of it, especially in the presence of God, and here is my answer: nothing will ever change for either of you unless you both enter into the beautiful paths of faith, the same as you once did by an entire devotedness to the service of our good Master and of his august Mother. Not too long ago, I wrote openly to Father Lalanne in this same vein. If both of you come to understand this fact and act accordingly, I have no doubt that peace and union will soon reign in the house, especially between you two. I would also have reason to hope for prosperity and divine blessings. If only one of the two opens his eyes, he will experience more combats and exterior difficulties, but nevertheless the troubles will cease. Humility and charity have an incalculable attraction, for it is divine virtue itself that operates in the actions of the humble and charitable man. Why do you not come to an understanding with Father Chevaux[1] to enter into the paths of faith? These rapidly lead us to conformity with Our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all virtues and our unfailing source of help. If you or Father Chevaux think you need more complete teaching, it would be a real satisfaction for me to work concurrently with the two of you toward your advancement in virtue and, in consequence, toward your happiness in this world and in the next.

I am going to close this long letter now, although I still have many things to say to you. I beg of you, answer me explicitly. In the course of this year, or rather last year, I received very few letters from St. Remy and even these were mailed secretly towards the end of summer. When I complained of this to Father Lalanne, he answered that it was for the purpose of reducing postage. In my reply I told him that I suspected a lack of liberty. On his part, he answered he had never hindered anyone from writing me and never violated the secrecy of the letters written to me. I don't see then how any fear of not being able to correspond freely with me ever got around. I shall nevertheless let this matter pass unless I come to find out that this liberty does not really exist, by some letter mailed to me secretly.

[1] His spiritual director.

The blessings that I wish you, my dear son, and that I beg of the Lord to bestow upon you are proportionate to the very tender attachment that so closely links me to you.

* * * *

Wise and paternal counsels to Father Chevaux, whom one feels to be one of the preferred sons of the Founder.

608 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, November 10, 1831

I have just learned, my dear son, through Brother Bousquet, that you made a little trip to Besançon with Brother Clouzet and that your health is improving all the time. I cannot withhold the pleasure of telling you how much I enjoyed getting this piece of news. Moderate your labors and your zeal and never use up all the strength you seem to have at your command. I know myself how difficult it is at times to hold one's energy in check, especially when there are pressing needs. Nevertheless, one can succeed, by ridding oneself of all idea of self alone and of seeking only to accomplish the will of God. Knowing how weak your health is, I have not required of you an account of the Novitiate. I did not even ask how far you were advancing in the beautiful paths of faith and of conformity with Jesus Christ, so as not to oblige you to write. I think that you are constantly doing better, as illness is not necessarily an obstacle to our spiritual advancement; it is an obstacle only when we are called upon to give an account of it. You will direct others well only in proportion to the progress you make. In order to lead others securely and safely, one must have gone that way before. This is especially true of a route where there are few travelers who can be questioned and where little information is available.

I am stopping, my dear son, assuring you of my continued remembrance before the Lord and of my tender affection.

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Will Father Chevaux perhaps be in a position to exercise a salutary influence on one of the two adversaries? In this hope, Father Chaminade, in a precise manner, brings him up to date regarding the present situation.

609 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, November 23, 1831

With your letter of November 3, my dear son, I also received the account of the Novitiate of St. Remy for the year 1831. I have sometimes desired to receive news from you a little oftener, but I do not accuse you of laziness. Your functions as Master of Novices are so delicate and the difficulties that present themselves in direction so numerous that I am sometimes amazed that you do not seem to have any. Take care of your health and make use of the little relaxations required to remain normal in every way.

My dear son, you have perfectly well understood the meaning of my letter. I am concerned about the relations between Father Lalanne and Brother Clouzet. You suppose that cases might arise in which Brother Clouzet would be much embarrassed, e.g., in which he would notice some error in the administration or in the observations and advice of Father Lalanne, without being able to persuade him to change his mind. You presuppose that the affair is of great consequence and so pressing that there is no time for referring it to the Superior General. I answer:

1. That if such a case is possible, it happens very rarely; you'd have trouble giving me a single example.

2. Supposing such a case, Brother Clouzet asks Father Lalanne to assemble the Council and there—:

1. The urgency of the case is passed upon.

2. The question is examined whether sufficient time can be gained to refer the matter to the Superior General.

3. In case this is impossible, the matter is left up to a Council decision, but the Council decides only for the time of the urgency.

You ask me: May Brother Clouzet admit or introduce domestics or workers permanently or at least to be fed in the house? In all these cases may Brother Clouzet make these arrangements without first having notified Father Lalanne? May he, in the same way, nourish, lodge, hire such persons by the year? And if in the case of negotiating with them, he would have made conditions which are unacceptable to Father Lalanne, what then should be done? I answer that Brother Clouzet is not to do anything of the kind, without a very formal consent on the part of Father Lalanne, because such things belong essentially to the good order and regularity that Father Lalanne has the duty to maintain. He has the authority which is necessary to accomplish his duties as Head and superior, and you must have noticed, my dear son, the serious inconveniences which the admission of strangers has already produced. Such admissions bring a mingling with the religious, a kind of association and rivalry which can easily become harmful When Father Lalanne, after having examined everything from the point of view of order and regularity, believes these admissions suitable, he is not to come back upon the conditions of price, rent, and interest agreements of any kind that Brother Clouzet has made, since these agreements have always belonged to the kind of Office Brother Clouzet has: provider, econome, Head of Temporalities, etc. The same would not be the case if the strangers, admitted with permission, were to be nourished in the house as payment or part payment for their services, unless they would remain completely separate from all the workers of the Society, the professed, the novices or even the postulants. The same reasoning must be followed with regard to lodging at night. Father Lalanne has the duty and consequently the authority to judge whether the persons who come to work may be harmful to the community.

You ask me who takes care of the employment of the Working Brothers? This difficulty can be very easily solved. Naturally, each one is to be employed according to the work he knows how to do. When they are able to do several kinds of work, the Head of Temporalities assigns them to what is most urgent. The superior is not to take them away from labors that have been assigned to them by the Head of Temporalities or give them other functions without having first notified the latter, as that would be introducing a disorder instead of maintaining order. The Head of Temporalities is to oversee not only how well the workers do their work, but also that they work religiously. To this effect, he may bring them together to instruct them or call them separately for private interviews all without prejudice to the influence of the superior or the Head of Zeal.

When there happens to be a lack of some serving Brothers, recourse is first made to the entire Society to find some; then among the workers in the house, if one might be more useful in serving than in his present work.[1] If it were an urgent service, for which there had not been time to make provision, then that one of the workers could be chosen temporarily, one who could be taken away from his present work with the least inconvenience. This change, even though only temporary, necessarily calls for an agreement between the superior and the Head of Temporalities.

You can see, my dear son, by these extraordinary cases, that the government may continue to go on perfectly just as it is, that all must be done *per modum unis*, as you say, that the superior is really the center of everything, although within their sphere of authority the Heads are in themselves centers. Is it not the same in the universe? Haven't the planets their own particular moons? God has established general laws, which admirably sustain this grand order in the universe. I have great confidence, that, if the general laws of the religious state and even of Christianity are well observed, this kind of government well extended will lead us to great order.

I do not intend to say that the government cannot be organized differently, but it is the one that our old Constitutions have introduced into the Society; and if well understood, it is better because it can stand without alteration all necessary modifications. Thus, for example, at St. Remy, two of the three great offices are given to Father Lalanne—the superior is also the Head of Zeal and the Head of Instruction. The next superior might perhaps be obliged to name Heads for these Offices, because it is very difficult to find superiors who are also in a position to exercise the functions of Heads of Zeal and of Instruction. In not giving the superior the functions of Head of Temporalities also, I did not intend to say that Father Lalanne is not capable of exercising them; but rather that this office at St. Remy demands such responsibility that it calls for a full-time man to fill it. Father Lalanne believes that, as a result of the new edition of our Constitutions, all the offices are attached to the Superiorship. It is possible that these articles are edited in a

[1] Father Chaminade here distinguishes the Brothers devoted to the interior services of the house from those assigned to farm work or the trades.

manner that leaves room for equivocation. Perhaps in a too hasty reading, I did not notice this; but such inattention could not produce any evil effect, since I am reserving to myself the final editing of this new edition before approving it. I must still examine it and consider all the observations that have been made to me. The Revolution and other circumstances have caused me to decide to leave things alone for now.

The new edition was just about started when I thought it my duty to name Father Lalanne superior of St. Remy and Brother Clouzet Visitor-General of our northern establishments and at the same time Head of Temporalities at St. Remy, as well as manager of its property and of that of Marast. I made these appointments only after both men, in the course of several days, had given their consent. You may recall, my dear son, that before leaving St. Remy, I announced both appointments at a general community assembly. Father Lalanne was not present for this announcement. Through friendship, I personally gave him the obedience during a meeting we had agreed upon in Arbois. I was very painfully surprised that since the Revolution, Father Lalanne has insisted, in many different ways, upon changing this order. The good God has judged it proper to add this sorrow to the many others I have, but I am not complaining. . . .

At the end of the summer, I first thought that Father Lalanne's sufferings might be provoked not so much by a desire to take over Brother Clouzet's office, but rather by the way the latter was carrying out his duties. That is what I wrote Father Lalanne and later Brother Clouzet. Brother Clouzet must certainly have told you about this letter, or he may even have shown it to you. I have as yet received no answer to it.

I am giving you all these details so that, when opportune occasions arise, you may speak to both of them: to Father Lalanne regarding the almost complete lack of foundation to his pretensions; and to Brother Clouzet of the humble, modest religious manner with which he is to carry out his functions, especially in regard to Father Lalanne.

I am ending, my dear son, all my reflections. I shall come back some other time to the account of the St. Remy novitiate you sent me. Take courage, and may your novices find in you the model they have to imitate, to penetrate themselves thoroughly with the true religious spirit, which is no other than the spirit of Jesus Christ. I am embracing you very cordially.

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The discussions with Father Lalanne are now entering a new domain and Father Lalanne, "due to scruples," says Father Chaminade, comes to the point of doubting the very foundations of the Society, whence the following letter.

610 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, November 24, 1831

This is an excellent piece of news that you give me, my dear son, in your last letter, which was without date and unsigned, about the success with which the good God has blessed the retreat you gave to the establishment of St. Remy. The order that followed it is a guarantee of the continuance of the good effects which it produced. I also understand that, in applying yourself to the great truths that you announced to others, this retreat served to take the place, at least up to a certain point, of the solitary or private retreat that I was counseling but that the multitude of your occupations did not permit you to make.

My dear son, without coming back upon our discussions which have already lasted too long, I shall say to you only that the decisions that two equally pious and enlightened men have given you have no other value than to reassure your conscience, presuming you have given an account, with honesty and simplicity, of things as they have actually happened. In the interior of a court, the judge pronounces judgment only on the part of the case that is brought before his tribunal.

I wrote to Brother Clouzet towards the end of October or at the beginning of September and spoke to him seriously enough about the need of entering into himself, etc. I asked him to come to some kind of understanding with Father Chevaux. Father Chevaux consulted me about several cases relative to his relations with you, and I explained them to him in such a way that he never had any annoyances or vexations. It is certainly not the exercise of his employment that has done the harm, but the way he did it. I don't think that Brother Clouzet is as yet inaccessible to the sentiments of religion and virtue. If he finds in you a father, a brother, a friend, who supports him in his defects, who does not desire his amendment for his own sake but for God, for the salvation of his soul, you will see that, in proportion that he has less bitterness in his soul, the beautiful sentiments of faith, humility and religion will enter. From then on he will listen to reason, he will correct himself, and you will rejoice in the Lord to have with you a man who is so necessary for a part of your work which you really cannot perform yourself.

Your doubt, my dear son, as to whether the engagements you have taken and which you have had others take are licit is really nothing more than a scruple, but it is anyhow a proof of the uprightness of your heart. I am deeply pleased to note the fact—not that I have ever had any doubt about it, but perhaps others might have.

You desire that I explain myself. You also ask me if I believe that, in our Society, nothing sins against the holy canons.

1. It is evident that here you are considering the legitimacy of the engagements only on the side of their object and in the object of its determination. Now, the object of our engagements has always been very well determined. Determined:

(1) by the general sense which the Fathers of the Church and the holy Doctors have always given them. We have all understood ourselves to be really religious, in the sense in which this name is understood in the Catholic Church.

(2) by the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary. Determined:

(3) by the general organization of the Society of Mary, based on the organization of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, which has been particularized and approved by Archbishop d'Aviau in the presence of Fathers Mouran and Laumont.[1] The proclamation of the Society, thus organized, was made solemnly, at the first exercise of the retreat which immediately followed the approbation which the Archbishop had just given it. The written account was made of it, and it is surely in the hands of Brother David. Determined:

(4) by the development of the Society. Nothing has been done but in the spirit and in conformity with the principle established at the beginning. If someone among us has introduced novelties foreign to the primitive views or if what has been properly introduced, has been denatured or changed, then this is slacking and abuse which must be corrected.

Brother David is so convinced of these principles that, in spite of the trouble which your last appearance in Bordeaux put in all minds, he made no scruples about renewing his vows. He only observed that he was doing it in the spirit and according to the principles of the old Constitutions, because he did not consider the new edition as representing the old ones. There is no question here of determining whether he is right or wrong. The fact is mentioned here only as proof that the object of the engagements is sufficiently determined.

It must not be concluded that a new edition of our Constitutions is not necessary. When I say necessary, I want only to say very useful and very suitable, because there is no question of necessity properly so called.

2. Is there nothing in the Society that sins against the holy canons? This expression, my dear son, is still somewhat vague. I know of nothing in the Society's make up that sins against the canons. If you have recognized something, it is there, my dear son, that you should look carefully. You can be well assured, by the knowledge you have of my entire life, that I am very far from doing anything against the holy canons. . . .

The regimen, my dear son, which you have undertaken since the retreat with your five collaborators is, doubtless very edifying, but it is rather rigorous. Take care that there is nothing excessive for anyone. Brother Brunet is full of ardor, but his health leaves much to be desired. He needs care and attention. Father Chevaux is thoroughly satisfied with the

[1] At the end of the retreat of 1818.

attention you are giving to his health. Even though I sometimes scold, my very dear son, I always keep a tender and inviolable attachment for you. . . .

P. S. You, doubtless, know the cause—it comes from the clergy of Besançon, for which the *Avenir* has been suspended for three months and which has brought about the journey to Rome of Fathers de Lamennais, Lacordaire and de Montalembert.[1]

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611 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, December 3-5, 1831

My dear son, your message of last November 22 came yesterday morning, December 1. Twice I looked over the balance of your receipts and expenses. Here are my observations. To follow the ideas and orders I gave you last year, you need two distinct accounts and balances. The first relates to the establishment of St. Remy itself, the second to the properties of St. Remy and Marast. The establishment of St. Remy must be sufficient by itself. This does not mean that the harvests of the property may not be consumed by the establishment, but that they be paid for as if coming from another source. You may make exception of consumption of what is only garden produce properly so-called. The impositions or costs must be divided into these two accounts: in the first all those that belong to the establishment as such, as if there were no dependent property or domain, and in the second the surplus added because of the domain. The fixed allowance for the doctor has nothing to do with the domain. The repairs on the buildings occupied by the establishment are also to be charged to it. The food of the workers on the domain properly so-called, whether they are religious or strangers, may be charged to the account of the domain. The wood burned in the establishment is also to be charged to the domain. As regards the debts contracted before November 1, 1830—for example, the eight thousand francs of M. Rothéa—they can be applied to either account, whichever one has the greater need.

I do not know the origin of the one-hundred fifty francs rent paid to Mme Chevaux. You will let me know about it, and, whatever the case may be, it seems altogether proper that the establishment be charged for it.

Supervise the forest as a good family father. You must understand that, if the good God makes it possible for us to keep afloat over the abysses, we shall find in his care a means of safely arriving in port. Whatever the case, this forest is consecrated to God and so it must be respected, and we must dispose of it only according to His orders.

[1] The allusion is no doubt to the pastoral letter which the Cardinal de Rohan had just addressed, from Rome itself, to members of his diocese, in which he found fault with the *Avenir's* doctrines.

You tell me, my dear son, that this year you haven't made many repairs on the château. That is fine, but haven't you really made too many of another sort, which do not directly concern the clearing of the land and productive changes in the domain? There are two main factors to take into consideration, my dear son. The first concerns the extreme want we presently feel and the second the state of poverty and humility which we profess. Both of them and either one individually demand great modesty in our persons and in everything that is ours, so that, when we once appear before the Lord, we can hear ourselves called good and faithful servants.

I am very glad to know, my dear son, of your friendly conversations with Father Lalanne. He is honest and so are you. He sincerely wishes to do good and you wish it no less sincerely. Why then could you not come to a mutual understanding? I have given so many explanations, pointing out your respective duties with all possible exactitude, just to make this understanding more easily attainable. As regards myself—and I hope both of your good hearts will do me this justice—my intention is to do only what is good, what conforms to good order and established principles. This is furthermore strict duty for me, and the attachment I have for both of you surely must not make me weaken on this. I can assure you, it is a source of deep sorrow when I have to contradict some one of my children, especially one of the older ones.

You have taken an excellent means, my dear son, to advance in the virtue and spirit of your state, that of having frequent interviews with Father Chevaux. From these you will surely come to know well and to appreciate the virtues of our Lord Jesus Christ, the real model of Christians and religious. The Most Blessed Virgin is doubtless our model, but only because she is an exact and most perfect copy of Jesus Christ, her adorable Son. It is the knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ which leads us to the knowledge of the Most Blessed Virgin, just as one may say that the knowledge of the Most Blessed Virgin leads us to a higher knowledge of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I am leaving with Father Chevaux a very precious little pamphlet by Father Olier. It is called *Introduction to Christian Life and Virtues*. He must have learned it well and, so to say, made himself a master of it, both for himself and for others.

I am glad, my dear son, that on Sundays there is a Community Mass properly so-called in the little chapel, at which those assisting may receive Holy Communion, and where recollection is really sustained. Nevertheless, my dear son, we must note that the Mass of the boarders, also a Community Mass, is like a parish Mass. It is suitable that the professors and the supervisors assist at it and receive Holy Communion. This must not be taken too literally, though, so that certain ones, with permission, are not able to receive some Holy Communions of devotion in the little chapel. You haven't told me, my dear son, which Mass the normal school attends. If the professors and supervisors hear the normal school Mass, whichever it is, then very few will be present for the Community Mass,

properly so-called. You would then have three chapels.[1] I understood this was the arrangement at the time of my last stop at St. Remy. However, if we properly equip the normal school chapel, I don't think the one reserved for the novitiate should be kept up, since the plan we had for the novitiate has never been carried out and has even been completely set aside. I am thinking that it would be better to come to an agreement with Father Chevaux before I write about it to Father Lalanne, to see if there is a convenient way of doing these things. If the normal school chapel is equipped, I would not see any difficulty in having the Mass for everyone there, since the novices form a large part of the Community, anyway. The chapel seems quite big enough. ...

It causes me great sorrow that at St. Remy too little interest is shown in the normal school and in the teachers of the two Departments, for whom this normal school has been instituted. Since we do not have a revolution, I can understand the two sides of the issue.

Our primary teaching method has been completed since the end of last summer. I had it tried with a class of beginners, composed of one-hundred fifty children of nine to ten different levels of intellectual capacity. This week, I am thinking of having a copy sent to the mayor's office and of having officials come to see it carried out in actual practice.

The teachers will have a copy specially made for them under the title of something like Normal Institution. This work is already fairly well advanced.

The large normal school of Lafuge[1] is not being forgotten. Primary teaching is the essential end of the Society—secondary teaching is, as it were, purely accidental.[2]

My dear son, always keep the needy workmen busy. If the weather gets to be so bad that they cannot work, give them soup, as you did last year.

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[1] The little chapel for the Community, one for the secondary boarding school, and one for the normal school.

[1] We do not know what project this allusion refers to.

[2] In this affirmation, Father Chaminade could have in view the character of the Society such as it was defined by the Royal Ordinance of 1825 and such as it was imposed by circumstances, under University Monopoly. The thought of the Founder was thus developed in the text of the Constitutions of 1829: "There are only two methods of saving men, to preserve them from the contagion of the world or to cure them once they have been attacked by it. Of these two methods, the society prefers to adopt the one that is surer and easier . . . to preserve, and that by the education of the youngest and the poorest children. She does not, for that reason, refuse to work, however, with the solicitude and mildness of Jesus and Mary, to cure, as much as possible, those whom error and vice have corrupted, of a more advanced age or in a higher level of society. It is by an effect of this predilection for earliest youth . . . that the Society of Mary has declared, in its civil Constitutions, that it devotes itself to primary teaching. Its principal works, in fact, are related to this teaching—the free and primary schools, the preparatory and primary schools, the special schools, the schools of arts and crafts, the agricultural and normal schools." See on this subject *The Spirit of Our Foundation* III, 13 and the following letters of February 15, 1826; March 19, 1833; February 7, 1834; December 12, 1836; and September 16, 1838, etc.

You may, my dear son, buy the little meadow that you need for drainage, which will cost you only sixty francs. But be sure that the deed of sale states clearly the meadow's poor condition. Otherwise, the sale could be called into question once you have put the meadow into shape.

When a person accumulates several titles, he is usually addressed by the most elevated of them. When I left St. Remy, I gave you, among others, the title of Visitor. I intended you should be called by this title. I recall having spoken about this to Father Lalanne before conferring upon you the Office that goes with it. I did so on purpose, since you were to remain at St. Remy to exercise there the functions of Head of Temporalities. We are aware of the title of Econome only when the Head of Temporalities is unable by himself to fulfill the functions peculiar to the Econome, the very thing that happened a short time ago in one of the convents of the Daughters of Mary.

Courage, my very dear son. Penetrate yourself more and more with the spirit of the holy state you have embraced. May everything else perish rather than our soul! I am embracing you very tenderly.

* * * *

612 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, December 30, 1831

My dear son, I really owe you an answer to your letter. . . . I was aware of most of the administrative defects of the Rothéa brothers, but I did not know them all equally clearly. I hardly ever write to either of them—and I write often—without having to blame them either for what they do or for their way of doing it and without giving them needed advice. But I am not hoping to cure all the evil because it is imbedded in their character and even in their temperament. They would have need of transcendent virtue. Your presence would doubtless do some good, but this good would be only ephemeral, and the evil would reappear to a greater or less degree the very day after your appearance.

If Father Chevaux, my dear son, had explained more fully one of the cases he submitted to me for solution, such as you place it before me yourself, my answer would have been different.[1] Not having kept any copy of my decisions, Father Chevaux will want to annul temporarily what would be contrary to what I am going to tell you:

"Brother Clouzet will be free to accept unknown workers during the seasons and for the time he needs them, provided they eat in a refectory apart, where there would be reading during the meal, under the presidency of a Working Brother. There would also be a religious charged with saying the night and morning prayer with them, in connection with a short reading, all not to last more than seven or eight minutes. If a worker should not

[1] See Letter 609.

conduct himself according the regulation given him, Brother Clouzet may send him away immediately."

This matter is quite outside the interior administration of the establishment and of all those who make it up. Consequently, it in no way diminishes the authority of the superior. You may tell Father Chevaux that I am well pleased with the sentiment he expresses in his letter to the effect of not allowing anything to be established that would have to be suppressed later on. I would then be very glad that the cases which he foresees might embarrass you be arranged with you and talked over in advance. I shall be obliged if he will make me a copy of the decisions already reached, in order to see things as a whole. I then shall pass it on to both of you. This final action is necessary for the tranquility of your mind and also that there may be no uncertainty in him regarding the direction of your conscience.

It is on the day before the eve of the New Year, my dear son, that I am writing you this letter, and as your New Year's gift I wish that this year the interior man in you be renewed and acquire the forces needed always to combat the old man, to keep him in constant subjection and to succeed even in crucifying him—that you may, in a word, become a man of faith. I shall often repeat my prayer to the Lord, that he may accord you this signal favor.

I had already learned that Brother Centrain had written to St. Remy about some worries he was experiencing at the Madeleine, but at the same time I understood that he was entering into himself. This year he is making his rhetoric course with Brother Hugeunin. Neither is very strong, because they have perhaps been urged on too much and neither at bottom has any unusual talents or dispositions. Brother Huguenin has an excellent character: he is really virtuous. His association with Brother Centrain cannot be but beneficial to the latter. Nevertheless, by my correspondence with Brother Centrain I hope I shall correctly see the final sentiments of his heart. Regarding music, we thought it best that he leave it aside so as to better advance in his studies and to bring himself up to a level more in conformity with his age and his size. . . . Brother Chopard has done well enough with his two years of philosophy at the Grand Seminary of Bordeaux and that despite the feebleness of his health. He is now in his first year of theology. The Grand Seminary is generally staffed with good professors. Consider carefully with Father Lalanne whether it would really be best to interrupt his theological studies and risk his health, which can perhaps be strengthened by the proper care and a few precautions. The young man, who is very submissive, will not oppose anything; but he will feel deeply being separated from Father Caillet in whom he has entire confidence. Reciprocally, Father Caillet has great confidence in him. From this mutual confidence comes much good, both for Brother Chopard and for the small community of the Madeleine.

I shall add only one more reflection: if we continue to employ our subjects when they are only half trained, we shall end by perishing. . . .

My dear son, I am pressing you tenderly in my arms and giving you my fatherly blessing with great enthusiasm of heart.

* * * *

613 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, January 10, 1832

My very dear son, you are asking me to answer some very delicate questions.

1. Should you go to Paris to follow up your petition, withheld, unknown to you, by the rector of the Academy of Besançon? *Ambages ubique*, I willingly believe, that if you go you will succeed in almost everything. But your successes might not be very solid. And you must realize we are buried in the depths of winter, but that spring is not far off. I admit to you that I see so much confusion that I cannot make up my mind to give any kind of decision. If you persist, I shall not blame anything you may do. My preference would be that you remain quiet, having a serious interview with the Rev. Rector.

2. I also realize that there is no longer much to be done for the normal school at St. Remy, from what you tell me about the Rev. Rector's projects. The usual letter that His Excellency the Minister of Public Instruction has just written to Brother Galliot explains all this. In times of flood, the best advice is always to go a bit higher.

3. Brother Fridblatt's letter was included in yours. I am going to answer him, but very briefly. Do you not find that this young man has a kind of eccentricity of mind that his self-love renders ever more annoying? If you think you can bring him up as far as the priesthood and that he is really attached to the Society, then we shall have to resolve upon a great deal of patience.

4, Brother Jacquot recently wrote me quite a good letter to ask for admission to Holy Orders. You annotated his letter to have it apply to the subdiaconate at Easter. I do not see any difficulty except that you compare him with Brother Fridblatt. This comparison makes it difficult for me to answer him. However, I shall send the letter to you, so that you may give a later decision.

May our status quo condition, my dear son, in no way disquiet you. If we remain inviolably united in Our Lord and in his august Mother, we shall be very strong. Our trouble—or rather, the fewness of our subjects—comes, I believe, from the fact that we have only a small number of subjects who really have the spirit of Christianity or, what amounts to the same thing, the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Our real strength must lie in interior dispositions. I am not saying here that there is no place for setting up certain wise defenses; but even if these defenses were to seem as impregnable towers, they would be as nothing if the interior were not in perfect order.

My dear son, let us make use of the less worrisome days to fill ourselves with the Spirit of Jesus Christ and to form some subjects who train themselves to live by faith. I am mindful, my very dear son, of the expression of good wishes offered me through you by all my children of St. Remy. You join to them your own, which makes them all the more precious. I beg of you to bear to everyone my paternal sentiments. I need a strong expression to characterize those you have acquired over long years.

* * * *

614 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, February 8, 1832

A serious and prolonged indisposition, my dear son, has obliged me to suspend my correspondence.[1] I am getting back to work today, and I shall answer your letters of December 24 and that of January 11. I shall be as brief as possible because I am considerably behind. I was deeply moved, my dear son, by your expression of good wishes for the New Year. You know you are one of my older children and that nothing will ever make you lose the place that you have in my heart.

Before going any further, I must tell you I have just received a letter from Brother Gobillot in Marast, putting all his temporal affairs in order. As a result of a liquidation, he owes two hundred fifty francs and thirty francs in interest. He wanted Brother Bousquet, his director, to advance him this sum. I am answering by this mail that he should address himself to you. You or someone responsible to you could better watch over the care and development of his small properties. I understand they are very near the Marast property. It seems that Brother Gobillot is very glad to keep his properties, but this is something directly opposed to his vow of poverty. By the vow of poverty he has dispossessed himself of everything. How can he enjoy the idea of taking all back? It would be mocking God. Will you talk with him? Perhaps he has not considered this fact but only the pleasing consequences that might follow. I would have spoken about this in my letter to him, but it was about finished when I started to make these reflections.

Father Lalanne has never spoken of the forest or the park, and still less of the projects he might have in mind. All the outside areas of the property are pleasant and roomy enough for all types of recreation for both pupils and professors. Thus it is vexing that he has cut down the fruit trees in the meadow, which you had cultivated so carefully. He could easily have attained the end he had in view some other way. No matter, we must be patient, as in so many other things. You must be very careful not to put walkways where the trees have been cut down—perhaps they may grow again.

I say the same about the swimming pool. That means to say, we must be patient no matter what happens to this project. The stones brought from the quarry must be selected and arranged in such a way as to preserve them from the inclemencies of the weather. A swimming pool can in no way be suitable to St. Remy—no matter what point of view is taken—and it could easily become harmful, especially if located at a distance from the main building. I remember quite well that, unknown to me, Father Lalanne published a prospectus the year before last in which he promised to teach the art of swimming to his pupils. I neglected to stress this matter, in spite of the displeasure it caused me, because I

[1] Quite habitually at this time of the year, Father Chaminade was tried by a kind of catarrhal cold which often obliged him even to remain in bed. Documents call attention to this fact for the years 1809, 1812, 1821, 1823, 1830, 1844, and 1846.

could not imagine how he would ever overcome the difficulties or handle the necessary expenses involved without speaking to me about it. If anyone complains about his not keeping the promise he made in his prospectus, he can answer that the work was started, but that the expenses became too great for him to continue it.[1]

Ask Father Lalanne for me not to insist on these works, nor on the embellishments he wants to make in the park. The park is to be kept as a forest and not as an amusement place the way it used to be.

Your troubles, my dear son, incline you to look for another situation, which recalls for you Father de Rainneville's enterprises.[2] But, my dear son, take notice:

1. that since this revolution and even for some time before it, I have not heard him spoken of.

2. that I named Father Lalanne superior of St. Remy precisely because you were there and because you were to exercise the functions that occupy you now. It was with this in mind that the three of us had conferences together over several days and that I told the two of you to come to a working agreement: now see how right I was in doing what I did. It was for the same reason that before last year and after our famous revolution, I traced out and detailed for you the duties of your office; and for this reason I have continued to do since, in spite of the almost endless letters from Father Lalanne during all of last year. But never has he told me, in spite of my request, that he was taking steps which would require of you the painful duty of opposing all degeneration and every kind of unnecessary expenses. If there happen to be some doubtful cases, I should be notified. As regards urgent ones, which would not permit notification, go ahead with them, at least as far as what is urgent is concerned.

3. You should not forget that we are in a time of revolution and that, from the beginning, I made up my mind to make the least possible number of changes. This has made it necessary for me to swallow more than one bitter pill. For all these reasons, my dear son, and several others I don't need to mention, you must see that the order of Providence wants you to remain at St. Remy, however painful or disagreeable your position may be. Let it be to your profit before God, for Christian virtues thrive very well amid thorns. . . .

In Father Lalanne's last letter, he asked to continue to help the greatest interest in the normal school but that he finds in it insuperable difficulties. In the last Rectorate, the Department of the Jura at least paid what was due, but for the future, it is different. What

[1] In a business letter of the following March 8, Father Chaminade wrote to Brother Clouzet: "Since the work on the swimming pool is so far advanced and we have a contract with the mason, we must permit the completion of the job." The pool in question was in the middle of a woods—now gone—behind the château.
[2] See Letter 481.

should I answer? I never know the complete story about anything. All I can do is talk about generalities. . . . I tell myself what I so often say to others: we must never allow ourselves to grow weary of being patient. . . .

I imagine that, not receiving any answer, you have left for Strasbourg to buy copper instruments such as cornets, bassoons, etc. You will do well to buy only those that are actually needed. You can do this by getting in touch with the manufacturer. It would be imprudent to keep some on hand, as they are not to be furnished to the pupils without first having their parents' consent and without their knowing the price.

Brother Chopard has recently been spitting some blood. How can we believe that this young man would study theology better at St. Remy than in the Grand Seminary of Bordeaux?[1] He could be of some use there, but considering his feeble health, what kind of studying could he do? And are there really theology courses at St. Remy? We have so few priests. Why then stop those who are well on their way? It is to be presumed that this particular man will keep up the good principles and practices of the religious state. You tell me there would be a reduction in kitchen expenses. This is evident, but would not those of St. Remy be increased? And if we are animated with the same spirit, should not what is saved in one house serve to help other houses that are in need? Furthermore, why reduce to so small a number the pupils at the Madeleine? Would there not result the danger of discouragement? Would it not harm regularity, edification and even emulation? . . .

I thank you for the details you give me about your round of visits to Besançon, Courtefontaine, and Acey. In fact, I am not too well informed about what is going on in our establishments. Receive here, my dear son, the assurance of my sincere and paternal devotedness.

THE CONFLICT OF AGEN AND THE CONTINUATION OF THE DIFFICULTIES OF ST. REMY

[1] Father Lalanne would have wanted to have at St. Remy the young men being trained in Bordeaux: Brothers Chopard, Centrain, Huguenin, etc. See Letter 612.

(FEBRUARY 1832 – DECEMBER 1832)

At this beginning of 1832, a new and more crucifying trial was added to those which had tested the virtue of Father Chaminade since the Revolution of 1830. There was a storm stirred up against him in the convent of the Daughters of Mary and the episcopal palace of Agen. The storm had been rumbling indistinctly for several months. It suddenly broke out during the early part of February, in the circumstances that follow.

As we have already seen, upon the request of Mother St. Vincent, new Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary, Father Chaminade had moved toward a regulation of the accounts between the two branches of the Institute, which until then had been more or less kept together under the direction and control of their common Founder.

Differences of opinion between Father Chaminade and Mother St. Vincent arose on this and other subjects (apart from this incident, Mother St. Vincent proved herself a religious of great virtue, as is proved by subsequent events of her life)—the latter thought it good and wise, on several occasions, to consult the Bishop secretly. Father Chaminade advised her of the difficulties which could result from such a practice,[1] but Father Serre, one of the Convent confessors, counseled her to assert her independence still more strongly.[2]

Besides this, the Founder had entered freely into the convent since the beginning of the Institute and there gave conferences in the community room. No one had ever had anything to say against this, and no one in authority had ever addressed to Father Chaminade the least observation about it. Now, on February 6, the day after a conference which Father Chaminade, just recovering from an illness, had given the Community, Father Chambret, the Vicar-General,[3] falling back on the exigencies of Canon Law, forbade him entrance into the Convent without a written authorization from the Bishop and unless accompanied by another priest.

Father Chaminade obeyed and for three weeks kept silence, after which time he wrote the following letter to Bishop Jacoupy.

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[1] See Letter 560.

[2] "To cast aside forever the superior general in order to have the Community come under the special direction of the Ordinary, I believe that this is touching the essential of a religious order and, in consequence, annulling the old vows in order to make a new order. This was evidently what was wanted. Father Serre has admitted as much; and it is through him, it seemed to me, that ideas somewhat like these—albeit badly understood—have entered into these good ladies' heads. The imagination is so active and self-love is so crafty!" Letter of Father Collineau to Father Trincaud, March 8, 1830.

[3] Father Chambret, 1788-1856, former Director of the diocesan Missionaries, was named vicar-general by Bishop Jacoupy in 1830, after the dispersion of the Missionaries; but, from 1836, the bishop withdrew his powers and put himself in charge of a country parish.

615 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY, BISHOP OF AGEN

Agen, February 28, 1832

Your Lordship – The Institution of the Daughters of Mary, which we have believed to be the work of the mercy of God in our unhappy country, is suffering great distress. If you paralyze the action of the one who established it on the Convent of Agen, this Convent will no longer be able to be the Motherhouse of this Institute, and as a result, there will be separation, schism, etc.—all evils that your Lordship is certainly very far from wanting to bring about. Two reasons seem to serve as the foundation for the prohibition against me. The first would be serious and very valid if it had a just basis—an accusation of serious abuses in my visits to this Convent. The second is taken from a false interpretation of a chapter of the Constitutions of this Institute (Of the Government: Chapter 1, Nos. 316-26).[1] Father Chambret thought me guilty enough and was too much convinced of what he thought he had seen in the Constitutions to need any kind of observation on my part. He issued the interdict, and I submitted to it without a word.

I thought it my duty to keep an absolute silence on this unexpected event. I even tried to derive some profit from this humiliation. I would surely have persevered in this line of conduct, if, before coming to a definite conclusion, I had not thought it my duty to give

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[1] It is hard to understand that even a doubt should have arisen regarding Father Chaminade's submission to the authority of the bishops, especially when it was affirmed with such force and precision in the articles referring to the Grand Institute:

316. "Every church and every religious establishment placed in a diocese, being under the government of the bishop by common right, it is just and correct that the Institute is recognized as subject to him."

317. The bishop's government includes the hierarchical rights and those of order and jurisdiction.

318. The hierarchical rights comprise, among other things, the blessing of virgins who make profession, the consecration of altars and of churches, the nomination of clerics charged with the administration of sacraments, religious services, etc.

319. The jurisdiction has reference to the institution of the superioress and to the determination of her powers, to interdiction and correction, to the right of visitation which is dependent upon rights previously mentioned.

320. All these things proceed from the divine right, and the one who meddles or interferes with it, without right thereto, is out of order.

321. His Lordship the Bishop may delegate the government of the Community to a priest having some dignity, who thus becomes his vicar and who is called spiritual superior.

322. Recourse to His Lordship the Bishop is free and open in all cases, notwithstanding the powers of the superioress-general, however extensive these may be.

323. The spiritual superior has no other mission otherwise than what is definitely determined in his credentials.

324. His Lordship the Bishop, however extensive be the power given to the spiritual superior, does not deprive the Convent of the consolation of his visits, which he renews at least once a year.

325. In the absence of the bishop, the spiritual superior receives the profession of the religious Sisters, consecrates the church and the altars, names the ordinary and the extraordinary confessors, admits the chaplain, confirms the election of the superioress and receives her oath of office, uses in case of need—if the special power has been given him—the right of interdiction and of correction, decides the claims or complaints of individuals or of the entire group, when they have not been referred to His Lordship the Bishop, or if having been so referred, they are sent back to him for settlement. He makes the visitations when such seem suitable or necessary."

Your Lordship an honest and open explanation regarding the interpretation which Father Chambret thought it his duty to give you about the chapter cited above.

As regards the first reason, it will collapse completely, I have every reason to hope, when the Mother Superior realizes that it is her duty to reestablish my reputation. It has been tarnished by implications drawn from some of my words, possibly spoken without sufficient reserve, and even from some inconsiderate complaints she may have made.[1] Nevertheless, do not believe, Your Lordship, that I am going to ask her as a favor to do me justice. I shall tell her, on the contrary, that she has it as a duty to tell the truth and the whole truth and not to serve confusion—not to call, for example, my opposition to her disorderly conduct an opposition to the Community. A difference of opinion between us cannot be considered a division between the Community and myself.[2] Must a superior remain an approving onlooker of serious imprudences[3] by a Superioress-General so that there may not be any division? Can she tranquilize her conscience by taking, unknown to me and by her simple statement, counsels of orders in direct contradiction to what I could give her? How many times in temporal matters have I invited her to take wise counsel, but we were unable to agree on the real cause of the difficulty and on her report about it.

I am stopping here, Your Lordship, asking you to appoint someone I can explain myself to, who will be kind enough to give you my answers, so that you may come to a decision with a full knowledge of the facts. Your decision will reestablish, I hope, the harmony which has been reigning between us for so many years. Since this harmony has been broken, the Convent is far from doing the good it had been. I am with the most profound respect, Your Lordship, etc. . . .

P.S. I did not want, Your Lordship, to wear out your patience while speaking to you about the much cause for anxiety the Mother Superioress has given me since her installation. You will notice it when she tells the truth about the happenings that brought about my interdiction. I know that she left the impression that our differences concern only temporal accounts. I hope that under the pressure of rendering justice, she will enter into herself and that the illusion she is under will soon vanish. Her personal conduct is otherwise regular and even edifying. I take mild measures to prevent her hasty and

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[1] First wording: “That it is his duty not to endure that the reputation of a priest be so seriously changed, who, however unworthy or incapable he may be, never did him . . .

“That, by some complaints she may have made against him or some answers she may have given to some questions, from which she would never have imagined the deduction that could possibly be made. . . .”

[2] Father Chaminade had at first added here: “My duty orders it to me and I hope to accomplish it faithfully, whatever may follow. . . .”

“My duty orders this opposition to me, without doubt, with suitable prudence and circumspection, but it orders . . .”

“But I believe I have the obligation to lead her along the correct paths, be it as a religious or as Superioress-General . . .”

[3] There is question evidently only of imprudences in the matter of government.

somewhat nonaffective character from being harmful to her administration. I was going to use them, when I was prevented from doing so.

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Evidently the government of the Institute could not be at the same time in the hands of the Founder and of the various diocesan heads the establishments of the Daughters of Mary depended upon. "As it is in the nature of this Institute to extend itself and to spread in the various dioceses of the Christian world to which it is called," wrote Father Chaminade, "it needs a Superior General who will be able to preserve everywhere unity of spirit and action in the government. He would be the habitual delegate of the bishops who desire communities in their respective dioceses. His delegation, like the Constitutions of the Institute, would be authorized by our holy Father, the Pope, Head of the Universal Church."[1] *In consequence, for the Founder to admit that the superioresses of the establishments may have recourse to the diverse bishops independently of him, without giving him direct recourse to the Prelates himself, was consenting to the certain ruin of the Institute. Hence, in his eyes, the seriousness of the crisis.*

Now, at the time when the Founder was asking Bishop Jacoupy, who was old and who governed through his vicars-general, to designate a person he could talk with, Father Collineau, who had had frequent enough relations with the Daughters of Mary of Agen during his stay in Villeneuve, was invited by Mother St. Vincent to take charge of the affair. He went to Agen, saw the bishop and then returned to Bordeaux.[2] *On the eleventh of March, Father Chaminade, having resumed contact with the Convent, gave the community a conference on religious obedience and denounced the danger of schism. The conference was immediately called to the attention of the Bishop, and on March 13, by order of the Prelate, Father Trincaud, Vicar-General, again forbade the Founder entrance to the Convent until the question of principle could be cleared up. To this effect, he asked Father Chaminade to answer in writing eight precise questions, the text of which we reproduce later.*

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[1] Autographic notes on the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary.

[2] From the confidential letter which Father Collineau then wrote to Father Trincaud, it is interesting to quote the following passages, which throw a bright light on the causes and nature of the conflict. "I did not have the time to embrace Father Chaminade before my departure and to say to him—what I really thought—that if his haste, in my way of judging things, had given me a less favorable impression, his calm reserved way of acting throughout the present disagreement would have more than reconciled me to all the sentiments I already had toward him and which I still find in my innermost heart. . . . If the Society of the Daughters of Mary has begun with a Superior General, if it has constantly received his direction, if it received all its rules and constitutions from the very one whose title of Superior General it would not call into question—because from prudence and by reason of what hostile disposition of the Government, he did not put into the Constitutions what, after all, could easily be put: "The Society has a Superior General" . . . I don't see how the quarrel with Father Chaminade on this would not be a quarrel after the German
fashion. . . ."

Father Chaminade immediately withdrew and the next day wrote Father Trincaud the following note.

615bis – TO FATHER TRINCAUD
VICAR-GENERAL OF AGEN

Agen, March 14, 1832

Rev. Father—I had thought it my duty, after the communication you gave me from His Lordship, to deal with the Yannasch affair with the care and discretion that seemed to be called for.[1] This affair took a happy turn. I had some hope, last evening, of advancing it a great deal, when almost upon entering the Administration Office, I was notified of the orders which obliged me to leave. Sister Blessed Sacrament noticed this. Right away, she wrote me the note herewith enclosed and sent, at the same time, what she wanted to give me at the time of our interview. No longer being able to treat of this affair, I am taking the liberty to send you these two notes. I shall tell her about it. I hope, for the welfare of these two souls, that you may have the most prompt and happy success.

I am, Rev. Father, with a respectful consideration, your very humble and very obedient servant—

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Then Father Chaminade addressed the following letter to the Bishop, answering the eight questions.

616 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY
BISHOP OF AGEN

Agen, March 15, 1832

Your Lordship—I have explained to Father Trincaud the two subjects that have afflicted your good heart. I am very sorry that it is on my account—that is surely not what I wanted. I'm sure Father Trincaud has shown your Lordship that last Sunday I was in a position actually to sound, as a matter of duty, alarms in the community. But I did not mention anything under discussion. This was such a positive stance that several have attributed the breaking of our bonds to the Revolution. These passing fears will only serve to strengthen the religious in the attachment to their state, if this beautiful harmony which has reigned between Your Lordship and your humble servant happens to be reestablished. I know some of the causes of the trouble. I shall take the liberty of placing them before you, and I hope you will have the consolation to see, under your benign rule, the development of this work of divine mercy for our unhappy fatherland.

I am with the most profound respect, etc. . .

[1] The affair in question concerned the relations between Mlle Yannasch—in religion, Sister Blessed Sacrament, younger sister of another religious Mother Theresa, who had died in Tonneins in the order of sanctity—and her mother, one of the early benefactresses, who, for years after the foundation, had been authorized to remain in the Convent. Sister Blessed Sacrament, quite different from her older sister, was not to persevere in her vocation.

P.S. I have the honor, Your Lordship, of giving you now my answers to the eight questions. I have tried to make them as clear as I could. I have had no mental reservation, as I abhor all manner of equivocations. If you notice anything like that, do have the kindness to point it out to me.

RESPONSE TO THE EIGHT QUESTIONS

First Question: The need of a Superior General being taken for granted, who has the right of naming your successor should you discontinue your functions through death or any other reason?

Answer: If the Society of Mary is to continue, I desire that my successor be, by the very fact, the Superior General of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. Nothing seems to me more conformable to the usages, to the spirit of the Council of Trent and to all established rules or traditions. If the Society of Mary does cease to exist, the diverse convents of the Institute, by their particular Superioresses, would consult their bishops to determine the one most capable of governing them. After these consultations, the convents would agree among themselves to request a person of the Sovereign Pontiff through their own Superioress General. Concerning the inability of the Superior of the Society of Mary to exercise his functions, this case is foreseen by the Constitutions: the one exercising authority in his place would also exercise it in regard to the Daughters of Mary.

Second Question: Do you think you have, as Superior or Founder, a jurisdiction proper and independent of that of the bishops? If so, what are the sources, the nature and the limits of this jurisdiction?

Answer: No, I don't believe so. I have no ecclesiastical title from which such a jurisdiction might emanate. It could never be proper to me and independent from the bishops, which is its cause and source. Its nature is that of the Institution and its limits are those of this same Institution, started, formed, and developed under Episcopal jurisdiction.[1]

[1] First edition: "The Superior, like all the members of the Society of Mary, has a special duty of humble submission to their Lords the Archbishops and Bishops. *Posuit Episcopos*, etc. The Superior claims no other jurisdiction over the convents than what he needs to maintain them in the spirit of their state and to have them attain their ends, and, by the very fact, he believes he can prove that over the fifteen years of the foundation he has never used it otherwise."

Third Question: Do you think that the Sisters have made the vow of obedience into your hands in such a way that it would be their duty to obey you, even when your orders would be disapproved by their bishops or be contrary to those which these last would give?

Answer: I believe that the Sisters are to obey their Superiors in all that is positively within the ends proposed by their Institute. It is not possible to suppose that a bishop would oppose acts of a just, legitimate and acknowledged obedience. Just for the sake of the argument, let it be supposed that a superior does give unjust orders, such as are irregular and even criminal. Then the bishop can and must oppose them. It is toward this end that the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary always give them free recourse to their bishop.

Fourth Question: Do you think that the bishops can release the Sisters from their vows and particularly from the obedience they believe they made to you?

Answer: I believe that the bishops can relieve the Sisters from their vows and particularly from the obedience they have to me until the time when the institution has been formally approved by the Church. But I also believe:

1. That a dispensation given to one of several Sisters of a community could become the cause of a great disturbance.

2. I don't believe that a Sister could have herself released from this vow without abdicating her employment.

Fifth Question: Do you think that you have the right of changing or of modifying, without the approbation of the bishops, the Constitutions of the Order approved and accepted by them?

Answer: I do not believe I have the right to change or to modify essentially, without the approbation of the bishops, the Constitutions of the Order approved and accepted by them; but I believe I have the duty of always examining what might need to be clarified, what the development of the Institute might require, in the matter of additional articles, all of which must be finally submitted to the bishops. I do not know of any founder of an order who acted differently in this matter. A first draft of the Constitutions may be good enough to have the approbation of the bishops and even of the pope in Rome, to be put into actual practice and then to get a formal approbation. That was the opinion of Archbishop d'Aviau and it was that which prevented me from making use of a favorable occasion to have the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary approved by the Sovereign Pontiff.[1]

Sixth Question: Do you think that, without changing or modifying the written Constitutions, you can legitimately invoke, to establish your rights, usages that would be contrary to these Constitutions; and do you think that the obedience of the Sisters extends to or takes in such usages?

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[1] Cardinal Lambruschini, then Nuncio in Paris, had offered himself, in 1827, to present to the Holy See the Constitutions of the Society of Mary and of the Daughters of Mary—Letter of Father Chaminade of December 24, 1835.

Answer: I do not believe I can, to establish rights, to invoke usages which would be contrary to these Constitutions, nor that the obedience of the Sisters could be made to cover such usages, which would amount to real abuses. God forbid that I should render myself guilty of such a prevarication!

Seventh Question Do you think that the bishops have the right to interpret doubtful points in these Constitutions, to modify them or even to change them notably, until they are approved by the Holy See and this contrary to your own interpretations or even without consulting your opinion?

Answer: I believe that the bishops have the right to interpret doubtful points of these Constitutions; but I could not persuade myself that each bishop could modify them or change them notably, and still less without considering the opinion of the founder. It could be otherwise for an isolated religious community. I know a notable example of such a one in Paris; and I think I can say in all truth that is why the monastery has not prospered.

Eighth Question: Do you think that the Sisters can withdraw themselves from the authority of the bishops without endangering their salvation and that, should they do it, you would then have personal rights to direct them, hear their confessions, etc.?

Answer: I was pained in answering the sixth question. I am much more so in answering this eighth and last one. Oh no! I do not think that the Sisters can withdraw themselves from the authority of the bishops without endangering their salvation and that, should they do it, I would then have personal rights to direct them, hear their confessions, etc.!

* * * *

As if the trial were not yet sufficiently severe, at this same time Father Lalanne sent Father Chaminade from St. Remy a new message full of recriminations.

This accounts for the three following letters.

617 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, March 26, 1832

My dear son—I did not address my letter to you in Paris because it did not seem from what I knew of your arrival in that city that my letter would reach you in time. . . . When your letter arrived from Paris, it came a few days after I had answered the one you wrote at St. Remy.

I fear that your new request will end by depriving you of the Certificate. Why always new plans?[1] You have been in Paris at a time when the Ministers are taken up with affairs and anxieties, and you addressed yourself to a man who is known not to believe in God.[2] You have had success well beyond your hopes, and I can do no more than congratulate you.

You are bitter, my dear son, and I pity you. I sincerely want to find a means to give you some relief, a means I can use in honor and good conscience; but you alone can cure yourself, with the help of grace. . . . What would my change of systems, as you call it, accomplish? The year would not pass without your becoming disgusted with it. You seem to call my paternal authority into question; but if this is so, my dear son, what about yours at St. Remy? Because I could only give you what I had myself.

In making everything so problematic, you have put us in a fine plight! . . . I shall not comment on the terrible threat that concludes your letter except to say that I hope through the grace of God that no evil will ever make me deviate from what I consider to be my duty. If I am going beyond my duty, have the goodness to let me know it.

I now come to the additional matters in your letter.

1. The park. I agree, my dear son, that in ridding the paths of brambles and briars, the woods will have more air. I also thought that it would be good to clean the inner part of the woods. I remember making this observation to Brother Clouzet. I think he answered that he would do what he could, but that it would be expensive if we wanted the whole job done all at once. It is true, my dear son, that I always recommended this woods to Brother Clouzet, especially since the Revolution. I am very surprised that you, who have experience in education believe that this park should become a pleasant place for youth. The surroundings are already too spacious for the supervision of boarders. I shall not add anything more, for I don’t want to be wrangling. If Brother Clouzet neglects this little woods, you have the right to warn him about it; and if he pays no attention to your reprimands, then you should notify me. . . .

As regards the big star that you want to reestablish and that Brother Clouzet wants to till, I am not well enough informed about the quality of the ground; but, at a glance, it seems to me that if the ground is really good and relatively easy to cultivate, it would be better to put it under cultivation than to plant trees on it; in this way it would be easier to reestablish the big star if that is ever to be done. I shall seek further information on this subject. You see that, if I am thinking

[1] See Letter 625.
[2] M. de Montalivet, Minister of Public Instruction since the end of 1831.

of drawing a reasonable profit, I am not aiming at the biggest interest, as you suggested. The better is often opposed to the good.

2. The swimming pool. I have permitted Brother Clouzet to complete the job, since the work was already well advanced when I found out about it. But I tell you it in no way agrees with my tastes and ideas, especially when placed in the woods. You will say that I am an old man who does not know how to put himself in tune with the ideas of the times and that some well-known schools have one. You may say what you please; but in my turn I shall say that I like cleanliness; I agree that baths are often useful, sometimes even necessary; but that that is not the case here. I sincerely hope you will have no cause for repentance because of the accidents that could result.

You did not feel it your duty to notify me of this undertaking, as well as of several others, "because you did not always expect to find me up-to-date." If you teach the line of conduct that you are following, you are twice as much to be pitied.

3. Geographical map.[1] How can you consider as underhanded Brother Clouzet's making a report to me? He had succeeded in making the meadow in front of the château highly productive. The site included a certain number of fruit trees that were regarded as precious. The meadow is destroyed, and the trees are cut down. He tells me about it. Is that not his plain duty? I do not wish to find fault with the geographical map nor to say that the utility to be drawn from it is not superior to the revenue from the meadow and the trees. I am saying only that this judgment in no way concerned Brother Clouzet.

"The orchards are perishing," you added, "but that is no business of mine." Brother Clouzet has the duty to take precautions so that the orchards will not perish; and it is up to you to warn him about it, if there is serious negligence on his part.

I am coming now, my dear son, to the end of your letter. The humor that made its appearance throughout really bursts out at the end. I cannot answer the language of passion. All I can do is sigh and pray. I invite you to join me, and you will have strength, both interiorly and exteriorly. You can also consider that what you vaguely call "your just recrimination" could easily be just a reflection of your point of view; and that it is not sufficient for a thing to be just in itself, to be so in reality, etc. . . . Do you really believe you "preserve full and entire charity only because, on account of religion, you do not burst forth and because there is still the appearance of union?"

I do not believe that Brother Clouzet likes to be called Superior by the workers or by outsiders. Whatever the case, I shall shortly notify him not to allow himself to be given this title, to reprove personally anyone who gives it to him, and to have himself called Director by his employees, which is sufficient to indicate the kind of authority he has over them.

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[1] To interest his pupils in the study of geography, Father Lalanne had conceived the idea of building a relief-map on the land at St. Remy. A four-acre meadow in front of this château—which thereafter was always called "the map"—was given over to this project. There were rivers represented by sand tracks. The mountains and hills rose above the plains, the cities and towns had their spots marked by cut stones, and the Department boundaries were indicated by plants corresponding to the products of the regions.

One of the reasons, my dear son, that led me to write this letter in my own hand is that you might see from this fact how much I desire order and peace and also how lively and tender is the affection that I have for you.

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618 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, March 26, 1832

I have received, my dear son, your letter of the eighteenth of the present month along with Father Chevaux's, dated March 15. I thank you for the fervent prayers on my behalf to my glorious and well-beloved patron. I have more need of this than you perhaps imagine.

I am very happy to note that you are continuing to see to the clearing and improvement of the fields and meadows; as you observe, we must go slowly, little by little, in proportion to our means. It is highly suitable that you do not part with all your money, except in an extreme emergency. It is for this reason that I asked you for a balance of the accounts of last year and not of the present year. For the present year, you can give only a kind of presumptive report. By the balance and by the report, I see what you have or what is due you, and I can better regulate the demands I make on you. I would not want to make any that are indiscreet, except in case of some extreme needs; and even then I would try to reestablish the balance as promptly as possible. It is so easy to come to an understanding when we act with honesty and simplicity.

I have seen several times, in the newspapers, that some kind of machine was invented in Paris for threshing wheat and several other machines that greatly simplify the threshing process. The prices seem reasonable enough. If you know someone in Paris, he could easily learn about these inventions; in any case, he could find the suitable addresses in some newspaper office. . . .

Father Lalanne is up in the air. I no longer reason with him because it would be useless and time lost. In fact, I did altogether too much of that last year. What has excited him the most is that you allowed yourself to be given the title of superior and that you made reports to me that he calls clandestine or underhanded about the park, about the swimming pool, and about the geographical map. He excuses the fact that he asked for no permission.

Following this letter, you will find an extract of my answer to these three points. Be careful to permit yourself, henceforth, to be given only the title of director. And don't give up being patient. Always fulfill all your duties with great modesty though not without firmness. Let me know about anything that is somewhat seriously in opposition to the accomplishment of your duties. Always show Father Lalanne your wish honestly to share his tastes and ideas; show that you are stopped only by the obedience that you owe me and by the nature of the functions it is yours to accomplish.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with an altogether paternal affection.

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619 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, March 29, 1832

My dear son—I have received your two letters, one of the twelfth, the other of the fifteenth of the present month. I am now answering the first. All the decisions, explanations and interpretations possible will never prevent all troubles and collisions—even between Brother Clouzet and Father Lalanne—until God, in his great mercy, will deign to apply his holy hand.

Father Lalanne only wants Brother Clouzet to be a kind of little clerk, who is constantly at his beck and call, etc., etc.

I cannot give you a better idea of Father Lalanne's attitude toward Brother Clouzet than by quoting the ending of a seven-page letter of complaints about him: "You may perhaps see a malignant passion in this entire letter—The fact is I am deeply wounded and shocked, but my claims are just nonetheless. It is because they are so just that I cannot find any force sufficient to impose them to silence. All I can do, from the viewpoint of religion, is not to cry out, to preserve full and complete charity, apparent union, etc. . . ."

Twice in this long letter, he says that one of them must withdraw. In our active correspondence of last year, he threatened to resign. I never made anything of his threats, because I always imagined that he looked upon these as a means of making me give in to his grand ideas. I am speaking to you of it today, because since the evil has become greater, he could finish by no longer containing himself, and bursting out in a most unfortunate manner. I have told nothing about it to Brother Clouzet, so as not to have him worry. All I had him do was to transcribe the part of my answer to Father Lalanne that relates to the latter's three accusations. My answer is very moderate in tone, but it justifies Brother Clouzet.

Brother Clouzet must doubtless fulfill his duties with firmness but without prejudice to patience, humble modesty, and fraternal charity. Always be sure to support him in the practice of these virtues. If Father Lalanne were to make some kind of a sudden break, Brother Clouzet would then at least have nothing to reproach himself with in his manner of dealing with him. There is doubtless some difficulty involved, but there is also much spiritual benefit. It is very annoying that these unfortunate disputes come at a time of revolution, but God permits them and we must remain silent. Make it a point, my dear son, to write at once anything that happens at St. Remy.

You calm me somewhat by telling me that Father Lalanne's instructions to the boarders have already produced a good effect and have boosted Father Meyer's courage.

I pity you, my dear son, for having so many difficult classes to teach. They deal with such abstract matters as to call for really serious preparatory studies,[1] and you are obliged at the same time to exercise the functions of the holy ministry. Nevertheless, take care not to overdo your

[1] Father Chevaux was in charge of mathematics courses in the boarding school.

studies or use too much lung-power in your explanations. Your health is weak, and your strength must be spared. Try to advance in faith and in the imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is too bad that we can give so little time to these important matters. Let us at least act in such a way that nothing will prevent us from practicing virtue. In that way, *"Porro unum est necessarium."*

Always take good care of Brother Guillegoz. If faith eventually takes a good hold of his soul, he may become a good subject. We must help him derive profit even from the class that distracts him from the exercises of the novitiate.

When Father Etignard seems discouraged to you, see if you can get him to write me. He knows how much I love him and his brother also. Tell them both many friendly things from me.

The three weekly Holy Communions accorded Brother Deshayes seem quite sufficient, at least for some time. It is already a great deal for him to receive three times.[2]

I now come to your last letter, but before doing so I shall recommend you to keep a complete secret what I have told you about Father Lalanne. It is very possible that the hostile dispositions he manifests toward me are only apparently more rhetorical than real. The confidences I am giving you should serve only to enlighten you in the spiritual direction of Brother Clouzet and to invite you to notify me of anything you might consider serious. . . .

I have been deeply touched, my dear son, by the attention with which you offered me greetings for my name day. Thank you also for putting me in contact with the entire St. Remy Community so as to pray for all in general and for each one in particular. I shall write on another page to my dear children of the Novitiate Community of St. Remy. May the Lord shower upon you all his most abundant blessings.

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[2] He was young and not too sure of himself. He was to withdraw the following year.

620 – TO MY DEAR CHILDREN, THE BROTHERS
WHO FORM THE NOVITIATE COMMUNITY
OF ST. REMY

Agen, March 29, 1832

The list of your names, my very dear children, on the beautiful solemnity of my glorious and well-beloved patron, arouses all my sensibility and my tenderness toward you.

I read and reread your names, which brought you all before my mind's eye—all of you to whom I am so devoted.

The virtues which you ask of the Lord, by the intercession of St. Joseph, tell me that you are all well disposed, that you all desire to become real children of Mary. Take courage then, my dear children. Let us walk with firmness toward the crown of immortality we shall find at the end of the road traced out for us by the Society of the august Spouse of St. Joseph.

Although the letter containing the list of your names did not come to me until after the solemnity, I did not pray any the less for you. If I could not put that list on the altar, according to our custom in the celebration of the holy mysteries, I made up for it as well as I could. I brought it several times before the Blessed Sacrament, uniting my prayers to your prayers, just as you unite yours to mine.

Let us remain, my dear children, intimately united. First be united among yourselves by bonds of fraternal charity. Then, be united by the same bonds of charity to your tender father, who considers you as a precious portion of his family, and who wishes you on every occasion, but especially on this one, the abundance of heavenly blessings.

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Bishop Jacoupy was satisfied with Father Chaminade's written answers. He nevertheless judged it good to ask him for new details, so great was the bias against the Founder! He had Father Trincaud ask him, on March 30, a new series of six questions, to which, on April 1, Father Chaminade gave the following reply.

621 – TO FATHER TRINCAUD, VICAR-GENERAL OF AGEN

Agen, April 1, 1832

I have the honor of conveying my replies to the six observations or questions of the bishop on my answers to His Lordship's eight questions. I beg you to place them before him, and I hope that they will be satisfactory to him.

The work of the Institution of the Daughters of Mary, having been undertaken with the consent and under the protection of His Lordship, would do no more than languish, were he not to accord me complete confidence. Have I gone beyond what I believed he had granted me? Have I during the past fifteen years abused his confidence on any particular point? I know that I am full of defects and miseries, but I have never refused to listen to the counsels that anyone deigned to give me. If I do not always follow them, I give the reason for it. If the counsel is transformed into an order by a competent authority, I submit to it, even when I see that this authority is plainly mistaken. If I do not always do things as others would do them, it is doubtless because I do not know how to do them better, and perhaps also because the times are not the same. *Nova bella elegit Dominus*.

I beg of you, Rev. Father, to make a formal declaration to His Lordship, on my part, that I shall consider it a duty—a duty very dear to my heart—to recognize and to have recognized his episcopal authority and to give him at all times proofs of my respectful submission. Tell him also that, if in the matter now at hand, he thought he saw in me a kind of opposition, that is only because of some misunderstandings—because I thought myself obliged to sustain the work of the Lord, however worthless his instrument might be.

I have no doubt that His Lordship has heard still more murmurs against me and possibly something even more than complaints and murmurs. This is an inconvenience attached to the eminence of his episcopal see. Are these complaints and murmurs fair and just? If His Lordship would have the kindness to let me know of them before taking action, ordinarily I could give him satisfactory reasons for my conduct. And I think myself strong enough, if I happen to be in the wrong, to acknowledge it to him candidly.

I am not adding to the new memorandum any reports of difficulties which may have had a part in troubling our precious harmony. This report, in a memorandum, could produce an effect that is opposite to that intended. When I have the honor of seeing His Lordship in person or perhaps even by some confidential letters, I shall tell him some of my views based on my experience. I am with a very respectful consideration, Rev. Father, etc. . . .

FATHER CHAMINADE'S REPLIES TO THE OBSERVATIONS OF HIS LORDSHIP THE BISHOP OF AGEN, REFERRING TO HIS ANSWERS TO THE EIGHT QUESTIONS WHICH HIS LORDSHIP HAD ASKED HIM.

First Observation: Concerning the first question. The desire you express regarding your successor or your substitute as Superior General will be well weighed, but it will not have the force of law. It even seems better that it be not accepted hastily, since the Daughters of Mary, in a Council held to consider this matter on October 14, 1831, have formally manifested a contrary desire. It is essential to let this question evolve further through experience and reflection. When the special document containing your reflections is submitted for the approbation of the bishops, they will judge more judiciously what decision it is suitable to take. In the meantime, are you disposed to leave to the Sisters the liberty of expressing their opinion on this point and to conform yourself personally to the bishops' decision on the supposition that the Sovereign Pontiff will not yet have spoken?

Reply: I am always disposed to leave to the Sisters the liberty of expressing their opinion in this matter and to conform myself personally to the decision of the bishops, on the supposition that the Sovereign Pontiff shall not have spoken yet. I have always been so disposed.

Second Observation: Regarding the second question. The negative answer to the first part of the second question seems to be sufficient. From that time on, in fact, your jurisdiction flows from the bishops. It is then up to them to determine its nature and its limits, allowance always being made for the intervention of the Holy See. Do you recognize this?

Answer: I have recognized and I recognize that my jurisdiction over the Institute of the Daughters of Mary emanates from the bishops, and I recognize, in consequence, that it has no other nature and no other limits than those the bishops may give it.

Third Observation: Concerning the third question. This answer is not precise enough. Since it is not possible, from what you yourself say, to suppose that a bishop be opposed to acts proceeding from a lawful obedience, it follows that, if a bishop disapproves of orders of the Superior General or gives such as are contrary to them, he will have or will think he has good reasons for so doing. Now, in this case, are the religious to obey the bishop or the Superior General, even supposing that they have reason to believe that the latter is right?

Answer: I believe that, in the case where the Sisters would receive contrary orders from their Superior and from the bishop, their duty is to obey their bishop. But I also believe that the Sisters ought to make known to their Superior these contrary orders. It would seem suitable to me, if the orders of the Superior preceded those of the bishop, that they notify the former, should they have reason to believe that he was ignorant of them. But in principle the obligation lies in obedience to the bishop. Furthermore, I am much inclined to believe that, if a bishop gave orders contrary to those of the Superior in matters referring directly to a general administration of the Institute, the execution of these orders should be temporarily postponed.

Fourth Observation: Regarding the fourth question, it is recognized that, if one or several Sisters of the same community were dispensed from their vows and in particular from

that of obedience, that they would believe to have made to you, there might result a great disturbance. But do you think that fear or even the moral certitude of such a result would invalidate the right of dispensation which you recognize the bishops to have, or that after the disturbance had taken place, this right would no longer be the same?

In the second place, on what do you base yourself for believing that a Superioress who would be dispensed from her vows would be abdicating her position by the very fact or would have to abdicate it?

Answer: I have not believed and I do not believe that fear or even certitude of a great disturbance arising from the dispensation from some vows, would invalidate or weaken the right which the bishops have of dispensing from vows which are not solemn. Nor do I believe that this right would not be the same after such a disturbance had actually taken place.

I have not said that a Superioress who would have herself dispensed from her vows would abdicate her position by the very fact, but that she should abdicate it. The basis for this obligation seems to me to result from:

1. The respect which she owes to the oath she has taken at the time of her promotion to her office;

2. The difference of direction that would be found between herself and the Community;

3. The little confidence that the Community would have in a Superioress who would have neither the same views nor the same ends in mind. It might be added that after one of the principal bonds that unite the Superioress and the community had been severed, the union would suffer a great deal.

Fifth Observation: Concerning the seventh question. This answer appears correct, as well as the reflections that accompany it. However, so as to leave no doubt in the matter, it is asked if, in the case where the bishops have Daughters of Mary in their dioceses and they would be in agreement as regards notably modifying or changing the Constitutions, and the Sisters agree with them, would you judge the advice or the consent of the Superior General necessary?

Answer: In the case where the bishops who have Daughters of Mary in their dioceses would be in agreement as regards notably modifying or changing the Constitutions, and the Sisters agree to these, I would not consider the consent of the Superior of the Institute necessary in principle.

Sixth Observation: To shorten the delay brought about by the exchange of notes, and also to make sure that he has well understood your observations, and that you have correctly grasped his, His Lordship the bishop believes he should add here a ninth question which includes all the others.

Do you regard yourself, in regard to the Daughters of Mary in the diverse dioceses where they reside, as the simple delegate of their respective bishops in all matters, and do you think

that at all times and for any reason whatsoever, these Sisters may in good conscience appeal from you to them?

Answer: To answer only with regard to the bishops, I consider myself to be their simple delegate.[1] I believe that, if my powers had not this divine source from the beginning, the obedience of the Daughters of Mary would no longer have faith as its foundation and that the motives for their obedience would no longer have anything of a religious character. I anathematize all other doctrines.

In consequence, the Sisters, at all times and for any cause whatsoever, may in complete surety of conscience appeal from me to their respective bishops.

This principle as well as everything that results from it, is incontestable; but its application must be reasonable and regulated. If, for example, there is question only of interior and personal matters of conscience, the Superioress may and really is to ignore the appeal; but for matters that have reference to what is exterior, the Superioress should have a knowledge of the council and even help the Sisters in the clear exposition of their case. The Superioress must at least be in a position to explain matters to the bishop, if she judges it to be useful or necessary. If the councils are held, if the requests for superior orders are made without her knowledge, her direction becomes impossible, especially if it is the Superioress General who holds the councils and requests the orders.

* * * *

About the same time, in answer to a letter of Mother St. Vincent concerning a Sister who had applied for the dispensation from her vows without the knowledge of the Founder, Father Chaminade wrote to the Superioress of Agen this energetic letter, which seems to have dissipated her illusions.

[1] It seems quite probable that, in the preamble of this declaration, Father Chaminade, as he will do later with more energy at the time of the difficulties of his last years, is making allusion to the mission received by him from God in Saragossa, a mission which he otherwise always has in mind in submitting to the authority of the bishops and of the pope.

622 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Agen, April 6, 1832

My dear daughter—The repeated reading of the letter you have just written to me demands that I speak to you very openly.

Doesn't the pitiable state in which you find Mother Stanislas give you a chance to see the force that illusions can take, when they are nourished for a long time? Look to your own self, my dear daughter. Has the illusion I have been combating since arriving in Agen diminished? On the contrary, has it not increased!

You imagined that, if I were your superior, my authority was as nothing regarding you, either as simple religious or as Superioress General, for the simple reason that the episcopal authority was incomparably more excellent than mine. You were even persuaded, or someone at least tried to persuade you, that I was not submissive to the episcopal authority or that I did not recognize it. From that, you drew the practical consequence that you were to deliberately, unknown to me, take orders and obtain decisions without my knowing anything about it, and that your conscience was to have nothing to reproach you with, because you were obeying a higher authority. I have always maintained, as you well know, my dear daughter, that you were in illusion, that you were exposing yourself to the commission of many faults, that you would bring about a great disturbance and even that you would be lacking in the respect for the oath you took at the time of your installation.

I have never prevented you from consulting. On the contrary, I have often advised you to do so, considering the little interest you took in the remarks I made to you. But I have always required that you inform me of the consultations you held, in reference at least to matters which might have an exterior effect and which were not solely personal to yourself. I required it because it is a matter of constant experience that you never give an account of things really as they are, that you habitually omit mentioning essential circumstances which would infallibly vary the decision of a wise and enlightened counselor. How, my dear daughter, can you not see that by such conduct you render practically impossible the exercise of the authority that it is my duty to exercise over the Institute of the Daughters of Mary? How can you not see that, apart from the injurious suspicions regarding my pretended rebellion against episcopal authority, you were doing all you could, not only to authorize these injurious suspicions, but even to shake the institute that you had sworn to maintain? And to commit at least many faults that became harmful to it?

I have said at the beginning of this letter that you should see, in the strength that illusions assumed in Mother Stanislas' head and heart, the force that an illusion can muster and how far it can lead. Now see how far yours has led you!

I can well imagine that you do not believe yourself under the influence of an illusion and that Mother Stanislas does not believe so in her own case.

It is quite possible that, on the contrary, it is I who am under the influence of an illusion and that you are praying, as you think, with a good heart, and asking others to pray that the Lord may deign to enlighten me. You would then have no other means than to consult some outsider who would not have been influenced or informed one way or the other. I am taking it upon myself to write up the report on the affair, and I shall send it to you before giving it to this outside counselor. Now if you persist in your way of seeing things and if you refuse this last means of assuring whether you are seeing correctly or badly, then I shall come to a final decision.

I shall examine with Mme Belloc what can be done for Mother Stanislas. I thought it my duty to write you this letter before she comes, so that you will not think they had come together to arrange for a common plan of action. I have not seen her since my illness. Yesterday I was surprised to find her pretty well up to date regarding all our affairs. My dear daughter, may the grace and peace of the Lord be always with you!

* * * *

The next day Father Chaminade informed the Superioresses of the two Convents of the North—Acey and Arbois—of the situation as it now stood. Here is the letter he addressed to the Superioress of Acey He sent a copy of it to the Superioress of Arbois.

622bis – TO MOTHER GABRIELLE, ACEY

Agen, April 8, 1832

My dear daughter—I am answering your letter directly, the one of the twenty-seventh of last month and which I received on the fifth of the present month. . . .

One of the principal reasons I have not acted in regard to the desire which you and the Mother Superioress of Arbois expressed, that I should give an obedience to the Mother General to visit the convents of Arbois and Acey, was:

1. The promptitude of her hasty and nonreflective character;

2. The tenacity of her ideas, her not wanting to listen to practically any of the observations I have had occasion to make since her installation as Superioress General. When she found herself too pressed by my observations, she constantly consulted, secretly and unknown to me, the Bishop of Agen and took his orders. Did I not have reason to fear that, in her visits to Arbois and Acey, she would do more harm than good, besides knowing as I do the character of Father Bardenet?

3. After two months, things have come to the point of fearing there might be a schism in the Institute. When I had strong reasons for fearing this, I said as much in a letter to the Mother Superior of Arbois. I wrote this letter to inform both of you without having to speak openly to the Community Council of Arbois. The Mother Superior of Arbois sent you a copy of this letter, but you have not understood its real meaning, doubtless because she did not explain that this letter was a confidential supplement to the explanation I wrote to the Community Council.

You will find accompanying this letter a copy of the one I wrote the day before yesterday to the Mother Superior of Agen, and so you will be somewhat informed regarding what is happening and regarding the line of conduct you are to follow. I shall not fail to instruct you regarding all you will have to do. I shall not recount to you all the evils that result from this anarchy, as it is not permitted to speak against the neighbor except out of necessity or for the great utility of the neighbor himself.

Concerning the need you feel of a visit, you can hardly expect any as long as there is fear of revolutionary movements, but I shall try to supplement the lack by correspondence. The same for the convent of Arbois. You and the good Mother of Arbois should let me know your general and particular needs, spiritual as well as temporal, and I shall try to meet them in the best way possible. I shall also write Father Dane.[1] Let us hope from the grace of the Lord that we shall correspond to all of his designs upon the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and in particular upon the communities of Acey and Arbois. May the Lord shower his blessings upon you and upon our dear Daughters of the convent of Acey!

* * * *

A few days later, Bishop Jacoupy, overcome by the loyalty and the charity of the Founder's declarations, restored all his powers to him. So as not to give reason for any criticism, though, the Bishop specified that when he entered the Convent, he take the precautions prescribed by canon law. This was the end of that sad episode. From this time on, the relations between the Daughters of Mary of Agen and the Founder resumed the character of religious confidence that they had had from the beginning and continued in this vein until his death. Mother St. Vincent, in particular, little by little developed a real veneration for Father Chaminade which she expressed in touching terms the day after his death.[2]

[1] Priest of the Diocese of St. Claude, whom we shall meet again later on.

[2] "How I pity Father Lalanne," she wrote at the time of the latter's difficulties in Layrac. "May God grant him the same grace that he granted me, in drawing me out of my illusion five years ago!" (Cited by Father Caillet, January 14, 1836.)

623 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, April 24, 1832

I thank you, my dear son, for the details you give me about your round of visits in Alsace. I was pretty well aware of them from the active correspondence I have with all the establishments there and especially with the Rothéa brothers. I am doing my best to lessen the evils and the defects you noticed, and especially to encourage the subjects to correct themselves interiorly. It would be vain and useless to change them and to give orders if the subjects do not become intrinsically good. Unless that happens, we shall not succeed. Furthermore, you know, my dear son, that my policy, since the Revolution, is to make the least possible changes, not to have ourselves spoken about. . . .

Yes, my dear son, I am interested in your agricultural labors, and I want to see them always improve. Your idea of making St. Remy a model farm is very good, but both prudence and patience are necessary. Yes, patience, for all cannot be done at once or in grand style because of the costs. We are in a situation in which we can make only moderate progress in the domain of St. Remy. Prudence is necessary so that everything may receive due consideration.

As regards the machine for threshing the wheat, it seems that the one that is manufactured in Paris is, in fact, the same one that was invented in Holland. Before receiving your last letter, I noticed in the *Quotidienne* an invitation from the manufacturer. I had a copy made of it, and I am sending it to you. The small details given by the manufacturer will tell you if it is really an improvement on the Holland model. I would hardly like to see it constructed in the orange grove, as this would interfere with our future plans. Besides, you can see from the enclosed note that we need only a donkey to run this machine. For our locksmith machine, much bigger and heavier, a little horse sufficed to run it. We didn't even need anyone to give commands. The expense was very moderate.

I am surprised, my dear son, that you can't give the net result of the produce, to use your expression, on the properties of Marast and St. Remy, as a result of not having taken note of the expenses and costs of culture:

1. because it had been agreed upon, in principle, how you would make the said expenses, which required the taking of notes to enable you easily to figure out the result.

2. because it is very easy to supply such notes, at least approximately. Whatever the case, I am going to notify Father Caillet to reassure him that he will very shortly receive a money order for five hundred francs on Paris.

Yes, my dear son, you must hold firm to your post, and Father Chevaux was very correct in exhorting you to do so. It is not during combat that soldiers ask for holidays. Only this firmness must be accompanied by the practice of the Christian and religious virtues: charity, humility, patience, modesty, etc.

Since the star[1] may make a very good field and is easy to cultivate, you may begin work on it when there is sufficient money to advance. I am leaving everything to your prudence.

I believe, my dear son, that it would be good to wait a little longer, before speaking of Brother Seguin and of our factories or machines. Presumably, there will be some kind of winding-up of the affair.

Be wise and prudent, my dear son. Write often about whatever you think might be of interest to me. May Father Chevaux also write to me often. Father Lalanne has not yet answered my last letter. His correspondence usually gives me very little information about anything. May the Lord shower upon you, my dear son, abundant blessings!

* * * *

In the meantime, Brother Auguste and Father Collineau, while temporarily lending their assistance to the Society's work, were at the same time completing their separation from it.

In the spring of 1832, they applied for and received from the Archbishop of Bordeaux the dispensation from their vows.

At this same moment, Father Caillet was to present for Holy Orders the young Brother Fontaine, seminarian of the Madeleine. Archbishop Cheverus hesitated. Father Chaminade took the occasion to write him the following letter, full of noble dignity.[2]

624 – TO ARCHBISHOP CHEVERUS OF BORDEAUX

Agen, May 30, 1832

Your Excellency—Not being able to offer Your Excellency the homage of my profound respect and my humble submission personally, I wanted at least to convey these sentiments in writing. Father Caillet has just furnished me this opportunity.

He tells me, by one of his last letters, that Your Excellency had admitted Brother Fontaine to the subdiaconate with a kind of regret for fear that the Society would not continue, considering the withdrawal of some of its principal members. And besides this, there was the fact that you do not know this Society. I shall have the honor of making known to Your Excellency, by a simple and rapid sketch, what this Society is exteriorly; and I shall ask Father Caillet to communicate whatever is most intimate concerning its interior functioning and its government.

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[1] See Letter 617.

[2] His Excellency Jean Louis Lefebvre de Cheverus, a native of Mayenne, emigrated at the time of the Revolution and, in 1795, left from England for the United States, where his zeal and charity won him the esteem and the veneration of everyone. Promoted to the See of Boston in 1810, he had just sought retirement in France when in 1824 he was promoted to the See of Montauban and then transferred to Bordeaux in 1826. Named Cardinal in 1836, he succumbed, shortly after, to an attack of apoplexy.

The Society of Mary took rise under the eyes and protection of your very respectable predecessor, Archbishop d'Aviau, eight or nine years before his holy death. The foundation of the Daughters of Mary, first at Agen, had preceded by three or four years that of the Society of Mary.[1] Archbishop d'Aviau had quite a detailed knowledge of the whole thing. The Constitutions and general regulations of the first Institution had to be applied to the second with some modifications necessitated by the difference of sex. Archbishop d'Aviau approved the extract which characterized these modifications.[2] He gave his blessing to the members who pronounced their vows, and every year thereafter until his death, he had the signal kindness to visit us at retreat time and bless all who made or renewed vows or had been admitted to the novitiate.

As the Society of Mary grew, I wanted to acquaint the Sovereign Pontiff with it and obtain from him some particular favors. My request, which briefly explained the ends and the organization of the Society of Mary, contained a favorable postscript written by Archbishop d'Aviau. A Brief from the Sovereign Pontiff followed, granting the favors requested. Two copies of the request containing the favorable postscript were made, one was sent to Rome and the second was filed away in our Secretariate. It can be duplicated if Your Excellency so desires.

There was a third approbation, more authentic and more detailed, as regards the Society itself and its principal Statutes, when I applied for the approbation of the Government. I believe that this approbation is in the Secretariate of your Archdiocese. Father Barres was its editor after he had seriously examined the Statutes I presented to him.[3]

I could, Your Excellency, show or have shown a sequence of secondary titles all of which suppose a society recognized and authorized. For example, a letter written entirely by the hand of Archbishop d'Aviau which promises to ordain all the subjects that I shall present for ordination. Following these authorizations came those of several archbishops and bishops who permitted establishments in their dioceses.

I am not speaking of the Government. That is beside the point.

But because of the defection of its principal members, isn't the Society in a position to die out? Whatever esteem I may have for Father Collineau and Brother Auguste, I could not decide whether they were principal members from the religious standpoint, not considering their talents and functions. Whatever influence they may have had in the Society, I do not believe this breach will trouble the Society, let alone sweep it away. Their example could momentarily harm several of the less fervent members; but the more regular ones, looking upon the Society as the work of God, will in no way be affected by their withdrawal, as regards the stability of the work. Furthermore, I believe them both timorous enough not to seek to influence their former confreres.

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[1] By these three or four years must be understood the interval between the first overtures relative to the foundation of the Daughters of Mary, 1814, and the foundation itself of the Society of Mary.
[2] See Letter 102.
[3] See Letter 263.

During the long trip I made when you first arrived in Bordeaux, Your Excellency, following the desire you expressed to Father Collineau to become acquainted with the Constitutions of the Society of Mary, the latter immediately had the honor of putting before you all the copies of these Constitutions along with the general and the particular regulations. Whether you were frightened by their length or satisfied to know of their existence, you had them returned to Father Collineau.

Since then, a new edition has been drawn up, which has not yet been reviewed or approved. It is against this new edition, without having read or examined it, that two or three rose up in opposition. From this opposition they took the pretext—they had no other—of quitting the Society.

The Society continues under the old Constitutions. Since this upset, I have forbidden bringing up any questions relative to this new edition.

Father Caillet will have the honor of successively presenting to you, Your Excellency, everything that has been written, the old as well as the new. We shall never have anything to hide form you, as we have regarded you and still regard you as a second Archbishop d'Aviau and as a second Father.

I was greatly pained at the thought that two of my children should have grieved your good heart by giving you such a poor idea of the Society of Mary or by having you believe that, because they were leaving it, there were troubles and dissentions in the ranks. To speak truly, if they had been more prudent, their departure would hardly have been noticed. Brother Auguste's conduct, so contrary to all rules, has caused enough trouble in the matter of finances. That is about all I can say about this financial matter. A settlement has been undertaken.[1] I have reason to hope that everything will be taken care of as a family without commotion of any kind.

Your experience of recent history, Your Excellency, as well as of present-day events will not permit you to be surprised at these contradictions. You surely know of the more important difficulties that arose last March regarding the Institutions formed at the beginning of the last century. It is only two days ago that I handed in my answer to the report that was given me about them.[2] If the Catholic religion taken as a whole experiences so many jolts, the little sections of it must not complain of those that come their way.

The dark storm that arose over the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and stood particularly over the convents of Agen and Tonneins has been entirely dissipated. If Your Excellency is interested in knowing more about this, I shall have Father Caillet properly inform you so as not to tire your patience by making this letter still longer.

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A new letter of Father Chaminade to Father Lalanne, always calm and restrained, but firmer than ever, letting him know that no kind of threat could make him deviate from his line of duty.

625 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, May 21, 1832

I had almost despaired, my dear son, of receiving an answer to my last letter, when I got your letter of the seventh of the present month.

The great disruption which the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and its Founder have experienced has completely ceased. Order and the former harmony are reestablished without any modification, because the disturbances had as a cause only illusions which it has been hard enough to disperse. It must have been quite difficult for you, in this circumstance, to give advice to the Mother Superiors of Arbois and Acey. But I am sure that when you did give them any, it was with great uprightness of heart.

I believe, my dear son, that our intentions are always the same, but that we have different ways of reaching them. One general means was the raising of the boarding school at St. Remy to the grade of Institution. It was the plan that was adopted, and you were going to Paris only to remove the difficulties in the way. You are now substituting a new way, a new plan.[1] The first plan, more modest, had a better chance for success; and I also believe that it would have more easily attained the final end which we propose to ourselves, or which we are to propose to ourselves, that of multiplying Christians. When, on the occasion of your petition, I said, "Why always new plans?" I had in mind many more specific plans rather than general ones. To have a facility for conveying plans is to have genius; but to wish to make them prevail by arbitrarily changing what hasn't even been tried, that at best leads to very great inconvenience and dissonance in a Society.[2]

Your position, my dear son, is sad and false only in your own eyes. You must have believed that I saw you as very hostile and even threatening, because that is the way you saw yourself. Had I really seen things that way, I would have taken other precautions. I believe that, if in the turmoil in your head, you came to the point of withdrawing, your withdrawal would be that of a wise and just man.[3] I am not pushing you, my dear son, to any kind of extreme. If, as a good logician, you examine the way you are reasoning, you will soon see the weakness of your minor premise, as well as the flimsy ground on which it stands, so that your conclusions must

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[1] Father Lalanne decidedly breaking away from the traditional limits of the University and giving free course to his genius, "divided teaching into three branches, distinct but not separated: the mathematical sciences, the positive sciences and letters." He "furthermore, maintained the study of the Latin language as the regulator of good taste in literature." He did not fear to add to the study of French, Latin, and Greek the study of a living language, German or Italian or any other at will. Finally, he introduced vocal music and linear drawing into the curriculum.

[2] But without wanting to make them prevail at all costs, but to change some even before having had them adopted by the Society . . .

[3] Your withdrawing from the Society would be done at least in an honest manner and not by any incorrect methods of procedure.

necessarily be erroneous. For a long time my dear son, I have ceased to place before you the divine precepts of abnegation, of obedience, etc. All last year all you wanted to do was reason, and I think that I was reasoning also. This year, you are again taking the same question, but under other aspects. To my mind, it will be more prudent to end all further discussion.

At any price you want what you are asking for. Here is a case to which may be applied what St. Augustine says: What we want is always good and even becomes holy when our desire is more ardent: *Quod volumus*, etc. As far as I am concerned, I have a genuine desire to enter into your views, of condescending to all that is not opposed to my duty and to my conscience. I have already told you that this was the case at present. I have changed nothing that was primitively regulated. When I named you superior of St. Remy, I named Brother Clouzet at the same time to the post we call Head of Temporalities. I completed the nomination only after having exhorted both of you to good mutual understanding. You have since learned that you can follow your ideas and plans better if you yourself are Head of Temporalities as well as Head of Zeal and of Instruction. I did not believe your viewpoint to be true, and I do not believe it now; and the more you insist, the more you take measures to persuade me, the less I shall believe it. The functions of Head of Temporalities, such as they are at St. Remy, would essentially hamper those of the Head of Zeal and of Instruction, and with all the greater reason, those of the superior, although you think differently.

You say you would be ready to make the sacrifice, if the Spirit of God had suggested the sentence—the sentence of your annihilation—because you doubtless think sacrificing your ideas means being annihilated. But, a new doubt: "Here below, the Spirit of God resides only in the Church and in its words. Now is our work approved by the Church? Is it even known by the Church?" It would seem, my dear son, that you have come to an understanding with Father Collineau. Father Caillet has just presented one of our young men for ordination to the subdiaconate around the feast of the Most Holy Trinity. The archbishop refuses, for the same reasons suggested by Father Collineau to the superior of the Grand Seminary. Father Caillet insists, explains himself and asks that the young man be ordained *subtitulo paupertatis*. The archbishop consents and exhorts Father Caillet to persevere. Although this unfortunate story is now over, I believed it proper to write the Archbishop of Bordeaux. I wrote last evening and my letter left this morning. I shall have it copied and included in this one.

The Society of Mary is one of the works of the Church, where the spirit of God resides. If the Spirit of God is not within me personally, because of my unworthiness, it is in me as the Superior of a Society received favorably in the Church by its bishops, by the Sovereign Pontiff himself, by the Apostolic Nuncio—even though its Constitutions do not as yet have the final approbation of the Church. As for myself, I have laid its foundations as Missionary Apostolic. Its foundations were not, so to say, level with the ground, when I gave notice of it to the pope and asked of him favors for the budding Society, under the auspices of the holy prelate who was governing the church of Bordeaux. What else was there to do? What more did St. Vincent de Paul do? What more did so many other founders do? Perhaps several might be found who did a great deal less.

I have just been consulted by the members of another Society, founded at the beginning of the last century under the title of Company of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit. The

Superior General of this Company is at the same time General of another Institution of men and two of women. One of these two counts one hundred fifty establishments and a thousand subjects. Nevertheless, this Company is less advanced than we as regards its Constitutions and its approbations. A single bishop, the ordinary of the diocese, had approved some regulation made by the Founder. Another General had added a few more articles with the consent of the Company. Their Motherhouse, since the concordat is no longer in the same diocese, and the new bishop has never found any difficulty in recognizing as belonging to the Church, both the Company and the General of the four Institutions. Their difficulties are not the kind you are creating. I do not enter into detail in my letter to the Archbishop of Bordeaux, so as not to appear to carry indiscreet tales that he may be ignorant of.[1]

My dear son, you end your letter by telling me that "you feel that all these things are painful to me." It is true, my dear son, that they are painful to me, even very painful, but without being troubling. As I desire what God desires, my submission to the dispositions of his Providence leaves me in great peace. I pity you. I am sorry for you. I pray the Lord to enlighten you, because I believe you are laboring under an illusion, whatever conviction to the contrary you may have.

I am stopping here, while recommending the sick to your conscientious care and embracing you very tenderly. I shall always love you, in spite of all.

* * * *

Here is a consultation of Father Baret, one of the confessors of the Daughters of Mary, about the nature and the extent of the vow of enclosure in the Institute.

"The Daughters of Mary," writes Father Baret, "have as end of their Institution, the spiritual and corporal relief of persons of their sex. Once this principle is established, I conclude that the Superior General and the Superioress General may, in conscience, order a religious who has made the three perpetual vows and the two vows of enclosure and teaching, to go out of the convent:

1. to teach catechism in town or country to persons who don't sufficiently know their religion;

2. to console afflicted persons;

3. to try to convert persons hardened in crime;

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[1]The Company of the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit, better known under the name of the Company of Mary, founded by the Blessed Grignon de Montfort, 1673-1716, in the diocese of La Rochelle, had been governed since 1821 by Father Gabriel Deshayes, 1767-1841, Superior General, who also governed the Brothers of St. Gabriel, the Daughters of Wisdom and of the Sisters of St. Gildas. The Motherhouse of the first three Congregations was then and has remained at St. Laurent-sur-Sèvre, in the diocese of Luçon. The difficulties Father Chaminade alludes to bore on the question of the vows of religion, which, foreseen by the Founder, had ceased to be in force any longer, and were to be returned to their original force only in 1834. Father Gabriel Deshayes developed a personal relationship with Father Chaminade on the occasion of the foundation in Réalmont.

4. to bring corporal relief to the homes of the sick;

5. to take care of them in their infirmities, etc., etc.

“If this principle of the Institution of the Daughters of Mary is correct, I think that the consequences that I have come to are rigorously true. Thus I have the honor of asking the venerable Founder to enlighten me concerning the principle and its consequences and to tell me whether I am correct in my deductions or in error. From these things it follows that the vow of enclosure of the Daughters of Mary depends uniquely on the superiors. It differs from that of other Sisters in this, that the latter may not go out of the enclosure unless they are exempt from it, unless authorized to do so by the bishop of the diocese in which they reside. And even then, for the authorization to be licit, it must be accorded:

1. because of a contagious malady existing in the community;

2. because of a war threat;

3. because the convent building is on the point of collapse;

4. because of the formation or reformation of another community;

5. the bishop may also dispense a Sister from enclosure who is being sent to another community to be superioress or mistress of novices, when in this community there is no one who has the required qualities;

6. it may also be, if the prioress is obliged, because of a fief, to go and take an oath to a secular Lord, when it is impossible to do so by procuration;

7. if a Sister wants to go from a less perfect state of life to one more perfect;

8. if the needs of the community require that the lay Sisters go out to beg.

Here is Father Chaminade’s answer to this consultation.

626 – TO FATHER BARET, AGEN

Agen, May 24, 1832

The principle from which Father Baret draws five consequences not being exactly established, these consequences cannot be deduced from it; besides for sixteen years, neither superior nor superioress have been able to see them in the ends of their Institution.

It is very true that the vow of enclosure, being exceptional for the Daughters of Mary, is somewhat different from the same vow made in other Orders.

Here is how this vow is set forth: “I vow to observe, during the same time, enclosure, as long as I shall not have an express order to go out momentarily from the superioress or from the ecclesiastical superior.”

The consequence that Father Baret draws from the nature of this vow for the Daughters of Mary—that is to say, that it depends solely on the superiors—is correct only for active enclosure; because passive enclosures depend, like all other vows, on episcopal authority, without prejudice to that of superiors.[1]

Although in the profession of this vow it is said “As long as I shall not have the express order to go out momentarily from the superioress or of the ecclesiastical superior,” this must be understood, for the superioress, as only a discretionary power. That is to say, in case of urgency in which it is impossible for her to take counsel with the local superior if there is a possibility of doing so, because this is the spirit of the Constitution and the custom constantly followed. The superior remains responsible before God for the orders he may give for momentary breaking of enclosure. The motives for them must be very serious. He alone is nevertheless the judge of their seriousness. The Sisters obey blindly.

If these few remarks do not sufficiently meet all the difficulties that can be brought up, Father Baret can continue to propose questions.

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[1]Active enclosure concerns the Sisters going out of the convent; passive enclosure concerns the entrance of outsiders into the convent.

627 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 24, 1832

My dear son—Do what you can and as you can for your instruments and your workers' agricultural tools. It would not be improper, considering these times, to dismiss M. Seguin. Let us not grow weary of being patient! Father Lalanne wrote to me a few days ago. Although his tone was somewhat more moderate, he always insists on his position and for reasons that are at best rambling and without much foundation. I replied but with mild firmness. If he tries to bring in Fathers Chevaux and Meyer by his subtleties, I shall see that they get copies of my letters; or what might be better, I shall have them write to me themselves, and I would answer them directly.

I am always surprised to receive so few letters from Father Chevaux. I know that he is very busy and perhaps even more than is necessary; but what occupations can he have that are more urgent than that of giving due consideration to the confidence that I have in him? For example, why does Father Chevaux not speak to me of Brother Fridblatt?

I see no drawbacks in transferring the little chapel to the big hall destined for that purpose, but let it be done without expense . . . it will suffice for the moment that it be done with decency. When you receive this letter, I do not doubt that you will have made your trip to Besançon and sent directly to Father Caillet the money order for five hundred francs. As soon as your letter was received, I informed him that it would come to him directly. I did it to calm him, for he had just told me he was worried about giving back the money he had borrowed. Wisdom, moderation and firmness! I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

For the first time, in the following letter we find mention of Father Lalanne's new proposal, his shift to new ground. Seeing that he could get nowhere with limiting Brother Clouzet's powers, he proposed to Father Chaminade to separate totally his work from those which, from that time on, Brother Clouzet would especially direct, viz., the property the normal school and the novitiate.

The dispute was taking on a new aspect, and Father Chaminade, no longer having to defend his principles, showed himself disposed for the sake of peace to enter into the proposed arrangements.

628 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 29, 1832

My dear son, Father Caillet acknowledged reception of the money order for five hundred francs which you had sent him. You have done well in writing me about the interview you had with Father Lalanne. Several times last year, the question arose of separating the boarding school from the rest of the establishment. I never spoke of it to Father Lalanne because he himself never made any proposition of that kind to me. Rather, there has been a continual desire on his part to be at the head of everything and to dispose of everything according to his wishes. Several times there were even threats of a sort about quitting the Society.

My dear son, either you or Father Chevaux must write to tell me exactly what is going on. Perhaps in the end he will open his eyes to the light. . . . It is very unfortunate that all these disagreements are coming during the time of a revolution; but perhaps God permits them, so let us adore the designs of His Providence, and let us submit ourselves to them with complete resignation. . . .

I wrote you, my dear son, as well as Brother Saumade, a few days ago. I am here repeating my tender greetings.

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The following letter, in the midst of the correspondence with St. Remy, informs us of the difficulties that Brother Auguste's departure created, which were later to have such sad repercussions in the life of Father Chaminade.

629 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Agen, June 9, 1832

My dear son, I keep always in mind the observation you made at the beginning of last March. It is a source of great sorrow to me that my answers did not satisfy you. I shall now answer a few words, my dear son, to the three parts of your letter relating to the liquidation of Brother Auguste's belongings.

1. It seems to me quite correct that the Society take over the debts that were contracted in its name; but is it just that it take over those that were said to be contracted in its name but which were in reality carried out without its knowledge and even against its will and to its detriment? Besides, these debts—at least a certain number of them—were only undertaken under the private name of Brother Auguste. The parties he contracted with did not know him as a member of a Society or as one acting in its name. What reflections might be made here! But you see them more clearly than I could present them to you. How is Brother Auguste still to pay the first of the bills, authorized to the sum of twenty thousand francs! It is useless here to speak of the considerable injury that this kind of business has done to the Society and, above all, of how much it is to be regretted that Brother Auguste has not kept his vows!

2. Would it be just, especially considering the above amount, that he take back purely and simply the goods he bought? When he entered the Society he owed more than fourteen thousand francs.[1] The releasing of his goods, of the life annuity for fifteen hundred francs, is an incidental question which can be more easily treated when the others have been disposed of.[2]

3. I have read and reread the third part with pleasure. It is new evidence of the upright dispositions which I have always seen in Brother Auguste.

"Enough money" can hardly be hoped for in these difficult times nor even in the immediate future. Nevertheless, we might reach a settlement with Brother Auguste whereby he would take the Saint Marie Boarding School with the profits and losses until all his creditors have been satisfied. The arrangement would be for an undetermined time—the actual length depending upon conditions we would set relating to the settlement of his debts.

Here you have, my dear son, the first ideas which come to my mind while reading your letter. I am deciding nothing. I am looking only for what is just and reasonable in an affair there was no reason at all to expect. I have not moved on this before out of consideration for Brother Auguste, since it has been for some time that he has been definitely separated from the Society, although he kept up some legal appearance of still belonging to it.

My dear son, I am taking part in your new sufferings. I am praying the Lord to deign to deliver you from them or at least to lighten them and to make them meritorious for you. I am embracing you very tenderly.

P.S. Father Caillet consulted me about the Laforgue affair. I advised him to go himself to see this tenant, and if he could not succeed, to come to some agreement or arrangement with you. I have no counselor in Agen, as I have told you before.

* * * *

Of the letter in which Father Chaminade answered Father Lalanne's new proposal, only the following has been preserved, which includes the precise conditions placed upon their acceptance by the Founder.

630 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, June 17, 1832

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[1] Brother Auguste required that this debt be left to the account of the Society. Now, the day after his death on August 14, 1874, Brother Etignard wrote to Father Lalanne: "Brother Auguste in dying left debts to the amount of twenty thousand francs. The sale of his belongings, still to be done, will not bring in more than six thousand, if even that much. Consequently, more than fourteen thousand francs will be lost to his friends, from whom he had borrowed money on all sides!"

[2] The life annuity for fifteen hundred francs, due Father Estebenet for the sale of his boarding school on Rue de Menuts, see Letter 127, was hypothetically among Brother Auguste's belongings, but it was and always remained a burden on the Saint Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux and later in Layrac.

My dear son—You propose at the end of your letter a way of reestablishing harmony and union. Before saying anything about this proposal, I ask you to observe that the break between us—if such really exists—of harmony and union, in no way comes from me. A consequence of this truth is that there will be harmony and union only insofar as I do not grant all that you desire. I am already granting a great deal. Let us come to specifics without further reflection.

You propose the separation of the boarding school. Out of love for peace I willingly agree to it, provided:

1. that the separation be only temporary;

2. that you occupy the château and some dependencies necessary to the boarding school—such as yards, flower and vegetable gardens—a tenant, charged with the maintenance and all repairs, who has only the use of such things and no right to make radical changes, unless with express permission of the rightful owners;

3. that you regulate what you will do for the community. From the day when this new arrangement will be agreed upon, we shall suppose a liquidation already made; thus everything due to the common treasury from the boarders, as tuition or advance payments, would remain in the said common treasury, in proportion as the parents would discharge their debts.

This arrangement will be accepted only after I have been able to tell Brother Clouzet about it, and perhaps also someone else, so that I can have an exact idea of everything involved.

This arrangement will not be prejudicial to anything, one way or another, as regards the old Constitutions or as regards the new edition made or yet to be made.

* * * *

As he told Father Lalanne, Father Chaminade informed Brother Clouzet about the proposed separation of the works at St. Remy.

631 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, June 18, 1832

. . . Father Lalanne has just written me a long letter. At the end of it, he proposes, as a means of reestablishing harmony and union, to separate the boarding school from the property and to name for himself a Head of Temporalities for the boarding school. I had a copy made of this part of my answer to his letter, and you will find it herewith enclosed. Weigh well the three conditions that I lay down for this separation. Consult Father Chevaux. Consult also Father Meyer, if Father Chevaux thinks it apropos. The first condition is that this separation be only temporary. I am agreeing to it only for the sake of peace. The second condition is that on the property accorded the boarding school, Father Lalanne changes nothing. He must act, so to say, as a head of a boarding house who is renting the château along with the dependencies necessary to the boarding school. As regards the third condition, we shall let that be determined by what he will be willing to give. It is, nevertheless, good that something definite is agreed upon, which we can count on. You will answer me as soon as possible in case these conditions are acceptable to him, so that peace may reign everywhere.

In the postscript of his letter, Father Lalanne tells me that you have been in Switzerland with Brother Pelleteret to buy calves, bulls and heifers, because of the difficulty in procuring milk at St. Remy. He adds that he is not joking in giving me this news. I answered him that I was glad he was not joking, because I could never have guessed there was such difficulty in procuring milk, especially since for so many years you have never spoken to me about it. During my stay at St. Remy, I saw a great use being made of milk. I noticed that there were some cows in St. Remy then and even a cowherd. Why then do you make such expenses at this time with our financial difficulties being what they are?

I am stopping here, my dear son. Be careful, be prudent! I am embracing you tenderly.

P.S. After this letter was written, I received yours of June 10, with the power of attorney of M. Saumade. I am seeing more and more the need of a separation. I also see that your morning and evening exercises will have to be made in your new chapel, that it would be better to have your kitchen apart, and that Father Lalanne be asked to keep his professors and his pupils in the places reserved for them, so that others on the property may never be annoyed or have their possessions rifled. Be mild and patient, my dear son, in the contradictions you experience, so that they may be of service to you before God. In the firmness you will need, so that the arrangement may be carried off properly, never lose the principles of honesty and of a respectful reserve.

The supplies of grain you have taken in might be divided according to the number of persons to be fed on either side. The bread, however, might be baked in common, each party getting his proportionate share. There will doubtless be other provisions to prevent trouble. Nevertheless, those which might wound delicacy must be omitted for the time being, such for example as would regard the religious as mere employees of the boarding school. All products of

the property used by the boarding school, no matter what they are, will have to be paid for by the same.

There is a great difference between what you tell me about your trip to Switzerland and what Father Lalanne tells me about it…

This separation will give Father Chevaux more liberty, so that we may be able to correspond.

I am very sorry for Brother Pesant. The same for Brother Perrot.[1] I think that notice has been given to Brother Pesant's parents of the death of their son and the same with regard to Brother Perrot. A day will come, my dear son, and maybe it is not far off, when the same will be said of us as is now being said of Brother Pesant: He is dead. Happy for us if we have died in the Lord.

* * * *

Without much hope, the Founder makes, through Father Chevaux, a last effort to avoid the separation. He will resign himself, though, if it has to be.

The letter is concluded with interesting directions to the master of novices.

632 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, June 25, 1832

Your long letter of the fourteenth, my dear son—only too long—made me understand what last year I knew only imperfectly. It wasn't long before my original understanding was shattered by the disputes which took place. I am going to explain myself. . . . It seems, from all that you tell me, that Brother Clouzet has confounded his two titles, Administrator of the property and Head of Temporalities of the boarding school, and that he has in no way followed the responsibilities of a Head of Temporalities. There would never have been any collision between the superior and the Head of Temporalities if each had followed the ruling peculiar to their respective offices. At that time, when Father Lalanne was working on the edition of the Constitutions at Gray, I told him to arrange things in such a way that the responsibilities of the three Heads would never get entangled. Among the Daughters of Mary it sometimes happened that one of the three Mothers would assign some subjects to one thing and another would assign them to something else related to her office without knowing they had already been assigned. I never told Father Lalanne that there had been coldness or collision between the Superioress and any one of the principal Heads. There never was any, and there has never been any in the Society of Mary except at St. Remy—and that has only happened because neither Father Lalanne nor Brother Clouzet has observed the Regulation in its entirety.

[1]These two young religious had just died, the first on June 6 and the other on June 10. Brother Henry Perrot, 1810-32, from Porrentruy in Switzerland, of Protestant origin, made his abjuration of heresy at St. Remy in 1830 in the presence of the pupils and entered the Society, in which he showed great piety. His favorite virtue was devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

It follows from these observations, my dear son, that if each would observe the Regulation in its entirety, the separation that Father Lalanne has just proposed to me and which I have agreed to under certain conditions, would not be necessary. I have agreed to it only for the sake of peace. This measure of separation of the boarding school from the rest of the property is a concession which is very little in accord with the religious spirit and, above all, with the spirit of the Society. It leaves a kind of ferment in hearts, which I can tolerate, but which I am far from loving.

My dear son, being well instructed in this situation, you may give Brother Clouzet salutary counsels. He can propose to Father Lalanne to hold exactly to all the points in the Regulation concerning Head of Temporalities properly so called for an establishment, and that the administration of the property of St. Remy and Marast would be a separate matter. If, after having made your observations to Father Lalanne and after the promises of Brother Clouzet, the former continues to ask for the separation, I shall subscribe to it as soon as I receive from Father Lalanne an answer to my last letter as well as a reply from Brother Clouzet and your own observations. . . .

You must suffer, my dear son, from all these mistakes which are causing such flimsy argumentation and misunderstandings in a matter which, after all, is so serious. I assure you that I have often taken my share of the worries which you must have as a result. You have not wanted any part in the situation, but you have always held to what is primitive and well-ordered, and you have acted wisely. On a small scale such things happen in particular religious societies, as they happen in the Church as a whole. In the confusion which results, what an excellent means we have to preserve ourselves from all error, in attaching ourselves to the Apostolic See, as to a primitive center, the very pillar of truth!

My dear son, I shall now say something about the various matters you speak of at the end of your letter. Brother Curot, you tell me, has understood the necessity of evangelical renunciation and of the mortified life. That is something, but it is not much if his heart does not incline itself to the renunciation of self and to the mortification of Jesus Christ. In the spiritual education you have to give your novices, you must always reach the heart and form the will as well as enlightening the mind in the principles of the interior life. I do not see how the will may be gained for God otherwise than by faith and charity. The fear of the judgments of God may shake it advantageously and oblige it to turn toward God. But that is still only the entrance on the way of life: faith and charity alone make us walk on it.

Brother Fridblatt, you tell me, is asking to be presented for Holy Orders. That is a bad sign. It seems he knows neither what sacred orders really are, nor what dispositions are required. We have just had Brother Fontaine receive the subdiaconate. When he presented himself for the examination, the superior and the professors of the Grand Seminary said to Father Caillet that, if he so desired, he could become a professor of theology and philosophy. Brother Fontaine has asked me several times to be kept from Holy Orders for good because of his unworthiness and to be employed in the Society in the meanest functions. He has only obeyed a formal order. . . .

Is there really a vocation to the religious state as there is to the ecclesiastical state? Father Lalanne told you, at the last retreat, that everybody was called to the religious state, and you think it your duty to teach the contrary. You ask me if you are in error. Here it could be answered that the one is right and the other not wrong. The one is correct, depending on the point of view he has, as regards the religious state. He says to himself: The evangelical counsels are for everybody but *Qui potest capere, capiat*.[1] The other one says to himself: No one observes the evangelical counsels unless the Heavenly Father gives it to him to understand their importance. This gift of the Heavenly Father may well be called a vocation, a grace of favor and predilection. This double manner of seeing the subject may have its advantage, according to what we are trying to get at. Father Lalanne, for example, in giving the retreat wanted to do away with all worry and scruple on the subject of religious vocation. He could very well suppose that their reunion at St. Remy was an effect of a special choice on the part of God and that from then on, they would have only to do violence to themselves, etc., etc.—Would all Christians who would be willing to do violence to themselves receive the grace of a religious vocation? It seems to me there is no doubt at all that they would, if we do not take the religious state strictly under the form that we have been obliged to. For several centuries the first Christians were real religious, and in all centuries there were some who lived very religiously. I am stopping here, as it is sufficient that I have indicated to you some means for reconciling two opinions that seem so contrary one to the other.

I am going to answer Brother Brunet. You might have an interview with him, for it is good to frame the question clearly. It is vexing that there is even need to bring up such questions,[2] especially during a time of revolution; but the good God permits it. Let us do what is plainly our duty to do. Let us remain inviolably faithful to him and be at peace. While embracing you tenderly, my dear son, I am wishing you this true peace of the Lord.

P.S. Have Brother Curot write to me with openness of soul his most intimate sentiments. Once he is a priest, I would have my eyes on him for an important position. But I am determined, as far as important positions are concerned, to employ, as much as possible, only real religious.

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At this same time, we find the following extract of a letter of direction to Father Meyer, preserved by this last in his spiritual notes.

633 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Agen, June 26, 1832

. . . The sentiments of penance, mortification, humility, and recollection are particularly precious. Be truly faithful, as they will lead you to the practice of good meditations, and good meditations will in turn increase them.

[1]He that can take, let him take it.
[2]We do not know what questions are referred to here.

The practice of penance is to be regulated, not only as far as bodily strength is concerned, but by the inspirations of the Holy spirit as well or by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. The difficulty is to assure oneself of the truth of these inspirations because, in times of fervor, Satan sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light in order to suggest to us indiscreet penances. He thus succeeds in making us abandon penance itself by the distaste we feel for it, by the injuries to health that it produces. With attention and in great humility before God and with the aid of the director of your conscience, you can easily make this discernment.

A general practice to grow in all the virtues of penance, mortification, and humility is to unite oneself to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, penitent, mortified, humble, etc., in a spirit of faith and love. I would very much desire that you exercise yourself in the union with Jesus Christ or to the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ in praying and even in doing all your actions with him, by him and in him. . . .

* * * *

Correspondence with Father Lalanne is taken up again. In it Father Chaminade makes clear the sense and the extent of the concessions to which he has regretfully consented and which he still hopes not to see realized.

634 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, July 13, 1832

My dear son, the pleasure you show over my condescension regarding the projected separation is a proof that either you have changed in your pretensions or that we have not understood each other in our discussions for more than eighteen months.

Brother Clouzet is piling on his head several offices, in particular that of Head of Temporalities and that of steward for the properties of St. Remy and Marast. They are joined on his head because this seemed proper to him—he thought they could mutually assist one another. However, they could also be separated and given to two distinct Heads. That is the way it was done at the beginning of the establishment. The Head of Temporalities was Brother Bousquet, and the stewart or administrator was Brother David. Brother Clouzet was first Head or superior. In all of our correspondence, we have always confounded or confused these various responsibilities. The Head of Temporalties, taken separately as such, is very much dependent on the superior of the establishment, although he is not appointed by him. For example, the latter surely has the authority to order the Head of Temporalities not to serve moldy bread to the boarders, etc. I am citing this little point only because it seems to be pertinent. Today it seems to me very evident that all these ideas have been confused, that Brother Clouzet does not really know what is demanded of the Head of Temporalities, a cause of real vexation for you, since he exercised its functions arbitrarily. On several occasions you did not even seem to be Superior. You may be wrong in two ways and more or less guiltily: the first, for not having yourself made this distinction; the second, for not having strictly enforced the regulations of the Head of Temporalities properly so-called. You were expected to know the Regulation, since you had read and thought it over, at Gray and, in the second place, since the appointment to these diverse

Offices is very distinct. After the appointment I sent Brother Clouzet a very clear statement of the duties which each one of the Offices imposed on the incumbent.

You add, my dear son, that "you would be still more satisfied, if I appeared more convinced of the suitability of the goodness and of the necessity of this measure I am acceding to." I cannot appear to be convinced either of the suitability or of the goodness of this measure. In it, there is no suitability; since, after all that has happened, it will be scandalous. And it will render the scandal habitual, always recalling the unhappy dissensions that do so much harm. This measure has goodness, only insofar as it stops the harmful dissensions—but the Regulation has sufficiently provided that there never be any collision between the Superior and the Head of Temporalities. In Gray I spoke to you of a certain overlapping of authority, which was sometimes found in the exercise of the three principal Offices, and I gave you several concrete examples of it. However, I am not saying that there was collision between any one of these Offices and the Superiorship. It would be good, my dear son, not to quote me as having said something I did not say . . . I could be convinced of the necessity of this measure only to the extent that there could not be any peace at St. Remy without it.

This question of peace, it seems to me, boils down to two things. First: Does the Regulation concerning the Head of Temporalities, well observed, wound the Superiorship and is it even in opposition to the Superior's rule? Second: Does Brother Clouzet want to submit himself to the directions in the Regulation concerning the Head of Temporalities? There is need for the measure if one of these two points is lacking. If the Regulation is not sufficiently developed, if it is not easily applicable to the establishment of St. Remy, it is easy to make some changes, even in the spirit of the Constitutions of the Society of Mary. Will Brother Clouzet want that? Will he accept the said Regulation? I believe so, but at least we can make a try at it.

If cholera[1] is too threatening, you may be thinking of giving vacation on August 1. From the current news, I know it is causing much havoc in the Department of the Haute-Saône. But, if that is true, I doubt that the parents would be pleased to receive their children. It would be otherwise if the epidemic broke out at St. Remy. Generally, in Paris, the boarding schools have remained open despite the intensity of the scourge. In giving vacation a month sooner, you accept consequences likely to be very annoying to the establishment. . . .

I like music very much and I like that it be taught to the pupils who have talent for it, whether vocal or instrumental. Concerning military music[1] and the use you make of it in church and at the holy offices, I cannot say the same.

The confidential interview, my dear son, that you tell me you had two years ago with a friend recalls to me one of LaFontaine's fables which one of your professors lately quoted for me on another subject. In the administration, the only order you see is what you imagine. You will do well to attach yourself to the religious state. Otherwise you will be wanting in fidelity to God, since it is he who has called you. But if you do not change your line of conduct, you will have many combats to sustain; and you are running the risk of perishing on the way, of not reaching

[1] The cholera epidemic of 1832, the first in Europe, caused terrible ravages. Nearly twenty thousand persons succumbed to it in Paris alone.
[1]Requiring brass instruments.

the end pointed out by the Gospel. This friend blamed your presumption. I surely wish he had been wrong or that he had been mistaken.

Brother Auguste is a very honest man. He did not separate himself from us because we were not living according to Rule, but because we urged him to live that way. If the bandage of illusion falls from his eyes, he may well ask to come back.

You will do well not to forget the village school affair in St. Remy. See how just the Government is and how it fulfills its promises even when without prodding. Two burses and two half-burses for the normal school, that is surely something!

May the Lord, my dear son, deign to grant you his light and his peace!

* * * *

Father Chevaux is kept informed about everything as is required by his role of mediator.

635 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, July 13, 1832

My dear son, I have just answered Father Lalanne, who thanked me for having acceded to the separation of the boarding school from the property. I am writing him in the same way I wrote in my last letter to you. I profited and I shall continue to profit by the observations which you, Father Meyer and Brother Clouzet made to me. You may give them this copy of my letter to Father Lalanne. It is good that we all speak in the same tone and manner. It really seems that Brother Clouzet has given Father Lalanne cause for complaint. Perhaps everything will be arranged peacefully. Keep the copy of this letter. Depending on how things turn out, I might ask you to use it. The good God permits these storms, and so we must also permit them. Let us bless His holy Name in whatever happens! . . .

Take good care of all your people, always walk in the path of faith and believe in my tender attachment.

P.S. Before this letter left, I received one from Brother Clouzet dated July 6. You will be kind enough to tell him about it. He must not think of going on retreat before everything at St. Remy has been settled peacefully. Let him remain calm!

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Father Lalanne is not yet satisfied. A new letter from him calls for new explanations, which Father Chaminade never tires giving. He goes into all the practical details of the separation, for the purpose of attaining the least harmful results.

636 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, July 22, 1832

My dear son, a few days ago, I wrote you a long letter with the hope that perhaps we had badly understood one another, that his many responsibilities had made Brother Clouzet consider the others as dependent upon the office of Head of Temporalities, and that he had really given you reason for complaint in not following the Regulation for this Office. I had about made up my mind, should he not follow the full Regulation, to take away this Office from him altogether.

It would be difficult for me to put into words what all the discussions you have brought up, especially since the Revolution, have caused me to suffer. I am giving you too much credit to believe that you have looked upon this Revolution as a favorable opportunity to realize plans for which you alone have the solution. However, if the Revolution counts for nothing in your thinking, can't you imagine the same for me? . . .

I cannot understand why, if we all go ahead with honesty of purpose, any serious discussion should arise. You propose the separation from the boarding school from the rest of the property. I consent to it. A division of properties must be made. I assign to the boarding school those that are suitable to it. There would be serious drawbacks for the morality of the boarders in giving them more space. I am fully convinced that, often enough, far from giving them more space, you will be obliged to restrain it.

But the separation, thus made, will attract attention. My dear son, it will attract no more attention than what you cause yourself. Can you not quietly arrange everything before the vacation, carry it out during the vacation, and when the pupils return, forbid with wisdom, as coming from you and for the sake of good order, going beyond such and such limits, etc.?

This separation will involve great expenses. I thank you, my dear son, for telling me about it. I hope to find some ways of avoiding them. I shall write about the matter very strongly to Brother Clouzet. Furthermore, the separation being only temporary, it is better to put up with some want than to have to make repairs, which could possibly last for only a very limited time.

You seem to fear, my dear son, not to have the wherewith to sustain your boarders if we do not mix the products of the property with the paid tuitions. These fearful expressions surely must have gotten away from you in a nonreflective moment, since you fixed the tuition at five hundred-fifty francs. The supplies you get from the property, will always cost you a little less than if you procured them elsewhere. Anyhow, at least the transportation cost would always be that much saved.

I shall be very obliged to you, my dear son, not to present any more plans regarding this separation. If the separation actually takes place, it must be purely and simply. As you first seemed to agree, this is the sole means of keeping peace. In less troubled times, we may be able to do better. . . .

You tell me, my dear son, that you planned to put forth to your Brothers assembled all that you propose to do, that Brother Clouzet seemed alarmed and that Father Chevaux feared that this Council or Chapter would have a bad effect on the young men who would be called to attend

it. With all my soul I pity you, seeing your reason and even our religion subjugated by your mental torture. What do you think such a Chapter would do? What lights and what force could it give its decision? Its force would be only an act of rebellion, and with what vexing consequences! Its lights would surely be nothing short of errors and darkness. There are not true lights in meetings and reunions except such as one made in the name of the Lord.

I pity you a lot more than I blame you, my dear son, since you believe yourself moved by conscience, and possibly I am scandalizing you in calling your long and persevering resistance mental torture. The illusion that dominates you is very similar to that which dominated the Mother Superior of the Daughters of Mary, from about the time of her installation. She had been strengthened in her deadly illusion by the bishop and by her confessor for more than a year. And from all this what harmful consequences resulted! The illusion was finally dispelled; good order was restored; and now the light continues to increase as she is repairing the damaging effects of her long and persevering illusion, which she always called her conscience. The Institute of the Daughters of Mary was teetering for a long time on the brink of an awful precipice.

On several occasions, I was strongly inclined to believe that Brother Clouzet did not know how to keep to a just balance between the spirit of economy and what propriety calls for, that this leaning toward economy and saving had been cultivated by the practice he had in business. This must be what makes him esteemed and qualified for the precise offices he had to fill in St. Remy; and surely you would not be there yourself except for something similar. However, would you want to infer that this spirit of saving and economy takes away from him the feeling for propriety? I think you are mistaken here. What do you honestly have to reproach him with in the dealings you had with him at the time of your trip to St. Remy before being Superior of the place? From what I have been able to see, I feel like reproaching him for too much rather than for too little. Some members of the community complained from time to time of too much stinginess. Most of them appeared content. Were the few correct in their complaints? It is possible that at times they were. But we both know that generally all providers and economes, whatever the kind, always find complainers in the communities, who are never satisfied unless these officials are only simple machines that can be pushed about at will.

All this reduces itself to one thing: If there had been no separation, Brother Clouzet would have been invited to penetrate himself well with what the Regulation says regarding the Head of Temporalities, and, in carrying out his duties, to follow its spirit exactly. The Superior would have been invited at the same time to admonish him charitably in case he failed to do so.

My dear son, I am writing to you in my own hand, because Brother Morel has sore eyes, and this makes things quite uncomfortable for me. I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

The same day Brother Clouzet received a copy of the letter which the Founder addressed to Father Lalanne. Father Chaminade's practice of making what he did and wrote known to all interested parties is constant throughout his life and shows the uprightness and loyalty of his soul to a high degree. These few lines accompanied the copy.

637 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 22, 1832

My dear son, herewith is the copy of the answer I am giving to the letter which Father Lalanne transmitted to you, and to Fathers Chevaux and Meyer, before having it posted. You will also be able to transmit my answer to these two gentlemen.

I do not think Father Lalanne had any intention of saying that you wanted to make a fortune by following the practice of merchants in his temporal administration. In referring to this matter, I am assuming that he does not have this intention.

I am discussing neither your plan nor his. He asked me to separate the boarding school from the property. I agreed to it under three easy conditions, for the sake of peace. I understood the separation to be absolute, and his letter before the last gave me reason to believe that he understood it the same way.

You know that I received your last two letters. Be prudent and patient. Write to me often, always with openheartedness. Often consult Father Chevaux. Tell Brother Etignard that I received his letter and that I shall answer him shortly. We are living in difficult times. It doesn't seem as if we are paying enough attention to this fact.

I am renewing, my dear son, the assurance of my tender attachment.

* * * *

In his conversations with Father Chevaux, Father Lalanne had expressed the doubts which he liked to bring up to support his cause concerning the legitimacy of vows taken in the Society of Mary, for want of a sufficient approbation on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities. Father Chevaux, who was not aware of the origins of the Society, could have had Father Lalanne tell him about them. It was important that he be informed on this subject. Hence the very remarkable letter which follows.

638 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, July 31, 1832

My dear son, to answer your last letter, I need a reply from Father Lalanne. I am writing now only to answer the note inserted in your letter.

I would like to believe, my dear son, that the pretended confidence which Father Lalanne thought it his duty to express to you comes from a pure zeal rather than from the knowledge which puffs up. Without a long reasoning process, I shall give you very briefly the historic account of the Society's birth. The Little Institute, in 48 articles, is not a part of this account—it has its own history.

The Institute of the Daughters of Mary, its Constitutions, general and particular Regulations were approved by the Bishop of Agen after a serious examination. The Institute was founded. Before my departure from Bordeaux for Agen, I informed Archbishop d'Aviau about the Institute and the principal objections to it.[1] I have here the answer I made to these objections. I presume that the written document is in our Secretariate in Bordeaux.

After returning to Bordeaux, I prepared subjects to form the Society of Mary. When I thought I had a big enough nucleus, I notified the Archbishop of Bordeaux. I submitted to him a little extract of the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary, which was being applied to the Society of Mary, especially to its organization, the moral and religious duties we assume being sufficiently set down in the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary. The Archbishop approved.[2] We made a retreat. When it was over, I announced in full assembly and in the name of the Archbishop, that the Society existed. His Excellency had the goodness to give his blessing to all new members of the Society.

[1] Objections to perpetual vows were made by the Bishop of Agen. See Letters 67 and 69.
[2] See Letter 102.

Each year, until his death, he came to bless the new members, after having been informed, in writing and by word of mouth, of the Society's progress.[1] I can tell you now that I have never done anything of importance without consulting His Excellency or without taking his orders. But let us continue! Shortly after the Society of Mary began its formal existence, I proposed to His Excellency to explain the Society to the Sovereign Pontiff and to ask some favors from him. I prepared the request or supplication, in which I told His Holiness about this religious society, about its principal ends and organization. The Archbishop of Bordeaux added a postscript.[2] A Brief was returned from the Sovereign Pontiff which among other things accords a plenary indulgence at the time of profession of perpetual vows. Two copies were made of the request to the Sovereign Pontiff, both with the postscript of the Archbishop. One was sent to Rome, and the other is in our Secretariate. At that time, I seemed to suspect what is happening today, namely, that it would be possible to cast a cloud upon the legitimacy of its institution.

Some years later, thinking about having the Society authorized by the Government at the first suitable moment, I asked the Archbishop for a positive authorization. It was drawn up by Father Barrès, based on the writing and papers I furnished him. Father Barrès is the first Grand Vicar of the former as well as of the present Archbishop. The said authorization was inscribed in the registers of the Archbishop's secretariate.[3]

A sophist could, my dear son, find a way to criticize all these things, because he could 1) consider them only separately instead of as a totality; 2) fail to make allowance for the times, circumstances and precautions that I have always taken not to compromise any bishop or even the Pope; 3) forget that I have always acted in virtue of a Brief of Missionary Apostolic, especially recognized by the Metropolitan in the Diocese of Bordeaux and in the Novempopulanie.[4] In the Diocese of Bordeaux I have always been authorized and approved to do all that an Archbishop could do himself; 4) forget that when I rendered an exact and detailed account to the apostolic Nuncio to France, of all the institutions I had founded, the method I had followed, etc., everything was recognized as regular, and I received only encouragements. And you yourself, my dear son, are a little proof of it, in the matter that embarrassed us, at the time of your promotion to the subdiaconate.[5] Doesn't His Excellency reason as we do, that is to say, as regards the validity of your vows? 5) understand that in thus isolating some facts, we take from them the strength of this continuity in action and correspondence, as much with the Archbishop of Bordeaux as with several other archbishops and bishops.

I am stopping here, my dear son. If Father Lalanne has communicated his scruples to someone else, that person has to be enlightened. Concerning Father Lalanne, you will not succeed in making him listen to reason, no more on this point than on several others. He has tried

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[1] See Letters 145, 175, 215.
[2] See Letter 110.
[3] See Letter 263.
[4] The Novempopulanie, the name given to the nine people who composed it at the start, formed a division of the Roman Empire whose names remained attached to the Christian Metropolis of Auch, which was its capital. Until the Revolution, the Archbishop of Auch bore the title of Primate of Novempopulanie and of the two Navarres, and it is through the Archbishop of Auch, as we know, that Father Chaminade had obtained the title of Missionary Apostolic.
[5] Father Chevaux had had scruples regarding the validity of his ordination, bearing, it would seem, on the nature of his ordination title.

to establish pretensions that I cannot in honor and in conscience admit, and I have told him so several times. If he believes that, in conscience, he is not exercising the Office of superior according to the spirit of the Society of Mary and conformably to the Regulations and to his nomination, then let him offer me his resignation. In a letter I have already let him know that this course would be preferable to being always at loggerheads with his superior. His teaching about his ideas must be doing much harm to several young men, most of them without the least experience in matters of this kind.

However laconic I may seem to have been in this letter, I notice that it has become very long, considering the minimum amount of time I had to devote to it. Brother Morel, who copies all my messages, has sore eyes, and this is what obliges me to write in my own hand. I noticed that you had need of being calmed and so I took up my pen. I pity you in your position. May the Lord who has said: *Oportet ut eveniant scandala*[1] be your consolation and your source of strength!

* * * *

Some days later, Father Chaminade wrote to Father Chevaux on the subject of a new worry, in connection with the normal school at St. Remy. Father Chevaux was not accepted as titular head by the Academy, and Brother Gaussens replaced him in this post.

639 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 9, 1832

My dear son, the difficulties put in your path by the Rector of the Academy of Besançon have no foundation. Nevertheless, I don't think I should fight his pretensions by writing directly to the Minister of Public Instruction. We have arrived at one of those times called "the patience of the saints."[2]

Without approving or disapproving, Brother Gaussens will go to St. Remy. He will present himself to the Rector. However, I would not want him to leave right away because of the current heat wave and also because I wish him to spend a few days in Agen. Here he can get definite information about the primary teaching Method as applied to a normal school and so be in a position of organizing a model school if the need should arise. It is also very possible that his trip will be delayed by a third cause which in no way depends upon us. You must have at least an imperfect idea about this.

A schoolteacher can be furnished the village school in St. Remy only when the lawsuit between the Mayor and the present teacher has been terminated by the dismissal of the latter. In no way must we have any part in this lawsuit. It is the third case of this kind that we are meeting this year.[1]

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[1] It must be that scandals come.
[2] Apocalypse, XIII, 10; XIV, 12.
[1] Doubtless following the troubles caused by the Revolution.

I am very easily inclined to believe that the military music has moved the villagers in favor of the Establishment,[2] but that does not make me appreciate it for the divine service of the chapel. . . .

I surely desire, my dear son, that all our dispensations[3] will turn to your profit as far as the cholera is concerned. This epidemic is a real scourge, brought about by the anger of God; and it is by penance that this anger can be appeased, while still taking some precautions suggested by prudence.

Courage, my dear son! Take care that all the vexations you may experience in no way affect your interior, as they seem to me very suitable to sustain us in the beautiful paths of faith and to encourage us to seek only God always and everywhere.

I am embracing you tenderly.

P.S. In granting a Brother as teacher in the village school, Father Lalanne had expressly agreed with the Mayor that the teacher would have no other obligation toward the village church than to take part in the singing at Sunday services.

* * * *

Evidently the separation of the works in St. Remy, which had been consented to by Father Chaminade, does not correspond to Father Lalanne's desires. He would want the direction of the Establishment, including the management of the finances.

Father Chaminade holds firm and requires the carrying out of what has been agreed upon.

[2] See letter 634.
[3] Dispensations from fast and abstinence, accorded by the ecclesiastical authority on account of the cholera epidemic.

640 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, August 23, 1832

Your letter of the twelfth of the present month, my dear son, reached me the day before yesterday. Almost from the beginning you say: “Since you absolutely want the separation, I agree to it. You will no longer have any reason to complain of my resistance. I subscribe to the conditions you impose upon me, although, in the manner understood, they dig an abyss under my feet.”

Before receiving your letter, I intended to draw up, as it were, a little account of the proposed conditions to see if you would accept them with pleasure, as I had reason to believe you would. Since the first separation proposal, which I painfully agreed to, I thought I understood from some subsequent letters that your motive might well be that Brother Clouzet had confounded the two distinct Offices he had to fill at St. Remy. I was not slow in noticing, that, although you had some reasonable complaints concerning his conduct as Head of Temporalities, it was a separation you were asking for and not a change of conduct on his part.

The beginning of your letter, my dear son, supposes sentiments on my part that I have not had and which I do not presently have. I want the separation only because you asked for it, as a means of conciliation. You yourself complained of the repugnance I seemed to have about the matter, and I have put before you several times and quite clearly the reasons for this repugnance. Why then do you say to me today: “You want the separation absolutely! I accede to it.” The conditions that I was proposing to you, in no way dig an abyss under your feet, unless you have some other design in mind, more particular than the one a superior who is placed at the head of an establishment should have. How can you suppose that “I am digging an abyss under your feet”?

You have spoken to me almost constantly about plans for education and instructions, especially when you wanted to replace Father Collineau at St. Remy and to take over the direction of the Ste. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux.[1]

These plans having failed, you wrote that you were going to devote seven or eight years to the realization of your teaching projects. . . . I always admitted to you that I thought the college educational program susceptible to amelioration or improvement and that the instruction might be speeded up a great deal or at least much extended. It is suitable to leave the children in a college for about the usual number of years. But I have always added that there was no prudence at all in making sudden changes. You answered me that you wanted to try your experiments only on children especially chosen, whose education you could continue over seven or eight years. I subscribed to that, although not without some difficulty, because then you would no longer be open to the ultimate views of the Society.

Hardly had you begun than you wanted to give your vast plans the full extension they demanded. You met with obstacles in what had been already arranged or agreed upon; nothing seemed well organized or well regulated to you. Nothing seemed even reasonable to you,

[1] See Letter 505.

because nothing was in relation with your grand ideas. Everything had to give way. You met with resistance, you consulted; one had to give ground to you. You complained; your professors and your counselors pitied you. In fact, your cause was so good, it even became so just and holy that a superior could no longer oppose your views and projects—which he might wish to ignore—without exposing himself to wound both the justice and the delicacy of your conscience! It was brought to your attention that we were in a revolution, that only such changes as were strictly necessary were desired. All of this rests heavily on my soul, which has been only too well hit by all of it.

This combat has been going on for almost two years, very stubbornly and with much vexation. You propose a means of obtaining peace, viz., separating the boarding school from the property. I accept it because I am tired of this struggle, but I am laying down as a first conditon[1] that this separation will be only temporary. Why temporary? So as: 1) to provide breathing space; 2) to reestablish order and unity, everywhere so essential and so conformable to the spirit of the Society of Mary, wherever Providence will deign to furnish us the opportunities. You can see the reason for the second condition. It would be vexing, in the time that intervenes, whether long or short, to change anything in the matter of properties: to take down walls, partitions, etc. As regards the third condition, I left it to your wisdom to settle upon the amount to be granted the community as indemnity. You can easily do it, having neither rent nor fees to pay to the professors, nor, etc. Someone has written me that the tuition is five hundred-fifty francs. You say that it is only four hundred-fifty francs. I imagine that the four hundred-fifty francs are for the school year of ten months, which would about make five hundred-fifty for the year. It would also be very suitable that the rent for the beds would turn to the advantage of the community. It furnishes them rather than you, and in this you find yourself neither the gainer nor the loser. . . .

As regards the repairs that the separation requires, I believe that as few as possible changes be made, because of our present situation. We must hold to what is strictly necessary. But we must begin them. Our present conditions require that we do not begin work until our small insurance policy has been signed. As soon as I have your answer to this letter, I shall write it up, and all will turn out well. The renovations will take place at the beginning of the vacation and the students will notice nothing.

I am hoping that great good both for the boarding school and the community will result from these arrangements. The boarding school pupils will find fewer obstacles to their Christian formation, and you will have greater facility in directing them. The community will be more separated, the religious more recollected. The candidates will have fewer attacks of human respect to overcome. Both groups will be able to be more recollected during the Sunday religious services.

I ask the good Lord every day, through his august Mother, to turn everything to his greater glory and to the advantage of religion. I continually place the fate and the direction of the Society of Mary in his hands, being of myself incapable of governing it in such stormy times and circumstances. I am embracing you tenderly.

Brother Clouzet receives notice of the preceding letter.

[1] See Letter 630, for the three conditions laid down by Father Chaminade.

641 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 24, 1832

My dear son, by his letter of August 12, Father Lalanne accepts the three conditions purely and simply, but with bad enough grace. I believe it my duty not to settle on anything without once again explaining myself. Here is the copy of the answer I am sending him, in order that we may be in perfect agreement. The reasons that demand a separation are so sad, in all respects, that I am consenting to it only for the sake of peace and because we are in a time of revolution. Perhaps we may even hope that in time Father Lalanne will finally open his eyes.

My dear son, I am with you in the sad news that your brother sent. You know well that you cannot absent yourself from St. Remy, considering the pitiful condition of our affairs. Let your brother replace you in everything, and offer to give him your power-of-attorney.

If the separation takes place in accord with the three conditions and the explanation that I am giving of them, we will need only the most urgent repairs, since the whole affair is and must be temporary. I am writing Brother Gaussens to prepare himself or rather to present himself to the Academy of Bordeaux to obtain a certificate of the first degree.

I do not recall the older Brother Dormoy's writing to me.[1] I have some recollection of his once writing, but that is a long time ago. I believe he asked for a change because of the proximity of his parents. Tell him to write to me again. I am sure I have not received any letters from him other than the one I just mentioned.

Concerning Brother Guillegoz, I granted him only one year at St. Remy. I have always thought he would be in danger if he remained there; but as he is necessary to Father Lalanne, the latter might believe I was recalling him because of one of our disputes. Either Father Chevaux or Father Meyer should inspire Father Lalanne with the thought that the interests of the Brother's salvation and of his vocation would require that I recall him to Bordeaux. They could suggest that he write me, asking that I do so.

May God deign, my dear son, to inspire you with the faith, courage, and prudence that you need. I am embracing you tenderly.

P.S. My dear son, not only do I permit you, but I counsel you to have your workers take a piece of bread at five in the afternoon. I had forgotten to talk to you about it.

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642 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

[1] The two brothers, Francis Dormoy (1800-76) and Philip Dormoy (1812-95)—from Girefontaine, Haute Saône—entered the Society at St. Remy in 1826 and 1828 and were employed as cooks in a great number of communities. Both ended their lives in the agricultural house of Coubeyrac, near Bordeaux. A letter of Brother Philip Dormoy is reproduced in the *Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 728.

Agen, September 11, 1832

An expression, my dear son, from your letter of the first of the current month, gives me to understand that it was preferable to settle our definite or final arrangement by letter than by any kind of police-regulations.

I am appending the letter stating the final arrangement to this one. It contains nothing new, properly so called, as it reproduces only what you have already accepted, but which was not yet definitive.

You will do well, my dear son, to look upon this little arrangement as an order, and I am happy to learn that you are disposed to consider it as such. It cannot bring you to ruin. Much to the contrary, unless you put yourself in peril by making excessive expenses. Then it would not just be yourself you are ruining, but the Society as well. The Society would always be responsible before the courts, and that in spite of any particular agreements we might make. You know what took place on Rue du Mirail. It is not just that Brother Auguste brought himself to ruin, although he did personally have something to be ruined. Will the Society recover from the terrible blow that he dealt it by his excessive and badly planned enterprises? I hope so, in the great mercy of God, but the wound will be a long time in healing. I shall not say any more on the subject.

You and your all-too-short letter, my dear son, contain these lines: “I am figuring that you will arrange everything as a father and as a wise and just man who wants to save and not to lose, to edify and not to destroy.” I hope that you will find that I have arranged everything as a father. If I had arranged them only as a man, even as a just and wise one, the arrangement would have been different. Yes, my dear son, I always feel that I am a father, however different your ideas may be from mine, and it is in these sentiments that I embrace you with tenderness.

* * * *

The preceding letter crossed with one from Father Lalanne, dated September 8 in which the latter again tried to find fault with the conditions of the separation. In a new letter, in which we are reproducing only the following lines, Father Chaminade firmly maintains what has been agreed upon.

643 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, September 23, 1832

Your letter of the first of the present month, my dear son, did not give me reason to expect the one of the eighth, which I received a few days ago. I immediately answered the first in such a way as to arrange and settle everything. Nevertheless, your last letter seems to me to call for some new reflections.

I shall not come back upon what has brought things to their present state, since we are acting in this way only for the purpose of ceasing all further discussion. In the temporary provisions I am insisting on, there is no mystery. . . . I look upon this separation as a moral evil, which I think I can tolerate only by reason of our present critical circumstances, but which I shall have to heal as soon as Providence grants me the means. None of my letters gives any reason for suspecting anything mysterious in these temporary expedients. I am far from wanting to be shrewd or cunning. It may be that out of consideration for you, I do not always tell you the whole truth—and everything I am thinking or feeling—but I make it a point that everything I do say is true and clear. . . .

My dear son, I cannot grant the altogether too general request that you make in these words: "I ask that I be granted complete freedom to make any repairs not of a kind to alter irreparably the interior or exterior of the building." My dear son, all I can permit you to do, is to make such interior or exterior repairs as are made necessary by the wear and tear of the buildings. Thus, you can have other partitions made if they would serve the division or allotment of personnel you believe necessary, but you must not tear anything down, even under the pretext of making the demolitions at your own expense. Everything must be left as is until a definite plan has been adopted concerning the château's ultimate use. You will say I am always thinking of the Razac mansion.[1] It is true that I have to bear the heavy burden of maintaining it, not only because of the enormous expenses involved, but also because of the inconsistency of the supposed repairs—repairs so inconsistent that the Razac mansion is now valued at thirty thousand francs less than when it was bought. However, although I have these serious facts in mind, you know that before these annoying events I was already thinking as I do today. And you also know that I had drawn up a very exact plan of the mansion's interior, story by story, but. . . .

You end your letter, my dear son, by saying "that your painful struggle, without making you deviate from the right path, has nevertheless troubled and dried up your soul." I admit that I find it very difficult to understand how such a fight against a superior can be sustained without straying from the right path. But you have lights. . . . I am stopping. . . .

[1] The Ste. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux.

My dear son, I am ending this long letter here. Perhaps it is too long, at least considering my many occupations. But it would have been much longer if I had not constantly repressed the plethora of moral and religious reflections. I embrace you always with the same tenderness.

* * * *

Father Lalanne no longer had anything else to do but give in. The separation of the works at St. Remy was made, but the wrangling which had provoked it continued. Father Chaminade was not yet at the end of his tribulations.

Father Chaminade had to name a director for the new community. His choice, after mature reflection, fell upon Father Chevaux. He told him of it by the following letter, to which was joined an obedience making clear the nature of his charge.

644 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, October 25, 1832

My dear son, I received your letter of October 7. I am making you superior of the new community. I have explained your responsibilities a little, in case you haven't our Constitutions with you. I understand that you would like—and perhaps would even need—me to open my heart to you in your painful new situation. I shall do so gladly when we have come out of the numerous difficulties we are presently in, not only at St. Remy, but elsewhere. As far as you are concerned, always write to me with great openheartedness and candor.

The separation has caused a commotion while it should have remained almost unnoticed. Father Lalanne and Brother Clouzet wanted to make the division of localities, of effects, and of furnishings, not as religious vowed to poverty and subject to obedience, but as merchants who break up a partnership and take out everything they can. The situation is pitiful. The only thing that covers over the evil is the good intention that each doubtless has preserved. I am not aware that in my many letters to both Brother Clouzet and to Father Lalanne, I have ever said or done anything that might have given rise to such discussions. Quite the contrary. But what is to be done with regard to the Archbishop and the permissions you need for the new chapel? Let us always act, my dear son, with uprightness and simplicity. Go yourself to Besançon, tell His Excellency you are the superior and, as such, ask him for the permissions you believe to be necessary. His Excellency will not fail to ask you some questions and your title gives the reason for them. Answer with moderation and with all consideration possible for Father Lalanne, that he is full of good intentions and of burning zeal, but with a head fanatically worked up with plans and projects he believes in conscience he must follow. This despite the advice or orders of his superior. Explain that since being definitely settled at St. Remy, and especially since the July Revolution, he has never ceased to act arbitrarily and to ask me for independence in everything, even regarding the property of St. Remy. Say also that he has several times threatened a noisy and public rupture with the Society and that finally seeing he could not get what he wanted, he proposed the separation question. Say that I agreed to the separation for the sake of peace, but that my first condition was that it would be only temporary, because we are still in a revolution. Tell him also that I am not expecting complete peace in a matter so worked up that it is for me a

cause of great pain and sorrow, but that I hope: 1) to avoid still greater outbursts and 2) to diminish, to a great extent, the evil effects which his pride has caused in this establishment.

Several times I wanted to write to His Excellency about it, but I was always hoping that, with patience, I would get to the point of having Father Lalanne listen to reason and of being able to avoid having recourse to the first superior.

Before your trip to Besançon, which you are to keep secret, you will read or have read the ordinance of your nomination to the assembled community. I had reason to believe that you would have no one to console, as all are very much pained by the mess that has been going on at St. Remy for the past two years and especially by the obligation of going to the chapel in the château on Sundays and feast days. This obligation was becoming very irritating, above all for the normal school candidates.

You will also do well, my dear son, once my messages have been received, to let Brother Clouzet in particular know of your appointment. I have received all his letters and I shall answer him shortly. The same for Brother Gaussens, Father Meyer, and several others. I am unusually occupied and far behind in my correspondence. I have just given two retreats in succession, one to the Daughters of Mary and to our young religious of the Midi and the other to the religious in the North. We were in all about forty or fifty. I was much consoled by both retreats. Everyone renewed his vows with a profound understanding of the religious state and a clear knowledge of the Society of Mary. I shall come back to this, which must be of particular interest to you. I am saying nothing to you about the retreat at St. Remy, because it will already have taken place by the time this letter gets to you. You will let me know how it went. If your community is not sufficiently renewed, I will tell you how to go about supplying the deficiency.

The superioress of Acey wrote me recently. She and her entire community are very happy for you and for the missionary from Besançon.

I am stopping here and embracing you with full paternal tenderness.

P.S. I beg of you to offer His Excellency, the Archbishop of Besançon, my most respectful homage.

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645 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, October 25, 1832

THE SUPERIOR OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY TO FATHER CHEVAUX, HIS WELL-BELOVED SON.

I have not been able, my dear son, as you know, to obtain peace from the superior I had named for the establishment of St. Remy, except by granting temporarily a real separation of the two communities which direct this establishment in its different works. The separation has been consummated, I am to name a superior for the part of the community which occupies the secondary buildings on the property, and it is upon you, my dear son, that I have cast my eyes. You will join to the title and functions of Master of Novices the functions of superior.

According to our Constitutions, the custom is to name in each community three principal Heads for zeal, instruction, and work, who separately exercise all the authority that the superior has collectively in each establishment in such a way that the superior is, by his title, Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Temporalities. Although each Head has a real authority in his Office, he always remains subject to his superior and gives him evidence of this submission.

In the little primary school establishments, the head has all three Offices.

In your present position as superior, you will directly exercise only the Office of Zeal. By the same mail I am sending Brother Gaussens, with his obedience as Head of the normal school, his nomination as Head of Instruction also. Brother Clouzet will be Head of Temporalities. I hope, my dear son, from your obedience, that you will acquit yourself of the three important functions that are being confided to you, with fidelity and prudence—that is to say, those of superior, Master of Novices, and Head of Zeal.

I shall always pray the Lord to pour down upon you and all your labors his most abundant blessings.

* * * *

Nevertheless, from Bordeaux came new needs that were to give a new turn to the events at St. Remy: the future of the Ste. Marie Boarding School, still directed by Brother Auguste, was called into question, and Father Chaminade did not hesitate to tell Father Lalanne about it.

646 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, October 29, 1832

I received, my dear son, your letter of the ninth of the present month, postmarked from Besançon. I was then at the climax of the second retreat. There were forty or fifty of us, and everything went well. Here I think the best policy is to leave things as they are. Nevertheless, my occupations have allowed me to give Father Chevaux a temporary nomination as superior of the temporary community which is occupying the secondary buildings on the property. At the same time, I sent Brother Gaussens an obedience as Head of the normal school at St. Remy and, separately, his appointment as Head of Instruction, under Father Chevaux's authority.

I was very sorry when I learned of the discussions that arose between you and Brother Clouzet concerning the sharing and division of the furniture. Neither of you had authority for this sharing.

The division or separation that has just been effected must have very much displeased all the good religious who are employed in the boarding school, not because they would be more inconvenienced or poorer, but because of the causes that brought it about.

I believe the same is the case among those who are employed in the other part. If the majority have shown some satisfaction, the fact is they are little qualified to probe the consequences and have seen in the separation of the works only a means of becoming more recollected. It is good that they know no more about the matter.

The struggle has really been directed at me these past three years, although Brother Clouzet always seemed to be the one under attack. If Brother Clouzet was not obedient to you in everything that you had the right to command, I should have been told about it. Then everything would have been settled one way or another.

I bless the Lord because religion has taken the upper hand in you, for you had entered upon a very bad and dangerous path. I am hoping that grace will bring its work to a happy end. Let us live in peace! Do not believe that my confidence in you has, in any way, diminished. I know well how to distinguish the person in himself from his ideas and from the stubbornness with which he maintains them.

I am entirely disposed to grant you whatever permission will be necessary to promote the good order which is to reign in the boarding school, but I would be obliged to you if you would still delay in undertaking anything new before peace and calm have been restored. I no longer want you to arrange things with Brother Clouzet because of all the complications that would cause and because I would not be able to counsel him regarding what is permitted before everything is carried out. I received two letters from Bordeaux concerning you, one from Father Collineau and the other from Brother Auguste. Without judging anything beforehand or hastily, I shall have them copied along with this one. I shall say nothing about either but simply forward them to you as they are.

I am very sorry, from the standpoint of nature, my dear son, about your affliction; but I shall rejoice in the Lord if it helps you to win an interior victory over the capital enemy of your salvation and of your eternal happiness. I always embrace you with altogether paternal tenderness.

P.S. You will recognize a new handwriting of a new writer, Brother Troffer's. Brother Morel has been attacked by a mortal sickness.

* * * *

Here is Father Collineau's letter which Father Chaminade sent to Father Lalanne. Brother Auguste's was only a résume of it.

Rev. Father—As a result of quite a long interview I had with Brother Auguste about the future fate of the Ste. Marie Boarding School, he expressed the desire that I share my ideas with you. Everything that might be useful to your works and conducive to the good of all concerned will always be agreeable to me. Here is the summary of our interview.

I think that Brother Auguste's boarding school is a work of great interest to religion, considering the almost infinite number of bad boarding schools arising on all sides. I also believe that a strict and well-understood administration may well make of it a paying proposition.

It is not less certain for me that the boarding school has obstacles to conquer to maintain itself in its present prosperous state, and even to increase the same. The Collège of Bazas, a new boarding school directed by a priest so gifted as to inspire confidence,[1] receives children not destined for the ecclesiastical state. It is similar to the kind adopted by Father Lacombe.[2] This school establishes a kind of rivalry with the Ste. Marie institution that it is worthwhile to sustain.

In the farther circle of acquaintances, Brother Auguste alone is known to the parents and has their confidence; but in the closer circle Father Lalanne is still remembered. If he could return to Bordeaux to join Brother Auguste and allow the latter to quietly hand the helm over to him, the day would be saved. The school would only prosper, of course, if the transfer were effected with appropriate care.

Brother Auguste had me observe that he could take part in these arrangements only after you have given him the needed guarantees. The resolution of this affair is no longer up to me, but if it depends only on suitable arrangements—and if it is within your power to give

[1] The Little Seminary of Bazas, since 1828, had been transformed into a secondary college, under the direction of the abbé Jean-Marie Lacroin (1797-1866).
[2] Father John Baptist Lacombe (1788-1852) from Bordeaux had heard, while in the Sodality of the Madeleine, the call of God. A student in Paris in the Institution Liautard—the future Collège Stanislas—then in the Seminary of St. Sulpice, he came back to Bordeaux after his ordination and was immediately put in charge of the Little Seminary, which he governed until his death, first in Cadillac, 1816; then at Bazas, 1818; and finally in Bordeaux, 1828, when the Decrees chased out the Jesuits from the Little Seminary they had been directing since 1818.

the needed security or guarantees—then I would urge you to favor the plan. I think it would promote both the general welfare and the good of the Society as well as the tranquility and satisfaction of Brother Auguste.

Be pleased to accept the sentiments of respect and devotedness with which I am, Rev. Father, your very humble and obedient servant.

* * * *

The question raised by Father Collineau's letter was to ripen in time. It would end with the return of Father Lalanne to Bordeaux in 1833, and thus the conflict at St. Remy would end by the very fact.

By the same mail, Father Chaminade was writing Father Leo Meyer, who was beginning to become one of his surest correspondents and trusted friends and was acquainting him with the difficulties at St. Remy, such as we know them from the preceding letters. Of this letter, we can reproduce only the following passages.

647 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Agen, October 29, 1832

My dear son, I shall answer your letter of October 3 only in a somewhat general manner, because it seems that you are little acquainted with the real nature of things. It is possibly sounding your praises to say that you are little acquainted with the same, because it implies that your sole occupation is to fulfill your various duties in the best possible way.

Brother Galliot, the Director of Courtefontaine, who is always preaching for his parish, wanted you and asked that you be sent to Courtefontaine. Father Lalanne would seem to consent to the idea. Father Chevaux fears for some of the Germans, since there was always a few at St. Remy.[1] I also would be glad to see you at Courtefontaine, but I fear for the piety of the boarding school of St. Remy if there is no one there to hold fast. Despite the trouble you take, look at the disorder! And there is more than perhaps you are aware of. Our four student-novices (Dumont, Etignard, Leroy, Rohmer) whom you are helping—what will happen to them if you are changed? Wouldn't Father Chevaux be overloaded, especially since at present he is joining to his office of Master of Novices that of superior of the second division of the community and Head of Zeal too? See what you can answer concerning these difficulties and I shall then do what is necessary to have you sent to Courtefontaine, where you could do much good in peace and with tranquility on all sides.

I feel that I still have many things to say to you, because we are always walking toward eternity; but let us first get out of our present embarrassments. I shall never lose sight of your spiritual needs, for I feel that I am your father and that you are my son. I wish to return you to Jesus and Mary in a condition worthy of them.

[1] Religious workers, knowing only German and needing for their spiritual direction a priest able to speak this language.

* * * *

Nevertheless, Father Chaminade, who, according to his own words was receiving all the blows hitting at St. Remy from every side, received a last shock from the unhappy separation affair. Brother Clouzet, already annoyed by the concessions made to Father Lalanne, felt himself humiliated by the appointment of Father Chevaux as Head of a new community, so much has self-love strength when it is not dominated by grace, even in generous souls. It was then necessary to spread healing balm on this wound which was not deep, to be sure, but for the time being very painful.

648 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, November 14, 1832

My dear son, today I received your letter of November 9, and I am hastening to answer it. I continue to take interest in drawing you out of the sad state in which my letter of October 29 must have put you. . . .

You ask me: "What crime have I, then, committed?" None at all, my dear son, as far as I know. Much to the contrary, for I have never noticed in you anything but great zeal in everything that concerned the interests of the Society of Mary. You have performed well in all the functions confided to you, whether as superior of St. Remy, as Head of Temporalities, or as administrator of the property of St. Remy and Marast, etc. I was very far from thinking that, in making Father Chevaux superior of the new community, I would be giving you grounds to feel this punishment for some faults of yours or as a degradation to brand you with the eyes of the public. No, my dear son, such thoughts have never entered my mind. I love and esteem you, and I want you to be esteemed and honored by the public, and I hope you will enjoy more esteem now that you no longer have to work against Father Lalanne.

"If this is the case," you then say, "why did you not name me superior of the new community?" My first answer will be short. It is that the Spirit of God has inspired me to act thus, and it looks very much as if you would have understood it so if you had taken suitable time to quiet yourself and to see things in the calm and peace of the Lord. However, to give you some exterior reasons, so to say, I shall tell you that, if I had named you superior—I am saying acting superior—it would have seemed that all your disputes with Father Lalanne had had no other motives than to shake off all dependence. This would have been a very bad endorsement, whether in the establishment of St. Remy itself or with the Archbishop or the general public. I know, my dear son, much about these things that you are ignorant of. I could well add that your occupations are already numerous enough and so distracting that they can hardly be allied with those of an acting superior. If this second community gets along well, as I hope it will, your occupations will increase still more.

Again you will say to me: "But why make me inferior to those I have drawn into the Society of Mary and in particular of the one I have always been the superior of? What reversal of order and ideas!" No, my dear son, things are not so. All I was waiting for was to know whether

my last letters had arrived, in order to continue the organization of this new community, which I hope will produce excellent fruits for the glory of our divine Master and of his august Mother. I have in mind giving you your title of former superior. This title, which is due to you and which you deserve from many points of view, puts you above all others and assures you the esteem and veneration of all. From then on you are no longer what Father Lalanne very inopportunely called the superior of the workers, as you mentioned in one of your letters to me. In giving you this title, I shall designate the rights and priorities attached to it.

You will perhaps find it a bit strange that I did not give you this title at the same time that I made the other appointments, but that, on the contrary, I wrote to you a letter which you call icy. I shall answer you that (1) there seemed to me a great good in separating them and (2) I had not foreseen such a great sensitiveness. My dear son, you must learn to possess yourself entirely and to count a little more on my friendship and also on the assistance provided by my grace of state.

The obedience of Normal School Head, which I sent Brother Gaussens seemed to surprise you, but how could Brother Gaussens present himself to the Rector of the Academy without it? Haven't you written it to me several times about this just as Father Chevaux has? Is not a responsible party needed in the normal school? All these things will explain themselves, and I do hope there will be no confusion.

If you are not able to appreciate these last arrangements, my dear son, and if you believe that the title of acting superior will become necessary for the greatest benefit to the establishment and for your personal honor, tell me so right away and have Father Chevaux write to me about the great sorrow he experiences over his nomination. I am far from feeling repugnance at seeing you acting head of the community. In fact, in certain respects, I would even be pleased.

If, on the contrary, you share the views which have directed me, encourage Father Chevaux, promise him the assistance of your experience and work with him more and more, etc.

I am stopping here, my dear son. I shall be awaiting an answer to this long letter, with some details about your new primary boarding school and about the normal school and also some words about what is going on in the boarding school of the château. I am embracing you with tenderness.

P.S. As I was signing this letter, I received a second letter from you and another from Father Chevaux and Brother Gaussens. I am including herewith a first answer to Father Chevaux. You may read it and pass it on to him without sealing it.

* * * *

649 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, November 15, 1832

My dear son, at the moment I was going to mail an answer to Brother Clouzet, I received three letters from St. Remy: from you, from Brother Clouzet, and from Brother Gaussens. I am going to insert this note in my letter to Brother Clouzet. It will serve as a provisional answer.

It seems to me, my dear son, I have weighed well and before God all you told me about your incapacity, etc., and I have also weighed other serious circumstances. Everything is in the hands of Brother Clouzet, and I shall be altogether ready to revoke your title of superior if Brother Clouzet deems it suitable. I shall await his answer.

Although Brother Clouzet continues as Head of Temporalities and administrator of the property of St. Remy and of Marast, he still remains former superior, with the usual rights and precedence, and you, my dear son, are the acting superior. I have not spoken of this to Father Lalanne in all of our vexing discussions; but, before his nomination, I had him consider this, and I had given the two of them several days to arrange a common plan of action. The demon of discord came in to intervene, but I hope that from this great evil there will result a great good even for the establishment of St. Remy. Let us entrust ourselves to the guidance of the Spirit of God!

I do not believe, my dear son, that Brother Clouzet's zeal will relax, even at the moment when, the Lord having blessed his constancy and fidelity, he will renew his promise of working more than ever.[1] Make it a point to get along well together. I shall explain myself at greater length, as soon as I have received Brother Clouzet's reply.

I am amazed that, after what I wrote to Brother Clouzet and Father Lalanne, there should still be discussion regarding the furniture and personal property. If they can't agree fraternally, let me know about it, and then I shall say what is to be done. In the meantime, patience, always patience!

You will ask Father Lalanne to have you replaced in the boarding school for the lessons in mathematics you were going to give there. You will be able to have him note, that, for my part, I don't think your health and your many occupations allow you to give them. The mail-carrier is leaving. I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

When Father Chaminade was trying to console Brother Clouzet, he himself was receiving an unexpected consolation: Father Lalanne was throwing himself at his feet, his sentiments of the most touching repentance capable of atoning for many wrongs.

My good Father—Awaiting each day an answer to my last letter and not wanting to write to you before having received it, I was impatient to have it come. But, what was urging me still more, since the end of our retreat, was to ask your pardon—a thousand times, pardon!

[1] At the close of the retreat.

How I have been misled! It is now ten years, that, blinded and enchained by self-love, the love of vainglory, I withdrew myself from your hands, to go as I liked or according to the views and impetuous desires of my passion—My sacrifice had been sincere and without reserve at the first moment, I had the full intention of renouncing the world when I took my religious engagements; but the world had soon retaken its influence over me and, to be something in its sight, I substituted my reason for faith and my will for the will of God…You know as well as I all that followed in consequence. In fact, you know it better than I; for, Good Father, you have long sighed over it. Your patience and your prayers, without doubt, have caused my eyes to be opened. Continue, help me to obtain mercy and to repair everything, if it is at all possible. I have made my culpa of all the wrongs I have done here, in regard to Fathers Chevaux and Meyer and Brother Clouzet. I have a letter of disavowal to write to a community superior, to whom I made propositions—If you suspect or have knowledge of anything else I have done, please feel free to tell me of it.

I built up in my own way, at St. Remy, what here in the country is called a collège. In this I forestalled your orders. I followed my design according to views that I considered good; but this design did not come from you; it was not from God. If you think that God does not wish what I have undertaken, I shall let my ephemeral work fall or destroy it with my own hands.

Some questions follow that refer to the details of the separation, and the letter continues:

The propositions of Brother Auguste and Father Collineau seem to me untimely. I cannot leave here less everything that depends upon me fails, because I see no one to replace me, even for the space of two weeks. My unexpected departure would give cause to a certain number of important persons to reproach me with having betrayed their confidence, and this reproach would fall back on the Society.

Here is rather what could be done. You would send Father Curot to Brother Auguste with the same guarantees, and he would receive him with the same outlook he would have toward myself. Father Curot would sustain the house—he is capable of it—until I have finished my time at St. Remy.[1] If the results of the course permit the Society to adopt as its own the progress and the method, I would go to Bordeaux to try it there.

You see the plan and get the idea; but, of course, I am not insisting upon it. Everything will be as you say and desire. Oh, may God have me die rather than permit that I should ever do anything but his holy and amiable will! Do not refuse, my Good Father, to a guilty but repentant son, his pardon and your good favors which he is asking for on his knees!

* * * *

[1] Meaning: Until I have finished at St. Remy the experiment of the new course of studies, according to the principles expressed in the Prospectus of the boarding school.

Of Father Chaminade's answer to this letter, we have only the last part, and that is surely too bad. This page lets us at least get an idea of the sentiments that moved the good Father and of the counsels he gave to his repentant son.

650 – FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, November 29, 1832

(Copy, for the first part; autograph for the second.)

At the present time, let us think only of establishing a real peace, that union and charity may resume their rule, that each one observe well the conditions of the separation, good or bad, until we arrive at an altogether religious system. . . .

Try, my dear son, to end everything amicably. Among us the one who gives does not impoverish himself, and the one who receives does not enrich himself. If there are objects you do not presently need and which there is great use for on the other side—for example, Father Chevaux's theology books, etc.—don't hesitate to part with them. We shall easily arrange things between ourselves from the time that the same spirit animates us. So that everything results in a great peace, it will be well to make use of the mediation of Father

Chevaux, who will make known the respective requests or even reject them, should they seem excessive to him. But, nevertheless, while everything is about ended, I advise you to imagine a general practice in which all the members of each community may fraternize and that henceforth etc., . . . you easily understand me. Separation of place and rank for the individuals, but no division of minds and hearts: real union, which no kind of personal interest will ever succeed in breaking.

I have just received a little education plan[1] from Father Rothéa. I copied it immediately and am sending it to you. Without changing it basically, retouch it in such a way that he can distribute it with ease.

I do not know if you made insinuations to him.[2] There was a time when you two seemed to be in harmony, but this time didn't last long. There is one individual whom, on two different occasions, you tried to seduce as it were. I am not mentioning his name, because he seems to have confided the fact to me only when he believed I needed to know it. I think that, little by little, things will get back to normal if your conduct is truly religious—if, in two words, you build on Jesus Christ.

Do not allow anyone to speak ill of anyone else. Some one of those that are said to be on your side not long ago spoke ill of Brother Clouzet, while at the same time saying good things about you. There was real reason here for scandal. It is impossible that in such a struggle charity has not been seriously injured.

But let us talk no more about it. An entirely opposite line of conduct will repair everything, even with some advantage, especially if we are seen to be perfectly united. I think I can assure you that there is in my heart no trace of any bad feeling toward you and that, from now on, we shall work together in doing good with confidence, and as if there had never been anything of an irregular nature going on between us.

May the Lord deign to shower upon you, my dear son, is most abundant blessings.

P.S. I beg of you, be very careful, for Brother Clouzet's soul is very ill. Count as nothing whatever you can do to heal it.

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At the same time that he acknowledged to Father Lalanne his letter of submission, Father Chaminade sent Brother Clouzet his new title and functions and gave Father Chevaux his first directions for the conduct of his Community.

651 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

[1] Prospectus for the boarding school of St. Hippolyte.
[2] The allusion is to a passage in Father Lalanne's letter cited above.

Agen, November 29, 1832

Obliged, as I am, my dear son, to provide for the new community of St. Remy, suitable Heads, I have been able to find only you who are sufficiently able to fulfill the functions of Head of Temporalities. That is why I named you, as I am naming you by these present letters, to this important and delicate charge (especially in St. Remy) and this without any prejudice to the title of administrator of the domains of St. Remy and of Marast and also without any prejudice to the title of former superior. You enjoy all the rights and privileges attached thereto, such as that of bearing the title; of replacing the acting superior in case of absence or of serious infirmity until a new appointment can be made; of being seated on his right everywhere; of being a member of the Council, even should you cease to be Head of Temporalities; of being called to the General Chapter of the Society of Mary and of having all the same rights to vote as superiors on active duty, etc.

If I did not know your zeal and your entire devotedness to the Society so well, I would beg you to help the new superior with your counsels. Doubtless, you must be all the more interested in this establishment, since it is you who have made it what it is.

The Lord will be your light and your support in all your labors. The present nomination given at Agen, November 29, 1832, will be copied in the great register of the Society of Mary and sent to the acting superior to be given to Brother Clouzet. Thus signed.

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652 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, November 30, 1832

What Father Lalanne has done, my dear son, on a small scale and verbally before you and before Father Meyer and Brother Clouzet, he has just done on a large scale and in writing, to me. Grace seems to have entirely changed his heart. May the name of the Lord be forever praised because of it! I am answering him by this same mail.

Since he still speaks about some points he is not settled on and since you have posed a few questions to me about similar things, I shall have some extracts of my answer copied for your guidance. God will aid us if it is very true that we are seeking only him. In his long letter, Father Lalanne, in treating of some current affairs, speaks with a modesty and submission that are truly edifying.

You will have the kindness to give Brother Clouzet the new title I am sending him. It is accompanied by a little letter. I hope that you will have in him a real helper. You must excuse his passing weaknesses and even seem not to remember them any longer. I think you will be indifferent concerning his title, provided each one fulfills well his proper functions and that the glory of God be found therein.

Father Lalanne thinks that you are overloaded but that he cannot do without you, and he asks me to send him Brother Bonnet. I am suggesting to him that, since I cannot presently send him this young professor of mathematics, he should at least do whatever he can to relieve you. Nevertheless, always treat him with the consideration that he deserves. The separation is, doubtless, an evil; but it is quite possible that the divine mercy will draw from it great good. Let us always be, as it were, drawn along by the dispositions of divine Providence.

Introduce—of course with great prudence—a real spirit of regularity. In order that I may be able to get beyond current problems, I shall have a short analysis of our retreat given to you, for it will help you to determine your ideas better as regards the religious state. I shall also continue the "Practice of Mental Prayer."[1] I don't know if Brother Gaussens will have finished copying what has already been done by the time he comes to spend a few days at Agen. This work, all imperfect as it is, can serve you in renewing your community and in directing your novices. I shall help and support you all I can. *Operemur bonum, dum tempus habemus*.[2] Remain always in peace in the midst of the storms and anxieties of life.

May the Lord, my dear son, deign to shower abundant blessings both upon you and upon your community!

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[1] See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 251 and the diverse extracts cited in the List of Writings II, page 755.

[2] Let us do good, while we have the time. (Gal. VI, 10.)

* * * *

The correspondence with St. Remy continues in a quieter vein, although we still sometimes feel some remnants of past agitations.

653 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, December 10, 1832

My dear son—I have received your last two letters, those of November 25 and 28. My answer to your preceding one must have reached you by this time.

Without examining whether there is economy in your expenses, I see, from looking at the account you sent me, that you may experience some uneasiness concerning some expenses you made this semester but which you will not have to repeat next semester, considering probable delays in your financial returns. But in general, after a short time and with a little wisdom in handling affairs, you will find yourself more at ease. . . .

As regards the wall of separation,[1] I really believe it will call for an expense of three thousand francs on your part and perhaps even more, without counting the two porters you would need. If, in consequence, we were to find great inconveniences in restoring the old entrance to the château, time enough when that comes; but for the moment, I don't see serious inconveniences in leaving things pretty much as they are. We must be careful because the respective boarders would begin to make fun of one another and to insult one another, an inconvenience which, it seems to me, it would be easy enough to remove. Not only religion, but even the most ordinary educational principles forbid it. Can we not also take some precautions—for example, put some landmarks at some distance from the park entrance and make the part entrance still more obscure in parts, etc.? Certainly, if you take strong steps and inculcate in your pupils a style of honesty and good breeding, no accident will ever occur, not even in going to and fro on walks or in returning from them. Perhaps, it would be well to have an inside porter who could be called by strangers by a little bell attached to the park entrance.

You are right, my dear son, in believing that I have not been consulted as regards what was to be taught relative to music and drawing. I shall settle on something with Father Chevaux and Brother Clouzet. The rivalry could become odious, especially in the beginning.

I shall suspend all arrangements regarding Father Meyer and Father Rollinet. The latter has at last written to me. He justifies his silence and puts himself at my disposal to make his novitiate wherever I wish and so exercise the holy ministry. I believe that,

[1] Between the two works.

provisionally, he must enter the novitiate at St. Remy. There he can be somewhat occupied with certain instructions. You might also find for him some suitable occupations. Come to an understanding with Father Chevaux. It was formerly said that Father Rollinet was able to teach a good third class. Doubtless, there was no question of Greek . . .

The reasons for not sending you Brother Bonnet, at least for some time, are becoming more serious than I expected. Now that our good Lord has given you the grace of coming back to the right path, I sincerely wish I could send him to you.

The grace, my dear son, that has dispersed the illusion which dominated you is a very signal favor. It is very rarely granted. Be faithful to it and entirely faithful. If I can be of any help to you, either by advice or by encouragement, I am always at your disposal. Count always on my tender friendship and my entire devotedness.

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654 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, December 10, 1832

My dear son, I am beginning with the principal object of your last letter. I take it for granted that there is nothing odious in the purchase of the property in question and that since M. Ricot has sold it, he will know where to go. I suppose, furthermore, that the property is easily worth ten thousand francs. You may buy it in your own name. As you see, it is not by halves that I have confidence in you. . . .

I have answered most of the questions which you, Father Lalanne, and Father Chevaux have asked me. Father Lalanne has just asked me another. I shall have a copy made of my answer to this one, which I am sending him by this mail. Take care that there be never any animosity in your relations with him. He seems to have sincerely recovered from the illusions that held sway over him. All will turn out well, I hope, even in those matters that have wearied us so long.

As regards what you have written to me—your two letters of the eighth and the ninth—all is forgotten. Your position and the appointment of Father Chevaux should in no way slow down either your zeal or the interest you put into the prosperity of the normal school, of the new boarding school, of the novitiate, etc.

The confidence I have in you explains why I do not take the precautions with you that I would with several others that I consider weak. I look upon you in the Society as another self. Let us run to wherever there is the greatest need or the greatest good for the Society of Mary; and let us seek ourselves in nothing.

Take care not to equip your normal school and the primary boarding school for music and drawing after the fashion of the boarding school at the château. Otherwise, it would appear that there is competition of the lowest kind. Limit yourself to plain chant, to which you might add plain chant accompaniment; and, as regards instruments, to the organ and piano. It would not be bad to join to these last the serpent wherever possible.[1] So much as regards music. For drawing, limit yourself to linear drawing, and that is nothing trifling when one wants to learn it in all its extent and applications.

Courage, my dear son. Let us go to the Lord in all uprightness and simplicity. In a few days, I shall answer Fathers Meyer and Rollinet, etc. I am always very busy. I embrace you tenderly.

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655 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, December 14, 1832

I hope, my dear son, that all the letters that I have written to St. Remy have reached their proper addresses and that you have seen that I profited by the various observations that you made to me.

How much the style, or, I should rather say, the tone of Father Lalanne's letters has changed! It is that of submission and modesty in place of etc. . . . I hope very much that we shall come to a solid peace and that I shall be able to occupy myself with the inner life of the two Communities.

Brother Clouzet appears to be making a good comeback, but the natural sentiments seem to dominate a lot more than those of grace. Perhaps, and it must be assumed that these first are a preparation for the second and for the complete triumph of grace? Consult him often, even if there is no real need for it. Make yourself, as it were, necessary to him, without, however, detracting from anything essential to your office. Wisdom knows how to follow middle courses.

I am answering Father Rollinet. After having read the letter and sealed it, will you please give it to him.

Father Lalanne has just asked me to forget about sending Father Meyer to Courtefontaine. Profit by the time during which you have such intimate relations with the latter to reanimate yourself in the service of our divine Master and of our august Mother. May nothing in the world be able to weaken in you the real spirit of the Society of Mary: *Ego*

[1] A wind instrument which was used in church music to support the singers and which had the shape of a serpent.

servus tuus sum et filius ancillae tuae. . . . Oportet ut eveniant scandala. . . . Oh, my dear son, if we remain firmly united by the direction of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, under the auspices of Mary, we shall be very strong and all hell will be capable of nothing against us. *Inimictial ponamiter te et Mulierem, etc., et ipsa conteret, etc*. Do not be surprised at difficulties. I do not yet write to Father Meyer in any other vein. Let him take good care of our four young postulants who are studying at the château. They concern us more than the novices.

I am stopping here and embracing you tenderly.

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656 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, December 30, 1832

I am answering, my dear son, your letter of the thirteenth of the present month. I hope Brother Clouzet is improving, little by little. Spiritual falls, the effect of illusions brought about, so to say, by refined self-love, always heal slowly. By the totality of your letter, it would seem that Father Lalanne is still convalescing.

Brother Clouzet can tell Vesoul that at St. Remy, there is the intention of setting up various shops for the ordinary trades, where young apprentices can be received; but that, for the present, the project is not sufficiently organized In fact, I believe that Brother Clouzet would do well to busy himself with it, but without prejudice or hindrance to what has already been undertaken. In the cities where we have primary school establishments, we shall have a means of preserving from moral corruption the children who will be leaving them to begin their apprenticeships.

Brother Clouzet has a beautiful soul. One might say, in a certain way, that it loves only what is good; but he does not pay enough attention to not falling back upon his own thoughts and doing good only for God and as God wants it to be done. The remedy of blind obedience, which you suggest to Brother Clouzet, is excellent, provided you would dispose him to adopt it by mild insinuations, instructions, exhortations, etc. . . .

I have not been able to take up my pen since the last retreat, either for the analysis of the retreat or for continuing work on the Practice of Mental Prayer. My correspondence on all kinds of affairs and subjects absorbs me and takes up all my time, especially during the last three months. I hope that before long I shall be able to rise above this fast-running current, since I have very much at heart continuing this work. I feel so keenly the need for it. . . .

Brother Claverie is not strong in grammar. I believe it, but Brother Fridblatt could teach him with special assistance and this seriously, as he would do with a pupil specially

assigned to him. Brother Claverie will find a double advantage in this, that of learning what he doesn't know and that of ridding himself of a certain self-sufficiency that is doing him a great deal of harm.

Brother Hunolt is not able to teach grammar. I believe that also, but it seems to me that he was in St. Remy only for writing and a little music—not for any kind, but for that relative to the organ. However, care must be taken not to appear to be competing with the château.

I don't think we can count on Brother Fridblatt, but all the time you have him you must keep him well occupied, without, of course, overloading him.

Brother Gaussens is subject to little infirmities. He needs some mitigation of his workload, and he has to take certain precautions; but, apart from that, he needs steady work. All these observations do not prevent your asking for Brother David[1] from Father Lalanne. He should let you have him, as soon as he can do without him.

That there should be emulation between the two communities, as to which one can better conduct a boarding school, is all very well; but let there be neither jealousy nor rivalry. In your boarding school, the ornamental arts are not to be taught *ex professo*, as that would be a loss of precious time for your pupils, but only such as would be specially useful and necessary for them. Linear drawing carried to a great perfection, plain chant, even ordinary singing, organ, etc., all are required by the University for the normal schools, and that goes very far. Your boarding school, charging for less than the château, must not try to imitate the latter in the matter of food, I mean as regards the quality of the various dishes.

It is now rather late to be talking about the young men who are subject to the call for military service. There is every appearance that the law is going to be promulgated. I don't

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[1] Brother Stephen David (1805-90) form Cuve, Haute-Saône. After good classical studies made at the Seminary of Luneuil, he entered the Society at St. Remy, 1831, where he made profession and started teaching. After having taken part in the foundation of Marast and Fribourg, he was chosen by his superiors to preside over the foundation of Sion, where he started the first normal school and directed the primary schools through long years. There, his memory has remained in benediction. In 1873, Brother David retired to Marast, where he died of old age, without having been felled by any illness, faithful to the last moment to the rule of common life. Brother David is remembered as a fervent religious, a man gifted with an active and cultivated intelligence, a mild and amiable character, and noble and distinguished manners.

There was another religious of the same name, Brother Francis David (1829-83) from Frasnois in the Jura, who entered the Society at Courtefontaine in 1845. He spent his entire life in the Midi, particularly in Salles, near Bordeaux, where he was director during a quarter of a century and where he died surrounded by the respect of the entire population. It was at the time when the sectarian spirit was beginning to assert itself. With him gone, the University authorities gave the Society of Mary notice to leave; but on his tomb, piously cared for until the present day, the inscription was engraved, "Here lies Francis David, Brother of Mary. He spent his life doing good and so, his death is deeply regretted by his pupils and by the entire Commune."

see any other means, for those who have no legal exemption, than to hand in their pledge to serve in primary teaching for ten years in the Society of Mary and to attach them immediately to a teaching establishment, for example to a normal school or a little school. A certificate of the second degree is necessary and, in addition, an authorization to teach, with an attestation of a good and moral life during the past three years. This attestation is given by the mayor. But when the recruits have not been three years in the same Commune, my supplementary attestation has been sufficient. There are some variations in the forms, according to the various academies. The shortest thing to do and the surest would be to see the Rector of the Academy of Besançon and after the customary civilities ask him what there is to be done to obtain the dispensation from military service for some young men attached to primary instruction. Then we must conform as closely as possible to whatever he may prescribe or require.

Has Brother Gaussens already made the acquaintance of the Rector of the Academy, as Head of the normal school? That ought to be easy, since Father Lalanne, who knows him well, is always there with you. Although the privileges of the Society of Mary are being attacked in this respect, and perhaps in several others, I am saying nothing, for I do not think that the opportune time for speaking has as yet come. . . .

Brother Clouzet has excellent qualities—I have no doubt of that—but even if we were to gain the entire universe, how would that serve us in any way were we to lose our souls? And we shall surely lose them if we are not really the poor of Jesus Christ, if we are not really humble of heart, obedient, etc.

As regards the appointments I have made in the new community, as far as I have reason to believe, I have done no more than follow an impulse that is, so to say, divine. The idea of humiliating Brother Clouzet and of degrading him in some way was certainly not in my mind. It is very possible that, with your recommendations, if Brother Clouzet had taken the things in the proper light and spirit, I would have placed the nomination of superior on his head; but, actually, I would have feared to harm his soul and also Brother Gaussens,' who is quite prompt to murmur and find fault. I am confirming your nomination. Have Brother Clouzet help you, as I have already suggested to you, but you are the one responsible for all the functions of superiorship.

I have just received a letter from Father Lalanne. He speaks very little of current matters, although it is quite long. It is full of humiliating admissions and disavowals of his past conduct. I am very hopeful that grace will also take hold of Brother Clouzet. We shall lose St. Remy if the light of faith, if the maxims of the Gospel are not the compass of direction for the various Heads of the establishment.

Take courage, for the good God will help us.

Six days have already passed since this letter was begun and later resumed. In the interval, I received several letters from St. Remy,[1] and I learned with astonishment (1) that Brother Gaussens and Brother Clouzet protested against your appointment and that Brother Gaussens produced copies of what he said were the first Constitutions. This is something serious. It is revolt. Only perhaps it is not yet open.

(2) The boarding school pupils are being treated and entertained like those of the collège. Would that not be like wanting to provoke trouble, to take revenge? It is said that Father Lalanne seems to be jealous about it. The tone of his letter and the sentiments of affection for Brother Clouzet he expresses in it suggest he is innocent of so base a sentiment; but, although he says nothing about it, must he not experience sorrow at the sight of such conduct?

(3) What is this round tower, covered with zinc, that has been in the process of construction in the enclosure of the walls for three months? It is said that Brothers Clouzet and Gaussens are to lodge in it. I have permitted the making of only such expenses as are strictly necessary for the separation, and there were strong reasons for acting thus. Would Brother Clouzet have considered as necessary an elegant building to lodge the superior of a poor community vowed to poverty? Could he have believed that a superior is to be and to appear rich, while making others observe a strict poverty?

The short reflections, put at the end of the above three facts, come from me. No one has judged the facts. They were merely described. There are many others likely to make good religious sigh with grief, but I am not talking of them now, since they are less serious. As regards the three I have just mentioned, let me know exactly, by return mail, how matters stand that I may know, before God, what is to be done. Your position at St. Remy and your spirit of conciliation have not permitted you to indicate such serious happenings to me; but this is no longer the case. You are obliged to do it both as local superior and as subject to the orders you receive.

You can read, my dear son, the parts of this letter which you judge suitable to Brothers Clouzet and Gaussens, either together or separately, according as prudence will suggest. . . . I am very anxious that peace and order be entirely reestablished.

It seems that in the château, the good spirit is catching on, as much among the professors as among the boarders. Have a friendly understanding with Father Lalanne, so that all troubles may cease. It may be that with him there could still be some exaggerations as the result of his illusions. Close your eyes a little, and be careful not to hinder the action of grace in him. I am confident that you will soon have in him a reliable and competent counselor and support. . . .

[1] These letters came from Father Meyer and were marked with some exaggerations. See Letters 657 and 660.

I shall give you, my dear son, no other gifts at this New Year than good wishes as regards divine light, evangelical prudence and firmness. The sentiments of my heart are all devoted to you.

P.S. I am not rereading this letter, so as not to delay its departure. Give to all of your people the tokens of my tender affection. Know how to distinguish the older ones, as they also have a special place in my heart.

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The same mail brings to Father Leo Meyer, named pastor of Courtefontaine, the good wishes and the encouragement of the Founder.

657 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Agen, December 30, 1832

My very dear son, I have received your letter of December 10 and I can say with thankfulness that I was entirely ignorant of the facts contained therein. I beg of you, continue to tell me whatever you know that might be of importance to the order and regularity of the precious establishment of St. Remy.

If you are still at St. Remy, that is not what Brother Gaussens told me. He was wrong in telling you that the title of pastor you would have in Courtefontaine would not be conformable to the spirit of the Society.

I shall not lose sight of you. Remain faithful, as the good Lord will not let himself be surpassed in generosity.

May the Lord deign, my dear son, during this New Year, to increase your fervor and your zeal in his service! Receive my tender embraces!

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AFTER THE WITHDRAWAL OF BROTHER AUGUSTE— THE REORGANIZATION OF THE STE. MARIE BOARDING SCHOOL AND THE FINANCIAL LIQUIDATION

(JANUARY 1833 – NOVEMBER 1833)

After Brother Auguste obtained from the Archbishop of Bordeaux the dispensation from his vows, he negotiated with Father Chaminade for the liquidation of his belongings (See Letter 629). If he had wanted, purely and simply, to hold to the terms of the Statutes of the Society, the question would have been quickly settled; but he sought to withdraw under the most desirable conditions and felt himself supported by the ecclesiastical authorities. It was agreed to submit the affair to the judgment of three friendly arbitrators: MM. Lavardens Sr., Castelnau of Essenault and Hosten, all former magistrates.

The following letter gives us an idea of the situation at the beginning of 1833.

658 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Agen, January 7, 1833

My dear son, in reply to your letter of the fourth of the present month, I shall say, first, that I will go to Bordeaux for the affair, but only if there is urgency. My presence in Agen, through the work of Providence, is becoming much more useful than it would be in Bordeaux. If you think it all right, I shall name Father Caillet to represent me and to look after the affair in question. Everything that is passed through his hands will also go through yours; no document will be presented to Brother Auguste or to the arbitrators that you will not have retouched. If it is necessary to give a special form to this little note, to send something to the one replacing me, have the goodness to draw up the plan for me. . . .

You tell me, my dear son, "no doubt about it, there will be some deficit." No, I have no doubt about it, and here are the means which come to my mind, to defray what is owed to the creditors, with the name Auguste.

If they are capitalists,[1] mortgages or not, things will remain in their present state, that is to say, both of us will be responsible, while guaranteeing Brother Auguste in particular. It does not depend on us to take away the guarantees from the creditors, unless they consent to it. There doesn't seem to be any difficulty in regard to the debts contracted in my name.

If the creditors are suppliers of some kind or if they will be satisfied with the solvency of the purchaser, then that should take care of things. I believe that the majority will be satisfied. Perhaps some will not be satisfied and will insist on prevailing—in which case they will have to be paid and stop serving. We shall do what we would have done if Brother Auguste had become crippled or if he had ceded his place to Father Collineau, when I invited him to do so with so much solicitude.[2]

But, you will tell me, where is the money to act in this way? I answer, (1) that it is in the treasures of Providence in which I have confidence. The Lord, who permits such a violation of oaths as the result of so many transgressions, will have pity on us. I may be guilty, and I believe I am, of not having acted with greater energy; but I am submissive to all the rigors of his justice. He has the mercy to inspire me with the desire of always being faithful to him despite all my spiritual miseries. (2) I could call upon, from this day until the conclusion of the affair, eight or nine thousand francs and perhaps more, without counting what I could borrow. I am not speaking of what might be sold, because there are other commitments under my name.

[1] If they are lenders of funds.
[2] In the summer of 1829.

I shall willingly deal directly with Brother Auguste, but on condition that my answers go through your hands, so that they may have all the force and solidity possible.

Brother Auguste has no adversary in me. But I am witness of a very irregular administration and want to make him responsible for the effects of bad management and of his arbitrary acts. I desire (1) that, when he hands over his boarding school, he leaves us neither richer nor poorer than when he entered; (2) that the life annuity paid to M. Estebenet by the payee, remain, nevertheless, mortgaged on his belongings; and all sorts of reasons combine to call for his disposition; (3) that, until the handing over of the boarding school, he try to maintain it in good order. . . . Someone writes to me from Bordeaux that the rumor is spreading that he is to withdraw, etc. . . . People are burning to figure out the possible consequences. This boarding school, besides, is constantly losing more and more of its original reputation. When room is given for slander or scandal, then calumny is in a favorable condition for its evil work.

The most difficult thing to achieve in this affair is a real and conscientious state of liquidation. While the incidental questions are being discussed, what can prevent either party from occupying himself with it? It seems to me that, if Brother Auguste wants to be fair and reasonable, considering the good dispositions I feel in his regard, all can soon be terminated. You could have some friendly interviews with him. If he continues to want to make proposals, I shall listen to them, I shall answer them, and you judge, by the general tone of this letter, the nature of my answers.

Always tell me with complete frankness what you think in this affair, pro or con.

I am considering it more as God's affair than as our own. My entire ambition is not to be displeasing to our great Master. . . . I hope I have entirely answered your letter. I am embracing you with tender affection.

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Some days later the Good Father relates to Father Caillet the conclusion of the difficulties in Agen.

659 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BORDEAUX

Agen, January 11, 1833

My dear son, before answering your letters of last December 26 and 31, I want to let you know that Brother Jules[1] has been here for several days. He will be very well placed. He left Bordeaux before receiving my letter. I have just allowed him, as compensation for what

[1] Jules Chaminade, nephew of the Good Father, had just left the Society.

you might have given him, to ask you to pay for him the fifteen francs that had been lent him. Someone will present himself to you with his letter.

The pastor of Gaillan,[1] where Sister Trinity comes from, must make you count different sums, coming from the sale of goods belonging to the young Sister. You would have the kindness to receive them in the name and for the Superioress of the Daughters of Mary of the Convent of Agen. You will keep them in reserve and report to me about them.

I am able to give you the agreeable news that the disagreeable conflict with the Superioress General and with the whole community is entirely over. The illusion which dominated her for so long is now completely dispelled, and she is generously repairing the faults she had committed and the wrongs she had done to the Society. She has seen that I spent for the Daughters of Mary a little more than I had received from them since the foundation of their Institute. She gave me, by a special promissory note, forty-seven thousand and some francs, which she had received for me and which she had used for the Convent. She seems to distinguish very well the episcopal jurisdiction and the jurisdiction of the Superioress of the Daughters of Mary, etc.

On last December 31 we burned our respective writings on everything in the presence of the Council mothers. We have kept only the final decree, my copy being the final receipt, and hers being the acceptation, with renunciation of all that might be due to us, etc.[2] Before the ceremony, the Superioress, with the Council mothers, asked my pardon. While the papers were burning, the Superioress wanted to say the "Miserere" with the mothers and we closed with acts of thanksgiving and the "Ave Maris Stella." Since then, we are occupying ourselves only with reparations, and the renovation of order and fervor in the five Convents.[3]

I received with deep appreciation the various pleasant New Year's greetings from our young men of the Madeleine and yours also, my dear son. Later on, I hope to be able to

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[1] Denis Joffre (1780-1862), the "holy pastor of Gaillan," little parish of the Diocese of Bordeaux, had been one of the first spiritual sons of Father Chaminade before his departure for Spain. He always kept an affectionate veneration for the Good Father, whom he assisted in his last moments.

[2] At the end of one of the two copies of the settlement of accounts, is to be found the following note of Mother St. Vincent: "I, the undersigned, after mature reflection, and having observed that Father Chaminade, our Superior General, had, through generosity and delicacy, omitted to declare diverse articles which he had furnished to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, which, together, would make up a sum superior to what he was willing to declare he owed us, I begged of him to permit that I discharge the Society of Mary of this debt of 8,203 francs, 80 centimes above mentioned and to accept the receipt by the present writing." At the end of the other copy, is to be found the following note of Father Chaminade: "To return the loyalty and delicacy of the Mother Superior General, I renounce the secret pleasure that I wanted to procure for myself in declaring myself debtor to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, and I am accepting the receipt of the sum of 8,203 francs and 80 centimes mentioned above, which she sent me at the bottom of her copy, but on condition that, under pretext of any justice, loyalty or delicacy, we no longer come back upon what might have been omitted to my detriment; and, in consequence, that all accounts, notes, letters and writings whatever, in which there might be mention of the fact, be burned."

[3] Agen, Tonneins, Condom, Arbois, Acey.

show you all, in some way, the tender sentiments I bear toward you; at present, I am just overloaded with writings and affairs of all kinds. I was also very much moved by the kind attention of His Excellency, the Archbishop. I have written to Marie.[1] Greetings to John,[2] if there is no letter for him in the package with this letter.

May the Lord deign, my dear son, to increase his blessings upon you and upon all our children of the Madeleine!

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At St. Remy, there still remained some agitation in certain minds. The discussions which took place gave Father Chaminade occasion to recall certain details about the origin of the Society or to make more precise some principles of the government of the Institute, and this gives particular interest to this long correspondence.

660 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, January 14, 1833

My greetings to you, my dear son, and to Brother Clouzet at this New Year's time are changing into immense good wishes. Oh! That both of you would finally attain the end to which you are called by a loving Providence! That is what I desire and what I am asking the Lord for you. Be the interpreter of my tender sentiments toward the members of your humble community. May the hand of the Lord deign to bless all its members!

I really believe that Father Lalanne is still a bit blind regarding the feelings he believes he experiences toward Brother Clouzet. He is convinced, he tells me, that Brother Clouzet will never come back to truly religious sentiments as long as he is not changed from St. Remy. I have the intention of changing him; but before doing so, I want him to regain his first fervor, so that another replacing him could more easily fulfill the functions of his office because of the good order he left it in.

The Society has undertaken the Arts and Crafts from its first origin. It is true that this part of our work has suffered more than the others, because of difficulties, expenses, and the incapacity of certain Heads. Brothers Clouzet is right, in the main, and he will notice that I am supporting him; but as far as he is concerned, I want to see in him a firmness full of mildness, charity, modesty, and humility, for such is the firmness inspired by the Holy Spirit.

A few days before the retreat, which was to establish the foundations for the Society of Mary, I presented to our holy and wise Archbishop, a very short plan of organization for

[1] Marie Dubourg.
[2] John Larquey (1787-1854), Sodalist of Bordeaux since 1814, faithful servant of Father Chaminade and devoted sacristan of the Madeleine.

the Society of Mary.[3] This plan was entirely written in my own hand. It existed for some time. I even developed it somewhat shortly after the retreat, noting particularly the part read and approved by His Excellency. A long time after, I wanted to return to this first work. Not only could I not find the original but not a single copy of those that had been made from it. All my searching for several years has been useless.[1] Today, more than three hundred miles away and unknown to me, what is supposed to be a copy of this original document is being given value in opposition to the original. What about its authenticity? Before coming to any kind of discussion about the matter, have the kindness to make me a very exact copy of it, which you will verify and sign. Make the rough draft neatly, so as to lessen the sending charges. In addressing it to me, you might attach a little note about the condition of the pretended copy that was given to you. Has it been written, for example, by different hands? Does it seem to have been written in an uninterrupted manner? Does it bear several dates? Is it being said that it was made from the original copy? etc., etc. The examination of this document and even discussion about it—if there has been any—should in no way determine any of the acts of your superiorship.

Your place as superior, my dear son, has nothing embarrassing about it, and you are embarrassed only because there is mumbling going on around you. Every establishment, in the Society of Mary, must have or is supposed to have, a first Head or superior and three principal Heads: of zeal, of instruction, and work. All that may happen in life belongs to one of these three heads. The first Head or superior is at the same time Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction, and Head of Temporalities. The three Heads depend on the first Head for the exact performance of their duties and for their regular personal conduct. Having nothing to do with the appointment of the first head, they don't depend on him for the nature of their offices. The first Head may neither change, annul, nor prohibit the Offices. For anything of this kind, recourse must be had to an authority superior to his. . . .

I shall say a word to Father Lalanne, to persuade him that it is not in a spirit of competition that we are maintaining a boarding school of primary teaching. There is no harm in seeking or having the wherewith to excite emulation. The pupils need it and often so do the professors, however good they may otherwise be.

I am not at all sorry that Father Meyer is still at St. Remy, provided he walks with a solid step and does not stray from the beautiful paths of faith. I would have feared for our four postulants or novices, who are about to finish their profane studies, if he had gone away. You please me in saying that he can be useful to you. Courtefontaine must still remain patient. I think I shall soon be able to send them the help they would have had in Father Meyer. This will be Brother Fontaine, a deacon of the last ordination, very regular, very penetrated with the duties of a real religious and, otherwise, very capable. I presume that this assignment of his will be only temporary, to permit him as it were, to make his debut.

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[3] See Letter 102.

[1] This precious document was found at St. Laurent and has been preserved in the archives of the Society.

Father Rollinet has just written me a very fine letter. Keep him in your district, profit by his good will and by his first fervor to have him make a good novitiate. His novitiate will have been worthwhile if he comes from it loving and practicing poverty, chastity, and obedience, if he adopts the happy habit of uniting himself with Jesus and Mary, especially at the time of mental prayer. He must not be given any employment which would be unseemly.[1] There are many acceptable ways of occupying him during the periods that may be called free.

I am not yet sufficiently informed as regards Brother David to make a final statement. Continue to communicate with Father Lalanne about the need you have of him and, Father Lalanne on his part, will seek the means of doing without him.

In equipping the boarding school as you tell me it is equipped, Brother Clouzet has followed my views well. I presume that this boarding school will get better and better and will do a good which the château could never do. Speak of it to Father Lalanne from time to time, especially at opportune moments, in the way you have just spoken to me about it, and his bias will disappear little by little.

As I was finishing the fourth page of this letter, the mailman brought me yours of the eighth of the present month. I shall answer it as briefly as possible. It is already more than a week ago that this letter was started, but still more pressing affairs keep making me interrupt it.

My answer to Brother Clouzet is also being delayed. Since he is away, I shall wait a few more days before starting it. You will probably find him better disposed to take your advice when he comes out of a fervent retreat.

I am very well satisfied with the explanations you give me about the three principal matters which, in conscience, someone thought it his duty to make known to me.[2] I expected a lot of exaggeration at least, and it is precisely on this account that I immediately wrote you about it before doing anything or even before talking to anyone about it.

Since I did not doubt that Brother Pimouguet would come on the order I had sent him, I sent the teacher of his prospective class away. To cover the class until Brother Pimouguet arrives, I transferred the young man who was replacing Brother Morel, who died. That puts me in an embarrassing spot. I was ignoring, as you may easily understand, the new employment you had given Brother Pimouguet. Have him leave, as soon as you can replace him suitably.

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[1] Because of his age and the functions of pastor, which he fulfilled before coming to St. Remy.
[2] See Letter 656, toward the end.

Do not be bashful about polishing the style of your letters, in spite of the numerous occupations you have. Charity and promptitude, here you have the two essential qualities of our mutual correspondence.

I shall have a real substitute for Brother Dormier when he leaves for Courtefontaine. He is a *fac totum*: he handles kitchen work, the bakery, gardening, etc. Furthermore, he is well accustomed to regularity. What has been the reason for Brother Dormier's dismissal? What do you expect to do with him at St. Remy?

May the Lord, my dear son, shower upon you his most abundant blessings!

Agen, January 14, 1833. Eleven o'clock at night. I am not rereading this letter.

P.S. You are not to call your community, my dear son, the Community of Workmen, because Father Lalanne in derision called it thus when he announced the separation. The workmen form only an incidental part of it. It is perhaps this mistake that has aroused Brothers Gaussens and Clouzet against you.

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661 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, January 23, 1833

Since the beginning of this year, my dear son, I have had your letter of last December 20 before me, and, in spite of my good will, I have not been able to answer it until now. I hope you will believe me, although I am not giving you any reasons in detail.

In your preceding letter, you were suggesting Father Curot as able to replace, even advantageously, Brother Auguste in the Ste. Marie Boarding School. I believed you, but can we count on this devotedness? I have in mind in asking this question all the obstacles I told you about in my answer. Your last letter said nothing about them. Are these obstacles rigorously true? Are they invincible? If you don't think them invincible, are you working at conquering them? In the supposition that Father Curot could be put with confidence at the head of the boarding school, would he be the man to give all his attention to the direction of the boarding school and not to get mixed up in temporal affairs? If this were the case, I would prepare everything so as to put Brother Clouzet there, whatever might be his repugnance to the idea. Temporal affairs are always the abyss threatening to engulf us, but if Father Curot is really willing to go, we might be able, with Brother Clouzet well prepared, to float over the waters of the abyss and soon bring everything to a happy issue.

The number of pupils in the boarding school has notably decreased this year, forty-five boarders or half-boarders. Brother Auguste writes that it is urgent to remedy this

situation. Father Collineau,[1] Honorary Canon, is lodging with his father. He is quitting the diocese after Easter. Let me know your ideas, my dear son, after you have reflected on them well before God.

The pitiful illusions which the Mother Superior of the Daughters of Mary had been laboring under since her installation have by now entirely disappeared. In spite of my many occupations, I am helping her repair the considerable wrongs which her unbalanced condition caused her Institute. The principal cause of all her aberrations is the blind confidence she had in her confessor. Although everything seemed settled exteriorly last summer (especially with the Bishop, whose suspicions were difficult to dissipate), there still remained some bad leaven in the head of the Superioress and, in consequence, in some of the other Mothers who think about as she does. Your return to subordination and the letter you wrote to the superioress of the convent of Arbois have about finished opening her eyes. I am coming to your last letter.

You will provide a remedy to all your troubles, my dear son:

1. If faith, which has been solidly established in your mind since your high studies, passes completely into your heart. *Corde creditur ad justitiam*. We must love what we believe. We have all-powerful motives for credibility—to submit our reason to faith, all we need is, so to say, to be reasonable. This submission is already a great gift of God; but it does no more than precede the submission of the heart, and the heart becomes submissive only when it loves. At least, this is the way I see the thing, and it would seem to me very dangerous not to see it so, in actual practice. Faith, and especially this faith of the heart, is a great gift of God. It is for this reason that we always need to say: *Domine, adauge nobis fidem*! God, so to say, easily grants this grace, when we devote ourselves to works of faith. *Justus en fide vivit*. Oh, my dear son, what happiness for us if for the rest of our lives we can walk along the beautiful paths of faith, act only by faith, and live only by faith! The faith which would not enlighten our mind would not give us the life of justice, which is a divine life.

2. It is the same with humility as with faith. It is humility of heart which the Lord demands of us. *Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde*. I look upon humility as one of the first fruits of humility of heart. Humility makes progress in proportion to growth in faith. We shall find our abjection very great if we know ourselves well. Humility will make us love it. The sacrifices which obedience will oblige you to make will cost you little in proportion that faith of heart grows in you. What happiness, on the contrary to be assured of doing the will of God with one's heart! How amiable are these words: *Fiat voluntas tua sicut in coelo et in terra*!

[1] Almost immediately after leaving the Society, Father Collineau had been named Honorary Canon of Bordeaux by Archbishop Cheverus. He proposed to go to Beauvais to be with his friend, Father Armond Gignoux, Superior of the Grand Seminary. The fact is, he did not carry out this project.

3. The peculiar quality of faith of the heart is to give stability to the faculties of our soul, to our mind, and to our will. I call this the will of the new man. From here you will understand recollection. You will also understand what must be thought of as a habitual defect in recollection. This thought, thoroughly examined, may at first cause us to tremble; but it soon changes to a consoling sentiment of penitence and also to a sentiment of gratitude toward the one who deigns to enlighten us and to give us such easy means to go to him and to be all to him.

4. Without discussing here what matters a new general confession might turn to, it is easy to see that it would serve an excellent purpose and have a happy outcome, and all this without any drawbacks. In the least doubt regarding matters of salvation, must not the surest path be taken? I am pleased to know that you understand: *Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt*. . . .

In proportion as your devotion to Mary grows, you will become more skillful in inspiring others with it. I shall take occasion, from what you say about it to me, to give you the title of a new little work: *Love of Mary, Motives for Exciting in All Hearts the Love of Mary, Mother of God*, in Lyons, at Périsse Brothers, Booksellers, Mercière Street, No. 33, 1831. You might make the small expense and have eight or ten copies made. You could give three or four of them to Father Chevaux.

5. As regards the moral and religious condition of the house, I have generally observed nearly everywhere that the inferiors were ordinarily at the level of their superior in matters of virtue and regularity. There is a comparison almost similar to be made between pupils and their respective teachers. Everything falls back upon the principal Head. His is the responsibility before God. I shall not go into any details on this subject. A superior must not only work in common with his inferiors, but also with each one in particular, more or less according to their needs. When you have given me the description of such a one, as close to reality as possible, and when you yourself have experienced difficulties in leading them to advance in virtue, I shall tell you candidly what I think. Piety hardly ever proceeds from hearts in the same way as the sparks come from the stone when struck by the flint. Spiritual exercises are needed, so to say, but well made. One must know how to prepare the amadou.[1]

6. Father Chevaux wrote to me at about the same time about the difficulties that still existed between you and Brother Clouzet. I answered him almost immediately, and I think that everything is now in peace. I don't think there ever was in Brother Clouzet any will to harm you. Quite the contrary; but he seems to have wandered from the paths of charity, humility, etc. As regards the boarding school he is trying to organize, despite everything that has been said, I cannot think that he merely wished to compete with the boarding school of the château. I ardently wish that peace, union, and harmony be established and maintained among all of you. Father Chevaux also seems to desire it very much. It is only

[1] This is a sort of mushroom which catches fire easily. Before the invention of matches, it was used to get sparks from flint by the action of the stone. So that it would catch fire, it had to be first thoroughly dried.

with great difficulty that I can work at the particular good of individuals, when minds are not at ease. . . . Brother Gaussens, I believe, will be able to remain silent, but he will always have his own particular ideas.

I believe, as you do, that it will be only to his advantage that Brother Clouzet get away from St. Remy; but, before all else, his soul must be cured. If he goes, he must not take along any wounds. If he did, you yourself would always have reason to regret it. Be generous for God's sake. He will not let himself be outdone in generosity in all that concerns you.

I am granting Brother Brunet permission to receive Holy Communion a second time each week. It is not through indifference that I have not answered his last two letters, for I have not changed the place that I had given him in my heart. . . .

I am not rereading this long letter so that its departure may not be further delayed. All the more reason for not having a copy made of it. If I have explained myself too obscurely on some point, let me have a copy of the passage that is obscure or difficult, so that I may clarify the ideas I originally had.

My heart, my dear son, is full of sentiments of the most tender affection for you and of the most ardent desire that you correspond to the wishes of God in your regard and that you become not only a saint, but a great saint.

P.S. Take great interest in the Ste. Marie Boarding School. Since I began writing this letter, I received the most distressing news about it.

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In Bordeaux, Brother David, whose character was becoming decidedly more and more difficult with age, was letting the Auguste liquidation affair drag along, and Father Chaminade thought himself obliged to send Brother Mémain to Bordeaux to represent him there.

662 – TO M. LAVARDENS, FORMER COUNSELOR OF THE ROYAL COURT, BORDEAUX

Agen, February 1, 1833

Dear Sir, I am sending the older Brother Mémain to Bordeaux to represent me in the troublesome business arrangement that Brother Auguste wants to work out with me. I beg you to help him with your counsels to work out an amicable arrangement with the latter. I have inspired him with complete confidence in you, the same that I have enjoyed over the forty years that I have had the honor of knowing you.

I am not alluding to the share that my long-standing friendship with you had in the redoubling of your infirmities, at the time Brother David was asking you to be my arbiter. I put off signing the compromise until Brother David had written to me so that I could add your name to it and so that the meeting could be held at your place. It is only by reputation that I know M. Castelnau d'Essenault and M. Hosten, but they are very well known to Brother Auguste. I shall not weary you here with memories. I have supplied Brother Mémain with the short answers I thought I had to give Brother Auguste's propositions, after the signature on the compromise. Brother Auguste reserves to himself the right to reply to my agent.

I am with a respectful and inviolable attachment, dear sir, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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At St. Remy Brother Clouzet's sensibility still remains aroused. In a long and warmhearted letter, Father Chaminade patiently tries to enlighten and encourage him.

663 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, February 9, 1833

My dear son, I was going to try to answer your last letter, when I received one from Father Chevaux telling me that, following your Gobillot affair, you were going to make a retreat. I hesitated then, and since I have been deluged by a torrent of urgent letters...Father Caillet has just sent me the letter you wrote him toward the first of the year as well as Father Lalanne's. . . .

In your letters, my dear son, there always reigns a basic discontent which afflicts me a great deal, in spite of the fact that things at St. Remy have been arranged about as you desired. The separation came off without any great upheaval and if there had been less haste, it would have gone practically unnoticed.

From this separation some happy effects have resulted:

1. The great change in Father Lalanne's conduct. Edification is felt everywhere and is producing much fruit. Father Lalanne plainly admits, and without human respect, the irregularity of his conduct toward me as his superior, etc.—This is the object of his letter to Father Caillet. . . .

2. Instead of one community and one boarding school there will now be two. Each one seems to be able to grow more than previously, with the result that the good will be increased.

"All this," you say, perhaps to yourself, "would have been true if I had been named superior of the new community. It is I who had so well foreseen everything and took care of everything so that the separation could produce these happy effects. They can only sustain themselves and increase by the one who fathered them. Not to name me superior, is, at the same time, to throw over all my projects for the good and prosperity of an establishment which has cost me so much pain and to which I gave so much solicitude. It is also to commit a grave injustice and even to go against the Constitutions."—I suppose that you harbor all these murmurs, since you have expressed them all, at least in part, to various persons. Since they have a great appearance of truth, those who are learning their history must pity you, and if they have enough charity not to attribute any bad sentiment toward me, they must at least suppose that I am shallow, that I am very narrow-minded in my views, etc.—How could you repent before God, since you are only the victim of injustice and of blundering? My tender affection for you and my duty oblige me at least to try to dissipate the illusions that I believe you are creating for yourself.

1. Is it true that you are being hindered from doing the good you have in mind, which you had so effectively started? I frankly answer: No! Not only is Father Chevaux incapable, by the purity of his intentions, of preventing you from continuing; but he has the greatest need, at least for some time, of your help and counsels.

Would you insist on saying that you cannot continue with a permissive and, as it were, a subordinate authority, but that you need full authority? I would answer that the good will toward the establishment comes more from the confidence people have in your person than from the title you might have. That is the reason why Father Chevaux needs you, at least until he has won the confidence that you acquired for yourself.

2. "But, is it not dishonoring and degrading me not to name me superior? How shall I hold my head up?" The answer is purely negative. Superiorship is not an irremovable position. Even that of the General is not. You were not acting superior when Father Chevaux was named, and so there can be no question of degradation. There is no dishonor, since the spirit of the Society of Mary and of all similar societies is to place in superiorship, in different times and places, subjects that are considered qualified. What answer is there for those who seem surprised? Nothing else than Father Chevaux's suitability and the fact that you were tired, so to say, of so great a responsibility; and that, furthermore, things really remained as they were; and as you had explained it, you would put in the same interest, that etc. . . .

3. "But a priest was appointed as superior instead of a layman and this is against the Constitutions." Yes, my dear son, a priest has been named superior rather than a layman and I am here not denying all the personal interest you might have in this question or objection:

1. Since the Novitiate forms part of this community and there are often ecclesiastics in it, even such as are in Holy Orders, including professed members who are sent there for good reasons, there is great suitability that the superior be a priest, especially when we had one whom we judged fully qualified for the office.

2. This community needs a chaplain and a confessor, especially since it has a boarding school and a normal school. If there is only one priest and this priest is capable of being superior, is it not more suitable to name him than to subordinate him to a layman?[1] If there are several priests or even several ecclesiastics as professors, whether in the boarding school or in the normal school, there are still more reasons for naming a priest, however in the supposition that one is available.

3. All these reasons of suitability are here greatly strengthened when we consider the struggle that has been going on between you and Father Lalanne for three years. I am saying the apparent struggle, because, although you were opposed to him because of me,[2] many would have been able to believe that you were combating only to claim a victory and to be master. You yourself wrote to me that, when Father Lalanne announced the separation, he added that you would remain "Superior of the Community of Workers."

4. The new community having so many and such different attributions, it was altogether suitable that the Superior not be in charge of the accounts and temporal matters, as this would have distracted him too much from his more important functions. Who, then, were we to name, besides you, at least temporarily, for this so essential temporal task? I have said, at least temporarily, because it is easy to foresee that you will be necessary to the Society in another place[3]; but first we must see that everything is well enough regulated at St. Remy, so that an ordinary though intelligent man might be able to replace you. But that is not the precise question at the present time. I shall come back to this more fully at another time.

I have no other purpose, in the present letter, than to help you bring back peace to your soul and to furnish you with motives for dissipating the illusions that make you so strongly oppose the principles of Christian and religious virtues. Oh, how much I shall bless God, my dear son, if grace comes to operate in you what it seems to have done for Father Lalanne! I am continuing.

5. "The nomination of a priest to the superiorship of this new community is contrary to the old Constitutions. They call for the nomination of a layman." That is, my dear son, what you thought, what you said, and what others have said and thought to prove. By old or primitive

[1] We know that the canonical rules and religious discipline at this time were not opposed to this idea and seemed rather favorable to it.
[2] Only because of the decisions I had taken.
[3] In Bordeaux. See Letter 665.

Constitutions is here meant a little outline of the prospective Constitutions, which was presented to Archbishop d'Aviau before the retreat in which the Society was declared constituted, which outline was approved by him. Some details were added almost immediately. Now, I am saying that the said nomination is not contrary to this outline, and this, of course, has to be. You and Brother Gaussens must recall the serious murmurs that were heard at St. Laurent after the nomination of the Heads of the group that was to form the establishment of St. Remy. The reason for the murmuring was that Father Rothéa, a priest and member of the group, was subordinate to you as simple Head of Zeal. To speak truly, I named you first Head because I thought you the most capable of the group and because I was persuaded of the incapacity of Father Rothéa for governing. What I thought then I still think today. I immediately assembled all the retreatants and, without saying anything injurious, I made some explanations which softened and quieted down all minds. Since then, a strange hand has written, about this plan or organizational sketch of the Society, I don't yet know exactly what; but I expect to know it at the first opportunity, and thereafter the consequences to be drawn from it. All these complaints, contestations or murmurs do not come from any better source than the contestations that Father Lalanne does not cease to deplore. Come back, my dear son, to the real principles of religious obedience. It is only there that you will find peace of soul and the courage needed to fulfill the designs of God in the state with which he has inspired you and which you have embraced.

I am not too well contented with some passages of your letter to Father Caillet. In the few lines that make up the letter, you underline these: "As the Good Father has not yet given me a positive answer,—on the contrary, he seems to condemn me to stay in St. Remy, where I suffer much—I am making up my mind, etc." In what way have I seemed to make of your stay in St. Remy a condemnation? If you suffer much at St. Remy, is it I who am causing you these sufferings? By entering into yourself, you would find that most of them, if not all, come only from your interior dispositions.

You add in the postscript of the same letter: "Poor St. Remy! . . . I had hoped, until the present, that this establishment would draw the Society from its present embarrassment, that the resources would increase visibly; but now, all is upside down, turned into disorder and run in an altogether different way. Nothing is just right." You would find it hard, my dear son, to prove that St. Remy has lost the resources which the Society ought to find there, to get out of its present embarrassment. It seems more probable, on the contrary, that God will bless the acute pains which you and I have endured during the last three years.

If you have written several letters similar to the one you wrote Father Caillet, you surely have done a great deal of harm. If you speak to Brother Gaussens in the same terms, the harm will be still greater. However, I like to persuade myself that you have seen the truth during the retreat you have just made and that you will become an entirely new man.

I have just sent the elder Brother Mémain to deal with the liquidation of the boarding school affair with Brother Auguste. The revival of this boarding school is going to be difficult, as our means are very limited. We must also think about considerable financial resources. How much felling of wood has been going on at St. Remy? Can the total amount be estimated? The time for it has arrived. I shall not delay speaking to you with an open heart, as we say. My

confidence in you has not been shaken by all your outbursts and ill humor. Faith and religion will triumph in you, as they have just triumphed in Father Lalanne, in the Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary, in Father Colin, etc. I think I have never prayed as much for you to the Blessed Virgin as I have since seeing you a prey to self-love and to the enemy of Mary, who seeks but to ferment and to justify it by all sorts of illusions. My dear son, let us watch and pray!

I have just reread your last letter. There is not as much ill-humor in it as in your letter to Father Caillet, although it is five times as long.

Warn M. Pidoux[1] not to loan large sums to Father Lalanne. I do hope he will do no borrowing; but, nevertheless, it would not be bad, if he did, that M. Pidoux should ask him if he is authorized to do any borrowing. To whom, if he were replaced, would he have to address himself, etc. . . .

It will doubtless be necessary to repair the breaks in the wall of enclosure when the time for masonry comes. In the meantime, take your precautions to have this work done as economically as possible. . . .

I shall write Father Lalanne concerning the wall of separation[2] and the grand gateway when everything is finished and the two communities are in perfect peace. Oh, my dear son, how much I desire to see a real union of heart and mind between you and Father Lalanne, the union we love to call fraternal! Charity is generous. Do not fear to make the first move.

The end of your letter, my dear son, lets me see in you a great surprise, which proceeded, doubtless, from a great preoccupation. Here are the terms of it: "I have not been able to prevent myself, my Good Father, from feeling a genuine sorrow, while reading in your letter of the eighth these few words: I have forgotten everything. This is the answer and the entire answer to a letter of five pages." In that letter of yours, you made excuses to me concerning the manner, so lacking in respect, in which you had written me at the news of Father Chevaux's nomination. So as not to humiliate you in recalling what had happened, so as not to let you, out of consideration, notice the large and deep wound which you had made in my heart, as soon as I see you return from your momentary aberration, I say to you: "Be quiet, for I have forgotten everything." And, in fact, there would never have been any further question about it between us if you had not provided the occasion for it. I shall repeat to you again today: I have forgotten everything if I can get a good letter which will let me know that grace has reformed your heart. What do I desire, what am I looking for with so many labors and so much solicitude if it is not first my own salvation and then that of my children? I am mindful, no doubt, of everyone's mistakes, but those of my older ones pain me a lot more. Are you not really one of my older ones? I sincerely desire your greater good, and in my cries, and even in the bitterness of some reproaches, you can make out the lively interest inspired by my attachment to you.

In this very long letter, my dear son, I am speaking to you very little of temporal matters, and that in spite of the fact there is quite some urgency for so speaking, because the Lord has told us: "Seek first the kingdom of God and all that can render you worthy to possess it!" Before

[1] Banker in Besançon.
[2] See Letter 653.

employing yourself with other needs of the Society—and there are many and great ones—before, that is to say, occupying yourself first with St. Remy—I desire that you give examples to the practice of your vows of religion, that you be the first to emphasize Father Chevaux's authority, to praise without affection his talents and good qualities, so as to have him well accepted both in the interior of the house and by the public. In the meantime, regulate well the temporal affairs of St. Remy and of Marast. I don't think I shall be long in asking you about the rules controlling liquidation and all the plans you are following or that are to be followed in the functions you exercise. Another less clever than you will then be able to replace you without disadvantage.

Just a few words about Brother Perrin before finishing. When you regulated his accounts with his mother, I had only good things to say about him. He seemed to be reaching maturity, to be sincerely turning toward God. I permitted him to make his vows for three years, and he was disposed to make them for life. For more than a year now, he has fallen into pitiful slackness which is growing each day despite all the observations I make to him. It is good that his respectable mother knows about it, as I am beginning to have doubts about his return to virtue and regularity. Brother Perrin owes more than a year of tuition, as is evident from the last payment. Have the kindness to ask for it. As he has received a little money, either from his mother or his brother, and as he has always been somewhat employed, I am not taking account of what may have been advanced to him. Furthermore, all we can do is to have him teach a class in linear drawing. He cares only for this branch of study and for mathematics—no writing, no spelling, no grammar, not even reading. He wanted to give his sister a present at the time of her marriage, at the end of last year. It was agreed that, considering the difficulty and expenses connected with the manufacture of his present, you would buy him in Besançon a copy of the Introduction to a Devout Life *by St. Francis de Sales, that you would have it bound in morocco leather and that you would give it to her as coming from him. . . .*

I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, and wishing you the peace of the Lord.

* * * *

Although he has sent Brother Mémain to Bordeaux to negotiate with Brother Auguste, Father Chaminade finds himself pressed to write to the latter. He cannot believe that the separation is definitive, and nothing is as touching as the perseverance of the Founder to regain the heart of this well-beloved son.

664 – TO M. AUGUSTE PERRIERE, BORDEAUX

Agen, February 13, 1833

Dear Sir—Although I have immediately answered Brother Mémain's letter of the tenth, the very sincere interest I have in you obliges me to talk with you about its two main articles. Here is the first:

After an interview of seven or eight hours," writes Brother Mémain, "Brother David decided that we could undertake absolutely no further negotiations without your presence, which amounts to saying that Brother Auguste always persists in his old opinion."

Brother Mémain says further on that Brother David has forbidden him to write me his reasons, but that he would have permitted Brother Mémain to come tell me verbally. Brother Mémain does not speak about the impression that these reasons have made on him.

I answered Brother Mémain: "What is there new today that can render my presence absolutely and rigorously necessary? Brother David has been a long time without thinking such, since he wrote me that, if I did not come to Bordeaux, my representative should be provided with all my powers."

I don't know what reflections you have about this manner of acting. As far as I am concerned, I have abstained from making any. . . . Already, by the inconceivable incidents Brother David has fostered, he has made us lose so much time, especially since you had invited me to discuss our negotiations directly between ourselves!

To this effect, you are sending me the propositions which you consider it your duty to make me. I answer each one. I uselessly await your reply . . . My correspondence gives me reason to believe that you are afraid to write, that you might thus compromise your case, that, if there were no arrangement, all that you would have advanced by way of a conciliation would be imputed to you, etc.

The chapter of possibilities is long and frightful and well able to paralyze everything. Here the fact is that two friends, full of good faith and incapable of harming one another in any way or of doing anything against this good faith, are trying to come to some kind of agreement. Must such friends, then, confine themselves to the innumerable precautions of jurisprudence? Our affair, vexing as it is for both of us, is nevertheless clear enough. People who act with the uprightness and simplicity we have should be able to reach a reasonable settlement. So much for the temporal side of the matter.

Let us move to the spiritual side of things, because Brother Mémain never believed that you would ever recover from your baneful illusion. I gave him the evidence of three conversions which have filled my soul with consolation.[1] *Their illusions were even more pitiful than yours. Brother Mémain was telling me: Brother Auguste will never decide upon an apostasy. His faith and the fear of God will bring him back . . . I answered him: He had himself dispensed from his vows and from the oaths that confirmed them . . . Do, I added, what your friendship and your zeal suggest.*

Here is what he writes to me on this subject in the same letter: "I have had several long interviews with Brother Auguste. He thinks he is absolutely unable to reconsider his separation, but he seems to me to be very well disposed. He is willing to do all that will depend on him to come to a fair and friendly arrangement. He has an affection for the Society and for you in particular, and he regrets a great deal that circumstances and the turns which the Society has taken oblige him to separate himself from it."

[1] Those of Mother St. Vincent, of Father Lalanne and that of Father Colin. See the preceding letter.

I answered Brother Mémain: "I believe all that you tell me of the good sentiments of Brother Auguste, and I have always believed it. He must have realized that, judging from my conduct and from what I have written, my paternal sentiments toward him have never altered. Brother Auguste, you tell me, regrets very much that the circumstances and the turns that the Society has taken oblige him to separate himself from it. I also believe in the reality of his regret. This regret is that of a good heart, of a loving heart, but all in the natural order; while here the separation is of interest to the soul, in the supernatural order. He is dominated by a fatal illusion and by a certain human respect, in regard to the steps already taken. The circumstances and the turns that the Society has taken are not of a nature to—I am not finishing."

Between us, dear sir, what are these so important circumstances, and this turn, so far from the point of departure, that call for a separation? Great motives are surely needed to tranquilize a conscience, before God, on the pure and simple breaking of vows which you have renewed for so many years. What becomes of all that reason and faith teach us about the holiness of oaths? You will perhaps answer me that you are not making me the judge of the motives which direct you in so important and delicate a circumstance. If this answer brings into your soul the peace of God, and if, besides, you are not in a mood to discuss their solidity, then I must remain silent. I shall have accomplished the duty which my former liaison with you imposed upon me in the circumstance which Providence has just provided.

Receive, dear sir, the assurance of my tender and persevering devotedness.

* * * *

The cholera is raging across France and putting St. Remy to the test. From all sides bad news comes to Agen, but the faith and confidence of Father Chaminade are not shaken.

665 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, February 18, 1833

Brother Pimouguet has just arrived, my dear son. He told me the causes of your bitter affliction. Here I am immediately sharing it with you. Your sorrows and your joys are my sorrows and my joys. My heart has always remained united to yours: Cor unum et anima una*. I have never believed that your heart was distant from mine. I am convinced that your faith has made you profit from the calamities which God has thought it good to send you and all those under your authority. What is most consoling to the eyes of faith, it seems to me, is the fact that it is a scourge of God. Although there was an epidemic in the regions that surround St. Remy, it is impossible not to see the finger of God, especially in the ferocity with which it has taken hold in the château. You know that David preferred pestilence to war and to famine, for it seemed to him to come more immediately from God. Let us not cease to say with the holy man Job:* Sit nomen Domini benedictum*!*

As I was finishing the prayers that I ordinarily say for you and for the entire Society, someone came to bring me more troublesome news than what was coming from the château of St. Remy. It came from the Ste. Marie Boarding School. Sit nomen Domini benedictum*!*

Here is the fact. You know that Brother Auguste was to withdraw from the Society and that, in consequence, we would have to replace him in the boarding school after the regulating of the accounts and the liquidation. Brother David was in charge of this matter, and we were, from one incident to the next, about where we were last year in the month of March. Brother Auguste is not to be blamed; but you know Brother David.

The shortest and even the only way to arrive at something definite is to eliminate Brother David from this affair entirely. I intend to contact him by this morning's mail. If the affair in itself is very little advanced, its consequences are already very disturbing. On the one hand, last year was very stormy for the boarding school, as discontent, both inside and out, already gave it severe blows. The fear of cholera caused the departure of a certain number of pupils. Some boarding schools that are considered good have been established since. The Ste. Marie Boarding School this year has had only thirty boarders and fifteen half-boarders. Besides that, it is being seriously shaken by the indiscretion a
of---. The rumor spread that Brother Auguste was to withdraw. It is even being said, and quite openly, in the city that he is going to get married. Brother David is doing almost extravagant things to draw me to Bordeaux to settle things with Brother Auguste, and in that way he puts a new obstacle in the way of presenting my views. The debts contracted by Brother Auguste are frightful, and he tells me or has me told that they are increasing each day, by a diminution in the number of boarders.

When I began this letter several days ago, I was not thinking of speaking to you of the Ste. Marie Boarding School in the way I have just done, but, looking at both disasters—St. Remy and Ste. Marie, although their causes are so different—I said to myself:

1. There are a certain number of pupils who are withdrawing from St. Remy; some permanently, others, perhaps the majority, temporarily, to get into the fresh air to recover completely.

2. The professors and the superior himself have been attacked by the epidemic. There must be a certain amount of discouragement in all this, and studies are languishing. It is even prudent not to do any urging.

3. The professors would perhaps, in this situation, be prepared to continue along the courses already begun for the rest of the year or at least for a good portion of the current year.

4. Father Lalanne, under pretext of regaining his health, and also to call a truce on the wearying ideas that this disaster does not cease recalling for him, has ostensible reasons for being absent a considerable length of time.

5. A certain number of the pupils who have withdrawn are perhaps precisely those whose parents Father Lalanne has made certain commitments to.

From these considerations taken as a whole, and perhaps from several others I have thought of, I concluded that it could be in the designs of Providence that you spend some time in Bordeaux to replace Brother Auguste. You are known and loved in Bordeaux. If we could announce that you are coming to be the Head of the boarding school, the turmoil there would

probably stop and, etc. You would not have to bother, except as a matter of counsels, about temporal matters, which are so muddled, but which, nevertheless, do not precisely worry me because of a certain confidence I have in our Lord and in his august Mother.

As regards temporal matters, I had Brother Clouzet in mind and a few days ago I wrote him of the intention I had of transferring him once everything was going smoothly at St. Remy, but without mentioning Bordeaux. Now that I understand that you can come to Bordeaux without too much inconvenience, that changes things for Brother Clouzet. Who else could replace you at St. Remy? I see no alternative, at least for the time being, to putting Brother Clouzet in Father Chevaux's position and Father Chevaux in yours, though only as a temporary arrangement. Nothing, it seems to me, would prevent Brother Bonnefoi from coming to Bordeaux later. I do not think, at least for the present, that he would be able to act as Head of affairs that are in such disorder; but he would not lack work as second in command.

Since the last letter I wrote you, my dear son, in which I spoke about Father Curot, I have learned that his scruples were increasing right along and that he could hardly be occupied with saying Mass from day to day. What is most vexing is that he is not scrupulous regarding quite essential points, only on minor ones, in which he should make his own decisions. Before leaving St. Remy, perhaps you could induce him to write me a good letter, in which he could clearly explain his interior state. He might perhaps be cured, and I think he could be, provided he does exactly what is prescribed for him.

Father Collineau has notified me that he will go to the boarding school only after Easter, to provide me, etc. . . . Father Collineau has been named Vicar General of Beauvais. He is leaving the diocese of Bordeaux only after Easter.[1]

Everything seems to be falling at the same time. Our Lord seems to intervene in an extraordinary manner, in order to put us in our places. He chastises us to purify us. My dear son, we must serve him in all seriousness—serve him, not in our own way, but as he wants to be served. If he strikes us, it is certainly not to lose us; and I believe that the Blessed Virgin, to whom we belong in such a special way, would not permit it to happen.

Although I believe that you can wait until Easter before leaving, it will be necessary to write me as soon as possible so that we can make an announcement. For some days, the good God has been allowing me to glimpse some means of stopping the shock that could disrupt our temporal affairs at the same time of our separation from Brother Auguste. . . .

Brother Auguste always manifests a great regret over this separation. This regret, although merely natural, could well be the prelude of a grace, which might dissipate the fatal illusion which dominates him; but even if this illusion should be dissipated, I don't think he could remain in Bordeaux. Thus our fortunes are to follow their own way.

Accept there, my dear son, the new tokens of my tender affection and of my entire devotedness.

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[1] This project was not realized.

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666 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, February 23, 1833

My dear son, I have received the copy of the Institute of Mary*, which you took the trouble to copy. This text carries with it great proofs of truth and authenticity.*

1. It is exactly in the spirit of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

2. You have it, entirely copied in Brother Gaussens' hand who insists having taken it from the original. It must be remarked, however, that Brother Gaussens, along with certain of his confreres, has seen the things in the manner of an inexperienced young man and that he imprudently made use of his own ideas without telling me anything about it.

Here is the fact. I submitted to Archbishop d'Aviau the abridged plan for the Institute or Society of Mary, entirely conformable to that of the Daughters of Mary, the Constitutions of which were to serve us as Rules—Constitutions already known to the Archbishop and approved in Agen by His Lordship and his council after a long examination. This is one of the bases of our Society. I presented to the Archbishop of Bordeaux only the part which contains the entire plan and spirit of the Society. Later, in my petition to the Sovereign Pontiff, I gave only the most general dispositions, in telling him of the foundation of the new Society under the auspices of Archbishop d'Aviau. A double postscript was added to the petition by His Excellency, one copy of which remained in our Secretariate.

All that precedes the Nota, which, in your copy is on the sixth page, was presented to His Excellency, written by my hand and placed in his hands for several days to be examined more attentively. I did not give His Excellency the details about government, because I was not yet sufficiently settled regarding certain points and because the sketch or plan I was presenting, with the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary, sufficed to determine the object of the vows that were to be made.

On account of the very great confidence I had in my dear children, Father Caillet, Brother Gaussens and others, I was in no way opposed to their copying of the entire document, which, moreover, had its correlative copy. I was far from expecting that, one day, after the original copy had been taken away from me, I would be put against a copy in a way unknown to me.

My uncertainties, my dear son, as regards some detailed articles, which prevented my submitting them for the approbation of the Archbishop of Bordeaux and so tying myself up to a certain point, have disappeared as the Society has grown, especially when it became necessary to draw up Statutes to obtain the royal sanction. If, then, I had not followed my first plan, how would it be that no one among the older members of the Society made mention of it?

Why, someone could easily say, if you had a clear idea of the Society of Mary from its beginning, did you have uncertainties on certain detailed points, relative to the government of the said Society? These uncertainties came precisely from the fact that the wording was not entirely conformable to my idea. It was my counselor, who was also my secretary,[1] who wrote them up. The distinction of colleges,[2] for example, was expressed in too decisive a manner. It is useless, here, to give you the reasons. . . .

It is already a week since I began writing you, and since many other matters have come up for consideration during that time, I have had to busy myself with them as though I had finished and sent off this letter. I am continuing it now.

It would be good if Father Lalanne saw, in behalf of the entire establishment of St. Remy, the new Prefect of Vesoul. Brother Clouzet might also see him, but then he would need a letter of introduction from Father Lalanne. The latter has an excuse for not going himself, if he does not care to, in the epidemic which raged, etc. . . .

I am embracing very tenderly each one of the Brothers of your little community. I am deeply appreciative of all the tokens of devotedness which they give me. I would surely like to be among them and to spend some time in their immediate company. Let us hope that a better management of things will make this possible for me. I am giving them all, my dear son, in your person my fatherly blessing.

P.S. Father Lalanne has just written me that everything seemed to him well settled between the two communities, that he had reimbursed the advance payments which Brother Clouzet had made to him and put back all the furniture he could do without. . . . I wrote Brother Clouzet a very long letter a few days before the arrival of Brother Pimouguet. If he can understand well and appreciate the truth above all, we shall try to go forward. . . . Father Lalanne's return to entirely religious sentiments is doing a great deal of good.

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With Father Caillet, his representative at the Madeleine, Father Chaminade exchanges views on diverse questions.

667 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BORDEAUX

Agen, February 28, 1833

. . . You may tell the master bakers that the large room already having a settled purpose, as I believe to have told you, I cannot rent them the little room they are occupying, with the condition, pure and simple, that they use the big room three or four times a year;

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[1] Brother David Monier.

[2] Brother David had conceived the existence of a college of priests in the Institute, charged with the spiritual concerns of the houses, and of a college of laymen, instituted in the form of a Civil Society, these two colleges having an independent existence and mutually completing one another, following rules more theoretical than practical, which Father Chaminade never approved.

but that, by reason of the attachment I have always had for them,[1] I willingly consent that they use it until they are told that this is no longer possible. As long as the little lease of fifty francs continues, they will have to agree to leave the key to the gateway in the house and to come and get it every time that they want to get into their room. I think that they have paid you the fifty francs for last year. It is, furthermore, unnecessary to come to any written agreement with them, but keep a note of all that has been said and promised respectively between you and them.

When Father Collineau finally leaves Bordeaux, Father Fontaine will be able to go to the boarding school to fulfill the same functions. It is well understood that Father Fontaine will stay at the Madeleine, but I hope it will not be for very long. I am not losing sight of this boarding school, but it is not very easy to arrange everything that concerns it and still have an arrangement that takes in everything that is necessary. Everywhere divine assistance is needed but here very specially.

The Institute of Mary, *which you found in St. Laurent, included, as I think I told you, general provisions and particular provisions. I have acknowledged the former and obtained the approbation of Archbishop d'Aviau for them. It is these general provisions that were presented at the time of the first retreat, in which the existence of the Society was proclaimed. A written account of them in due form was drawn up. I did not think I should have the particular provisions approved, because they were not entirely to my satisfaction. I nevertheless added them as a kind of memorandum, but I have never regarded them as consequential. I thought I had explained myself with sufficient clarity when I stated that only the general provisions had been approved by Archbishop d'Aviau. I knew well that I had permitted you to make a copy of them, because I never hid anything from you; but if I had known that Brother Gaussens had made a copy for himself, I would surely have explained myself. I don't know of ever having permitted anyone besides yourself to make a copy. We are praying for Father Fontaine. Be kind enough to convey all my sentiments to my friends. What is Brother Centrain saying about the letter I wrote him? With the envelope that contained it, there must also have been one from Brother Bonnet, the secretary.*

My dear son, I am embracing you very cordially!

* * * *

With Brother David, always in bad humor, Father Chaminade continues to correspond in all patience.

668 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Agen, March 3, 1833

[1] It is known from the *Life of Father Chaminade* that from the time of the Empire, the Association of Bakers in Bordeaux, protected by the Association of the Fathers of Families, had its seat in the Madeleine. It used to meet there at the same time as a religious confraternity and a professional corporation.

My dear son, I have answered all your letters. I may have neglected to mention the date at times, when the meaning of the letter indicated sufficiently well that it was but an answer. The one I am answering now is dated yesterday, March 2. There is in me nothing like a quarrel with you, either open or silent. However unguarded your expressions often are in your letters, as in your discussions, I take no offense at them. I am sorry only when others, besides myself, are made the confidants; but my sorrow is always without bitterness. Let us come to the point.

In sending Brother Mémain to Brother Auguste, to deal with the liquidation, I thought I was entering into the first ideas we all had before starting, those of doing away with all quibblers, even such as we might take as judges of last resort.

Brother Auguste thinks he must make propositions to me before proceeding with the delicate affair of the liquidation and to the more painful matter of the carrying out of the separation. I actually invite him to make proposals. You send them to me, copied with your own hand. I answer them immediately and directly. No answer.

My answers may have seemed severe. If they are not drawn from previously stated principles and facts, let Brother Auguste tell me of this clearly. I am all the more determined to do him justice as my heart already finds them very rigorous. It is in this caution and in several others that I wrote to you that I was never losing sight of the old adage, Summum jus, summa injuria*, and in this same sentiment I have said and written that while discussing the propositions we could proceed to the last two articles first.*[1] *It would then be much easier to come to a really friendly accommodation. In taking these questions or propositions, one after the other, we can answer only what reason and justice would demand.*

Already, in the too violent discussions that have taken place with Brother Mémain, the principles from which I drew my answers were attacked. I have no intentions here of describing these discussions. I hope that one day you will pay attention to them; but, as regards the principles, is it not true:

1. that we have always intended creating a Society to which we have given the name Society of Mary?

2. that we have always intended to base the temporal and material part of it on the Civil Code? If Brother Auguste has become a member of this Society, has he not adopted its principles? Should he not then submit to the natural consequences of this adoption, the more so if it were required?

But, finally, when I sent my answers to Brother Auguste, I sent you an exact copy of them, to permit you to judge for yourself their soundness. Why, then, without saying anything to me about it, do you turn yourself against me? I have no intention here of reproaching you about anything nor of receiving any answer about this. Let us not multiply incidents. I wanted only to put into context the question of your intervention in this affair with Brother Auguste, as representative of the Society of Mary.

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[1] To pay off the mortgage that burdened Brother Auguste's belongings and to give him back the profits from these for the last year.

I desire, my dear son, that Brother Auguste discuss his interests with Brother Mémain alone and that, if they can't come to any agreement on certain points, then you may intervene as arbitrator to bring them together by mild suggestions as well as by solid reasoning. Although Brother Mémain is completely empowered, if he happens to be afraid of giving his word verbally or in writing, I expect that he will write me. In the same way, Brother Auguste may want to consult before committing himself definitely. He must have this liberty as well as Brother Mémain. This method will not take longer than any other if the parties in question come immediately to the last two articles, where the greatest difficulties lie. I desire with all my heart that peace, union, and charity may never be troubled.

Just between ourselves, neither Brother Auguste nor Brother Mémain are in a condition to discuss seriously the one great question, but they have enough uprightness and good sense to approach it with truth and decency. Even if they were to state their premises badly, so that their conclusions would be false, let us admit the consequences anyway, if they are admissible. I hope that, in this way, our arbiters will grow a bit tired and that the affair will not take as long as was first thought.

I am sending Brother Auguste a copy of this letter. I believe I have entered into his views and sentiments. I shall answer you shortly, my dear son, on the other points of your letter, and I shall speak to you about several other matters.

Very affectionately yours.

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669 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BORDEAUX

Agen, March 4, 1833

With this letter, my dear son, Brother Mémain will give you nine hundred francs to pay what remains of my promissory note, order of Raccouillat, amounting to 913 francs. Herewith included is the procuration you asked me for. How has everything worked out regarding the young man from Rissac? If this young man is not neglected, it is possible that he will become a Christian, and at least an honest man, for there is really something good in him.

We shall give the Manuals of the Servant of Mary *to the Convent of Agen for forty sous each. By selling them to outsiders for forty-five sous, the community can keep its own copies for practically nothing. The Mother Superior gave me eighty francs, which form part of the nine hundred I am sending you.*

Keep the copy[1] *of the* Institute of Mary *which you found at St. Laurent. In the approved part or in the general dispositions, we have a rule for judging every edition. There are many other Rules, but this one is the first. If you find His Excellency little occupied and in good humor, speak to him about it. May the Lord be ever with you!*

* * * *

[1] The original and autographed one.

There were three sisters in Bordeaux: Martha, Mary, and Mary Anne or Marianne Dubourg. In this correspondence, we often meet the name of Mary, the devoted maid-servant of Father Chaminade at the Madeleine. Martha and Mary Anne devoted themselves to the care of the kitchen and of the bakery. The recollections of the time make mention of the little quarters of Martha and Mary at St. Laurent. Marianne died, and her death caused agitation between the sisters. Father Chaminade had to intervene, and this is the principal object of the following letter.

670 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Agen, March 9, 1833

It is very surprising, my dear son, that we can come to no agreement in a matter of major importance. Let us then talk no more about it!

I can easily imagine that, since the death of Father Laboual,[1] you have found a confessor, at least temporarily. If this confessor suits you, take him certainly. If you think you can find another more suitable to you, take him. If you have trouble in making up your mind, mention the names of a few, and I shall make the choice for you.

At the death of Marianne, I wrote to Marie to have her sister come live with her so that they would thus console and help each other, and I have insisted upon this several times. They have no reason to complain about their separation.

I remember having made a deposition to Marie to the effect that all the furniture in her room belonged to her, and I made it general enough, so as to calm her. I am far from looking at close range with her. Really, when I came back from Spain, she lent me an old and large bed that I always believed came from her family. This old bed has served in many different circumstances and has had different furnishings. It is the one in my room. I made her several depositions including, to have it over with, the one you are now speaking about. Now, since new difficulties have arisen, have the kindness to:

1. Have a copy of the deposition I made to her sent to me and

2. Also a copy of the one she needs or that you think she would need.

At least for the present, I see no drawback in having the two sisters lodge at No. 1 on Lalande Street. A rental lease, besides, would seem to me ridiculous.

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[1] Father Laboual, Sacrist priest of St. Eloi and, since 1823, honorary Canon of the primatial See, had shared the apostolic work of Father Chaminade during the Revolution and had had himself inscribed among the members of the Sodality of the Madeleine.

That Martha should rent for herself one or more rooms in the neighborhood of the Madeleine and bring her furniture there and even some from Marie's room which neither Marie nor I would think needed at the Madeleine, this would be practicable.

You tell me, my dear son, "that you have had them hope for a long time that I would come and arrange everything but that you are forced to tell them today that you are no longer counting on my return." I thought I had studied a little logic, but I am mistaken if you are reasoning correctly. . . .

I believe, my dear son, that, considering your natural sensibility, you must be suffering a great deal, when you bring affliction rather than consolation through a duty that you believe binding in conscience. I pity you without blaming you, but I am remaining not the less devoted and affectionate toward you.

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Brother Clouzet made a retreat at Notre Dame of the Hermits, Maria Einsiedeln, in Switzerland. Father Chaminade encourages him in the good inclinations which he gained there and speaks to him of the agonizing question of the restoration of the St. Marie Boarding School

671 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, March 13, 1833

All that you tell me, my dear son, in your long (but not too long) letter of last February 17 interested me greatly. After you read this letter, you will understand why I delayed my answer for some days. . . .

One cannot judge, my dear son, the effectiveness of a retreat by some consolations one experienced while it is in progress.

I thank God for the success that he gave your visit to the rector of the Academy of Besançon. I shall shortly say a word to Brother Gaussens about the relations he is to have with the rector.

You, doubtless, were very wrong in the manner in which you received the news of the new community's organization. You recognized the fact, and I answered you that I had forgotten about everything. After that, self-love unhappily returned again. You seemed to be guilty only in the way in which you wrote to me at the time. I then thought myself obliged to enter into some detail.

What concerns me particularly, my dear son, is your soul and your salvation. However well you were doing otherwise, you could not save yourself if you were not mild, humble, charitable, patient, obedient, etc. The good intentions we have do not by themselves render our actions good. However good an action may be, it becomes defective in the eyes of God if there is lacking to it a single virtue. . . . Your resistance to Father Lalanne must have been very painful to you. I have very often praised your firmness, but you know that I have never ceased to tell you to practice the virtues essential to your state. You should have been better able to put into practice the fatherly counsels I was giving you. If you had done so, you would have found yourself better disposed to receive the plan of organization that I thought it my duty to follow for the new community. You would surely not have seen it either as humiliation or as degradation or as an obstacle to continuing the good that you did at St. Remy and for the entire Society of Mary, or, etc., especially a lack of confidence in you. If you have not seen all these things well in your retreat at Our Lady of the Hermits, my dear son, you have not drawn from it all the fruits that there was reason to hope for.

"But this retreat," you tell me, "has been very short." Well, then, my dear son, try to make up for it. Have some serious and searching interviews with Father Chevaux about the virtues of a religious who does not want to live under any illusion but who sincerely wishes to save his soul. Father Chevaux has seemed to me to have this end sincerely in mind.

My dear son, I have just written Father Lalanne to put a stop to the abuses you point out to me. I am writing him in a very moderate though energetic manner. I don't believe he is, after all, authorizing them; but it is possible he did not take enough interest in correcting them. It must not be imagined that, because he has sincerely turned over a new leaf that all will be perfect in less than no time and that there will be no remnants of his former ways. I had no knowledge of these abuses. Nevertheless, I believe that, at some time in the past, you or Father Chevaux must have told me something about them—but I judged then that it was better to put off talking about them to Father Lalanne on account of his attitudes then.

I have learned of Father Rollinet's withdrawal in five different ways. The way he tells it himself in the letter he wrote to you, which you sent to me, is more exaggerated than any of the others. Father Rollinet was already at St. Remy before I knew anything about it. I regretted that he had entered at so critical a time—the separation I mean. Nevertheless, the first letter he wrote me was very edifying. In the second, he seemed still to be in good dispositions; but it included threats, if I did not permit him to enter the novitiate under the direction of Father Chevaux. I then learned that he was living in the château. I almost immediately wrote Father Chevaux to profit by this time of first
fervor. . . . It is possible that M. Rollinet would have succeeded under good and wise direction, in spite of weaknesses in his character which you often spoke of. The good God has permitted that he enter under the vexing circumstances connected with the separation. We must adore the judgments of God.

This withdrawal will, nevertheless, have produced one good effect—that of making Brother Fridblatt enter into himself. On account of some indiscretion on the part of Brother Fridblatt at this time, Father Lalanne dressed him down in such a way that he finally saw the light. It is Brother Fridblatt himself who writes me about it, with full repentance for the past and with his intention to abandon holy orders, etc. I shall answer him, as soon as I shall have sent off this letter to you.

The revenues of the secondary boarding school will not be negligible, and you see that, even from the beginning, it will be the beneficiary of certain resources through our arrangements. I do not recall having told you that this year Father Lalanne would reckon the fees of the pupils only on the number fifty-five. He asked me for this after the reopening of classes. He had only about this number of paying pupils, and I gave him the required permission. If the two communities get along well, the good God will pour out his blessings on them and the resources will keep on increasing in regard to both the number of pupils in each community and the domain of St. Remy. Let us not be unfaithful to God, and he will not fail us!

I have just gone over your letter again, and from the note that was inserted, I realize that I have not recently made Father Lalanne the particular recommendations that you mention; but, on the other hand, I give him all sorts of recommendations, so that peace, union, and fraternal charity may reign between the two communities. I am telling him that it is not possible to work efficaciously at the sanctification of individuals if the two communities do not have the same spirit; and most certainly, God will not bless an establishment in which he is not served as he must be served.

Regarding God's blessings, I must speak to you of our St. Marie Boarding School, and that is one of the principal purposes of the letter I am writing to you now. The year before last, I wrote, from time to time, to Brother Auguste that, considering what was happening in the boarding school he was directing, he should fear that God would withdraw all his blessings from it. I used to tell him just about the same things when I visited Bordeaux, but then he still had not really felt the threats of the Lord. It will now soon be a year that Brother Auguste chose the path of asking for the separation. I consented to it. Brother David was charged with the settlement of the liquidation. He first spent from four to five months without doing or saying anything. It is useless to relate to you all the details that have led us up to the present impasse. I was simply obliged, in agreement with Brother Auguste, to remove Brother David from all further intervention in the affair. In spite of these developments, a compromise has been reached between Brother Auguste and ourselves and arbiters chosen to judge the points on which we are unable to agree. The older Brother Mémain is even now in Bordeaux, dealing with and discussing some propositions which Brother Auguste thinks it his duty to make to me before withdrawing. In the meantime, Brother Mémain is looking through all Brother Auguste's books in order to know our position definitely. In general, I see that it is awful; but we must know exactly. Brother Auguste has allowed the rumor of our approaching separation to spread. The boarding school has been

shaken. The great dissatisfactions of last year have brought down the number of admissions to thirty boarders and fifteen half-boarders.

Nevertheless, the expenses are about the same as if the boarding school had a very large enrollment.

The retaking of this boarding school entails two great difficulties: the one, relative to the very personnel of the school; and the other, relative to the matériel, that is to say, to the debts that bear down on it. Let us enter a little into detail.

For the retaking of the boarding school properly so-called, I was thinking at first of Father Lalanne. In that way, we could avoid all repercussions. I was looking upon the epidemic that hit the château of St. Remy as a good pretext for justifying a considerable absence. According to this plan, another, in our place, would be in charge of all expenses and debts. Father Lalanne would not be mixed up with the temporal matters. I let him know of my plan. Father Lalanne answered me that the effects of the epidemic were about nil, as regards the boarding school itself—he enters into details—and that this could not serve as a pretext. He proposes another pretext, which would tend to put an end to the secondary boarding school—we would have to be satisfied, as at the beginning, with a primary boarding school. He was also suggesting discontinuing the boarding school in Bordeaux. I accepted nothing, but I formed another plan in which you will be the principal agent. Here it is:

1. Personnel: Father Curot would be the Head or Superior. Professors: the same ones who are there now but who would be gradually and quietly replaced. We shall soon have substitutes who are members of the Society. Since Father Curot could have some difficulties earning the Diploma of Boarding School Master, we could present, if necessary, an SM bachelor of arts. Then the St. Marie Boarding School would be about like St. Remy at its beginnings—although the superiorship was on your head, Father Rothéa had the Diploma of Boarding School Master.

2. Matériel: Here is the hardest thing: It is a bad bone which I would like to gnaw on. You will succeed, if you are willing to go at it with all your heart. I am not trying, my dear son, to elevate you before men but to have you do good and to have you gain heaven. Furthermore, in the eyes of faith, there is neither great nor small, high or low, noble or vile, but in proportion as the designs of the will of God enter in. I think you are well settled as regards these principles. The representations I made to you about the sensibilities you have shown are a proof that my confidence in you has not diminished. You see that I am always going forward and that I am giving you, in proposing these new functions, a token of the most authentic confidence. I shall support you with all my authority and by all the means that are at my disposal, and God will help us.

There are many debts of all kinds, and much money will be needed to make an honorable beginning. But you ask me, where can we find so much money? Providence

seems to present it to us. You know, my dear son, that M. Lapause is dead.[1] The property he has left has been well kept and restored. There are some envious persons.[2] The property seems to be estimated at forty-five thousand francs. Here you have the principal means. Some secondary sources can well supply some twenty thousand francs. I am not speaking to you of those whom Providence may have sent our way in disposing of things according to its material designs. You will perhaps tell me, my dear son, that creditors are not paid with landed property and that, even if we make an immediate sale, that does not necessarily mean ready cash.

[1] October 19, 1831. Regarding M. Lapause, see Letter 174.
[2] Some amateurs are presenting themselves.

I answer:

That those who desire M. Lapause's property are people of great means, that they take terms of payments, and these terms will not be easily set aside.

I answer:

That it is to be presumed that we shall find in Bordeaux someone to borrow from, when everything appears to be on a solid basis. Toward the end of last summer, I found twenty thousand francs to pay a claim of about the same amount on the mortgaged Razac Mansion.

But what would be still better would be to borrow in the circles you are familiar with. There are businessmen or persons of means who could lend certain amounts, doubtless at the ordinary rates of interest, but without any special contract. Finally, all this would become your affair. One must not fear to contract the obligations of new interest, while awaiting the reimbursement of the capital, since the goods or effects we are going to deprive ourselves of produce a corresponding revenue.

Do not fear that I forgot St. Remy. Just put everything in order. Do well whatever I have told you to do. Very mildly give credit, but always more and more, to the Heads who are in charge. Act in such a way that, your absence, whenever it takes place, will hardly be noticed. I shall send someone to replace you who like yourself will know how to handle everything, whether at St. Remy or at Marast.

I have not spoken to you of the resources that the St. Marie Boarding School will be able to procure for you pretty soon. It has given M. Estebenet as much as fifteen thousand francs cash. Answer me, my dear son, as soon as possible and explain yourself. Enter sufficiently into detail so that I can make a clearly detailed plan for myself. If we are obliged to lower our eyes so often to earthly things, let us lift them continually to our heavenly fatherland, that we may eventually reach it after our sad and painful pilgrimage. I am embracing you with heart and soul.

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In the letters which follow, among other questions, we see Father Chaminade preoccupying himself to assure a rigorous separation between the religious of St. Remy and the persons who look after the needs of the community.

672 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, March 14, 1833

Yes, my dear son, I have learned about Father Rollinet's retreat. When I learned about it, the answer I made to the letter I had told you about was ready to leave. He had entered into a very favorable period. Brother Fridblatt wrote me quite a fine letter. The reproaches which Father Lalanne made regarding his indiscretions and imprudences seem to have opened his eyes. In this, as in so many other things, we have to adore the judgments of God. Considering the delicacy of Father Rollinet's conscience, it is not to be presumed that he is making any idle remarks about St. Remy. If he were doing it, it would be a proof that his withdrawal was a decisive good for us.

There is nothing to be done as regards M. J. We must not speak about him and we must not suffer that he be spoken about.

With regard to the dirty linen and the laundering and repairing of linen, talk it over with Brother Clouzet and seriously look for a way of getting the family away from the place it now occupies. Do nothing hastily and show no fear, but Brother Clouzet may explain to the parties involved the need we have of the place. If there are some sacrifices to be made, because of the arrangements that would have to be made, they should be made without hesitation. I see very well the embarrassment which this moving might cause for Brother Clouzet, but he will succeed in finding some other means which do not present the same drawbacks like the one you presented. Quite recently, I wrote such a long letter to Brother Clouzet that I forgot to talk to him about this very important matter. I expect to learn from you or from him that you have remedied these serious inconveniences. However, do not worry about all this. During the time that Brother Clouzet will need to take, with prudence and discretion, efficacious means to do otherwise, let us be really watchful to stop all communication that is not essential.

It was good not to have the bulletin printed without first sending it to me. There was enough time to send it on before the supposed urgent moment of its appearance.

Brother Gaussens is really Head of the normal school. It is then he who must be named wherever the name of the Master is to appear.

If Father Lalanne repeats his demands in regard to the little fellow, supposed to be a baker, but who can make neither bread nor anything else, you may tell him that I wrote you that he was not to be admitted. . . .

The diocese of Besançon has had a great loss in the death of its pious and holy archbishop.[1] Bishop Dubourg, of Montauban, has been named to replace him.[2] He has accepted. Father Caillet had the honor of dining with him at the time of his trip through Bordeaux, and he recommended St. Remy to His Lordship. Bishop Dubourg gave me, on diverse occasions, tokens of esteem and interest. He saw with pleasure the two little establishments we have in the diocese of Montauban, in Moissac and Lauzerte. It would be good for Father Lalanne or yourself or a little delegation to go to Besançon once he has taken possession of his see. You will not fail to speak to him of all the confidence in his protection I have inspired in you. He is an excellent archbishop, but of a different character and a bearing from the one we are mourning.

You must consider the writing which Father Rothéa sent you as null and void, but nevertheless, take whatever may be good and reject the rest.

I am stopping here, my dear son, so that I can send my messages with this mail. I shall not lose sight, I hope, of what you tell me regarding different subjects in your community. I am embracing you tenderly.

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673 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Agen, March 15, 1833

My dear son, as an answer to your letter of the thirteenth of the current month, I shall recommend Father Barrès as a wise and prudent confessor.

The declaration of the articles of furniture which you tell me is among the papers of the Dubourg sisters, in six to seven pages, was surely not torn up when another

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[1] Cardinal de Rohan, 1788-1833, Duke and Peer of France, belonged to one of the most illustrious families of the Kingdom and had been associated successively with the fortunes of Napoleon and Louis XVIII. Having lost his young wife in a tragic accident, in the midst of a worldly reunion, he entered the seminary of St. Sulpice, was ordained priest in 1822 and almost immediately was named Vicar-General of Paris. During his short episcopate, he joined to the most active zeal the ways of a great lord. Chased from France by the Revolution of 1830, he had taken refuge in Rome. He came back to Besançon when the cholera broke out in his diocese and died there shortly after, leaving him the reputation of a really great man.

[2] Bishop Louis Dubourg, 1766-1833, was born in San Domingo but had been brought up in Bordeaux. In Paris, he escaped the massacres of 1792, emigrated to the United States, founded in Baltimore St. Mary's University, was made bishop of Louisiana in 1815, started the work of the Catholic missions in America and in Europe, and contributed much to the foundation of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. In 1816, he honored the Sodality of Bordeaux with his presence. In 1826, having returned to Europe for reasons of health, he accepted, on the insistence of Bishop Frayssinous, the see of Montauban. On February 13, 1833, he was promoted to the see of Besançon. When he took charge, he paid tribute to the devotedness of the "worthy sons of Mary," the religious of the Society. He died some months later on December 12, 1833.

declaration, more advantageous to them, was drawn up. Whatever the case may be, in a few days I shall write Marie to quiet her and to settle her affairs about as she and her sisters would want them to be settled. They are entirely free to take whatever advice they wish. I don't believe they will find anyone who will oblige me to do more for them than I have done and that I still intend to do. I attribute their recent worries to the weakness of their heads and not to the dispositions of their hearts. I am asking for you and for myself, my dear son, the mercy and the peace of the Lord.

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Following a letter from Father Lalanne, Father Chaminade had returned to his first project for the restoring of the St. Marie Boarding School. He definitely gave up the idea of confiding its administration to Father Curot, and he was encouraging Father Lalanne to carry out his idea of a trip to Bordeaux. On this occasion he shared with him his views regarding middle range of teaching and classical teaching in the Society of Mary.

In this letter and those following, there are touching sentiments of confidence in St. Joseph, on the occasion of his feast.

674 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, March 19, 1833

Your new resolutions, my dear son, which came with the letter of Father Langue,[1] are very correct and just in themselves. I did not appreciate the pretexts you had suggested as you may have been able to judge from my last letter, which you must have received this very day, and I believe that the pretext of an order which appoints you to another post is an irreproachable one in the eyes of all sensible persons. However, I would like that at St. Remy the same type of teaching you have adopted would be followed as closely as possible; but if it were not followed, or if something about it were changed, this should be done, as it were, imperceptibly. I would also want that in Bordeaux, there would be no perceptible change, that the revival of the St. Marie Boarding School would not consist in the way of teaching, but in the means of directing and encouraging the teachers, of exciting emulation among the pupils, of winning the confidence of the pupils, the teachers and the general public. . . .

[1] Father Albin Langue, 1806-68, from Champagnole in the Jura, had made a first trial of religious life in the Society of Jesus, when he entered the Society of Mary at St. Remy. After his profession in 1833 and his ordination, 1835, he was employed as professor and chaplain in diverse houses of the Society, in particular, St. Remy and St. Hippolyte, where he died.

Father Langue was partly paralyzed on the left side and had quite an original character, but he was gifted with a good heart, a lively and well-cultivated intelligence and a prodigious memory. Thus he easily gained the confidence of his pupils, among them Father Demangeon and Good Father Hiss. A religious of profound faith and great piety, he had much to suffer from his infirmities, without ever allowing the least complaint to escape his lips.

Later on, when everything has quieted down, we shall come back to the system of the middle schools.[1] I believe, in fact, that this system is to be adopted. It can produce the greatest good for the glory of God and the prosperity of religion. For several years I have received many requests for it. I have refused to honor them for two reasons: first the lack of qualified subjects and then the Revolution, but I have the thing greatly at heart. The plan needs only to be written out and discussed a little. But, my dear son, this must not prevent us from having some establishments where the studies are on a higher level and more demanding. This would even be an indispensable necessity for the training of subjects, who would give fairly good hope of becoming members of the Society of Mary.

I believe, my dear son, that, if we are wise, we will occupy ourselves at the present moment only with the maintenance of the establishments already existing. We should seek to win always greater confidence in them, to refine the Society of Mary, to reform and improve all those who are in any way under its influence, to free ourselves from all embarrassments and obstacles that stand in our way. In the meantime, the times will become more favorable.

I am very glad, my dear son, to see you in such a happy state. The good God will bless us, the august Mary and her holy spouse will protect us from the time we seek only the good, in an entire abnegation of ourselves and of all we are and have.

See, furthermore, if the little plan I proposed to you, in the supposition that you would come to Bordeaux, may serve both Father Chevaux replacing you at the château and Brother Clouzet replacing Father Chevaux. If we could take Father Curot away from St. Remy, it would be good to shake him a little and you could bring him along to Bordeaux.

Hardly had I written you my last letter when I wrote Brother Clouzet that I was seriously thinking of enticing him to Bordeaux and of putting him in charge of all our temporal affairs, at least of all those that have any connections with the St. Marie Boarding School, numerous and thorny as they are. I was entering into details, but I think that he will have only pleasure with this little revolution.[2] Furthermore, like ourselves, he must disengage himself from every human consideration.

Brother Auguste has written me. He is crying out pretty much like a drowning man. Brother Mémain is still in Bordeaux, stabilizing the situation and seeing how matters stand with regard to the deficit. He is lodging in the boarding school itself. The evil is great and dangerous. The delay in applying remedies may well bring death. Nevertheless, there must be no precipitation. Otherwise we would be exposing ourselves to kill what is still living.

[1] It seems there is question here of that middle-range of teaching, the degree between the primary and the classical teaching, which had been one of the ends of the budding Society.
[2] That is to say, these new projects which will still keep him in St. Remy.

I have just said Mass. I have put all into the hands of St. Joseph, of him who is gifted with such a high degree of supernatural prudence. I have placed into his hands persons as well as things—you especially, so that by his mediation you may no longer act by yourself nor for yourself and that you may seek the very works of God, but only for God and in the manner he asks them to be done. We are doubtless the children of Mary, and this is our glory and our consolation; but we are also the adopted sons of St. Joseph, and this is no small reason for the great confidence we have in him. I have a secret joy in my soul, from the fact that I shall be able to embrace you sooner than it seemed and that, on the occasion of some interests which seem temporal, we shall be able more easily to speak of our great spiritual interests, which are of their very nature eternal.

It is in these sentiments, my dear son, that I wish for you all kinds of blessings.

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The following is an extract of a letter to Father Leo Meyer, on the reconciliation in the heart of a young man of the duty of filial piety with the response to a call from God.

675 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Agen, March 22, 1833

I am glad, up to a certain point, that in considering the different states, the young man thought of assisting his father and mother, for that is the proof of a good heart. Nevertheless, this view, which would first come to mind in his search for his vocation in life, might well deceive him. Let him leave alone the sentimental side of the question. Let him seek only God, his glory and the salvation of his own soul. Whatever be the vocation to which God destines him he will not fail, as a good Father, to come to the aid of his father and mother. Furthermore, after having embraced the state to which God calls him, he will have the duty of trying to do them all the good he can. I don't doubt that, if he acts with uprightness, he will get to know the designs that God has upon him.

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676 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, March 23, 1833

I am beginning, my dear son, by answering your last letter and by thanking you for the good prayers which your tender friendship has prompted you to say for me, on the occasion of the feast of St. Joseph.

Father Chevaux told me several times that he had not yet let the community know of his nomination. I have not answered him one way or the other, thinking that prudence was

still holding him to this measure. This must be the principal reason which obliged me to speak to you of it in my last letters. Father Chevaux is giving signs of a very weak character. I would have thought he had more resources for rising to the occasion and asserting himself, when there is need for such a policy. Help him and encourage him all you can.

You had not yet received my last letter when you wrote me this one. In my last, I spoke to you at great length about the St. Marie Boarding School. Your last letter, nevertheless, caused me much pleasure and edified me greatly, seeing that you are ready to leave to be supervisor in this boarding school, and that in spite of your natural repugnance to that sort of thing.

After mailing the last letter I wrote you, I received one from Father Lalanne, in which he referred back to the one preceding, declaring himself ready to absent himself from St. Remy and to come and replace Brother Auguste. All he asks for is an obedience on my part. In this he would have genuine pretext for excusing himself, as regards the parents of pupils to whom he had made commitments. This would seem all right with me, provided it implies no kind of important change in the teaching, whether at St. Remy or at the St. Marie Boarding School.

If things come to be arranged in this way, you would be obliged to stay at St. Remy. In no way would it be suitable that both of you leave at the same time. I am hoping that I shall soon be able to settle the matter for you, because it is very urgent that a definite stand be taken.

You can always quietly keep your eyes open for some means of procuring money within your sphere of action. Brother Mémain is still in Bordeaux to settle Brother Auguste's liquidation, but I am expecting a very great deficit. A remedy for it must be found in the retaking of the boarding school. I need not tell you that you are not to talk to anyone about what I am saying to you regarding the St. Marie Boarding School.

I seem to feel in advance the state of peace and quiet we shall have once this last storm has abated. Father Caillet has had the same presentiment. The august Mary will put into the hands of her holy Spouse the settlement of all our affairs.

Do not worry about my delays in determining the construction of the wall of separation and several other incident matters. Once the important points are well arranged, all the rest will come as a matter of course. I have, nevertheless, spoken very strongly to Father Lalanne, of all the disagreements you pointed out to me, while recalling to him the manner in which the château's boarding school was to be run. I have never told him who gave me the information.

Courage, my dear son. Give yourself entirely to the practice of Christian and religious virtues! The designs of God on the Society of Mary will be accomplished. I am embracing you very tenderly.

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677 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, March 23, 1833

My dear son, I have received with much interest and consolation the letter you wrote to me for the occasion of my feast day in the name of your entire community. On the day of the feast, at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, I interpreted the good sentiments of my dear children of St. Remy. I prayed for them and I shall continue to pray for them. I consider myself as their father, but it is only, so to speak, to replace the holy patriarch we habitually honor, and especially on March 19. Give to all, I beg of you, the tokens and assurance of my tender affection.

You are worrying too much, my dear son, over your possible difficulties. As long as we are upon earth, we shall have them. Without making your nomination known in any formal manner, do not hesitate to let it be known. The nomination now so much a thing of the past, formal publication might give rise to disadvantageous ideas. Act with more simplicity! Have no worry about some annoying incidents nor about dissatisfaction that might be shown you. Fulfill your duties, try to please God, and remain at peace! One must not be easily alarmed. Be mild and honest with everyone but not feeble, timid and uncertain. You will see that, with the grace of the Lord, all will turn out well.

I have spoken to Brother Clouzet about the reasons for not hastening the construction of the wall of separation, as of other matters. He seems to enter into the dispositions of a true religious. He is one of our foundation stones. If he can make good meditations, feel the beauty of humility, obedience, poverty, charity, etc. . . . we shall have gained much. You can have him understand that I am very happy over his resignation and obedience. I shall busy myself at some other time with Brother Athias.[1]

May the Lord deign, my dear son, to shower upon you and upon all our children his most abundant benedictions!

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[1] Brother Philibert Athias, 1799-1871, from Dommartin in the Jura, had made good studies when he entered the Society in 1829. But the little aptitude he showed for teaching brought it about that he was directed to manual work, and since he furthermore showed little zeal for his religious life, Father Chaminade was on the point of sending him away. (See further on, Letters 936, 946, and 959) Fathers Chevaux and Meyer interceded for him, and their charity finally won the day. Brother Athias took himself in hand and gave himself with success to horticulture, in which he acquired real competence, both theoretical and practical. After having directed the garden work at St. Remy and in most of the agricultural establishments of the Society, he died piously at St. Anne's in Bordeaux, August 23, 1871.

678 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, March 29, 1833

My very dear son, I was going to make a few reflections on your first letter of the nineteenth of the present month when I received another of the same date, but which came two days later. I am starting with the second.

` Father Chevaux told me not long ago about his serious fears concerning what could happen at the home of the laundryman at St. Remy. He had no actual deplorable fact to allege but-well founded fears: (1) as regards the composition of the family with which arrangements for the washing were made; (2) as regards the women who will work there; (3) as regards the refusal of several workwomen, who are either more delicate or more fearful, to go there and work. I answered him to work with Brother Clouzet and to find another way of doing the laundry and also to remove the family, taking the necessary precautions not to afflict or dishonor it in any way. It is to be presumed that, at this time, Father Chevaux having communicated my desires to Brother Clouzet, the latter will do the difficult part, so that nothing may be noticed. Whatever the case may be, there would be no prudence in keeping such a combination with so many young people present. In one of my last visits to St. Remy, I was obliged to tell Brother Clouzet to dismiss three quite elderly persons who were lodging in the same place. Our precautions must go to the point of severity. You must have heard of the scandals given by M. J. He had already done a lot of harm before he left. I am not aware of the embarrassment which the dismissal of this family will put you in, but we must always do our duty, while hoping and seeking to find a way out. The Providence which permits it must have its own particular designs.

The nomination of Father Chevaux must now be well known in the other community. His timidity, his fear of harming Brother Clouzet's zeal and perhaps also an excessive humility, have made him dissimulate his rank of superior. Brother Clouzet wrote me that he had encouraged him to show himself just as he is. In one of his last letters, Brother Clouzet told me that he is ready to leave and since Father Chevaux and Brother Gaussens are now more free, they will get along better. He also said that the properties of St. Remy and Marast are in good condition, that he will be able to give me all he can get from you this Easter, etc. . . .

As regards the breaks in the wall of the park to be repaired, he tells me that there are no stones to be gotten from the quarry, nor enough workmen in the house to get any, but that using stones from the big pool behind the château could make possible a proper repair at an expense of about three thousand francs. The work would hold up without deterioraton. Furthermore, with sloping ground, it could be made into a thing of beauty at little enough expense. I shall write him that this way of getting the stones he needs would be quite pleasing to me but that he should agree with you regarding the making of the walls, where I don't think that many new stones would be needed, unless those in the breaks are taken out, which is scarcely to be presumed, at least for the most part. We have at St.

Laurent a strong and robust young man whose trade was the quarrying of stones. It is also the trade of his father. He helps in the locksmith shop, but for which he hasn't much aptitude. Furthermore, since his entry, he has always been edifying. . . .

When I received your letter I told Brother Clouzet at the same time of the new kind of organization for the St. Marie Boarding School. I then told him, under the supposition that you were coming, that he should stay at St. Remy, that it would seem to me imprudent that you and he should leave that establishment at the same time. I am awaiting an answer from both of you. You could see by my last letter that I liked very much the pretext you indicate for freeing yourselves from obligations to the parents of your pupils. I believe that, if this is well presented, there will be few disadvantages, especially if assurances are given that there will be no change in educational methods. If there were some slight loss—which I doubt very much—it would be well compensated by the obvious increase in the St. Marie Boarding School. Furthermore, neither you nor I would ever lose sight of the château's boarding school at St. Remy.

While awaiting a final settlement, I am letting things alone. I am simply taking precautions so that the temporal matter may be taken care of when the boarding school changes hands. The good God seems to be blessing these precautions. At the first word I allowed to be circulated that Brother Auguste would sell the property of M. Lapause at Saint-Loubès, three potential buyers presented themselves. I wrote Brother Auguste or told him that I would have your procuration in due time.[1] I am not attempting to settle anything but only representing things to you as I see them. It is up to you, my dear son, in all abnegation of yourself, of your tastes and of your inclinations, to see before God what you believe to be best for his glory and for the advantage of the Society of Mary. Furthermore, Brother Auguste happens to be in a fairly good frame of mind. He has no ulterior motives. After the separation, he says he will voluntarily remain as a simple professor; but, actually, he is in constant torture to retire, considering the enormous debts he has contracted. He no longer knows which way to turn. I don't think that, if his conscience ordered him to remain in the Society, it would be necessary to keep him in Bordeaux any longer than would be necessary for the peaceful retaking of the boarding school. In the future, and I am not speaking of the end of the present year, we must no longer engage the services of teachers who are strangers to the Society. Let us always do only what we are able to do.

Brother Mémain is still in Bordeaux. If you esteem the second project better than the first and if you believe you should carry it out, it will not be necessary to send your procuration for the sale of Saint-Loubès. You will act in concert with Brother Auguste. In the contrary case, you will send it to me. The procuration must be left blank. It would be prudent to have it notarized.

I am not saying anything about the laundry bills and you see the reason for it in the first part of this letter. Give Brother Clouzet all that is coming to him, according to the

[1] Because the property of St. Loubès was resting on the heads of Brother Auguste and Father Lalanne.

conditions agreed upon, especially since he is to send it to us and that it is about all he can do at the present time.

The evangelical counsel to give even the tunic when the coat is asked for demands prudence in its observance; but anyhow, one must have the disposition to do so in one's heart. Let us take good care, my dear son, when our Lord tells us to love—be it our neighbor in general, our enemies, or our persecutors. He is speaking of a real love of charity. Not to hate, not to wish evil, not even to be indifferent would not be enough in regard to an enemy. We must love.

I am answering Brother Langue. Although you have assigned him to teaching, you must act in such a way that he makes a good novitiate, especially before being so soon promoted to Holy Orders.

I close, inviting you to say with me, from the bottom of your heart: "*Soli Deo honor et gloria*," while embracing you with a new tenderness.

* * * *

679 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, April 4, 1833

. . . I would have sent you, my dear son, an urgent obedience to call you from St. Remy, as a result of the letter you enclosed with Brother Langue's, if I had not wanted to give you time to see if you could not find a way to keep St. Remy pretty much in the condition you brought it to. I don't like changes, at least not the sudden kind, unless they happen to be absolutely necessary. If all your teachers get along well together, if they are truly interested, it is to be presumed that they will efficiently support the work so well begun. If there are some changes because of the fact that you have not sufficiently initiated them into your plan, these will scarcely be noticed—everything will look the same. If you believe that a letter I would write might enliven them and sufficiently interest them in the work so as to make your absence practically unnoticed, I would write it and send it along with your obedience. In the circular letter that you write to the parents of your pupils to excuse yourself for your hasty departure, you might say that there is nothing to be changed in the educational plan being followed, that your collaborators, etc.

Father Chevaux may be a very good superior, without being at the head of the studies and without having their direction, expressly so-called. Nothing would prevent one of the teachers being named Head of Instruction.

Brother Auguste has been shaken interiorly. He needs to gather together all his forces in order to appear firm.[1] He might become a good religious, but he should not be made an administrator. I have no doubt that you will win him interiorly for God and for the Society of Mary, to which he is in truth interiorly attached, if we honorably extricate him from the rut he has fallen into. Thus, my dear son, you will find occasion for making good certain wrongs you might have done to him, which you must surely have reproached yourself with before God.

Although I seem to see, in all respects, that it would be good for you to come to Bordeaux, I nevertheless do not risk ordering it. [some words left out by the secretary] Our work is common to all. Each one should devote all his efforts, all his interest, while always forgetting himself. I don't think we can have any true peace of soul without these dispositions. I leave some particular incidents to be considered, once the principal one has been definitely settled.

The retaking of the boarding school should be completed after Easter, but there would be the greatest imprudence in delaying it until the end of the year. During the vacation or at the beginning of next year, if we succeed in making it coincide with the temporal arrangements, all will proceed tolerably well, and I hope that shortly after Easter we shall have settled all the temporal affairs.

Although I have written you, my dear son, two other letters in about the same vein as this one, I thought it suitable, in an affair of such importance, to add the preceding reflections.

I am always embracing you in mind and heart, while awaiting that it be given to me to do it physically.

* * * *

680 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, April 5, 1833

I am sorry, my dear son, that my letter of March 13 troubled your sleep and caused you a bad night, but are we not to tell one another everything? We are laboring at a work common to all, which we rightly look upon as a work of God. We are the workmen, each one for the part he can manage, without return to himself. When a house is on fire, the buckets of water pass from hand to hand without any examination of their respective qualities.

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[1] "If Father Lalanne had remained in Bordeaux," declared Brother Auguste to Brother Mémain, "perhaps I would have always remained . . ." but, adds Brother Mémain, in telling Father Chaminade about this, he would not want this to happen. For the rest, continues Brother Auguste, "I don't know what I shall do." (Letter of Brother Mémain, dated March 30, 1833).

We are entirely of the same opinion. The St. Marie Boarding School must be maintained. It is to be feared, however, that we shall not sufficiently succeed if Father Lalanne does not put himself at its head and that with all his heart. I know, from the beginning, that he is prepared to make the sacrifice of all his tastes, and starting with the first order I shall give him. I praise this disposition on his part, as it is worthy of a true religious, but, in the present case, it is not sufficient to cure Bordeaux. On the other hand, I do not want to kill St. Remy. I do not want to kill even the secondary boarding school. I do not even want the method of teaching to be changed. If we have to modify Father Lalanne's plan, this should be practically unnoticed. I wrote two letters to him on this subject, and I am sending him a third by this same mail. . . .

I am hoping it will be possible to make the liquidation in great peace. All our enterprises are going along well, and I am beginning to see light in the abyss. Brother Auguste is conducting himself well. As a means for the liquidation, I have at present only the property at Saint Loupès, which will be able to go up to forty or fifty thousand francs, and a fairly good credit for about ten thousand francs. I have let it be known that the Saint Loubès property could be sold. There are already three rich men who want it. But all this, my dear son, is not ready cash, since I hardly presume that it would be paid for in cash, especially if we wish to sell it at its true value. That is why I told you to borrow, if at all possible, in your neighborhood, which would be a lot better than in Bordeaux.

You tell me it would be difficult to borrow large sums without sufficient guarantees. I would like to believe it. If you want, either I shall send you a note authorizing you to borrow or I shall guarantee the bills of exchange you will have to make. The loan must be made for a short period and at the ordinary 3% rate of interest. The interest will not be charged to us, since we receive the goods that are for sale, as well as the credit I have just spoken of to you. I would also wish that the bills of exchange would not be part of current business, so that we could withdraw them when we want to do so. However, I would not want that it be a notarized contract, because of the expenses. I am leaving all this to your concern. It is as much your affair as it is mine, and so you ought to bring to it genuine interest.

I am experiencing great satisfaction, my dear son, over the fact that you know the cause of the troubles that have agitated you. That is all I was asking for. Work at your sanctification. It is to save ourselves that we have entered upon the narrow Gospel path. Let us take care. Let us work with all our strength so as not to lose our way but always to advance.

Everybody at the château seems well disposed not to permit any damage to the park or any insult or mark of contempt on the part of the secondary boarding school toward the primary boarding school. I hope that the union among the priest religious and the lay religious will be reestablished and will increase more and more. The storms that have taken place at St. Remy and those that are still raging in the St. Marie Boarding School will have

as a last effect only the purification of the bad spirit that has been reigning for some time in the Society of Mary.

Father Lalanne lately wrote me about your laundry bills. Without entering into any kind of calculation, I told him that the difficulties that seemed to cause an increase in the laundry costs came, in all probability, largely from your efforts to dismiss the family in charge of the laundry. In fact, this family, to judge by its various members, is becoming dangerous. It would never be possible to supervise all of them sufficiently, without our always having some scandal to fear. Father Chevaux must have shared his fears and alarms with you, and he must have told you what I answered him. I am not hiding from myself your embarrassment, the difficulties of meeting the laundering and tailoring needs of the two communities; but it is better to endure the embarrassments than to expose ourselves to something a lot worse. I hope you will finish by finding what you are after. . . . Courage and perseverance, my dear son. I am embracing you tenderly.

* * * *

Father Chaminade had hardly written the preceding letter when he received one from Father Lalanne announcing his departure for Bordeaux; but with the thought of making a more simple appearance, Father Chaminade immediately sends him the following lines.

681 – TO FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Agen, April 5, 1833

Your letter of March 28, my dear son, surprised me. I received it during the hours of our Lord's agony.[1] I wrote to you yesterday evening and I went into great detail on your possible manner of acting, so that the secondary boarding school will not suffer from your withdrawal.

What shall I say about your appearance in Bordeaux? It seems to me it can produce only a good effect, but I doubt whether it will be completely effective. The plan of an arrangement with the creditors will all be changed, and it is to be feared that we shall not be able to find another. To postpone the liquidation and separation until the end of the year is running the risk of not being able to hold out. Brother Auguste doesn't know which way to turn to pay his debts. The debts on the boarding school are daily increasing, the boarding school is agitated, and your word will stop only a part of the agitation.

The end of the school year at the St. Marie Boarding School occurs at the same time as at the St. Remy Boarding School. If you do the closing at St. Remy earlier than usual, you agitate the boarding school very differently than by leaving several months before the end,

[1] The letter of Father Chaminade dated on Good Friday.

with the indicated precautions; and, if you are not in Bordeaux before the closing, you will no longer be believed.

Here you have, my dear son, the first ideas coming to my mind on reading your letter. It is possible that you will find a middle course in the midst of all these drawbacks. Brother Auguste has always been disposed to lend himself to whatever is needed to maintain this boarding school. In fact, he is even deeply interested. I shall write him a long letter in reply to the observations he makes about my answers to his propositions. He will surely communicate them to you. In any case, Brother Mémain will do it, and I shall address them to him.

It seems to me that you have not lengthened your trip by passing through Agen. I am thinking, though, that the coach changes might have made you lose time. With you I like to repeat, may the will of God be done, but I fear to add the "*Transeat a me calix iste*." I am unhappily so far removed from Our Lord's dispositions in the Garden of Olives that I am always afraid some natural attachment will make me incline rather to one side than to another. Furthermore, who knows the meaning and the depth of the expression "*Calix iste*," as it occurs on the lips of our adorable Master?

This letter will be happier than I. It will fall into your hands while I shall remain separated from you by fifty miles. Since I cannot embrace you physically, I am doing so in my heart.

* * * *

Of the long letter, to which Father Chaminade has just alluded, and which is rather a document in view of the arbitration, we shall quote only the following passages, which are interesting from the point of view of the history of the Society.

682 – TO M. AUGUSTE PERRIÈRE, BORDEAUX

Agen, April 9, 1833

Dear sir—I have just received your observations about my answers to your propositions. In replying to them immediately, I have no intention of furnishing a memorandum to the arbiters. By my answers, as I wish by my actual reply, I wanted to look for some way of agreement between ourselves as regards the facts and even the constituent principles of our Society. . . . These constituent principles are of two kinds—religious and civil—because the Society is at the same time religious and civil, and it was to be made up in such a way that, while always remaining religious, in its exterior acts it would never find itself in contradiction with the civil laws. This is what has been done. Consequently, a general plan of the Society as a religious organization was drawn up and was approved by Archbishop d'Aviau. Another plan of the Society was drawn up shortly after, but as a purely civil organization. It is Brother David who drew up this plan and with

some difficulty. I had it verified for rigorous exactness by one of the division Heads of the Prefecture, whom you know well. He said ingenuously that he would never have thought of finding a religious body in the civil Code. Some time after, some hope arose of having the Society of Mary approved by the Government. Brother David wrote out the Statutes and the letter for the king. Our hopes vanished because of the discussion which ensued, as much in the Chamber of Deputies as in that of Peers, over the law authorizing the religious orders of women. Finally, coming one day from my meditation, I thought the time had come to make a try. I recopied almost literally the Statutes drawn up by Brother David and the letter to the king. I did make the try, and you know what happened. The Statutes presented to the Government were not all approved, but those which were approved were almost literally among those which had been asked for. . . .

You speak of new regulations, which were asked for some years later. You say you did not submit to them, and you add that these changes became one of the reasons for your withdrawal.

New regulations—I am asking you, your hand on your heart: Is it true that it really was new regulations that were asked for? Can one call new regulations a new edition of all the old ones? Recall, dear sir, that, in full Council, you yourself admitted the necessity of an edition of the Constitutions and of all the regulations of the Society. Please recall also that the work of the necessary editing was proposed to you in the Council, also that a Circular to all the establishments was resolved upon in the Council to order prayers to draw down the lights of God upon the work of this edition. The motion was carried, the prayers were said everywhere. It is only a short time ago that I stopped them in Alsace, and it is even still more recently that they have stopped nearer to you, at the Madeleine and at St. Laurent. The edition, once completed, was proposed to the largest establishments, and especially to the first Heads. You began, dear sir, if you remember, by opposing it with one or two of your confreres, before even understanding it, before even having read it yourself or having heard it read. This did not prevent my submitting it to you, as to all the old Heads. I have right here before me your observations as well as three of the Heads, either present or stationed elsewhere. As your propositions—it is useless to speak of those of the two others whose impetus you seem to follow—were the occasion of some ferment, I made it known everywhere that we would no longer occupy ourselves with the edition, that we would purely and simply hold on to all the old regulations. . . . How, then, can you say that we wanted to introduce new regulations? One cannot call “new” particular regulations conformable to the spirit of the old general regulations that have been approved. In proportion as the Society develops, there will always be some need for similar adjustments.

You did not submit to them. Has your submission ever been asked for? Has it even been required that you observe, or cause to be observed, any regulations contrary to the old ones? To what then must we compare your rising in arms of the past several years? Did you hope to have the Society fall, so as to have a very apparent motive for withdrawing from

it? No, you have too much uprightness, even to conceive such bad intentions! I am stopping now on this article. . . .

You admit being the first member of the Society. You acknowledge the first Statutes regularly approved by the deceased Archbishop d'Aviau. You also admit that certain Statutes are approved by the Government. In the course of at least a dozen years, you renewed your vows and engagements, which are among us the binding contract, and you pretend that neither group of these Statutes are applicable to you and that recourse must be had to the rules and laws that govern ordinary societies! . . .

After about fifteen years spent in the Society of Mary, you thought yourself capable of breaking the religious contract, you have asked for dispensation from your vows and doubtless of the oaths which confirmed them. You have obtained it. There is no question here of examining the validity of these dispensations before God. That is matter for the tribunal of conscience. It is up to you to examine in conscience if the dispensation from your vows may have a retroactive effect, if the goods you have offered to God, in putting them in the Society, may be retaken. Foreseeing that the religious contract might be annulled, the Society asked of the Government the authorization for the annulment of the civil part of the same contract. Why then would the law not be applicable to you, if you are in the case foreseen by the law? Isn't the spirit of the religious contract, like that of the civil contract, such that the one who has the happiness of forming part of the Society of Mary may not become richer and that, if he happens to leave it, for whatever cause, he simply goes back to his former station and condition? When you entered the Society, you were in debt for more than fourteen thousand francs. . . .

I am stopping here, dear sir, my observations precisely where you stop yours, and I am offering you the assurance of my constant friendship.

* * * *

Nevertheless, on the way to Bordeaux, Father Lalanne had gone to Agen. He there interviewed Father Chaminade about M. Auguste's liquidation and the building up of the St. Marie Boarding School. It was decided that Father Lalanne would replace M. Auguste in July and, besides, Brother Prost and Father Curot would go from St. Remy to Bordeaux. These last were to be replaced at St. Remy by Brother Bonnet, then secretary to the Good Father, and Father Fontaine, priest since the preceding year.

Before leaving Agen, Father Lalanne wrote M. Auguste the following letter, which is an interesting token of the sentiments which animated the Founder in regard to the latter.

Having been asked by Father Chaminade if I had not noticed something in his answers that might have hurt you, I had him take notice of the passage where he seems to reproach you for the abuses which you permitted to be introduced into your community. He answered me that he had written that for yourself alone and that he authorized you to erase

those lines, should his reply come under the eyes of the arbiters. He says it was his duty to have you see all the wrong he thought you did but that he would in no way want to have you lose the esteem of respectable persons. In a word, his dispositions toward you are quite paternal. He very much wants you to arrange your affairs with him in the friendliest manner, without having recourse to arbitration. Most people expect religious to be arbiters themselves rather than have need of other arbiters.

All these things having been weighed and maturely considered, it has been decided that I shall prepare St. Remy for my departure at the beginning of July. And so, take courage and be patient for two more months! Father Chaminade will be pleased that you are not leaving the boarding school; and as for me, I am quite pleased to hope that, once brought together, we shall never again be separated.

Father Lalanne had hardly left Agen when Father Chaminade sent to St. Remy the two following letters.

683 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, April 12, 1833

You have learned, my dear son, of Father Lalanne's trip to Bordeaux. From Bordeaux he came to Agen, where we decided he would quit St. Remy and take over the direction of the St. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux. He will take all of May and June to dispose of everything in such a way that the secondary boarding school has nothing to suffer from his departure.

I gave him permission to take care, as soon as possible, of the wall of separation and the main gateway opposite the chateau. Both would have to be made at your expense. Your cash box is already rather empty, since there have been many other expenses and you had to borrow. The gate of the main entrance must be of iron, supported by two strong gate-posts. He will give you the decorations which have to framed. You might be able to find enough pieces among the debris from the large pond. In any case, I offer you the young stoneworker from St. Laurent of whom I have already spoken to you in one of my previous letters.

There will also be expenses for the trips, first, of Father Curot and Brother Prost,[1] and then of Father Lalanne. I myself will let those leave who are to replace Father Curot and Brother Prost only after the latter have arrived at their destinations.

You understand very well, my dear son, that these transfers cannot take place without new appointments, nor without regulations which distinguish the primary from the secondary boarding school, so that the most perfect peace may reign between the two communities. I shall send all on time, I hope. In the meantime, may everything proceed in its ordinary way, but well!

Continue, my dear son, if you have already begun, to see if you can borrow, but without any action on the part of a notary public. I have already told you the reason for this. Father Lalanne thought it easy to borrow about one hundred thousand francs from some bankers in Gray, provided he could offer them, for example, St. Remy as guarantee. I remarked to him that he could legally mortgage St. Remy only by notarized action. However, if the bankers would be satisfied with a mortgage under private seal, with the promise of making it public should difficulties arise in the reimbursement of the funds, etc. . . . this could still be done. Finally, give it, prudently, all the heartfelt interest that

[1] Francis-Xavier Prost, born in Pontarlier (Doubs) in 1807. He entered the Society at St. Remy in 1831, was ordained priest at St. Claude in 1836, assigned to teaching at St. Remy and at St. Hippolyte and exercised the functions of novice master at Courtefontaine, Ebersmunster, and Réalmont. He also filled the office of secretary for the Founder from 1836 to 1838. In 1845, he joined the Trappists.

depends on you. See to it also that Father Lalanne devotes much interest, etc. . . . Never reawaken your past differences. Let us all labor at the work of the Lord with a real abnegation of ourselves.

Father Lalanne has seemed to me to want to pay what he owed you the past semester and to know if you were to hand it over to me.

I shall not notify Father Chevaux, as I had the intention of doing, regarding the considerable changes that are to take place at St. Remy. Have the kindness to show this letter to him. I am going to write a few words to Father Lalanne. Receive my tender embraces.

* * * *

684 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, April 12, 1833

This morning, my dear son, I notified Brother Bonnet. He is going to prepare himself seriously for his departure. It is entirely within his leanings as a religious to make the journey on foot. He thinks that the preference of his amiable traveling companion, Father Fontaine, will be the same. You can have Father Curot and Brother Prost leave. Our two replacements will not be able to leave before the other two have arrived. . . .

I have just written also to Brother Mémain in Bordeaux everything that we have settled upon regarding Brother Auguste and the boarding school. I have reason to hope that there won't be any reason for delay on my part, so that all will be accomplished within the time limits we have agreed upon. . . .

Furthermore, my dear son, let us continue to pray to the Lord and to put all our confidence in him. This is one of his works, which he has called us to develop. Who then can shake our confidence? May peace be ever with you!

* * * *

Some days later, Father Chaminade addresses to his representative in Bordeaux the following letter, while adding to it a new note for the arbiters.

685 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

Agen, April 19, 1833

By your letter of April 17, my dear son, you let me know that M. Auguste put into the hands of the arbiters old and supposedly new regulations. In order the better to put the arbiters in a position to decide from a knowledge of the case, I am sending you a little document entitled *State of the Society of Mary in Regard to its Constitutions, General and Particular Regulations*.

I do not think it my duty to make a regular memorandum, addressed to the arbiters, because here I am only defending myself, and doing so with the least possible harm to those who are attacking me. Indeed, what claims I would have a right to make! But, my intention is only to ward off the blows, and this is the sole object of my answers to his propositions.

Here, then, are the only papers you have to give to the arbiters:

1. my first answers, with the observations that precede them;
2. my replies to his observations;
3. the *State of the Society*, which I am sending you.

I suppose that M. Auguste, on his part, has given the arbiters only:

1. the simple propositions he has made to me;
2. his remarks about my answers;
3. the pretended regulations of which you speak. If it were otherwise, my dear son, you would have the kindness to write to me about it. The arbiters will not refuse to let you see the papers which they have received from M. Auguste.

Before giving the arbiters the three papers I have just indicated to you, you will give M. Auguste a copy of the last one I am sending to you. You will notify him that you are going to give my three papers to the arbiters—all is to be done with honesty and simplicity—and then you will remain in peace. I don't even see why you could not come to Agen if the arbiters delay in giving their decision. You may even tell them that your presence in Bordeaux seems no longer necessary, but that it is required in Agen.

Express to each one of these gentlemen the sentiments of respect and gratitude I have for them and tell them that it was not up to me to make M. Auguste listen to reason, so they wouldn't have to know the kind of scandal they are deciding about. May the peace of the Lord be ever with you!

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We are not reproducing the documents joined to this letter, which is a simple repetition, under another form, of the details included in the letter to M. Auguste under date of April 9.

686 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, May 6, 1833

My dear son—Father Curot arrived on May 1 toward ten o'clock at night, a truly memorable day, as you know.[1] On the evening of the next day, he gave me your letter of last April 21. I didn't have the satisfaction of reading it before the third of the present month. We are working together to cure him.[2] He seems to have some confidence in the measures being taken in his behalf.

As the stay he is to make in Agen may be prolonged, I wrote yesterday evening to Bordeaux to have Father Fontaine come to Agen, so that he may leave from here with Brother Bonnet as his traveling companion. Nothing is more edifying than the letter he wrote me regarding the notification I had sent him through Father Caillet about his destination for St. Remy. It is possible that I shall give them a third companion, whom I would have to send to Colmar. This is a really fine journey and one really worthy of envy on the part of Christian and religious young men. They will be walking retreatants. Brother Bonnet knows all the highways of Auvergne—he is himself a genuine and loyal native of Auvergne[3]—he knows them as far as Autun. Thus you will have them with you as soon as possible. Brother Bonnet, nevertheless, regrets not having been replaced here before his departure. On my part, I regret not being able to send you one more. I am sending you all I have and, as you see, even a little more. . . .

You have done well, my dear son, to write to me even though you are so busy. It is always better to write about a few things than not to write at all. By the same mail, I am going to write Brother Clouzet on the subject of finances. To make matters short, I shall not send you a copy of what I write to him, but always have a perfect understanding with him. We shall be very strong if we remain always closely united.

Everything would be settled in Bordeaux, and even the scandal would be repaired, were it not for the intervention of Father Collineau. Nevertheless, everything is going as well as can be expected with such underhanded dealings.

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[1] The allusion here is to May 1, 1817, the day when Father Lalanne offered himself to Father Chaminade to share his work and on which Father Chaminade let him know of the mission he had received from heaven for the foundation of the Society.
[2] Father Curot for some time had been the victim of mental troubles which finally brought about his withdrawal from the Society.
[3] The letter had been dictated to Brother Bonnet, which explains the amiable joke of the Founder.

Brother Mémain has been here since the morning of April 30. He arrived in time to receive at the school the principal authorities of the city in the evening.

My friendship for you, my dear son, has never been warmer. I see with an extreme satisfaction that you have entered into the true path of salvation, and I relish the real happiness which we can enjoy here below.

P.S. A letter which Father Curot was to mail in Vesoul was given to me by him the day before yesterday. It was written by Father Meyer to Brother Galliot. It seems that he had written it only at your express order. Happily, I wrote Brother Galliot a few days after your departure. Everyone at Courtefontaine is delighted to receive Father Meyer soon. Brother Galliot wrote about it to Father Bardenet, who by his answer gives him to understand that he is going to try to persuade the bishop of St. Claude to have Father Chevassine installed in the first vacant place in the diocese and to have him replaced by Father Meyer as pastor of Courtefontaine.

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687 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, May 17, 1833

Your letter of the fourth of the current month, my dear son, came to me almost at the moment I was going to tell you of our traveler's departure. Father Fontaine and Brother Bonnet left Agen on the thirteenth of the present month, at five o'clock in the morning and in the best of moods. Brother Colin, destined for Colmar, joined them. Their journey will be only a long retreat.

Oh, yes, my dear son, I shall always say to you: Do the holy will of God. It is the accomplishment of this most just and most amiable will that brings peace and joy to the soul. *Quis restitit Deo et habuit pacem*? . . . One line of your letter, it seems to me, ought to be pointed out: "All my presentiments are dark . . . I have too much offended God." Let us remain with confidence in the arms both of the divine mercy and of the Mother of this mercy, with complete submission to all the effects of his justice. However terrible this justice may be, how its effects are tempered with mercy! If it is in regard to St. Remy that your presentiments are dark, I shall admit to you that nothing of the kind is to be found in me. Furthermore, we must consider it as a great advantage that God deigns to punish and to try us.

Your reflections on the final organization of the secondary boarding school are excellent and I shall make use of them. I can say that I had been mistaken regarding Father

Chevaux's talents.[1] It is so rare that the subjects are correctly described to me, and this is sometimes the cause of my going into affairs, as it were, just feeling my way.

Everyone who has had dealings with Father Fontaine has loved and esteemed him. He speaks and writes with great facility, even with elegance, and without seeming to notice it.

Do not fail to send me the two regulations we have agreed upon. Be sure to instruct well in your plans both Father Fontaine and Brother Bonnet. Although Father Fontaine does not have the same experience in profane matters as Brother Bonnet, he has, perhaps, greater facility in ideas and judgment and always greater solidity and maturity. Brother Bonnet loves and respects Father Fontaine, doubtless because of his virtue and fine character, but also by reason of his knowledge and intellectual penetration. Furthermore, both of them need to be overloaded with work, and this overload can go far, because they accomplish much in a short time and stay a long time at work. I must add that they have much confidence, and they will strongly insist on doing all you told them to do, and in the way you want it done, the more so when they know that I have confirmed all. Do not appear to be prejudiced in their favor, neither scare them by having them foresee difficulties. . . . let them be distrustful of themselves in everything. Provided they have confidence in the grace that accompanies obedience, all will be well.

I see with great pleasure the respect you have for the pure and simple truth, but I do not see how, in following Brother Clouzet's counsel on the announcement of an unlimited absence, you would be going against the pure and simple truth. Have you ever been told to give up St. Remy? Have you been told that you would always be in Bordeaux? We have believed that God wanted you to be in Bordeaux, that is true, but that's all there is to it. How long will the good God want it? I admit to you that I know nothing about it. Presumably, it will be at least for some time, but that is something one does not have to explain in an announcement. Furthermore, care must be taken with regard to the University. We have to have the time to talk things over. Later, we shall see if it would not be well for you, before leaving, to see the rector of the Academy of Besançon. Don't worry, my dear son, but act as if taking all kinds of precautions for God and all that concerns him, so that your temporary retirement from St. Remy may not harm the boarding school you have started and developed. If, in spite of all the precautions, things do not go well after your departure, no one will have anything reasonable to say against you. All will happen that God will permit, and we shall adore the dispositions of his Providence.

The Daughters of Mary, *hic et nunc*, would not be able to take over Father Bardenet's establishment,[1] but it is to be presumed that soon they will be able to do so. Many subjects

[1] For the direction of a boarding school of secondary teaching. See Letter 695, for the solution that was adopted to resolve the difficulty.
[1] Of which there will be question in the next letter.

are entering, since the storm has dissipated, and many steps are being taken to train them properly.

I am going to write Brother Clouzet to have the door opened that you speak of. Always plan everything together with him, for our strength can come only from our union, based on the principles of charity. It is surely to be desired that he will succeed in borrowing at least sixty thousand francs. Encourage him, but always in the views of religion.

I am stopping here so that this letter may leave with today's mail. It is up to us to put the greatest energy into our correspondence.

Father Curot seems to be feeling better. I sometimes fear for his head. It is only tomorrow that the resolutions he has to take for the future will be signed. He has asked me to send you greetings from him and to tell you that he would be writing to you at the first opportunity. I am embracing you with tenderness and wishing you the peace of the Lord.

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688 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 24, 1833

Your letter, my dear son, of the twelfth of the present month, short as it was, pleased me much. If it responds to the great interests that occupy us at present, it proves to me that you are not losing sight of them. You must have received another letter from me a few days after the one you answered. It was more detailed and more urgent. We have to put the greatest energy into our correspondence and do all we can to get out of our present affairs with at least apparent ease.

If Father Lalanne is directing all his efforts, as I hope, to putting the St. Marie Boarding School back on a solid footing, if he is making due provision at St. Remy for his absence, whether by offering the heads and professors his plans and helping them become capable of carrying them out, requiring from them a regular accounting of the progress of the pupils, as he is not definitely leaving St. Remy, whether etc. . . . the Society of Mary will consolidate itself and deliver itself from the worry, which is so great an obstacle to its development and increase.

But money must be found. M. Auguste must be delivered from the rut he is in. All the backbiting about and against us must be stopped. In borrowing the money we need for this, we will not by that fact embarrass ourselves, neither on the side of capital nor on that of interest, since we have landed property for sale to fall back upon. What will still remain to be paid can easily be taken care of if we put real order everywhere, and especially at St. Remy and in Bordeaux—I am saying, especially, because there happen to be many other

leaking places; but we must concentrate our thoughts and our efforts on St. Remy and Bordeaux.

If you find great embarrassment in forming the major sum of about sixty thousand francs, which, I would think, you need to go ahead on borrowing, could you not consult Father Bardenet? If there is such great want, you could say to him, without too much blaming those who brought it about, not so much by bad will as by imprudence, that Providence has come to our aid in giving us equivalent values and for that. . . . These things, if well presented, might touch Father Bardenet; and if he happened to be interested in them, he would surely succeed, as he is known throughout the Province and he knows it well. . . You would also do well to let M. Pidoux[1] in on all your secrets in this regard. My dear son, let us make the greatest efforts, doubtless with wisdom, but effectively. The Lord will help you. This is the time to redouble our courage to arrive at the port which is being held out to us.

Father Lalanne wrote with a kind of satisfaction that the workmen were working at the construction we had agreed upon but that he desired that, while the masons were on the premises, that an absolutely essential door be opened, for the pupils were obliged to walk through the window. In answering him lately, I told him I was going to write to you, and, in fact, unless there would be some serious drawbacks, you will allow him to open it.

You may take the bookbinder and fit out his shop, provided you can morally count upon him.

You will be able to go and see the property in the Vosges Department, which Father Bardenet wants you to buy. You could also make its acquisition in your own name; but if its location is not a happy one in the best sense, for bringing in the Society of Mary for the men or the Daughters of Mary for the women, be in no hurry. Work things out with Father Bardenet and tell me about them as clearly as possible, that I may be correctly informed about everything.

Father Lalanne tells me truly that he was going to be embarrassed in leaving St. Remy, that he would not like to leave debts in departing, that he had, to this effect, borrowed three thousand francs from a business man in Gray, and that, moreover, he could not leave without a penny. I asked him how much remained to him, or what he would still have of the amount spent or to be spent. He answered me six to seven thousand francs. To that I answered nothing. It is doubtless from this fact that he concluded that we had agreed that he would give you nothing. This conclusion is rather dry—not to say, hard—for someone who had in mind touching funds and who had made commitments in consequence. In truth, when he answered me that he would have six to seven thousand francs, I thought surely that he would have given you a great part of the sum he owed you, if he did not give you the entire amount. It would be difficult and it would take long to say

[1] Banker in Besançon.

what embarrassment all this puts me in, along with many here. Nevertheless, the matter must be barely touched, when speaking of it to Father Lalanne. If he spoke of charging you with the three thousand francs due to Gray, it is doubtless to bring them to Bordeaux, since this is about his only debt, and he promised to pay it back only during the last quarter of the year. . . .

I am stopping here. While writing this letter, I have been constantly interrupted. I am embracing you very tenderly.

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689 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, June 5, 1833

In the postscript of your letter of last May 18, my dear son, you were again telling me: “If Father Lalanne is to go to Bordeaux, etc.” Certainly, he is to go. In consequence, we are working to arrange everything at St. Remy in such a way that his absence may not become harmful in any way. He tells me he needs the months of May and June. This was agreed upon. I am surprised that he told you of the fact without at the same time informing you of the essential conditions.

But, my dear son, the overhaul of the Bordeaux boarding school cannot be done without money. I have recently written to you about it. From your first letters, I did not think you sufficiently realized the need, and that obliged me to bring it up again, but more forcibly. Actually, we are soon at the end of it. July is fast approaching. All M. Auguste’s bills are verified and settled until the end of last October. Not much time would be needed to finish with the temporal matters of this establishment and to regulate its finances. If, without great prejudice, you can be absent for a time from St. Remy, so as to put everything in Bordeaux on a solid footing, I think that much good would come from it. The greatest disadvantage that is to be feared is the matter of the old discussions with Father Lalanne; but in his present sentiments, why wouldn’t old memories be forgotten, especially to put out the fire in a house?—

It is true, your presence at St. Remy is going to become all the more necessary, since Father Lalanne is going to leave. But I would not see serious disadvantages:

1. if Father Lalanne preceded you by two weeks;

2. if, instead of one trip, you made two. There would be trouble and expenses, but what wouldn’t we do to put a favorable end to such an affair?

The older Brother Mémain would surely have enough intelligence and strength of soul for this operation. But:

1. the authorities of the city of Agen and, in general, the parents of the pupils are always likely to stir things up, and we don’t want the whole matter to rest on him. He has already made himself too necessary;

2. he is not as well known in Bordeaux as you are, nor do I believe he has as much experience as you.

Supposing that all is arranged and in good running order, do you not believe that Brother Bonnefoi, if he is closely supervised, would be able to keep up with the work if we gave him some other occupation? Although Father Lalanne has not spoken about it, he

might be pleased to see him there,[1] and, as you know, with Father Lalanne, an econome and a bookkeeper are needed.

I am speaking to you, my dear son, with frankness and all confidence, because I consider you sufficiently a man of faith to put yourself above all the meanness of self-love and to consider things as they appear in the light of truth.

My dear son, take the greatest interest in what I am telling you and in everything I have been able to tell you in my preceding letters. Father Lalanne and you are doing well in keeping quiet at St. Remy about all these changes, but we are publishing them in some way in these regions. It will be urgent that Father Lalanne puts in his appearance at Bordeaux, at the latest by the beginning of July. When I have learned that everything is well foreseen at St. Remy, I shall send the necessary nominations and obediences. I am always preserving interior confidence that this move will finally deliver us from the agitations we have been living with for several years. On your part, you have had many heartaches; but for your consolation, you will see that they have not been without fruit. If God is with us, who shall be against us?

From what you told me about M. Pommez's[2] interview with Father Lalanne, and the offer he had made him, I sent Father Caillet to him, to find out what we could count on. Everything seems to have boiled down to a few civilities. The reason behind this change is an interview that M. Pommez had with Brother David. The latter made him practically powerless by representing to him, on the one hand, the enormity of our debts and, on the other hand, letting him understand that all Father Lalanne could do was to increase them. I wrote again to M. Pommez to calm him on all points and to beg of him not to tell anyone that we had wanted to borrow from him. . . . It is not prudent, under the present circumstances, to borrow in Bordeaux. Later, after we are somewhat better off, I don't think there will be any serious difficulty. In general, there seems to be pleasure and satisfaction that Father Lalanne is putting himself at the head of the boarding school. No one doubts of the success that will follow, provided he can refrain from making expenses other than those agreed upon. We are learning a lesson we shall have to remember all our lifetime. . . .

In borrowing in the region you are living in, you are not saying it is for St. Remy; and, in fact, it is not for this establishment. It is easy to see that the separation of the works, far from making it decline, is really making for prosperity. I really have the intention of continuing the separation, while bringing back the two communities to the unity and union of one and the same establishment. The loan, proposed for the reasons I have placed before you, has nothing vexing for St. Remy. . . .

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[1] Bro. Bonnefoi had been attracted to the Society by Fr. Lalanne and had served him as secretary.
[2] A banker in Bordeaux who had been a member of the Congregation of the Fathers of Families.

Give Brother Gaussens a little courage. The more he listens to himself, the more he will feel the pain. Work and occupation will not harm his health, provided he does nothing imprudent and that he takes moderate care of himself. It is precisely because he needs to be always occupied that I have sent him to St. Remy and that I have given him the double function of Head of the normal school and Head of Instruction. I am very far from wanting to diminish his obligations.

If Brother Bonnefoi comes to Bordeaux, he will no longer be precisely Father Lalanne's confidential man of business, but the Society's. . . .

There is little likelihood that we shall succeed at Vesoul and at Salins. Let us get along well ourselves and not worry!

I am awaiting Brother Prost, who, Father Lalanne assured me, would be entirely suitable as secretary. I no longer have any forwarding clerk, since I sent Brother Troffer to Moissac, where he was much needed. Brother Bonnet will be able to notify Brother Prost about what he will have to do for me. You will understand by this letter, written by my hand, that I am my own shipping clerk.

I am embracing you very tenderly in wishing you courage and abnegation of yourself!

* * * *

A young religious is sent to Rouen to settle some family matters. Father Chaminade addresses to him the following counsels as regards his conduct in the midst of the world.

690 – TO BROTHER DESHAYES, ROUEN

Agen, June 9, 1833

Your journey, my dear son, to your parents and to your native city is a great trial brought about by divine Providence. Father Lalanne was right in granting it to you. He must have explained to you the reasons for it and given you at the same time the counsels you need under the present circumstance. I shall make you but few observations.

You have gotten to know how detrimental the world had been to you, and you know, by that very fact, how much you must look for seclusion and silence and find for yourself occupations that, with your religious exercises, will absorb all your time. I am putting among these occupations the affair you have gone home to settle.

You must never have been more severe as regards the use of wine and all kinds of liquor. Do not lose, for an instant, the pains of several years of combats and mortifications. You have nothing to arrange with the world. Of course, do nothing singular, nothing that might make you noticed; but always act freely and without human respect.

Write to me very often and, at the same time as you speak to me of your temporal matters, always tell me something of your interior. If you are faithful, grace will have, in your position, stronger and more distinct operations. Just have courage. I shall not cease to ask it of the Lord for you. You know how very close I am to you.

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The following letter shows us with what prudence Father Chaminade wanted superiors to act in regard to the admission of candidates, especially when certain indications suggested some uneasiness concerning them.

691 – TO FATHER LALANNE, ST. REMY

Agen, June 11, 1833

It is from the convent of the Daughters of Mary, my dear son, where I went to spend the day, that I am sending you two little answers, as I wrote you quite a long letter the day before yesterday.

You will see from my answer to Bro. Langue what you have to do. The examination, although very fair, must not be simply a ceremonial. There is great likelihood that Father Curot would not be in Agen if he had been questioned in the regular manner. Nevertheless, I must tell you that, for two or three days, he is showing signs of hope for recovery. I have several times been tempted to reproach you with something. After having seen the signs of lunacy on the part of the father at St. Remy, why did you not trace the matter farther back? But today it is finished. Let us talk no more about it.

I am praying without ceasing, so to say, so that all of our affairs may turn out well. Join me, but may our hearts be full of confidence. While embracing you tenderly, I am wishing you the peace of the Lord.

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Soon the series of letters to Father Chevaux is going to begin. They are very instructive, by reason of the principles and methods of direction of the Founder. The following letter is their forerunner.

692 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, June 17, 1833

It is true, my dear son, that I have some opinions about you, in the changes which are going on at St. Remy. The elation which Father Lalanne let you glimpse is, so to say, only apparent. Today, I see better than ever what is lacking in you and so I am going to take all the possible precautions, so that you do not succumb.

I am not sorry that you happen to have a feeling of your weakness and even of your incapacity, for nothing is more suitable. In fact, no other feeling is closer to the truth. If all men are to have it, even the strongest and the most enlightened, then with all the more reason, you, who certainly are not the foremost in the world. Do you not see that we are really in a supernatural order, although it seems natural, and that precisely for that very reason, in this supernatural order, we all require that Jesus Christ be our strength and our light? By all your humiliations and the avowal of your weaknesses, you seem to believe that natural talents would be absolutely necessary to fulfill high functions. This would be true in the civil and administrative order; but in the religious order, where we receive a mission which is divine, all our reasonings lose their fitness and cannot honor the great Master whom we serve. *Infirma mundi elegit Dues, ut confundat fortia*.[1]

I am very glad, my dear son, that you are trying to lead a really interior life. Once everything is well organized at St. Remy, in both communities, we shall discuss, for your benefit and others too, the ways of God in the sanctification of souls. It would be difficult for me to express the sorrow I experienced to have to write so many letters to St. Remy and to have had so little occasion to speak of things spiritual.

The study of theology and of Holy Scripture is a rigorous enough duty on the part of those who are being raised to the holy priesthood. I would then be very far from blaming the application that you give to it, unless it were excessive or disordered. But what rule and what authors will you have to follow? We shall speak of this a little later. One of the principal functions which Father Fontaine will have at St. Remy will be that of professor of

[1] The foolish things of the world God hath chosen, that he may confound the wise, I Cor. 1, 28.

philosophy and theology. He has been found capable in the examinations he had to submit to for the ordinations. He will also be able to initiate you into the reading of Holy Scripture. Nor must the study of Church History be neglected. We shall later return to these interesting subjects. At the proper time—and I don't think this time will be long delayed—Father Fontaine will tell me about the ability of all those who need these studies, and I shall try to settle the order and the pace to be followed. However, in regard to Father Fontaine, be careful to avoid seeming to estimate the extent of his knowledge, for that would be the way to render him powerless. Anyhow, I think he will get along all right, when he is persuaded that it is the grace of his ministry and of obedience which accomplished all in him. Continue what you are doing, as best you can, full of confidence in the protection of our august Mother, and remain quiet.

You tell me that Father Bouly wants to come to some kind of decision, at the end of the year, concerning whether he should be in the religious or in the secular state. If you and he desire that I take part in this decision, Father Lalanne would have to take the matter up in Council, to which he would call all those who are in a position to know him well. After each one has given the reasons for his refusal or his acceptance, the results would be sent to me.

I think you would do well to confide young Gindre to some religious who would watch over him, instruct him and have him practice virtue in proportion to the instruction he would be receiving and to his personal dispositions. If this way of doing things does not succeed after a certain time of trial, then he should be dismissed.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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693 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, ST. REMY

Agen, June 21, 1833

NOMINATION TO THE HEAD OF ZEAL FOR COURTEFONTAINE

I think the moment has come, my dear son, to begin your mission at Courtefontaine.

You will first exercise all the functions of zeal in regard to the establishment of Courtefontaine. In consequence, I am naming you Head of Zeal of the establishment of Courtefontaine. I am asking Father Lalanne to give you the counsels suitable to the delicate position which you will be in. You will follow them strictly, as if I were giving them to you

myself.[1] May the Lord deign to shower upon you, my dear son, his most abundant blessings.

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[1] Father Meyer, in addition to the office of chaplain of the house, under the direction of Brother Galliot, was to add the duties of pastor of the parish.

According to the decisions taken, Father Lalanne left St. Remy and came to take over the direction of the Ste. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux. At St. Remy, Father Chevaux is named superior of the secondary boarding school, replacing Father Lalanne, and Brother Clouzet superior of the primary boarding school.

694 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 25-30, 1833

My dear son, I have put off answering your letter of the eighth of the present month for several days, awaiting each day Father Lalanne, whose departure you had said would take place the day after. He arrived here only during the night of the twenty-fourth. He stopped for several days in Arbois, as he had told me he would; and, taking only secondary roads across the mountains to shorten the way, in reality he took much more time. He even traveled several days on foot. He is feeling quite well and is fairly well disposed. It doesn't seem to be necessary to bother about anything he told you about his removal from St. Remy. If this removal is a chastisement of divine justice, it is a paternal chastisement which will do much towards his sanctification. . . .

Until the present, all the attempts at borrowing without furnishing a mortgage have been useless. I am nevertheless not losing confidence. I am going to send word to Bordeaux to complete everything, as if the money were present; but do not cease looking for some—always prudently, to be sure—but with solicitude—in fact, great solicitude. I think that if we had known how to handle Father Bardenet and how to put things as they really are before him, he would have been able to remedy everything or at least most of it; but, in the end, you did not think him to be in good faith. It also seems that Father Lalanne did not know how to stand up for his own removal, for Father Bardenet expressed some dissatisfaction in regard to it. In proportion as you can borrow, send me whatever comes into your hands.

I was this far with my letter, my dear son, on the evening of the twenty-fifth, when I noticed that, to answer you more categorically, I would do well to await Father Lalanne's departure for Bordeaux, which took place yesterday evening, the twenty-ninth, at ten o'clock.

Yesterday, I received your letter of the twenty-second of the present month with your Prospectus project. The common Prospectus and your particular Prospectus[1] have furnished the most ordinary subjects of our interviews during Father Lalanne's stay in Agen. I must, nevertheless, except for the first two days, which were consecrated to a rigorous retreat. Toward the end of this little retreat, I told him that perfect union would never exist between us, unless we looked upon having the same doctrine and the same principles as absolutely necessary and unless I practically adopted the doctrine of Father Olier,

[1] The general Prospectus of St. Remy and the special Prospectus of the primary boarding school.

contained in his *Little Christian Catechism* and in his *Introduction to the Christian Life and Virtues*. Although he knew these two works, he asked me for the *Little Christian Catechism*. He seems to have read it attentively and to have adopted its doctrine.

The common Prospectus, which he had already spoken about to me, arrived only on the third day of his stay in Agen. It was immediately the object of our interviews. I found it beautiful and well-arranged; but on the second reading, I thought I noticed first a kind of gap in the plan for the secondary boarding school and then, in the other one, some restrictions which seemed to give hints of possible weaknesses and took precautions against them. I took my notes in writing. . . .

I thought I understood that, on the one hand, Father Lalanne still believed that, among the Heads of the primary boarding school, there was rivalry as regards the secondary boarding school; that perhaps there was even a financial interest; and that, on the other hand, the interests of the secondary boarding school would be treated according to the conditions that I had agreed upon with him.[1]

Now, I had, at first, not consented to the separation and admitted these conditions only by indulgence. Having later seen that the separation could turn to the advantage of religion and of the Society, I thought it best to let it stand, but to govern both boarding schools according to the principles of charity, of fraternal union, etc. The Head of the primary boarding school must ardently interest himself in the support and development of the secondary boarding school, and the same on the part of the Head of the latter regarding the primary boarding school. One boarding school no longer has any advantages over the other. It is simply the same work, divided into two parts.

There is a rivalry to which I shall never be opposed, and that is the one leading to better school management; there should be among each group of pupils more docility, more modesty, more honesty, more education, etc. This rivalry will turn to the profit of each, will edify, etc. . . . That each one should boast about his boarding school, as a merchant boasts about the merchandise that he has for sale, there is no harm in that. That each should teach according to its distinctive nature is only right, as everybody knows what belongs to primary and what to secondary teaching. Let each school limit itself to that, but let it extend the limits as far as it can. . . .

Father Lalanne, in considering these principles, still feared or seemed to fear rivalry. I said at first that, in our plan, this rivalry would be without interest and that, if it were to be feared, the means to stop it would not be to put obstacles in the development of the primary boarding school; but to instruct, exhort, and even punish those who act contrary to the principles we are to follow. It is in consequence of this that, in my notes, I had the age of entry erased, added to the teaching. . . .

[1] At the time he was to stay at St. Remy.

It was made to seem impossible to hold the double distribution of prizes on the same day. I was accused of having promised the secondary boarding school a promotion, in case it ran well. I then answered that an interval of at least one week should be placed between the two distributions. Father Lalanne was glad, and he immediately wrote to you about it. . . .

Your letter arrived yesterday morning with its Prospectus project. New examinations. Would the two distributions of prizes take place on the same day? Which boarding school would have its separate Prospectus?

To the first question, Father Lalanne had no objections any stronger than these two: (1) You have already decided that there would be an interval of a week between the two and (2) there would not be enough time in one session for the double distribution. This session must not last more than three hours, from eleven to two o'clock in the afternoon, to give each one sufficient time to retire. These two difficulties did not seem very strong to me.

We now pass to the second question. Father Lalanne readily agrees that there could be utility in each boarding school's having its own Prospectus, and that each one could show interest in the other, by including the Prospectus of the other whenever it sends its own.

Everything was done over and sent out by Father Lalanne before his departure. I would have desired to have copies of everything, to give you my reflections on certain subjects we have decided on, but there was too little time. But Father Lalanne told me that he was going to take notes for me. I am inserting them in this letter. For excellent reasons, I have, in fact, agreed to these four articles. Somewhat later, I shall be able to talk to you about them, if you so desire.[1] If the true spirit of the Society is reborn, everything will be arranged, everything will work out wonderfully well. Most of the difficulties we are experiencing arise only from the fact that we are so separated.

This letter will seem long to you, but I would have many more things to say to you. I shall come back to them as soon as possible, because we must keep on advancing, but on a way over which we can gather enough merits in exchange for the crown of immortality.

I shall shortly write to Father Chevaux. You may send this letter over to him. I am counting on the promise you made to me. I immediately made it known to M. Auguste. In proportion as you gather information, let me know about it and believe, my dear son, always in my inviolable attachment.

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[1] The notes in question have not come down to us.

695 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, July 31, 1833

My dear son—Although it is by obedience that, despite your repugnances, you must have accepted the position of superior of the Château community, I am not any less thankful to you, because it is a service which you are rendering the Society.

At the time of your installation, Father Lalanne seemed to put restrictions on your authority, for example, in naming Father Fontaine the only Head of the boarding school. Without examining here whether this expression is well chosen or only according to my personal views, I would be better able to decide the case for myself if there had been an official account of the installation. My intention is that you be purely and simply superior, although Father Fontaine ostensibly exercises the functions of Head of the boarding school. I do not doubt that he has himself understood the matter in the same way and knows how to reconcile all the various elements of the situation. I am saying the same for the case of all the other professors.

You will surely have understood that there were great precautions to be taken in the changes which have just taken place. Furthermore, I believe that this way of proceeding will help you a lot and that you will be able to lend yourself to whatever refers to spiritual matters without dispensing Father Fontaine from helping you in every way he can, especially in all that regards the instructions. I shall not lose sight of the fact that you are but two priests.

Father Lalanne has omitted having you and Brother Clouzet take the usual oath of office. Might it be because you do not happen to have the formula? I shall very shortly send it to you. I would very much desire that we do not deviate from our old ways of doing things.

By way of enclosure, I am sending you the dispensation that Brother Langue is awaiting with praiseworthy impatience. In it, you will see what you have to do.[1] Take care of the novices, wherever they happen to be. Courage!

Yesterday, I wrote a long letter to Brother Clouzet, and I am of the opinion that he will show it to you. The two boarding schools of St. Remy, just as the two communities that conduct them, are but the same establishment divided into two parts. It is but one same work and one same interest, even financially. I shall also shortly write to Brother Clouzet on the subject of the temporal matters concerning the two houses. May the most perfect union reign among you all! I shall be completely glad only when I see everywhere the *Cor unum, anima una, omnia communia*.

[1] See Letters 674 and 691.

Here I am adding, my dear son, a little letter to the professors of the secondary boarding school.[1] You will send it over to them. I desire that it do some good and I hope that it will. Count upon whatever I can do to reestablish everything. Before coming with such help to particular individuals, there must be order, harmony, and union in the ranks.

May the peace of the Lord be with you!

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696 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 5, 1833

I wrote you, my dear son, a long letter last July 30. On the day following, I wrote another to Father Chevaux. I shall not come back to the object of these letters, but in a way I shall continue my preceding one.

We need the greatest order possible to get out of the rut we have fallen into. I shall begin with the bookkeeping at St. Remy. The agreements made with Father Lalanne were arrived at only as a matter of indulgences, since they were a deviation from the Constitutions and from the spirit of the Society of Mary. The course of events having brought us to the reestablishment of everything, we must, it seems to me, begin right there in consequence. . . .

Henceforth, my dear son, I would want at St. Remy only one Head of Temporalities or principal Econome. It is you, my dear son, that I would choose, and for the time being, I see no one else available. Of course, you can have secondary economes, in each community, but I should want but one who is responsible. There may be several cash-boxes, but all must be reduced to one.

I am continuing with my own hand, my dear son, this letter, which was interrupted last evening, August 2. The third being the eve of the feast of St. Dominic, I wanted to reserve to myself the pleasure of wishing you a happy feast and without prejudice to what I am thinking of doing tomorrow morning at the holy altar.

Here is the order of bookkeeping, as I understand it:

1. The cash-box of the secondary boarding school: Father Fontaine could manage it. He is somewhat new in handling temporal matters, but he could adapt himself;

2. The distinct cash-box of the primary boarding school: it is up to you to take charge of it or to put it into the hands of someone who has your confidence;

[1] This letter has not been preserved.

3. The cash-box of the domain of St. Remy;

4. The cash-box of the domain of Marast;

5. The general cash-box. The particular cash-boxes that you are obliged to hold and control may well be materially reduced to one but not on your books. You leave in each cash-box held by anyone besides yourself a certain amount, sufficient to meet the course of the ordinary expenses. You balance everything at the present time, every month; later, once every three months. You see to it that I get a report on each balance. In Alsace for several years Brother Rothéa has balanced the accounts of the five establishments and reports to me about them every three months. There you have exactitude.

Even if you would find some abuses in the expenses of the secondary boarding school, if Father Lalanne has tolerated them—perhaps even introduced them—they must be allowed to continue. It would perhaps even be prudent to say that in general, as far as purely physical life is concerned, the pupils were doing better by the end of the year than under Father Lalanne. Let nothing be done that might be regretted later on.

The retaking of the Bordeaux boarding school not having occurred during the past month, M. Auguste has managed to overstate things in the most extraordinary fashion. We are very embarrassed to be facing the failures that are coming, one after the other. Let us have anything that you can dispose of, and that as promptly as possible.

Do you believe that Brother Prost could really be of service to me as a secretary? Will he be glad to busy himself with his own particular needs, when I do not have work for him? He will only have to wait. Is he careful, attentive, etc.? Does he want to come?

Is the one named Guyennet, who writes to me, really converted? What am I to answer him?

You know there was a time when I promised Brother Dormoy to place him in another establishment. Consequently, I am telling him to learn how to cook and then how to bake bread. Father Meyer complained to me about certain disobediences. I have ordered these to be made known in writing, but they were not found to amount to anything of real importance. In the meantime, Father Lalanne asked me to send him to Bordeaux.

Could Brother Marres in the château kitchen be replaced?

I had sent Brother Lacoste to Courtefontaine, as one able to do almost anything and always with good will. Brother Galliot complains that to everything, he answers that he knows nothing about it.

It seems that in his case there is more procrastination and laziness than any other bad quality. I think it would be good to assign him to only one specific job, at first under someone else, for his better formation, and then on his own responsibility. He asks me to be employed at Courtefontaine only in sewing, as the kitchen frightens him. Do you want me to send him back to you? He is strong, full of good will, pious and regular.

Few changes will be made at the Ste. Marie Boarding School during the remainder of the present year. The payments and reimbursements which we are unable to make preoccupy everyone. I have just sent Brother Mémain. He hopes to be able to find some money available among his relatives in Bordeaux. Nevertheless, we are thinking of giving a retreat or of having one given to the boarders before the feast of the Assumption. M. Auguste, in spite of his dejected condition, is in a fairly good mood.

Father Lalanne gave me to understand that if, in the last place, he had not sent Brother Prost as well as a young Hanoverian ecclesiastic, the difficulty lay in not having the wherewith to pay their voyage.

Without delay, please give Brother Bonnet the letter I am writing him and my note to our four postulants or novices.[1]

May the Lord, my dear son, grant you light, strength, and courage! I am embracing you tenderly.

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697 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 8, 1833

It is quite right, my dear son, that you, as well as Brother Clouzet, should know just what's what in regard to everything. It is because of these considerations that shortly after Father Lalanne's departure for Bordeaux, I wrote successively two letters, one to Brother Clouzet and the other to you. I also wrote one to the teachers of St. Remy, with the invitation that you and Brother Clouzet communicate the contents to one another reciprocally. The most intimate union must reign between you two, for you are like two racers, as it were, each harnessed to the same vehicle.

Whatever I may not have foreseen and which could embarrass you, be sure to let me know of it. Succeeding Father Lalanne, you will have difficulty in obtaining order and regularity in your community by means of authority but far more easily by the insertion of the principles of faith and religion and also by the influence of your own personal example.

[1] See Letter 703.

Have your community conferences given often by Father Fontaine and reach an agreement with him concerning the subjects he is to treat. Father Fontaine is in a position to say many things which it would not be suitable for you to say, especially in the beginning. It would be easy to attribute to you personally the severity which is really found in the principles that are to be developed and followed. Father Fontaine will surely arouse in everyone the confidence and love that each must have in and for the highest authority in the community.

Make yourself all to all in order to gain all to Jesus and to Mary. Never allow yourself any worry and pray often for everyone. The august Mary is an excellent counselor, and everywhere and in all things you may follow her counsels.

The greatest difficulty that is to be avoided is keeping Father Lalanne's absence from producing a sort of crisis in the secondary boarding school. To this effect Father Fontaine must be very watchful, to see that in the teaching Father Lalanne's plan and method is followed, and that all correspondence, whether with the pupils' parents or with the public, remain about the same. Again to this effect, Father Fontaine must be in frequent touch with the teacher of rhetoric, Brother Brunet, who knows Father Lalanne's mind very well and who has worked so many years under and for him. Both of them were closely linked by the ties of a mutual confidence. Nevertheless, I do not want to say that Father Fontaine is not to have frequent meetings with the other teachers.

You are very free in regard to the choice of the room you are to occupy. The simplest, the least ornamented and the most uncomfortable is ordinarily the best one for a superior. The only requirement is that one can do there what one has to do and that the duties of direction be not too hampered.

This is the first time that I am hearing that Brother Langue is one-armed.[1] If you please, let me know what this infirmity is all about. If I was told at the beginning that he limps, it was described as a defect that is barely noticeable.

My dear son, you are not to give permission to leave the house during the vacation or a part of it, even for only one day, without there being an urgent necessity. Urgent meaning that there is no time to write to me, for the particular superiors have only a discretionary power in this matter. Nevertheless, some pastimes and recreations are to be provided for during this time.

Brother Bonnet is in a sad position. He has already asked to make the long trip to Mauriac to see his mother. I have answered him about this, and before receiving my letter he writes me another in which he seems to be in dire straits. I shall interrupt this letter, in order to write him immediately. This young man, otherwise full of good qualities, has an excessive love for his mother, just as his mother has for him. He will be able to give you my

[1] Brother Langue was not one-armed but half paralyzed on his left side.

last letter, and I am sending you this one unsealed. Could you perhaps succeed in bringing him to reason? I shall continue this letter, so as to have it ready for the very next mail. I am embracing you tenderly.

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698 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 11, 1833

Always write, my dear son, for I shall always answer, as long as it is in any way possible for me to do so.

I have just received your letter of the third of the present month. You may write to Father Viard, pastor of Rosey, that he will be admitted into the Society when he presents his exeat, and, at the end of a year of novitiate, he will be permitted to take definitive engagements if his interior dispositions are really religious. He will simply bring along whatever he has, for nothing more is asked. He will tell the Archbishop, or have him told, that his predecessor promised to grant me the subjects of his diocese, whenever there would be evidence of a real religious vocation. At this time, we cannot discuss the establishment in which he will be placed. He must be disposed to go where it will be judged suitable that he should go, and we shall always follow our best judgment in the matter.

If Brother Le Boulanger is still at St. Remy when this letter comes, tell him that he is taking a bad approach to knowing his state of life. It is not a matter of his likes or tastes that is the sign or mark of a vocation. He must rise higher. Let him meditate seriously on the great truths of religion, and, in the light of these truths, let him see which state will best assure his salvation. Let him also examine the state he would wish to have embraced, and in which he would have wanted to live, when the hour of death arrives, or when he will have to appear before the dreadful tribunal of the sovereign Judge, etc.

Brother Jacquot is a cause for embarrassment. On the one hand, he is subdeacon, and I was not aware that this holy Order had rendered him more religious. Someone wrote to me—I no longer remember who—that when he appeared for ordination, and when he came back from it, he had an altogether worldly air, especially in his manner of dressing. Today, he desires to be ordained a deacon and you tell me of a disobedience. His excuse that in this matter Father Fontaine was not his superior is rather flimsy. I do not recall that anyone has spoken to me about him, in the meantime. See before God, my dear son, and with him, if faith really animates his conduct, if he is making real progress in self-denial, if, etc. I shall rely on your judgment, as to whether I should permit him to be sent to the ordination or to be delayed. There is still all the time necessary for the communication of our views. I would consider the Society as lost if those who were in it are elevated to the priesthood or the priests who would enter it were not really religious in mind and heart. You may read him this little article.

You ask me, my dear son, if Brother Etignard should also be advanced. But, see for yourself: Is he truly religious? Or, at least, is he making serious efforts to penetrate himself with the spirit of this state? Has he, otherwise, the suitable knowledge required? Consider this matter with him and before God, for it is of the deepest importance. I very much desire

that priests be multiplied in the Society, but I desire still more that there be but few if they are not to be models for the lay religious.

I shall say in regard to Brother Fridblatt about the same as is said about Brother Etignard. At the time of Father Rollinet's withdrawal, Brother Fridblatt seemed to me to be entering into good sentiments. Since then, he has written me a little letter, and there is further evidence of the fact. What has happened since? What progress has he made in self-abnegation, in the abnegation of his own judgment and of his will? Has he the knowledge of theology that is necessary? Father Fontaine would be able to find out about him, as well as about the others. . . .

By this time, you must have received all that was necessary for Brother Langue. I would see no inconvenience about sending him for ordination, considering the testimonials given about him by Father Lalanne. Anyhow, give him a close examination and have him examined in theology by Father Fontaine. . . .

You may continue to address yourself to the confessor in your neighborhood, without, however, depriving yourself, in pressing circumstances, of Father Fontaine's help. You will thus soon notice if there is any disadvantage in addressing yourself entirely to him.

Have you well read the *Introduction to the Christian Life and Virtues* by Father Olier? I had left it for you at the time of my stay in St. Remy. Have you also read well the *Little Christian Catechism on the Interior Life* by the same author? In these two little works, you can gather the real principles of mystical theology, in the broader sense of the word. This *Little Catechism* must be at St. Remy. I encouraged Father Lalanne to reread it at the time of his stay in Agen. I adopt the doctrine of Father Olier, and it is suitable that we all have the same doctrine. I believe that all it needs is to be further developed in certain places. I also believe that the subjects need to be prepared before being able to be of any service. His method of prayer can hardly be of any service, except to such as have already entered the illuminative way, but its spirit can easily be taken and be of great use in the purgative way.

My dear son, you must still continue to fulfill the functions of Novice Master. As regards the novice ecclesiastics or priests, I shall act in such a way as only to leave them to you to test, so as to determine whether they really want to save themselves, in practicing in the Society of Mary the Christian and religious virtues. When once we have a moral assurance of the fact, we shall send them off to Bordeaux. In this way, you can retain at the château the novice ecclesiastics who are, properly speaking, only postulants. In the meantime, do the best you can under the circumstances. I am saying "in the meantime," and that means until everything at St. Remy has reached a situation that can be called quiet and well organized.

I am stopping here. I may continue perhaps a little later. May the Lord shower upon you his blessings and his peace!

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699 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 18, 1833

My dear son, I am not answering anything regarding Brother Langue. He must have received his dispensations in time for the holy day of the Assumption. I shall be writing him a little later.

There is no doubt that it will be necessary to return M. Curot to the care of his children. I told this to Father Curot, his son, with some precaution, considering his state of health. He immediately wrote to one of his brothers-in-law to come get him at St. Remy, or wherever else you may have placed him temporarily to avoid any problems. This brother-in-law is ill at ease. He will have to be paid a little sum for maintenance. It would be abusive to offer him anything for his cares. Further down on this page, you will find the address of this brother-in-law.

I am very sorry that there is still so little union at St. Remy. To strengthen it, I had suggested that each Prospectus make mention of the other and that, ordinarily, the one would not be sent without the other. The prosperity of the two boarding schools and of the two communities must be of equal interest to each religious, no matter which community he belongs to. If anyone is more inclined toward one than the other, he must sacrifice this inclination and, above all, he must be very careful about not giving any signs of it. There is no longer any question of speaking about the public Exercises,[1] since a final decision has been made. However, let each community invite the other to its exercises. Whichever one outsiders come to, let them be well treated, etc.

As regards the iron gateway, it is neither your treasury nor the secondary community's but the general treasury that will have to pay for it, and that as soon as it can be done. My letter to Brother Clouzet about the organization of the various treasuries must have already settled that for you. All must be done per *modum unius*.

Father Lalanne believes that Brother Bonnefoi would accustom himself to work under Brother Clouzet only with difficulty but nevertheless, the latter is not in a condition to administer all alone. Father Lalanne believes that Brother Bonnefoi would serve me better than Brother Prost,[2] especially on trips, if I still have some to make. I need a young man, a true religious, prudent, discrete and even very reserved, who loves order, who dispatches well, who knows how to occupy himself when I have no work for him, who will follow me

[1] The allusion is to the literary exercises which Father Lalanne had established at St. Remy, at the end of the school year and before the distribution of the prizes. With Father Lalanne's departure, it seems, it had been decided to replace them in each of the boarding schools by less solemn exercises, but this question still gave rise to some difficulties.
[2] As secretary replacing Brother Bonnet.

everywhere when I go out and see to it that no accident befalls me,[3] who will assist me at my rising and retiring, at least when I am not in Bordeaux, because there I have a servant properly so-called.[4] I should wish that these services would be rendered to me by religion and devotedness rather than by obligation. Feel out Brother Prost, feel out Brother Bonnefoi also, but separately. Then let me know about your views and their respective sentiments.[1]

I am coming back to the union which must reign among all the religious. Lately, I understood that there was still a certain coldness and almost contempt among the ecclesiastical religious toward the lay religious. Thanks be to God, this disorder exists only at St. Remy and I think that, even at St. Remy, there must be but few who have taken this bad turn with any degree of seriousness. All must regard themselves as brothers and members of the same spiritual family. In human families, are not union and harmony established, although there soon exist distinctions, whether because of the superiority of talents of some or because of the states which others embrace or of the positions they occupy? Try, my dear son, to put an end to this disorder. As much as may be necessary, act in conjunction with Brother Clouzet and Father Fontaine. Let me know who those are who have the greatest repugnance to entering into true sentiments of union and of fraternal love.

Father Fontaine, doubtless, believed that the order given by Father Lalanne to have each Prospectus printed, unknown to Brother Clouzet, had been arranged with me. His obedience must here be considered, although it is defective by way of excess. A local superior may suspend, and even modify at times an order given by a higher superior, when he meets with serious difficulties in its execution. He then uses his discretionary power. You are Father Fontaine's immediate and local superior. You wish to stop the scandalous conflict of authorities. Father Fontaine ought to give way, taking for granted that he might explain himself. Furthermore, all must know how much I love the sacrifices which are being made for the maintenance of union and concord. *Hoc est praeceptum meum ut diligatis invicem*. See to it, my dear son, that this precept of Jesus Christ is well observed at St. Remy. Ask Father Fontaine, ask Brother Clouzet, ask the teachers of both communities to help you unite all hearts in one, true spirit of faith. The best news that you can give me is that division and coldness no longer exist either between the two communities or between members of either community.

With regard to the entrance into the park, I am very glad that all the religious are able to enjoy it, whether as a matter of relaxation or as a matter of greater privacy, etc., when they have the need and the time for it. The only thing necessary is that every religious who wants to profit by this little favor ask permission for it from his respective superior. To this effect, it will be necessary that the entrance-gate be provided with a strong lock, so that it can be closed or opened, as well from the inside as from the outside. A certain number of

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[3] Doubtless because of the weakness of his eyesight and the infirmities of old age.
[4] John Larquey. See Letter 659.
[1] They both filled the functions of secretary to Fr. Chaminade, first Bro. Bonnefoi, who in 1835 also succeeded Bro. David as Secretary General of the Society, then Bro. Prost.

keys will be needed, a part of which will remain in Brother Clouzet's hands and the others in your hands. Even the boarders can spend time there, provided that the heads take upon themselves the responsibility. Brother Clouzet, who is exclusively in charge of the park, like myself, asks but one thing, namely, that all abuses and waste be prevented; and that whatever God has given us be enjoyed with order. Arrange for a common plan of action with Brother Clouzet and then with Father Fontaine, who himself will suggest to the teachers the sentiments they are to have.

At this close of the year, Father Fontaine's mission toward the teachers must be only as a preparation of hearts for sentiments altogether religious; but it must be well developed with regard to the behavior of the secondary school, so that the teachers cause themselves to be loved and respected by their pupils; that they change nothing in the manner of teaching all matters and that none of these last be neglected. The pupils and the general public must not find that Father Lalanne's absence is causing any kind of prejudice to the studies. Brother Brunet is able to do much if he can be inspired with the sentiments he ought to have. Father Fontaine has to put much confidence in him.

I am stopping here because other dispatches are urgent. I shall, however, not delay in writing again to you or Brother Clouzet, because much uniformity is needed in your administration, to the effect that everybody be able to see perfect accord between you two. Once everything is well regulated exteriorly, we shall speak of the interior life, of that which we are to have closest to heart: *Quid prodest homini, si,* etc. May the peace of the Lord be with you!

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700 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 26, 1833

. . . . I hope that henceforth, my dear son, you will be doing all that depends upon you to establish and consolidate union, both between the two communities and among the individuals in these communities. This is the principal object of my letters to Father Chevaux. . . . You seem to me to have well understood that you have an equal interest in the good maintenance of the secondary boarding school and of the primary boarding school. There you have two parts of the same work, the only difference there being that the latter is directly maintained by yourself and that the other is directly maintained by its Heads. All will succeed perfectly if the union of hearts be reestablished and, to this effect, you have many things to forget. If you were wrong in some ways, do not hesitate or fear to admit it. The struggle has been so long! You will succeed a lot sooner if you always excuse Father Lalanne, if you attribute everything to misunderstandings, etc.

The grace of the Lord and the protection of his august Mother, as well as our own, will happily end the good which has been begun.

In a crisis of dissolution, let us do what we can, and let us await with confidence the blessings necessary for our labors. . . .

I am thankful for the little money-order you sent me and that in spite of your money needs, but what are three hundred fifty francs in our present position? I would have expected to receive some successively, or in greater amounts and oftener. . . . You do not seem, my dear son, to have added faith to all I was able to tell you about our pressing needs. The good God has sent us, at the last moment, what was needed for our obligations of the month of August. In the meantime, sales are being pressed,[1] but what a long process that is, and what sacrifices will have to be made if too much pressure is used!

My dear son, do not make other expenses of any kind whatever, outside of what is necessary for maintaining and sustaining what already exists; but nothing new without pressing need, and as much as possible, without notifying me about it. Doubtless, we must have confidence in Providence, but we must not tempt Providence. I think this would be the case were we to make improvement while everything is pending.

I admit that you need another priest. Nevertheless, you must be patient until I can find one to give you. Father Caillet is alone at the Madeleine.

I am stopping here, my dear son, but with the intention of continuing in the near future. May the Lord fill you with strength and courage! Be careful that the great number of your occupations does no harm to the interior spirit. I am embracing you tenderly.

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701 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 30, 1833

My dear son, at the moment I was going to answer your letter of August 20, I have just received your letter, stamped in Vesoul, with all the notes it included. . . .

Concerning the retreat, it is evident that it is to be in common for the two communities, just as it was last year, unless there were some abuses I do not know about. You and Father Fontaine will give it, agreeing between yourselves, first as regards the plan and the choice of subjects and then as to the greater or smaller number of exercises both of you will take.

There is great likelihood that Father Fontaine has a little extract of the exercises that were given last year in Agen. Since then, he must have penetrated himself more and more

[1] For example, sale of the goods of M. Lapause and of MM. Armenaud. (See Letters 671, 702, 723)

with them. Perhaps the retreat could be made in the same way at St. Remy, with the modifications which time, place, and persons might call for and also that the Spirit of the Lord might suggest to him.

I doubt very much that Father Rothéa will go to St. Remy for the retreat. He has much to do in St. Hippolyte and it is not in times of reunion and liberty[2] that a superior is to quit his post. You will have to let me know once you have decided upon a date for the retreat.

You may permit Father Rollinet to go to his home, advising him to remain there as short a time as possible and to conduct himself there as a true religious. To this effect, you will give him all the counsels necessary. On his return, he will give you an exact account of all that he has done. Since the letter he wrote to me contained only the request for this permission, I shall answer him only by this little paragraph.

I have nothing to say about the preparations for the public Exercises. I have much to think about. It is too late to speak.[1]

You and Brother Clouzet will go to Besançon as soon as the public Exercises of both boarding schools have ended and the pupils are on vacation. As soon as you have made yourselves known, with the modesty suitable to both of you, you will say to His Excellency[2] that you have the express commission, on the part of your first superior, to present to His Excellency, respectful congratulations on his happy coming to the pontifical seat of Besançon, which is so important and honorable. Tell him also that I would not have delayed so long in offering them if I had known his whereabouts after his leaving Montauban; that I invoke his powerful protection in all confidence; that the great establishment of St. Remy exists and is developing with such success only as the result of the favor of the three archbishops, his predecessors[3]; that his indulgence will often be needed, because we can sometimes be deceived by the introduction of some subjects who manifest false or superficial sentiments, who can become unsettled and sometimes even tear the paternal bosom that has engendered or adopted them, etc., etc. I can easily imagine that you will be careful to give me an exact account of all that has taken place. It is more than useless to recount the first motives that have brought about the separation of the two communities.

Always take care of Brother Bonnet. His love for his mother is truly excessive and, to some extent, entirely natural and can in no way take the name of filial piety, which it passes for. The note which he writes me, inserted in your letter, is but little reassuring. He is checking his passion by necessity and that is already some good, but he leaves it in his heart. The checking does not root it out, nor does it change its nature. It could even become furious. I shall try to write him a few words.

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[2] When the religious are reunited at the vacation time.
[1] See Letter 699.
[2] Archbishop Dubourg. See Letter 672.
[3] Archbishop de Pressigny, Archbishop de Villefrancon and the Cardinal de Rohan.

Brother Langue will have to write what is called a good letter to his mother in letting her understand that it is not in the first days of his entire and definitive consecration to God that he may ask for a permission to go and spend a few days with her. He will write in the same tone to his uncle and ask him to be his protector and consoler with her. Cultivate Brother Langue along spiritual lines, just as if he were still a novice.

I am very glad that you like the doctrine of Father Olier in his *Introduction* and his *Little Catechism*. I should not want us to have another doctrine. It needs certain developments, especially in what concerns beginners or for such as have been rather badly led and have not been kept long enough in the purgative way.

The sorrow that Brother Jacquot feels at being held back from ordination also hurts me a great deal. He seems to have meditated and felt very little as to what the holy Orders really are and as to what the priesthood really is. If he had knowledge of himself and of the priesthood most certainly he would have to be ordered rather than simply given permissions to advance. I believe that Father Lalanne would have desired to have him with him, to keep him busy in the Ste. Marie Boarding School next year. I have not yet answered anything concerning the changes of subjects that he proposes. What do you think about it yourself?

On whatever occasion you find Brother Etignard calm and well disposed, try to have him understand how distressing it is, both for himself and the Society, to see him so tenacious concerning his own ideas and so halting in his progress in self-abnegation. *Nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli, non intrabitis in regnum coclorum*. Brother Etignard has as much need of an entire renouncement of himself as, even naturally, his head has need of direction, and in proportion as he is less fit, himself alone, to be Head of the smallest establishment. Brother Etignard knows himself well from time to time, but he is not careful enough in using the means which religion and faith would suggest to him if he were more faithful to the graces he actually receives.

Brother Clouzet must have told you of the means I have taken, henceforth, to put an end to all needless or excessive expenses. Perhaps he is closing his eyes on this matter which is so important, both for the maintenance of the Society and for the salvation of its members. He must have wanted to end everything in peace. Let us be patient!

If you are really of God, my dear son, God will also be with you. The Spirit of the Lord will direct you and you will be firm and vigilant. There will be unction in all your words and even in all your movements. We must pray and pray well!

I shall shortly write a little letter of consolation and instruction to Brother Fridblatt. Tell him so from me, and let him take courage.

My dear son, I think I have followed all your letters and notes. I am embracing you with tenderness.

* * * *

702 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, September 25-26, 1833

My dears son, I received your last letter, stamped in Bordeaux on the twentieth of the present month. It contained a money-order on Paris for five hundred francs.

I would have reason to be surprised at the financial situation of the secondary boarding school if I knew less of the manner in which it is run. I shall nevertheless give some counsel about it to Father Lalanne, because he believes, or seems to believe, that there will be a surplus this year. Anyhow, it would be good to give me a detailed account about it, by receipts and expenses. You can send it with the first ones who leave St. Remy for Bordeaux, as there will be such shortly.

You tell me, my dear son, that, by the little summary you are giving me, I can see what the general treasury of St. Remy amounts to. You misunderstand me. For this, I would need a liquidation or an account similar to the primary boarding school's, of the shops and properties of St. Remy and of Marast. If you have not yet done this, you would do well to take the matter in hand without further delay. The year would then start with new accounts and what we owe, as well as what we have, would be reported.

Your functions as general econome have thrown a sort of alarm into the community of the château, which could easily be spread among the boarders, because no one fears for himself but for the boarding school. I immediately wrote to reassure everyone, but a short time ago I wrote more particularly to Father Fontaine to stop the meal system at the secondary boarding school. I asked him to communicate to you every article that concerned you, since I was then not able to write you myself. . . .

You need, my dear son, much wisdom and patience. Whether or not there is any foundation to the prejudices, we must act in such a way as to prove them groundless. I don't see anything better than to watch that everything is well determined, more particularly whatever concerns the food. I have done the same in the past, when in my youth I took over the administration of the Seminary of Mussidan, at that time absolutely discredited. I have since seen seminaries and schools where everything was checked and determined. There was no room for any kind of complaint. The disturbance was so great that it is bound to keep up for quite some time. Happily, we are not working for me, nor for our own interests, but for our great Master and the honor of his august Mother.

Our liquidation affairs regarding the Ste. Marie Boarding School are just about limping along. All the engagements for the month of August have been withdrawn, as I remarked to you, but the month of September has been much more charged, and I saw the moment when the protests for nonpayment were going to rain down (it was for today, the twenty-fifth of the current month). Providence has enabled us to find a way of warding them off. I had an express messenger leave last evening. According to your last letter, I was

awaiting greater help from day to day. I am going to send Brother Mémain again to Bordeaux. I have a well-grounded hope for a cash sale of the claim of MM. Armenaud. As regards the property of St. Loubès, we have thus far made no headway.

My dear son, all expenses, outside of those for cultivation and maintenance, must be rigorously suppressed. No more arguments about or temporary amelioration of the goods and shops, no more repairs except such as are required by maintenance. You must understand, my dear son, that it would be tempting Providence to do otherwise. Our confidence in its dispositions must be entire and unshakable, even on the brink of the precipice; but, once more, we are not to tempt it. Take then, my dear son, the middle way: make all the expenses called for by necessity and suitability, without fear of going wrong; but make only these, since God does not permit you others, at least for the time being. How count on his Providence for expenses which he would not approve of, however useful they might possibly appear for the future?

Father Lalanne is entering more and more into sentiments that are truly religious and edifying, but you must understand that nature may have its relapses, especially when some circumstance comes along to reawaken the remembrance of former anxieties. I think you would do well to write him a little letter. You could tell him that you have received a copy of the articles that regulated your temporal administration of the secondary boarding school, that you had already received orders from me that implicitly took in all that these articles contained and which possibly contained something even stronger. Tell him you were not all opposed to all these orders, because there was in your heart the very sincere desire to do everything for the prosperity of the secondary boarding school as you have in the primary and that you hoped it would be the same with the château community; that you see nothing more beautiful than what St. Luke says of the Christians of the Church of Jerusalem: “They all had but one heart and one soul and had everything in common.”

My dear son, we must not speak at all of the past, find out who is right and who is wrong, nor make any allusion to the changes that may have been made. Let us come right to the point! There is question of establishing real order in the two communities, order according to the reason that is always enlightened by faith. We want a truly religious union between the two communities and among the members of each one. We shall succeed, I hope; but let us remove all obstacles.

I have said a great deal about this article, in spite of my numerous occupations, so that you might clearly see the importance that I attach to it and that you yourself ought to attach to it.

I would like to send you Brother Seguin and Brother Kessler,[1] but consider:

[1] Bro. Joseph Kessler, 1803-84, born in St. Gall in Switzerland, in the very bosom of Protestantism, abjured heresy in Colmar, where he became acquainted with the Society and went to Bordeaux to make his novitiate close to the Founder in 1828. After having spent the first years of his religious life at St. Laurent, Marast, and St. Remy, he was sent to Besançon where he ended his career as teacher of

1. that Brother Seguin's health has greatly weakened and that he has much more courage than bodily strength. The doctors are not at all satisfied with him;

2. that, from one moment to another, we may have need of Brother Kessler for drawing. As you see, we have more than one war to wage;

3. we have a hardware machine that may well be worth twelve thousand francs. I see no way of having it transported to St. Remy without undergoing rather heavy expenses. It is not finished. Two thousand francs more are needed so that it may be put in condition to do all kinds of work, and Brother Seguin is the only one who can complete it. I am far from considering the Revolution as finished and quieted down. See if all these reasons are not sufficient to have us remain patient! I could add the failure of our locksmith-shop.

M. Louis Etignard wants to enter the Society. From what his brother tells me, he has his eyes always turned toward Bordeaux, since he experiences great repugnance for St. Remy.

When you say, my dear son, that you take it upon yourself every year to pay a thousand francs to the Society for the two subjects you are asking for, it is no doubt for the purpose of the better gaining my attention, because you cannot take on any such obligation in my regard. I am sure you need no further explanation. Foreseeing that Brother Bonnefoi would not like to be at St. Remy helping you with your writing, I am writing him a little letter to have him come to me, thus freeing Brother Prost, who is doing very well in the post recently assigned to him.

Count, my dear son, on my inviolable friendship with entire confidence.

* * * *

To the preceding letter was joined a collective obedience for several young religious of St. Remy, as well as a personal note addressed to Brother Bonnefoi.

drawing. He died in retirement at Courtefontaine, leaving the reputation of a very pious religious, very charitable, very regular, and, above all, very devoted to Mary. Father Chaminade had permitted him in 1837 "to renew every day, the vow of doing all his actions in the greatest purity of intention that might be possible to him, and in the manner that he would recognize as being the will of God."

703 – TO BROS. LEROY, ETIGNARD, BONNEFOI, DUMONT AND ROHMER, ST. REMY

Agen, September 27, 1833

THE SUPERIOR-GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY,
TO MY DEAR CHILDREN, BROTHERS LEROY, ETIGNARD, BONNEFOI, DUMONT, AND ROHMER:

You will leave, my dear children, as soon as possible, after you have received this letter, and you will go to Bordeaux to Father Lalanne, your former superior. He will assign each one of you a post which you will occupy, with the exception of Brother Bonnefoi, who will go to Agen, according to the particular counsel I am giving him. On the presentation of this obedience, Brother Clouzet will give you what is necessary for the expenses of this trip. Before leaving, take the advice of your superior Father Chevaux. May the Lord and his august Mother deign to protect you during your long journey!

* * * *

Father Ferreol Dumont, whose name we meet in the preceding obedience, was born in 1813 at Morteau, a little mountain town in the Jura region. Having entered in St. Remy in 1827, he made his novitiate under the direction of Father Chevaux and there began his teaching career.

Although remarkably intelligent, he was a mediocre teacher. He soared above his pupils, always supposing that they had understood what seemed evident to him. "Such a theorem is very easy," he would say. "It is the corollary of that other one. . . . In this latter one, it will be sufficient that you note this peculiarity. . . . Let us move on!"

He had hardly more aptitude for the direction of an establishment; and after diverse fruitless endeavors, at Givry, Réalmont, and Courtefontaine, confiding to him any other charges of this kind was given up.

His real place was thus in the ministry of souls. In the course of his long career, he there rendered the most precious services as chaplain of the boarding school at St. Remy (1846-52), of Stanislas Collège (1856-60), the Institution Sainte Marie of Besançon (1860-72) and finally in the St. Joseph Community of St. Remy, where for nearly twenty years, he was the worthy successor of Fathers Rothéa and Chevaux (1872-90).

Father Dumont was one of the most sympathetic priestly characters of the Society in the middle of the nineteenth century. An extraordinary love for study joined to a tender piety, the obedience of a child and a charming community spirit were its distinctive traits.

Of a curious disposition of mind, Father Dumont had made inquiries into all the branches of science and had a great facility in assimilating these and linking their fundamental principles. To a remarkable degree, he understood the mathematical and natural sciences, and he had a taste for the arts of drawing and music; but he had attached himself above all to the study of the ecclesiastical sciences. Early in his career, he had initiated himself into the knowledge of scholastic philosophy and the Hebrew language. Until the end of his life, he gave himself, with an exemplary assiduity, to the study of Sacred Scripture, moral theology, and the ascetical authors.

His instructions were thus most substantial and there was occasion to have them heard all through the Society, as he was one of its best-known preachers, preaching each year two or more retreats. He spoke simply and clearly, without passion, but in a convincing tone and with original views that impressed all minds. Thus it was a delight to hear him and be instructed in his own school. His habit of dividing his subject into three parts, subdividing each into three points, remained legendary. The subject matter of each of his sermons was contained on a small sheet of about the size of a hand and he meditated upon it a long time before going into the pulpit. Furthermore, during the retreats, he used to spend the greater part of the day in the chapel, on his knees at the entrance to the sanctuary, his eyes lovingly fixed upon the tabernacle.

Along with study, piety was the soul of his life, and the two great devotions he practiced and taught were the assistance at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the exercise of the Way of the Cross. Each day, he assisted at all the Masses that it was possible for him to attend. Each day also, from the moment of rising, before and after the Mass, and again in the evening, he multiplied his visits to the Stations of the Cross. Questioned as to the reasons for this devotion: "Believe me," he used to answer, "when you mint coins for the souls in purgatory, you can never strike too many."

In his ardor for study, Father Dumont was sometimes exposed to some rashness of thought and to some imprudences of language, but such were the humility and simplicity of his soul that, at the first word of warning on the part of his superiors, he gave in like a child. "I consider myself happy, yes, and I am saying it from the bottom of my heart. I consider myself very happy to have above me sure and faithful guides who foresee my errors." He one day wrote to Father Chaminade and later to Good Father Caillet: "I don't have as yet the evidence of the justice of the observations that are made in regard to my manner of preaching, but I consider them just, on the word of those who have the grace of state to guide me, and I am doing all I can to conform myself to them, remembering the divine words: 'God resists the proud and gives his grace to the humble.'"

"Until the last years of his life," recounts one of his superiors, "he covered me with confusion. In coming to the retreats, he, a venerable old man, would open his soul to me with the simplicity of a child and solicit direction, kneeling down before me to ask for my blessing."

"Obedience dominated his soul," says another of his contemporaries, "and so, he could not bear that any thing or any delay could stand in the way of conforming to it."

Man of the community, in recreation he joined the first confrères whom he happened to meet, charming them with the variety of his conversations, because, thanks to his faithful memory and his up-to-date readings, he was as agreeable a talker as he was an indefatigable one.

His life was crowned by a death no less edifying. After several days of a painful malady, "during which he showed himself as usual, simple, courageous, resigned to the will of God, obedient as a little child to all those who were taking care of him, he quietly passed away on August 15, at daybreak, at the moment when the Brothers, by a first prayer, greeted the glorious Assumption of their Mother."

* * * *

704 – TO BROTHER BONNEFOI, ST. REMY

Agen, September 27, 1833

My dear son, I shall say to you but two words in answer to your letter of the nineteenth of the present month. Join the other travelers who are leaving for Bordeaux. You can make your retreat there with them and then you will go to Agen, and you will henceforth be my secretary.

* * * *

705 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, September 29, 1833

. . . It is said, my dear son, that on your bills, the price of shoes is set at 6.50 francs and it is claimed that in town the price is from five to six francs. Although there may be good reasons for this, because of the quality of the leathers, you must take precautions so as not to pay anything beyond the current price of objects, if they come from home territory or if they come from some individual workshops. I am not entering into other details, my dear son, since you must understand what I mean. I have had experience in such matters, so to say, all my long life. Furnish good wines, even though country products, and for the secondary boarding school very white bread, as was supplied last year.

I have accepted the establishment of Salins.[1] Brother Troffer has been gone since the twenty-second as director, to prepare everything. He is to be assisted by a good subject

[1] See Letter 527.

from Courtefontaine, for whom Brother Galliot is responsible. As third man you will be kind enough to give him Brother Claverie. I have not left Brother Troffer ignorant concerning the reasons you think so little of this man.

Courtefontaine has just received the present of an organ, and now an organist must be provided. To this effect, it has been suggested that Brother Bouveret be sent in place of Brother Hunolt. I think you will gain much by this change. Besides definite talents for teaching, Brother Bouveret has a fine voice and knows singing very well. I have accepted the change.

I am stopping here, my dear son, while repeating, always with a new pleasure, my tender embraces.

* * * *

Father Chaminade repeats for Father Chevaux the recommendations he has just made to Brother Clouzet. Somewhat anxious about the situation at St. Remy, where Father Lalanne, after all is said and done, was not really replaced, he multiplies his recommendations, inviting the religious to make up for the insufficiency of their means by a perfect mutual understanding.

706 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, September 29, 1833

I am writing, my dear son, to Brother Clouzet. . . . and I am entering into all possible details as regards what will be furnished the château, whether this comes from the workshops or from some single shop, so that it never costs more than a comparable price in the city. It would be desirable that the cost be even somewhat less. I am recommending that he always furnish a good quality of country wine and very white bread, such as was furnished last year, etc. . . .

The closer we come to the reopening of classes, the better Father Fontaine will see what can conveniently be done to make up for a class that is without a teacher. With all that he has to do and his studies for the baccalaureate, he must add as little as possible to his present charges. Let him take up this question and all others like it with the teachers. This is to be a common enterprise with them. All must be made to advance, and all with the same interest before God and before men. There should be, among the Working Brothers, as regards the housekeeping and the cleanliness of the house, the same devotion as there is in teaching among the professors. Long experience has taught me that the fewer people we have for these tasks, the better we will be in the long run.

I shall shortly write to Brother Marres. Yours devotedly in heart and soul.

* * * *

707 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, November 6, 1833

I am sending you, herein included, a little answer for Brother Boillon, the carpenter.[1] Favor the least good will that he shows, in order that he return to God. Let him be instructed in the great truths of religion that he may reflect upon them. Otherwise, you will never, as we say, bring him into line. In the meantime, give him little attentions to win his confidence, if he seems to like instruction.

Your carpenter-shop is impractical for the winter time, on account of the water and humidity. The young people are very likely to catch cold in it. At least they are very much exposed to it. Have them work elsewhere, at least temporarily, or, while awaiting the time when you can meet the expense to have it put in a suitable condition, take all precautions that the workers do not have their feet in water while working.

Father Lalanne fears a great diminution in the number of pupils for the secondary boarding school and thinks, at the same time, that the number for the primary boarding school will be much increased. If such is the case, the most intelligent children of the primary boarding school would have to be put in the secondary boarding school, without, for that reason, increasing the price of their tuition. This measure is not a durable practice for the secondary boarding school, but a transitory one, so that the secondary boarding school may not appear to be failing. It would have that appearance, if the decrease were considerable. It would seem that way, even in the eyes of the pupils of the secondary boarding school.

Put real wisdom, my dear son, in everything you do. We are dealing with works of God, and so let us treat them with the views of God or the views inspired by faith, ridding ourselves of all our human views and still more of those which would be entirely personal.

You will do well to seal Brother Boillon's letter after you have read it.

Receive, my dear son, my most tender greetings.

P.S. I am awaiting many details regarding the retreat, the reopening of the schools, and the organization of the finances of the secondary boarding school.

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[1] There were three brothers Boillon in the Society: John Baptist (1798-1844), Charles (1806-74), and Victor (1812-52), from Bretonvillers, Doubs. All three entered at St. Remy and died there, and all three were very capable in their respective trades. Charles, the carpenter, being spoken of here, entered religion first in 1827, and rendered very great services to the Society in the construction and repair of the houses of Marast, Ebersmunster, Salins, and St. Hippolyte. It was according to his plans and by his care that the actual chapel of St. Hippolyte was constructed in 1850.

Victor, who entered in 1830, and John Baptist, who entered in 1839, were mechanics. Victor's life, after a rather difficult period, "became a model of patience in infirmities and his death was a model of confidence and resignation."

* * * *

708 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, November 11, 1833

This letter, my dear son, is only to send you two little letters, one for Brother Hunolt and the other for Brother Marres. After you have read them, seal them before giving them to the Brothers in question. Young men usually like to receive their letters sealed.

Keep in mind, my dear son, that Brother Marres is extremely limited in intelligence. I was rather surprised that he got to the point of cooking fairly well. With much mildness, you will succeed in turning even his limitations to good account. The religious motives you will suggest to him on occasions, when he could be failing, will have more effect than all reproaches. Doubtless, disorder must not be permitted, but a desired end is often much sooner attained by reanimating the subjects, encouraging them, etc., than by giving way to anger.

You know that I had promised the older Brother Dormoy to take him away from St. Remy. That is why I told him to learn how to cook and how to bake bread. I wanted to place him in Alsace or in Courtefontaine. At St. Hippolyte, it is the former housekeeper of Father Rothéa who does the cooking. As I had this intention, Father Lalanne asked me for him at the time of his first stop in Agen; but since he has found all the people he needed, he has no longer spoken about it. Brother Troffer, in his new establishment in Salins, would probably ask me for him; and I think that, in fact, he would need him, and even urgently. Should I let him have him? The three Brothers are too occupied in Salins to be able to bother about the kitchen and the service of the boarders. Besides, that would not be suitable, and there would be still more inconvenience in calling someone in from the outside.

From day to day, I am awaiting detailed news from you, but I am almost fearing what you will have to say to me. Accept, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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With the conclusion of the difficulties relative to the boarding schools of St. Remy and Bordeaux, the month of November brought the end of the litigation with M. Auguste.

Decidedly renouncing the idea of having the question decided by arbiters, Father Chaminade had offered M. Auguste "to have it over by the judgment of his conscience, on all the points under discussion." M. Auguste, embarrassed by such a proposition, after having taken the advice of M. Ravez, his legal counselor, and of Archbishop Cheverus of Bordeaux, went to Agen, to Father Chaminade, and presented him a project of transaction, in which he upheld all his former pretensions.

On November 5, Father Chaminade, after mature reflection, wrote the following letter to M. Auguste.

709 – TO M. AUGUSTE PERRIÈRE, BORDEAUX

Agen, November 5, 1833

Dear Sir—I have finally found the time to take up and examine the proposed agreement and transaction that you left with me at the time of your departure from Agen.

I have made no essential change in it. I have suppressed only articles 4 and 5.

Article 4, regarding furniture, because it is expressed in too vague a manner and, besides, you know well that I am very far from not allowing you to take along some articles of furniture, which might be able to replace those which you brought along if these last no longer exist.

Article 5, because the objects that it mentions (cart, mare, and Melac colt) are not appendages, as you say, of the Melac property. Nevertheless, I am not saying that we cannot come to some agreement about this later. However, we must bring this affair to a close.

And all will end, if, in exchange for the note I am sending you now, signed by my hand, you will send me a copy of it signed by your hand. If it is your desire that this little agreement be on stamped paper, use some for your copy and, by return mail, you will receive a similar one from me.

I experience great satisfaction at seeing, finally, that there will be no longer any contestation between us, but that we shall be able to continue to live in close friendship. You know how profound these sentiments are in my soul, and I am pleased to repeat here to you this assurance.

* * * *

As M. Auguste was not answering, Father Chaminade charged Father Lalanne to settle the terms of the agreement definitely, and these were signed on November 18, 1833.

In it, the Founder made M. Auguste all the concessions he had asked for. In fact, in matters of money, he could not make up his mind to claim his rights with the harsh perseverance of people of the world. At this same time, in regard to a quarrel with one of his creditors, after having declared himself ready "to make along with whatever this individual will have determined," he added: "I don't want to go to law, but I want to do full justice to whomever I may owe anything; I even permit to be taken away from me what I don't think I owe, however clear, however evident this may seem to me."[1] *If such were Father Chaminade's dispositions in regard to simple creditors, it will not be surprising to see him manifest at least an equal disinterestedness when he is treating with a well-beloved son whose return he is always hoping for. He prefers to allow himself to be robbed of a part of his rights rather than compromise forever this hoped-for return.*

From that, we have the agreement of November 18, 1833, no doubt favorable to M. Auguste. But, when all is said and done, Father Chaminade's actions also helped the Society, which he delivered from endless discussions, and assured the subsequent cooperation of M. Auguste himself.

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Volume 3, Part 2

NEW LIFE GIVEN TO THE SOCIETY
REORGANIZATION OF THE GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
CONSEQUENCE OF THE FINANCIAL LIQUIDATION – VISIT IN THE NORTH: TO ST. REMY

(NOVEMBER 1833 – APRIL 1835)

[1] The affair of Mlle de Maignol, August 3 and November 8, 1833.

On the outside, the political situation had become stronger. On the inside, the agitation of minds had quieted down. The moment, then, seemed to have come to resume the forward march. Father Chaminade took the reins with decision and firmness. From this month of November 1833, he adopted a series of measures tending toward a triple end: the strengthening of the interior of the Society, the exterior development of its works, and the progressive extinction of its debts.

To this effect, we see the Founder address circular Letters to the Society, reorganize the Council of the administration, resume the editing of the Constitutions, work at the formation of the religious. Then, in a general visitation, he understands from his own observations the actual condition of the works and enforces the strict observance of the regulations.

The first official acts in the matter of reorganization are dated from November 12, 1833.

One of them reconstitutes the General Administration, undone by the departure of Father Collineau and M. Auguste. Father Caillet replaces Father Collineau and Brother Mémain replaces Brother Auguste. Brother Mémain is preferred to Brother Clouzet, because, being on the spot, he can fulfill the functions of his charge with greater regularity. A second act on the same day calls for the signature and the regular transcription of engagements required by the Statutes. This formality of the civil order was indispensable, if one wanted to profit by the advantages attached to the legal recognition of November 16, 1825.

710 – TO FATHER CAILLET AND BROTHER MÉMAIN

Agen, November 12, 1833

NOMINATION OF TWO ASSISTANTS

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary.

In view of providing for the needs, experienced by our General Administration and due to the consecutive departure of two members of our Council and our Assistants in the functions of our Office, we have named and do name by these presents, as our First Assistant and member of the Council, Father George Caillet, replacing Father Collineau, who left the Society. We name equally the older Brother Mémain, third assistant, replacing Brother Brougnon-Perrière Jacques, called Auguste, who also left the Society.

Brother Charles Francis Bonnefoi, our particular Secretary, will make known to the persons named above, their respective nomination and will receive their acceptance.

Given in Agen, November 12, 1833, William Joseph Chaminade.

By order of the Superior General, Bonnefoi, particular secretary.

* * * *

711 – TO THE ENTIRE SOCIETY

Agen, November 12, 1833

ORDINANCE CONCERNING THE OFFICIAL INSCRIPTION OF ENGAGEMENTS IN THE SOCIETY.

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary.

Having taken cognizance of the registers of the Society and in particular of the one containing the admissions to the probation and the receptions of engagements of the subjects, such as is designated in Article 9 of the Statutes of the said Society of Mary;

Having seen that the acts of engagements were, for the most part, not drawn up such as it is ordered by article 6 of the Statutes, nor inscribed in due form, as it is prescribed in article 9, and that, besides, there are several complete omissions, without blaming the Secretary General of the Society, who would have numerous excuses to justify himself, be it on account of our long absences in the visitation of our establishments, and the labors that several of these call for, or on account of the illnesses and infirmities of the Secretary General himself: we have ordered and do order as follows:

1. that copies of the Statutes of the Society of Mary be drawn up and, in consequence, a general formula for engagements be established;

2. that these copies be sent to our diverse establishments, there to be signed by the members of the Society, properly so called;

3. that a register be opened and paged, after it has been identified by us at the beginning and at the end. Therein will be copied the Statutes of the Society of Mary, the general formula of engagements, and all the signatures inscribed that will be found at the bottom of the copies that have been returned;

4. These copies, signed by the Society's members, will be preserved as original and conclusive documents;

5. And henceforth, all the subjects who will be received in the central House will be inscribed in the form and terms prescribed by article 9 of the Statutes, reserving to ourselves to authorize two other houses of probation, with the advice of our Council, where engagements may be received and registered in due form as prescribed in article 10;

6. The present ordinance will be sent to all the Heads of establishments and also inscribed at the head of the new register.

Given at Agen, December 12, 1833, under our signature and the counter signature of our particular Secretary.

* * * *

712 – TO BROTHER PERRIGUEY, ST. REMY

Agen, November 13, 1833

I was sorry, my dear son, that I find myself so tardy in answering your letter of last September 9. I am surprised that you now have only one hundred francs of your legitimate title. Nevertheless, since everything is regulated in this way, I wrote Brother Clouzet that he permit you to go to your home to get this small sum and end the whole affair. I also told him to permit you to use this money to buy vestments for your chapel. You will see, with him, which vestments are most needed at present.

I also am inviting Brother Clouzet either to remove you from the linen-room as soon as he can or to bring it close to the door, if it is possible, because, in this way, this employment could be combined well with that of porter.

Become more and more regular, for you will find great peace of soul in the exact observance of our holy Rule.

You can join to the practice of the three Hail Marys that of pronouncing nine times the holy Name of Mary, Maria, in honor of the nine months that the most blessed Virgin had the happiness of carrying her divine Child in her chaste womb.

Receive, my dear son, my paternal blessing with my tender embraces.

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The following letter, among other questions, treats of great projects which were beginning to be worked out around Sion Vaudémont, in Lorraine, which the Society of Mary took part in.

The sanctuary of Our Lady of Sion Vaudémont, located at some miles to the south of Nancy and rendered famous by the novel of Barrès *the Inspired Hill*, was for centuries the most venerated place of pilgrimage in Lorraine.

It was through St. Remy and Father Lalanne that the Society of Mary was put in touch with the Baillard brothers, priests of the diocese of Nancy. The older one, Léopold, had been for some months pastor of Favières, at the foot of the hill of Sion. In a letter of the preceding October 26, Father Chaminade let Brother Clouzet know of the first offers of this priest, whose enterprising and daring character he was beginning to discover. "It is Father Lalanne who is carrying on the correspondence," he said, "and I wrote to him already two times and strongly enough, because I saw that a line of conduct was being adopted contrary to the one outlined by you, and which you have made out for yourself."

We do not have any further details on these first negotiations, but we can cite, with the support of Father Chaminade's sayings, "a curious advice to Christians and especially to ecclesiastical students"—a work, doubtless, by the pastor of Favières—approved by the bishop of Nancy on October 23 and recommended to the assistant pastors of Nancy, Verdun, Saint-Dié, and Metz.

After rather long considerations on the advantages of the diverse forms of religious life, the author of this Prospectus writes:

"In the actual state of society, at a time when everything is perishing by reason of the lack of instruction and of faith, is not the most useful work for the Church and the most efficacious means for saving souls to enlighten them and to have them act according to the Spirit of God, before they have been blinded and paralyzed by the spirit of the world? Jesus must come to the little children. The work of education has been undertaken under a new approach by a Society devoted to God under the auspices of the name of Mary. It has principally in view to fill the void that exists between the ordinary teaching of the little schools and the ordinary teaching in the colleges. . . .

"The aspirants will be temporarily sent to an establishment where they will be trained, as much for religious life as for the branch of education in question. If their number is considerable, a preparatory house will be established as soon as possible, with the aid of Providence, in some central spot in Lorraine and under the direction of the said Society. Negotiations have been begun for the purchase of a place which would be of interest to the whole country. These will be continued, as soon as some vocations have manifested themselves and as soon as charity, awakened by Christian zeal, has seemed to assure some pecuniary resources."

Although Father Chaminade had, from the start, taken a lively interest in this project—we see from his correspondence—it was only after several years that the relations between himself and the Baillard brothers became more consistent, without otherwise ending in the hoped-for result. (See Letters 901 and 957.)

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713 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, November 16, 1833

My dear son, I am answering your letter of November 6 without delay. Each day, I await the results of your interview with Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine regarding the temporal administration of the secondary boarding school. I recently wrote you about what would have to be done if the reopening of classes at the château left much to be desired. You do not speak about it. Doubtless, one of these gentlemen has taken it upon himself to write to me about it.

You think, my dear son, that, in the course of this year, you will be able to give me six to seven thousand francs. I am hoping that you will be able to do even better. If God is served and well served, the blessing of the Lord will be upon St. Remy. . . .

The answer which Father Bardenet gave you, when you spoke to him about Sion, suggests that you have not correctly placed the matter before him. Father Bardenet had charged you with the purchase of an old community in the Vosges Department[1]; we let him know that we could make an establishment in Sion, in Lorraine, rather than in the Vosges, and in fact there are great reasons for preferring Sion, as the first among those you have looked at. Would Father Bardenet, on his side, have reasons to prefer the Vosges region? In his answer, he brought in Marast, which was quite out of place, as the establishment in Sion will be of a nature altogether different from that of Marast.

Sion must be populated with ecclesiastical and lay novices, four bishops having authorized and even invited young men with a religious vocation to join the Society of Mary, since the Society of Mary promises to work in these four dioceses. But it cannot do so for lack of subjects. We have offered the house in the Vosges region. It has been claimed, and rightly so, that Sion would be more central, of easier access, but, above all, more venerated in all Lorraine. The Society would, so to say, make it go back on its throne. Even Marast would be better off because of it; for we might perhaps, in a short time, take away from Sion some good subjects to give new life to this establishment. You know, my dear son, that I have this in mind. I called your attention to it very specially in one of my last visits to St. Remy. Doubtless money will be needed; but if Providence desires this move, we can have confidence that Providence will procure for us what is necessary.

[1] See Letter 688.

I am surprised that Father Bardenet should have spoken to you about the ten thousand francs which the Society was to reckon on after his death. As I spoke to him about it at the beginning of this Revolution, when we also talked about the convent of Arbois, he wrote to the Superioress General that he had made all his arrangements and that we should all remain silent about the matter. You must then have explained yourself, my dear son, to Father Bardenet, or he himself by this time may have been very tired from other affairs. Let him have the facts exactly as they are.

We are not the first to think of buying an old community in the Vosges region. If after having represented everything with frankness and sincerity, Father Bardenet answers negatively, say nothing further. Do not insist. It could be possible that God wanted two establishments, one in the Vosges region and the other in the Meurthe. Furthermore, we plan on devoting ourselves to Lorraine and the neighboring Department only because we sincerely believe that such is the will of God. Four bishops and their grand vicars believe in divine inspiration. I am not speaking of a great number of pastors of superior merit. The good God will do what is pleasing to him. We are but very poor instruments in his hands.

If you are to be employed in the purchase of Sion, I shall let you know in greater detail how this work has developed. Its history is very edifying.

If you have no occasion to see Father Bardenet, my dear son, you might transcribe for him this entire part of my answer, in addition to what you tell me in your letter.

I am sending you a little answer for Brother Mérigot. His letter made me think that Brother Gaussens, Head of Instruction, understands very little of what this Office calls for. By his letter, Brother Mérigot makes an avowal of faults that can be the result only of crass ignorance. How could it be thus, if each religious was instructed at least in all that is essential to religion and particularly in all that concerns morality? Without doubt, Brother Gaussens thinks that his Office takes in only what concerns human instruction or whatever concerns human and natural knowledge. Assuredly, this last part must not be neglected, but religious instruction is much more directly the object of this office. See to it, my dear son!

Brother Mémain is answering you on the subject of Brother Victor Morel's replacement.[1]

May the Lord, my dear son, accord you his light and his peace. With much courage, I am embracing you very tenderly.

* * * *

[1] Who died on November 6, 1832.

Brother Mérigot. On September 19, 1826, Brother David Monier, Secretary of the Council, wrote from Bordeaux to Good Father Chaminade, then in Alsace: “A certain M. Mérigot, of the Haut-Pays, is bringing you his son, so that you may direct him according to the views of God. Young Peter Mérigot, born in 1812 in a modest village of the Agenais, made his First Communion and his novitiate at St. Laurent, under the direction of the venerated Founder, whom he always looked upon as a saint. He was then employed, at first in manual work, then in teaching in various communities in the east of France, particularly in Colmar, where he taught a little class for twelve years; then in Fumay, where he founded a school and lived out his life.

In Colmar, Brother Mérigot knew how to make himself loved by all. The mothers of families looked upon it as a favor to be allowed sometimes to assist at the charming instructions that he gave to the very small children. In community he was the poorest of all, wearing in the house a Prince Albert coat worn to shreds. By his jovial character, when the Brothers were occupied during recreation in making pens out of duck feathers for the use of their pupils, he kept everyone around him in an honest cheerfulness, contributing thus to the family spirit.

In Fumay, he quickly won the hearts of the entire population, and he became the counselor and friend of all. Nothing important was done in Fumay without his having been consulted; and often, in some delicate affair, the simple words: “Papa Mérigot said so,” ended all discussion. He was loved by all, poor and rich, little and great. It sufficed to speak to him only once to be won. Such happened to a man of high rank who detested the Brothers, to the extent of turning his back on them whenever he met them. One day Brother Mérigot had occasion to speak with him. That was enough—from that day on, he became and remained the great friend of the school. Brother Mérigot was no less cherished by his Brothers. While conforming exactly to the Rule, as he had been trained in the school of the Founder, he was ingenious in making himself agreeable to them, foreseeing their needs, saving them the trouble of asking. Knowing how to make them understand and admit their wrongs and avoiding every sort of humiliating reproach, he showed a confidence in them that they returned a hundredfold, sustaining and defending them finally “as a hen will defend and protect her chicks,” as one of the Brothers who was then living under his direction naively put it. His humility was profound, and in the midst of his Brothers, he wanted no other distinction than being less well treated than they. When he was suffering, which was often, he sought to hide it, and if the confrères noticed, it was by what he did to appear more gay and effusive. It was especially in their maladies and their infirmities that, following the recommendations of the Rule, his solicitude and charity shone forth among his Brothers. For one of them, Brother Bleicher, having been seriously ill for several weeks, Brother Mérigot took the latter’s pupils with his own. After the class was over, he remained at his bedside, watching over him as a Sister of Charity would have done, not wanting to leave this care to anyone else. And when someone tried to draw him away by reason of fatigue, he would answer, “Does a mother grow tired taking car of her child?” The Brother recovered, and the director had a celebration in his honor; but soon after, worn out, Brother Mérigot fell sick himself and had to go to bed. Eight days later, on January 13, 1866, he

rendered his soul to God. It was an occasion for public mourning in the city of Fumay. Better than that, there were conversions in the presence of his mortal remains, and the entire population felt it an honor to put up a monument at the tomb of the beloved director. Father Loetsch, Provincial of Alsace, in a circular letter addressed to the Province, announced the death in these terms: "The good God has just called to himself one of our best religious: Brother Mérigot, Director of our school at Fumay, succumbed to an illness which he had drawn upon himself by an excess of work and by the trouble he had taken in caring for one of his sick Brothers. Here we have a beautiful example of devotedness which the good God will know how to reward worthily. Like him, we have had the honor of consecrating ourselves to the service of Mary. Let us often renew the resolution of persevering in it until death, in spite of all the trials and all the difficulties that we may meet on the way."

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With Father Lalanne, now residing in Bordeaux, Father Chaminade talks about the situation.

714 – TO FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Agen, November 18, 1833

Brother Mémain, my dear son, will give you the duplicate copy of the deed drawn up with M. Auguste. This document seems to me full of wisdom on our part.[1] Brother Mémain will close the account-books as of last October 31. I would have desired that, along with you, he had closed the current accounts with the principal suppliers, and that he had resubmitted them on reasonable conditions or changed them entirely. It is preferable to inconvenience oneself a great deal in order to go elsewhere and stop this disorder.[2] I think there are sufficient means to bring this about. On the other hand, if it can't be done in every case, it will be possible at least for the most urgent.

Concerning the formula for engagements, I can correct it for the first members of the Society. My principal purpose in consulting you in this matter is to know if the general idea is correct and if the way of effecting it has anything contrary to the laws. In great evils, remedies must be found that are often daring. I always keep the same confidence. We shall triumph over the numerous difficulties that surround us, almost from very quarter, with the protection of our august Mother and Patroness.

Father Fontaine hasn't the latitude to hold to the spirit of the regulations. In accord with Brother Clouzet, he must adopt a regulation that they can easily follow in the entire

[1] See Letter 709 and the one following.
[2] The suppliers, serving the boarding school on credit, made use of this fact, as often happens in similar cases, to impose abusive conditions.

accomplishment of what you have shown them. That is what they understood, and Brother Clouzet has just written me that he will shortly send me the articles, in order to submit them for my approbation. When I receive them, I shall send them over to you. You know that there is some imprudence in squeezing the eel too tightly.

Would an early appearance on your part be advantageous to the secondary boarding school? That is something that seems very obscure to me. Your visit could even produce an altogether different effect. It would be quite another thing if you were not to leave soon again. Furthermore, wouldn't the visit stir up the Academy? There has already been much murmuring. Why not leave minds in suspense? My answer to Father Fontaine was in this sense. You say, you have made a promise to reappear at St. Remy from the eighth to the twenty-fourth of next December. Father Fontaine repeated it in front of thousands of persons, but who accepted it? And it is not an appearance that would influence the public mind. It is greatly to be presumed that it would produce an altogether contrary effect, and it would seem to me far more prudent to keep everyone in suspense. Nevertheless, I am deciding nothing. I am only reasoning on what I know and see.

I have as yet received no news regarding the reopening of classes in the secondary boarding school. Brother Clouzet tells me only that forty-one pupils have entered the primary boarding school and that seven or eight more are expected. I wrote to him, as I told you, of the necessity of putting several of his youngest pupils in the secondary boarding school, in case there was a great defection from the secondary boarding school. He had not yet received that letter when he wrote me his last one. Brother Clouzet adds that he is practically assured of being able to give me six or seven thousand francs in the course of the school year. I answered nothing else to this news except that he would be able to send to me much greater sums if God is really served at St. Remy, because then the blessings of the Lord will be on this establishment.

As yet, I don't really know what to say about the retreat which the Confrères of the Immaculate Conception propose that you should give them.[1] Let us ask the Lord for a ray of his wisdom, that he may make known to us what decision to make.

Your reopening of classes is not as poor as it may have seemed to you. Surely there will be progress, even if it is slow, and so do not worry because of it. For the time being, we should not draw any other conclusion than a great rigor in the expenses. Let us act in harmony and all will be well, I hope. Let us try to live up to the faith of Abraham and believe, even against all hope. Furthermore, we are really working for God and so may his holy will be accomplished! Never keep yourself, my dear son, in your own presence alone, but always at the same time in the Presence of God, *nec alterum ab altero dividas*. When we thus see what is and what might have been, our reflections and our memories may be bitter, but nonetheless, bear the consolations of hope.

[1] The Sodality, suppressed at the time of the Revolution of 1830, had just been reconstituted at the Madeleine under the name of Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception.

I was dictating this letter when I received the unexpected visit of M. de Rainneville.[2] He had left for Bordeaux. At his request, I gave him your address. Show him what you think might interest him. He will spend the night in Bordeaux. That is about as long as he will stay in this city. He is going to Paris with his family and hopes to spend the winter there in peace and tranquility. I did not take his Paris address. It is possible that it might become useful to us. Take it and send it on to me.

May the peace of the Lord, my dear son, be always with you!

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715 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, December 2 and 3, 1833

One after the other, my dear son, I received your two letters of November 22 and 25. By the time this one gets to you, you will have learned that Father Lalanne is going to make his visit to St. Remy. He is to stay there only four or five days. He is to leave tomorrow, the third of the current month, at ten in the evening. He is moved by the very best of intentions. When all is done, his absence should not last more than two weeks. Nevertheless, I would like him to make a rapid visit in Lorraine to put new life into the interesting work in question there.[1] He can talk about it with you and find out what Father Bardenet thinks about it. I shall write him a few words about this subject, which we have already spoken about. I shall leave to his wisdom, the length of this journey, according him an additional week of absence if he considers it necessary. I need not tell you to close your eyes and ears to certain incidents or words which might be displeasing to you. On every occasion, let us preserve charity and union. Little by little, you see that, without any conflict, all things get into proper running order.

By my ordinance of last November 12, I named as my First Assistant, General Head of Zeal Father Caillet, replacing Father Collineau; and the older Brother Mémain, as my Third Assistant, Head of Work. I am giving information about this as of several other particular matters in my circular letter bearing this date. Father Lalanne will send it on to you or rather will give you a copy of it. It is included in the package sent to his address, as are several other papers which I shall speak to you about.

A second order, also dated November 12, which especially prescribes a new register, according to article 9 of our Statutes, and in which are to be entered the inscriptions of all postulants at the beginning of their probation period, all the temporary

[2] With whom Father Chaminade had negotiated, before the Revolution of July, an agricultural foundation in Amiens. See Letter 681.

[1] The work of Sion-Vaudémont.

and final engagements up to the present day, a formula for definitive engagements, a second formula for three-year engagements and a note of information for the signatures of the novices.

I was the first to sign the formula for the definitive engagements. Everyone in Agen was pleased to sign the one or the other formula. I think that, in both communities of St. Remy, no one will cause any difficulty about signing, as such a refusal could easily do great harm, and we could even no longer consider the place as belonging to the Society. . . .

It is very evident that another priest has been needed at St. Remy since the beginning of October. Two were to go there. At least, that was the well-founded hope. One was a pastor from the Vesoul region, and the other from Bordeaux, a former Missionary of France. Perhaps the latter found it more difficult than he thought to replace himself in a large parish in which he was assistant. I shall shortly write him to find out the real reasons for this delay.

I had written Father Chevaux that for some time there would not be at St. Remy a special Novitiate for ecclesiastics, that the ecclesiastics who would present themselves to enter the Society would stay there as postulants first. If they possessed what is necessary to be admitted to the novitiate, they would then be directed to Bordeaux. Father Chevaux has already too much to do in the lay novitiate of your community, so much so that you will probably have to give him some help.

You must not think of M. Auguste at all. He is to stay all this year at the St. Marie Boarding School, because he has the love and the confidence of a certain number of the pupils and of their parents and also because only little by little can we pay the debts he has contracted, as he says, for the Society.

As regards a superior who has formal authority over the two communities:

1. we have no subjects;

2. I don't think that the right moment for it has arrived yet. The shake-up has been too severe for us to stop it with one sure stroke.

Brother Perrin arrived tonight. The one you call Gérôme, cook and musician for all kinds of serpents,[1] came to Agen. I kept him awhile, to try him and to feel him out. During the ten to twelve days now that he has been here, he has conducted himself well enough.

Brother Chopart had, in fact, spoken to me about the needs of his father. You know that, formerly, you were to give him some help; but the good man, having been assisted by one of his relatives, had the discretion of not accepting the thirty francs you offered him.

[1] The serpent is an old musical instrument, used to accompany the singing in church.

This relative is now dead, and his son told me that his father was reduced to dire straits. You could first give him the thirty francs offered, with a promise to give him something additional after some time. In the meantime, you could take measures to find out his most urgent needs. He seemed to me to a very good man.

By this mail, my dear son, I am answering M. Travernier d'Arinthod, to tell him we cannot accept the establishment he proposes because of a lack of subjects.[2]

I am not surprised that Father Chevaux should be very tired. He really has too much work. You must try to help him, at least for the confessions, until we can place some priests of the Society at St. Remy. Would it not be possible to have some good priest, some good pastor in the neighborhood, who would come to hear the confessions of the boarders? If two could be found, each one could have his boarding school pupils confess. For example, the pastor of the very village of St. Remy and the pastor of Menoux.[2] But you should have consideration for them. This word must suffice to express what would have to be done. Arrange the matter with Father Chevaux, with Father Lalanne and even with Father Fontaine. I shall myself say a word about it to Father Lalanne. I shall speak of it to these gentlemen, when writing to them. It seems certain that you will lose Father Chevaux if he is not relieved; and besides, how could he do good work, with all his time and all his strength absorbed? The pupils' confessions will profit by being more free in consequence.

You tell me, my dear son, that the older Curot has asked for two hundred forty francs a year. We must promise them to him and even assure them, provided he no longer returns to St. Remy. But what guarantee can he give you? Take all sorts of precautions! When one has made a mistake, he must, as we say, put up with the consequences. Father Curot was admitted to St. Remy without the preliminary examination called for by our admissions procedure. The matters on which all candidates are to be examined are explained at length in the Constitutions. Take older Curot, for quite a while before this had been insane and tied up . . . It would have been easy to discover that the son was a little cracked. He gave me a lot of worry during the six months I had him in Agen. Well, well . . .

Pray for the success of the interesting work in Sion. I am embracing you tenderly.

Here is the text of the documents mentioned in the preceding letter.

We, the undersigned, after having maturely examined the general interest which youth is expected to draw from the institution of the Society of Mary, and the particular and personal interest of a similar devotedness; after having well read and examined the statutes of the said Society, approved by royal ordinance under date of November 16, 1825, and after also having taken notice of the law of the civil code in the Statutes, we take the

[2] Arinthod, little town in the Jura region. Later, the Society accepted, at two different times, the direction of the communal school, in 1840 to 1842, and from 1857 till 1873.
[2] Neighboring village of St. Remy.

definite engagement of union and attachment to said Society, according to the spirit and the rules of the universal society, indicated in the civil Code tit. 9, ch. 2, sect. 1; we promise that, if we withdraw of our own free will, or if the Society does not want to keep us, we would not lay claim to anything, either for service or for industry, neither use of furniture which we might have brought along nor enjoyment of our immovables, present or future, wanting that everything remain the property of the work undertaken. Our devotedness is entire, just as is our confidence in the Society. Furthermore, we promise to conform ourselves in everything to the Regulations and to require their observance if we happen to be raised to some higher office. In testimony whereof, we have signed.

We the undersigned, of mature age or with the consent of our parents, after the customary tests, have promised to observe during three years, in their form and content, the Statutes of the Society of Mary, approved by royal ordinance, dated November 16, 1825, and to exactly follow the regulations and customs of the said Society, without any prejudice to the conventions or written promises which we might have made to enter into a society, whether for tuition, clothing, or furniture. In testimony whereof, we have signed.

The postulants admitted to the probation will be inscribed by name, forename, date of birth, origin of father and mother, qualities of these, living or dead, number of their brothers and sisters, their correspondents, their place of birth (designated by Commune, Canton, civil district, Department), the condition of their admission, their tuition, school dress, upkeep, date of their entry, baptismal certificate, and certificate of birth.

If it was considered good to admit to probation gratuitously a postulant not yet of mature age, his parents would have to promise in writing never to try to turn him aside from his state, directly nor indirectly, and to permit him to take, with the Society, such engagements as he might desire, and especially to take the engagement of serving primary teaching during ten years.

And here is the Circular joined to these documents. It announces the nomination of new assistants, the creation of central secondary houses, a prelude to the organization of provinces in the Society, and gives directions for the discovery and admission of the postulants.

716 – CIRCULAR TO THE ENTIRE SOCIETY

Agen, December 4, 1833

CIRCULAR OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY, ADDRESSED TO ALL THE SUPERIORS OF THE HOUSES OR ESTABLISHMENTS AND BY THEM, TO HIS DEAR CHILDREN, SUBJECT TO THEM.

For a long time, my dear children, your old Father has wanted to break the silence! What sorrows he has had to endure! The withdrawal of two of the principal leaders of the Society has deeply afflicted his paternal heart—not for fear that the Society was in peril because of their desertion—but because of the tender affection he had for them. They had been with us so long! Father Collineau and Brother Auguste were among the first members of the Society. They had renewed their holy engagements for so many years and each time they had strengthened them by the most sacred of oaths! During all the time that the storm lasted, I thought it my duty to extend the veil of charity and of friendship on all that was happening and to support the weight of my affliction alone, but if there is a time to remain silent, there is also a time to speak. My unshakable devotedness to the Society and my tender attachment to this family which is so precious and destined to accomplish so much good did not permit me to leave the Society deprived of two of its principal Heads for a long time. By my ordinance of last November 12, I have named as my first Assistant, Head of Zeal, my respectable son Father Caillet, replacing Father Collineau; and as my third Assistant, Head of Temporalities, the older Brother Mémain, one of our oldest members. And since the General Secretary of the Society, Brother David Monier, is frequently afflicted with various infirmities, I have temporarily named a particular secretary, to keep in order all the writing of the Society to accompany me wherever I happen to be. It is Brother Bonnefoi, whose zeal, exactitude, and devotedness you all know. In this way, my dear children, the organization of the General Administration is not being interrupted. It will surely be more active through the work of these Heads.

You are all surprised, without doubt, that I do not speak about our excellent Head of Instruction, the second Assistant, Father Lalanne. The fact is that he is being kept at his functions. Obstacles do no more than redouble his courage. See how, by his indefatigable zeal, instruction of all kinds and grades has been lifted to great perfection!

The information I am giving you, my dear children, about my three Assistants, or general Heads of Zeal, Instruction, and Temporalities, must reassure you as to the work they will put into the fulfillment of their functions. Each one of them is going to be provided with the necessary instructions, so that all the members of the Society may make rapid progress in the spirit of the holy state they have embraced or are embracing. These instructions will all be drawn from our Constitutions. But what use would be the most excellent Constitutions if they were not committed to practice? Oh, my dear children, how I wish that, by your regularity and your good spirit, you all become, as it were, living Constitutions!

You may be afraid, my dear children, that your leaders are overcharged with work and unable to fulfill with ease their important functions, for they are already very much occupied—Father Lalanne at the St. Marie Boarding School and Brother Mémain in Agen. I

have seen a way of relieving them, without any prejudice to their general functions. I am authorizing two other houses of probation. The establishments formed or to be formed in a large city district will be connected to these houses by way of filiation. I shall give the superiors of these houses, as well as their principal Heads, a great extension of authority. The houses that I propose to erect as secondary central houses are St. Remy, in the Department of the Upper Saône, and St. Hippolyte in the Department of the Upper-Rhine. As regards St. Hippolyte, it will surely be only temporary, because Ebersmunster, in the Department of the Lower-Rhine, would be far better suited than St. Hippolyte to become the central house of the ancient Province of Alsace, if we succeed in equipping it properly. Only the German language is spoken in Alsace.

If God continues to bless the Society of Mary, we shall find ourselves obliged to establish other central houses. From all sides we are being offered establishments for primary teaching. In entire dioceses, the teaching is being offered to us. If we had more subjects, the Society could spread very rapidly. It is with regret that I find myself always forced to postpone indefinitely the formation of these establishments, which, for the most part, are found in localities where the populations have the very best intentions. The harvest indeed is great, but the laborers to gather it in are too few. Pray, my dear children, that the Master of the harvest himself send laborers into his fields!

It is not proper for us to receive any subjects who are not sent by the Lord of this harvest. It is for this reason that I shall soon send instructions to all the Heads of our establishments, so that they may the more easily distinguish the signs of a divine vocation. But you, my dear children, should redouble your zeal for the maintenance and increase of the work which the Lord has inspired in us and to which we have entirely devoted ourselves. You will be able to find, among your numerous pupils, very good subjects whom God would call, but who, like Samuel, do not yet know the voice of the Lord. The Society is still too handicapped to receive them gratuitously as potulants or novices. Nevertheless, if you would find someone who would make up by extraordinary qualities for what they lack in economic terms, we would accept them, confiding ourselves to Divine Providence.

What things I still have to say to you, my dear children! I would like, above all, to speak to you about our august Mother and Patroness, but for now I shall stop here while imploring for you all the blessings of the Lord!

* * * *

717 – TO FATHER CAILLET, BORDEAUX

Agen, December 7, 1833

. . . Since the Revolution, I no longer send any list of those who reach the age of requisition; since some ordinances have changed this.[1] For four years and including this past year, our young men are following the lead of the other schoolteachers, and they have changed again this year. Since the last law regarding primary teaching, the examinations are taken in public and are very difficult. One of our religious, who is subject to the requisition, has just failed in the lower degree. Of about fifteen who have just passed their examinations, only two have obtained a certificate—one of ours, Brother Marandet, and an outsider. There is only one committee of examiners in each Department. In a few words, I am telling you that, since it is already so late to make suitable arrangements for Brothers Rohmer and Dumont through the ten year pledges, I saw no better way than to have them take the soutane and move to the Grand Seminary. I don't think that you are risking anything by awaiting Father Lalanne's return, in order to consult with him.

If, within a few days, no money comes in—and I am not expecting any in particular—I shall send you a little money-order for a thousand francs on the little deposit, already so much depleted, which is in Brother Auguste's hands.

I shall pray and have others pray for the success of your retreat. When your nomination has become sufficiently known in our various establishments, I shall send you a little instruction on the manner of exercising your functions of zeal.

Accept, my dear son, my tender embraces in the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

* * * *

Brother Mémain, Director of the schools of Agen, is sent to Bordeaux to oversee the financial liquidation of the St. Marie Boarding School there. Father Chaminade designates one of the religious of Agen to replace him in this city during his absence.

718 – TO BROTHER PIMOUGUET, AGEN

Agen, December 24, 1833

My dear son—The older Brother Mémain must be absent soon, and I have chosen you to replace him during all the time he will be away as Head of the primary schools of Agen. The exercise of your new functions will begin at the moment of his departure and will cease upon his arrival.

You know that every Head of an establishment, according to our fundamental Constitutions, is at the same time Head of Zeal, Head of Instruction and Head of Temporalities; that is to say, that his solicitude must bear upon all the facets of his

[1] The disposition of the law, exempting the religious from military service, by means of a pledge to serve in teaching for ten years.

administration. The discretionary power accorded to all Heads will not exist whenever I am present. Each one of the particular Heads or Heads of classes will continue in his functions as in the past. No change of any kind can take place without my participation.

I hope that you will give to everyone the example of regularity and that you will lead in all the exercises in common, of whatever kind they may be, even of those that are made in common in a determined place during free time, whether of study or of recreation.

This present nomination will be put into the hands of the older Brother Mémain to be announced to the assembled community and given to Brother Pimouguet, who, according to custom, will immediately pronounce the formula: Fiat. . . . All will answer by repeating the same formula.

* * * *

Father Lalanne has made his trip to St. Remy and has returned to Bordeaux. The following letter brings us some feedback of this trip.

719 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, December 31, 1833

My dear son—Father Lalanne arrived in Bordeaux on Christmas Eve. He immediately gave me an account of his visit to St. Remy.

Whatever is easily observable in this establishment is and seems beautiful. What pertains more to the interior is not quite the same.

I have been much moved by Brother Gaussens' illness. Father Lalanne has done well in delaying Brother Bouvert's departure. Take good care of all your sick ones and in particular of Brother Athias. It is said that the latter is in such bad shape only because of overwork.

Father Bardenet has, in fact, written to me. In spite of all his kindness and courtesy, he seems to continue a little ill-humor in the discussions he had with you concerning his yearly income of twelve thousand francs. I shall not delay in answering him. He did not mention the fine quarters you tell me he had reserved for me in the beautiful abbey of Acey.

I am surprised, my dear son, that, among your community there were a great many complaints regarding the signing of the pledges. If I had placed these before them directly, there is great likelihood that I would not have received their signatures. In fact,

1. they signed nothing to which they were not already engaged by reason of their vows;

2. the pledges they signed are less than those they have contracted by their vows;

3. it is not true that they alone take engagements and that the Society, on its side, takes none. On the contrary, the Society takes on such as are a lot stronger. By reason of the civil law, subjects may withdraw at will, giving six months advance notice. The Superior of the Society, on the contrary, may not dismiss them without the deliberation and consent of his Council. For this, a serious fault is needed, deliberate and recognized as such. A real judgment and condemnation are needed. The profession of vows not being recognized by the law, it was necessary to draw up a formula of engagements which could be recognized by the law. That is what was ordered by the Statutes of the Society, approved by royal ordinance. There is therefore an advantage both for the members of the Society and for the Society itself. The condition of the members is assured by the law, and the Society has a little less to fear from the inconstancy of the human mind and from the temptations of the enemy of salvation. . . . I presume that your young people have not had the time to think and reflect after you read both my ordinance and my circular. It may even be that they lack knowledge of the Statutes of the Society, as approved by the Government. I have not as yet sent to St. Remy a copy of the said Statutes, thinking that you already had one.

Father Lalanne remarks to me that you did not think it prudent to read that part of my circular where there is question of Father Collineau and Brother Auguste. Anyhow, he makes no reflection at all as regards this act of prudence.

Father Lalanne gave a full account of the matter to the community of the château, and there seems to be no evidence that anyone was scandalized. A great number of establishments have manifested contrary sentiments. They have sought to console me in my sorrow over the desertion of these principal members, and they expressed new sentiments of attachment and fidelity to the Society. Some have drawn the conclusion that they should not trust their good sentiments but rather keep constant watch over themselves. In general, all were pleased that I frankly informed them of the good as well as of the bad in the Society and of the precautions that were being taken to increase its fervor. I think, my dear son, that, when your religious finally learn the disturbing news—for in the end they will certainly learn of it—they will be even more shaken, especially after you tried to hide it from them. But then they will not have the same opportunity to strengthen themselves.

My dear son, you have returned to me the engagement sheets properly signed, but you do not mention either the postulants or the novices. Concerning the novices, if you have any, you would have to fill in the inscription notes that I sent you, along with the conditions, if there were any. Perhaps Father Lalanne has not sent them over to you. He himself has returned only two engagement sheets to me. You should see Father Chevaux, who received all these papers from Father Lalanne, and ask him for them. By our Statutes, admission to probation must be indicated in the great register in which the engagements are recorded. I can make St. Remy a secondary central house only after he himself has

regularized it, and then you will have to have a register altogether like the one in the central house. Regular registers will be opened, starting with tomorrow, January 1, 1834, following my order of November 12, 1833.

I thank you, my dear son, for the earnest invitation you gave me to live at St. Remy. The Rothéa brothers have multiplied invitations for the fine house in Ebersmunster. Several of our friends, of elevated rank, wish that I choose to live in Paris. The fact is that I shall always keep the house in Bordeaux as the central House, until the good God deigns to let me know his will in this regard. As regards my personal taste, I find very little, if any, of it in myself. All the habitations on the earth, the most beautiful and the most commodious, seem to me but places of real exile.

By your last letter you seemed in bad humor because of the bitter complaints of Brother Galliot, and especially because he gave you reason to believe that I shared his sentiments. I censured Brother Galliot because of the iniquitous judgments he made against you, and I really believe him to be blameworthy. All I could say was that, although there had already been a great reform at St. Remy, there might remain something to be done; and this is perfectly true. The Heads of the establishments must use great frankness and loyalty among themselves.

I have the intention, my dear son, to work constantly at the consolidation and regularization of the Society of Mary and, as much as possible, at the purification of each one of its members. There will soon appear a second circular on the first of the year. In the meantime, receive my great wishes for your sanctification and also my most tender embraces.

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720 – CIRCULAR FOR THE ENTIRE SOCIETY

Agen, January 4, 1834

CIRCULAR OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY TO ALL THE SUPERIORS OR HEADS OF ESTABLISHMENTS AND TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR 1834.

I wrote to you, my dear children, a short time ago. Nevertheless, I cannot refrain from writing again at the time of this New Year. When I consider what has just taken place or what you promise me for the future, everything urges me to again manifest to you my tender sentiments and I would almost say my gratitude, because, in the end, it is you alone who can console me and make me happy, at least here upon earth.

My last circular has been generally understood by your heart. You have felt that your Father was requiring no new engagement, that in the formulas that were put before you to

sign, there was only a matter of regularization with the civil authority, in which you are all interested. Thus, most of the sheets sent have been returned, even with the most ardent expressions of love for my humble person, of a most inviolable devotedness to the Society of Mary, and of entire fidelity in the accomplishment of the duties which it prescribes for us. All the later letters that reached me before the first of the year or on the day itself have only gone further in this same direction.

What a happy year you encourage me to look forward to, and what a beautiful future for the Society of Mary! I willingly grant, my dear children, that we shall prosper, if we always remain intimately united and if you are all really regular. All admit that the Society of Mary is visibly a work of God, especially placed under the august patronage of his most holy Mother. It can be destroyed only by your own hands, and by your hands united. But, what a crime even to try to cast a slur on such a work! No, this cannot be! If we have suffered because of the desertion of some members of the Society, we have reasons for great consolation. A far greater number of postulants of all classes are presenting themselves, the older ones are becoming stronger, and nearly all seem to be taking on a new life. It must be that scandals come, says our divine Master, a sentence difficult at first to understand. But, without wanting to sound the impenetrable judgments of God, do we not seem to see here an application of that sentence in the good which God draws from it and by the greater strength acquired by the good?

I would desire, my dear children, to give you a rapid sketch of the progress and improvements of our dear Society, but I am reserving this satisfaction for a later date. On the other hand, you would hardly be able to perceive this progress unless you had seen a picture of the situation at its beginnings.

It is not only the general Heads, nor even the particular Heads—it is all of you, as one body, who are my cooperators in this work of God. Altogether you form one real Society, first in the order of religion, but also in the civil order, by reason of the excellence of its object; and it is in view of this end that the Government has approved it. It is also with this end in view that you make such generous commitments upon entering. These commitments suppose a very complete devotedness to the work undertaken. They are, so to say, the annihilation of the egotism that afflicts society all over the world.

Let us all work together, my dear children, in perfecting our Society. An enemy has sown cockle in the field of the Father of the family. In proportion as the Society has increased, as she had formed diverse establishments, other maxims and other customs, by reason of these maxims, have been introduced in some establishments.

There is complaint, for example, and with reason, that there isn't real uniformity in the costume. I am saying that there is reason for this complaint, because this uniformity is of the greatest interest for the integrity of the members. If these abuses were allowed to continue, you would soon see the Society itself degenerate. My dear children, let us hold firm to our old maxims, in order to come back peaceably to the uniformity primitively

adopted. In consequence, I call upon all Heads of establishments to send me the detailed description of the costume of the members who compose their houses. This description will bring out the difference they would find between their actual costume and what they might know about the primitive costume. They will then settle the time for the replacement of each object of the costume or uniform; but, to this effect, they will consult their confrères. If there are some who do not think as they do, they will mention these particular opinions. With all this information, it will be easy for me, my dear children, to know the truth, and to arrange, once and for all time, for the greatest uniformity possible, except in some circumstances which might ask of me to grant some exceptional permissions. But these exceptions would but confirm the rule, as is said proverbially.[1]

I wish to live, my dear children, but for you. I wish to bring you to Jesus Christ and to his august Mother. I have consecrated to you and I am consecrating to you anew, at the time of this New Year, all my labors and every moment of my life. I desire that there be among us an entire correspondence, that we make up but one same family, intimately united by reciprocal sentiments of friendship and religion. In consecrating to you my whole life and my very existence, I know that I am not really giving much time to you, as I am already quite old, and even more so than several of you think. But, is this not a reason, my dear children, to hasten my own perfection and even to extend the work of God, the Society of Mary? What might we not be able to do under the auspices of our august Mother and Patroness! To what degree of virtue might we not arrive!

It is in the most entire confidence in her powerful protection that I am giving you, my dear children, in this New Year, and with the fullness of my heart, my paternal benediction.

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As a result of the recommendations of the preceding Circular, Father Caillet recorded the detailed description of the costume of their community by Brothers Joncas and Geneviève, tailors of St. Laurent. The principal passages of this document will be read with interest (January 30, 1834).

Description of the first costume of the Society of Mary.

The Prince Albert, or long coat, chestnut brown in color, extended down to about the width of a hand above the ankle. A sash, about four inches wide, a little longer: they overlap about four inches in front—it is quite ample…the buttons are of the same cloth as the coat; there are pockets in the folds of the sash…the collar, worn up or buttoned-down according to the occasion, forms an M front and back—it is more than two and a half inches wide at the neck, buttoning in the rear . . . the sleeves are lined with cuffs which double over about five inches . . . the pants black, extending to the ankles, without a crease in the lower part,

[1] See, on this point, the most complete expression of the thought of the Founder in the letter of April 15, 1835, to the Alsatian Heads of Houses.

rather ample, not following the shape of the calf . . . the vest black, perfectly straight in front, buttoning rather high; the collar straight with clasps at the ends.

Then follow details about workclothes, shoes, and hats.

Father Caillet completes the description by writing about the costume of priests and clerics at the Madeleine:

A cassock to the ground but without pleats (at least noticeable ones) on the shoulders and without leg-of-mutton sleeves, but simple. The top part of the cassock is gathered in the middle by one or two clasps so that the corners do not spoil the clerical band as when there are two rather high buttons. One wears a woolen sash the width of a hand for priests, a little less wide for those who are not yet priests. This costume is what is worn by the priests of Bordeaux.

* * * *

Nevertheless, at St. Remy a conflict arose between a pupil and Brother Burnet, professor of rhetoric. The latter, in an excited moment, slapped one of his pupils in the face, and the latter retorted by hitting his teacher. The teacher, irritated, told the director, Father Fontaine, that the pupil had to be dismissed or that he himself would withdraw. As the director hesitated, Brother Brunet left St. Remy and went to Agen to Father Chaminade. In the meantime, Father Fontaine, persuaded by the entreaties of the students, backed by a teacher, granted his pardon to the guilty one. The letters which follow let us know, with the wise reflections of the Founder, the happy solution to the conflict.

721 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, February 9, 1834

My dear son—I received your letter of last December 29, which tells me of the effects of Father Lalanne's visit to St. Remy. I think Father Fontaine will have calmed Brother Langue. This last would be wrong in asking for his displacement without at first notifying me of it, but Father Fontaine would do well to watch his words even when they are spoken in jest.

Yesterday, I got a letter from Brother Brunet which told me of his departure from St. Remy and the cause which had led him to it. Two or three days before, following his day of retreat, he had written to me, that, in renewing his vows, he had had the intention of renewing especially the vow of stability, in the sense that the Society understood the matter—I immediately sent Father Lalanne Brother Brunet's last letter and I am waiting for him.

It is perhaps an effect of the protection of Providence that he did this rash act. He was already beginning to be a nuisance at St. Remy, and it was difficult to replace him, because of the esteem and affection that his pupils had for him. His pupils being themselves, in great part, the cause of his departure will not be sorry to see another one in his place. I think you will have taken care of the matter, either with Father Fontaine or with Brother Bonnet.

Father Fontaine should have given in to the entreaties of the boarders only on condition that they would have obtained from Brother Brunet the pardon of the guilty one. It is certainly only a lack of attention on the part of Father Fontaine. You thus see what need the Heads have of attention, of reflection, and of discernment! Write to me immediately all that concerns this sad story and how it has all been settled, and in general, about the dispositions of all the parties concerned.

I am sending Brother Clouzet a Circular which I am writing at the time of this New Year, to all my dear children of the Society of Mary. I am asking him to communicate it to you, or rather to give you a copy of it, so as to share it with all the others in your community.

Take, my dear son, a very great part in the expressions of my paternal tenderness. It will always be difficult for me to tell you how much I am devoted to you.

* * * *

Better informed about the St. Remy incident, Father Chaminade, in a second letter, judges it in a different manner and sends Brother Brunet back to St. Remy, in the demeanor of a penitent.

722 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, January 15, 1834

My dear son—Your end of the year must have been very sad. God, in his great mercy, can draw some good from this unfortunate experience, perhaps for everyone concerned. Brother Brunet acted too hastily. The exclusion of the pupil was not in the Regulation, taken in its spirit, and you know that the letter kills. The Regulation could not have had in mind a revolt provoked by the teacher himself. Now, that is what happened. The pupil struck Brother Brunet only after having been slapped—a slap in France is an insult—and so, the blow given immediately after will be regarded as the effect of a first movement, of an involuntary movement, as it were. A revolt without reflection cannot be supposed. Brother Brunet was doubly wrong to pronounce, following the struggle, both the exclusion of the pupil and his definitive retirement. Wrong, first of all, as regards the exclusion of the pupil. It is not in the heat of an offensive struggle that the application of so rigorous a rule is pronounced. The second of his demands was worse still, independently of the fact that he was compromising himself still more. A religious, in a community, is no longer his own and under the pretext of forcing a superior to pronounce a punishment, he may not deprive an entire community of his services. In analyzing the thing, much evil can be found. It is an effect of the merciful Providence of God that Father Fontaine was, so to say, forced to grant pardon to the guilty one by his great sensitiveness. The teacher who asked for it seems to have given proof of good judgment. I am not going further into this affair. I am also answering Father Fontaine, and I shall acquaint you with my letter. You will be able to acquaint him with this one, and so you will work together only the better. I am going to write a few words to Brother Clouzet.

When some serious and disquieting affair arises, you become troubled and discouraged. That is not well. You risk nothing in considering quietly before God the disorders that arise under your direction. Neither do you risk anything in asking his pardon; but, in the meantime, full of confidence in God, you keep a calm face and try to diminish the evil if you cannot stop it entirely. You try to heal it when it is clearly defective. Let us preserve our peace of soul. Let us always go forward, as if all were well, and let us give no evidence of our uncertainties and hesitation.

That you have a Council and the best possible is in the order of prudence, but that there be at St. Remy a council superior to you, whose orders you would have to follow, would surely be contrary to the spirit of the Society of Mary. That would be changing the direction of its government, etc.

Independently of the Council of the Community, there ought to be one of the teachers, who could deal with all the affairs of the boarding school. I mean those of an internal character. Brother Brunet, who is at this moment entering my room to receive my blessing before his departure, told me that this council existed at St. Remy. There is now question only of finding out if it is functioning well. It seems that not all questions are brought to it that rightly should be if the matter of M. Adolphe de Belleney's hot temper has not been. The council should consider all possible means to cure him or at least to greatly diminish the evil and prevent accidents which could result from this bad temper. Father Fontaine is naturally President of this Council. You are free to take part in it or not. You are what is called an observer; but, anyhow, you must know whether this Council is doing good work at St. Remy. And in all our boarding schools and schools of whatever kind, everyone should interest himself, not only in his own particular task, but also in the totality, for each one is jointly responsible for the success of the entire work.

I wrote Brother Clouzet that you . . . might invite one or two of the good pastors of the neighborhood to hear the confessions of the boarders so as to relieve you somewhat, at least temporarily, of the burden you are carrying. You must not undertake too much. You must not ruin your health. There is a golden mean, which is not always so easy to recognize, but you must always be on the lookout for it.

Always give much to mental prayer and to good mental prayer. Without prayer, what other means of success is there for you, as well as for the others?

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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723 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, January 15, 1834

I hope, my dear son, that all the commotion in the château did not have any disturbing consequences, but that God will deign to draw advantage from it for us all. Today, the fifteenth of the current month, Brother Brunet has just left, full of new courage to devote himself to the work previously undertaken. He is leaving on foot, first, because I am not in a position to pay the expenses of a trip by coach but also for penance, for his considerable wrongs in this troubling affair. I am writing, in the enclosures for Fathers Fontaine and Chevaux, everything that must be done. I am quite sure they will communicate to you these letters. Brother Brunet will arrive at your place and will remain

there until a small deputation from the château comes to get and introduce him. We have agreed that nothing more be said about what took place. Brother Brunet renewed his vows yesterday, especially that of stability. Let us hope that henceforth he will be inviolably faithful to our great work.

You should consider whether you don't need to rouse Brother Gaussens and whether his illness is always as real as he thinks it is. By dint of thinking it so and treating and caring for himself in consequence, he could be aggravating the effects of illness. He was in this condition when he came to see me in Agen. He even had a crisis in Tonneins. In Agen, I tried to dispel his ideas and, in four or five days, he was pretty well cured and even had the strength to leave on foot for St. Remy.

All the movements and changes made at St. Remy, as well as the superfluous expenses, must have put you in straitened circumstances; but nevertheless I would not have believed that you had, as it were, completely forgotten Bordeaux, especially after what you had promised; and I was hoping that you would have funds sent over to me. It would be very difficult to express the pitiful position we are in, especially since last May and June. M. Auguste, to get himself out of difficulty and to go scot-free, had made promissory notes of the greater part of his debts from purchases, on account, the maturity of which he spread out from month to month. Father Bardenet has just died and that means twelve thousand francs have fallen due and can be exacted. Brother Mémain has sold the Armenaud brothers little properties. For some time, we could breathe a bit, but only very little; and we must constantly revert to expedients to avoid protests for non-payment. I am always hoping that we shall come to the end of all this mess, but we must not tempt Providence. I am convinced that, if you took things to heart, you could see a successful outcome. I now have in mind to put you in correspondence with Brother Mémain. You could come to some agreement with him. Your united efforts, blessed by the Lord, would succeed in supporting everything and, little by little, getting us out of our difficulties. What is disturbing is the fact that the St. Marie Boarding School is not yet self-supporting. Father Lalanne is really working at building it up and at making it flourish. We have several other establishments that are doing quite well and which, unless some unforeseen accident occurs, will also be able to help. Everything is in the hands of God, but—I repeat it—we must do all we can.

I am always working, my dear son, at the reformation of the Society of Mary in all of its aspects. I shall soon be in a position to make of St. Remy a secondary central house. I could not do it before having regularized civilly the subjects who direct this establishment. I still lack from St. Remy all the information I asked for regarding the novices. In order to firm up matters, laws and rules must be followed.

I am stopping here. Receive Brother Brunet kindly. Don't speak to him about what has happened, and I expressly recommend to the château that no one ever speak of the sad experience in which almost everyone was in the wrong. Receive my tender embraces.

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To assure the good financial management of the St. Marie Boarding School of Bordeaux, Father Chaminade confides it to Brother Bidon, whom he gives, along with his appointment, useful instructions, through the intermediary of Brother Mémain, Econome-General. It will be see, by what follows that this measure was not superfluous because of the enterprising genius of Father Lalanne, superior of the establishment.

723bis – TO BROTHER BIDON, BORDEAUX

Agen, January 13, 1834

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary, have named and do name by these presents, as Econome of the St. Marie Boarding School of Bordeaux, our dear son, Brother Bidon, founding member of the Society of Mary, bestowing upon him all authority concerning the economy of the said boarding school, under the supervision and direction of Father Lalanne, superior of this establishment.

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723ter – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

Agen, January 13, 1834

Herein included is the nomination of Brother Bidon to the stewardship of the St. Marie Boarding School. You will be kind enough to help him determine, little by little, every kind of expense. From now on, it is he who will be responsible for any expenses made in the boarding school. Doubtless, he is always to have an understanding with Father Lalanne; but, in effect, he is to make only those expenses that he judges necessary and suitable. These should only be expenses for the interior regulation of the house and for what concerns the strict and necessary maintenance, whether of the house itself or of the members of the community, but not extraordinary expenses, without an express permission from myself. And if you were in Bordeaux, you would vouch for the necessity thereof. . . .

In giving Brother Bidon his nomination, you will let him have a copy of this little note which concerns him, as a kind of instruction.

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724 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Agen, January 20, 1834

I thank you, my dear son, for having expressed, at the beginning of your letter of January 4, the thought which you call sad, and which came to you at the reading of my circular and of my ordinances.[1] Although my health is holding up, I must not flatter myself that my career will continue much longer. Soon I shall complete my seventy-second year. I do not have the ambition to live much longer, although I may have great need of repairing the past, which has been so weak in good works. Although young, strong, and vigorous, you must nevertheless not count on length of life, my dear son, but always be prepared to die. When you reach my age, if you do reach it, may you not have the regrets I feel for not having served God better. Enter into the beautiful ways of prayer, and may your union with Jesus Christ be ever more intimate. Live for God in Jesus Christ.

Make a Holy Hour each week. This will be fruitful only insofar as you are not considerably inconvenienced and until the end of the present scholastic year. You will be careful to have the permission renewed in case you derive great benefit from this holy practice.

Do not lose courage with Brother Galliot. See to it, in a way, that he resumes his functions with the same zeal and the same courage that he had formerly. A miserable illusion has taken hold of his mind, and the responsibility of his office is becoming insupportable for him.

Ask Brother Galliot, if he gets somewhat better, to write to me on the subject of M. Lassigne.[2] While awaiting final determination, recommend that he be employed a bit on the outside, for, in general, it is rather difficult to train such kinds of subjects in the interior life. I am writing a few words to M. Lassigne and to M. Chevassu. You will be kind enough to send them their respective notes.

I am writing a long letter to Brother Galliot but without speaking to him, as yet, about the burses of last year. His heart must be opened, and I shall not succeed in doing it unless you help me; but how will you get to that point if your own heart is tightened in his regard? May charity and zeal open and soften it!

If M. Lassigne is once well strengthened, and if, without fear, he can be sent to the Novitiate, and the ecclesiastical Novitiate at that, I shall charge Brother Galliot with the arrangement of his temporal affairs.

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[1] Doubtless an allusion to the passage in the circular of January 4 where the Good Father speaks of his advanced age.

[2] This was a postulant, 32 years old, “who, after all his theological studies, went into business and was employed for some time as a traveling salesman. He is said to be quite intelligent in the handling of temporal affairs.” January 26, 1834.

Be calm regarding the two francs given to the poor orphan. I am leaving to your disposition the few pennies offered to the church for the pastor.

Before this letter arrives, you will have received a second circular for the year 1834. Take from it, I beg of you, the greatest part of the paternal sentiments that I am expressing to all my children of the Society of Mary at the time of this New Year.

* * * *

Father Chevaux feels himself to be weakening in the face of the difficulties of his task. To encourage him, Father Chaminade sends him the following letter, one of the finest that have come from his pen.

725 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, February 7, 1834

I have before me, my dear son, your letter of last January 23. Brother Brunet's arrival at St. Remy will, I hope, remedy the embarrassment you tell me about in the first part of your letter. Furthermore, Brother Brunet will no longer have any excuses (though apparently valid) for not properly fulfilling his spiritual exercises.

Let us come, my dear son, to the great evil you have pointed out to me. What seems to break down your strength and to lessen the energy of your soul, should, on the contrary, inflame your charity and zeal. I do not disapprove the sentiment you have of your incapacity and of all your defects, natural or acquired; but I do disapprove of the discouragement that this sentiment seems to be producing in you. Are you an intruder in the position you occupy? Certainly not, for you have been sent there legitimately and regularly. Our Lord Jesus Christ wants to have all the glory of the good you will do and of the victories you will gain. Our Lord wants to have as participant in his glory, not you and your co-workers, but his august Mother, the most holy Virgin, under whose protection and guidance you have surmounted all obstacles. *Infirma mundi elegit Deus, ut confundat fortia*. Why, my dear son, do you not place all your confidence in Jesus and Mary? Do you believe that St. Peter established the Apostolic See in Rome by his education, by his knowledge, and his wisdom—his natural means? Do you not believe he succeeded only as a result of the confidence he put in the Master who was sending him? If you pray and do not obtain, why not continue to pray until your prayer is heard, in the meantime doing all that he inspires you to do?

It seems that your arms fall helpless when you see the young men who surround you and who have the same mission as you, full of good will but lacking in experience. Where did you learn the twelve apostles and the seventy-two disciples drew upon their experience before working at the great undertaking that had been assigned to them? They had good

will, that is true, and that's all they had. The disciples of Our Lord had no more aptitude than the apostles. They knew, as the apostles knew, their insufficiency only too well; but also like them, they had entire confidence in him for the mission he had given. Oh, how much we have degenerated! Where is then our faith, our faith in Jesus Christ? I have no intention here, my dear son, of humiliating either you or your collaborators, but to awaken you all from the kind of stupor into which you seem to have fallen and to recall to you what you all are by your entrance into the Society of Mary. You are real missionaries. The education of youth, whatever form it may take, is certainly not the end you must have proposed to yourself in consecrating yourselves entirely to God, under the protection of the august Mary. Teaching is but a means to make use of to fulfill our mission, to introduce everywhere, so to say, the spirit of faith and of religion and to multiply Christians.

Penetrate yourself, my dear son, with these sentiments. Work to make them fill the hearts of all your confrères, your co-laborers. Surely, you will find more of these sentiments there than you think. Once you are all animated by these sentiments, you will have found the remedy for the dreadful evil that reigns in the secondary boarding school. You are all missionaries, fulfill your mission! Perhaps the word "mission" may tax the imagination of several who imagine that to be a missionary one has to go about preaching from city to city, from one parish to another. Such have not formed the idea of a stable and permanent mission. In this matter, my dear son, we must rectify all contrary ideas.

But perhaps you will ask, how to carry out and sustain such a mission? What success can you hope for? I am going to give you some ideas you may profit from.

1. Real missionaries must in no way count on themselves alone, on their talents or their industry: rather they must put all their confidence in the grace of their mission and also in the protection of the Blessed Virgin, who is working at this undertaking for which she was elevated to the divine Motherhood.

2. All must be well penetrated with the importance of the salvation of souls redeemed by the price of the blood of Jesus Christ.

3, The principal end which all must propose to themselves, in all their efforts, but particularly in their spiritual exercises, must be the salvation of the pupils, the amendment of their vices and their progress in virtue.

4. They must all act together. The work is common to all, and each one is jointly responsible, in a certain measure, for the entire thing. Nevertheless, there can be distribution of tasks. Each teacher, for example, is responsible for his own class; the Head of each division for his division. Nearly everyone may work at the recreations.

5. When you all work together, you see how certain difficulties can be overcome. Certain pupils, for example, already obstinate sinners, and with deeply-rooted habits, can be distributed among yourselves. Those who are specially charged with them pray for

them, seek their conversion, invoke the lights of the Holy Spirit so as to direct their conduct properly.

6. Care must be taken that the zeal remain discreet. Beginnings are as it were unnoticeable. No success can be expected with a pupil unless he has first been won over and, up to a certain point, esteemed and loved.

7. It must not be forgotten that your secondary boarding school has difficulties not usually found in other boarding schools. St. Remy's is made up almost entirely of the children of distinguished families of the Department, whether because of birth or of wealth. *Vae vobis divitibus*! A curse is, so to say, pronounced against them. Pride of birth and of wealth draws them ordinarily to the basest passions. What a difference, as far as Christian education is concerned, with those boarding schools formed of pupils who are the children of the lower middle class, ordinarily poorly off!

These difficulties must not frighten us. Religion must surely be introduced into the upper classes of society. When, in your labors, you find some of these difficulties which seem to you insurmountable, you might communicate them to me, and perhaps I can propose some means of overcoming them.

8. In proportion as you have pupils who seriously turn to God, you will find some who have zeal and whom you could direct to be young missionaries among the others. I have seen great success as the result of this process.

You and all your confrères can henceforth communicate to Father Caillet, General Head of Zeal, everything that refers to zeal, to religion and to piety, whether concerning you personally or the pupils. I shall tell him so in advance.

It will be necessary to continue your correspondence with Father Lalanne for a time, in connection with all that concerns instruction. Independently of his office as General Head of Instruction, he is charged especially with the secondary boarding school and its good maintenance. But I can't believe that this good maintenance can continue, whatever precautions are taken and whatever notoriety results, if religion is not the dominating factor. Furthermore, our state is of a supernatural order. If we teach the sciences and the arts, it is only to teach at the same time the science of salvation.

I shall answer you a little later, my dear son, on what concerns drawing. Father Lalanne has written provisionally to have dangerous models withdrawn.[1] I shall write to you also about the important subject of novices. I shall write a few words to Father Fontaine and also a short letter to all the teachers together. You will do well to communicate to them the letter I am writing to you, but more particularly to Father Fontaine.

[1] The allusion is to the question of the "academies," of which something will be said in the following letter.

Receive here, my dear son, the new token of my paternal tenderness.

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In the following letter, Father Chaminade continues to deal with Brother Clouzet about the liquidation of the debts and lets him know of his views about the teaching of drawing at the school.

726 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, February 11, 1834

. . . I have repeatedly seen by your letters, my dear son, that you had been forced to make unexpected payments. This should not prevent you from getting into correspondence with Brother Mémain. I invite you to join your efforts to free us from the heavy burden of debts, always ready to dishearten, I should rather say to crush us.

The abridged list which Brother Mémain has sent you is not for the debts exacted this year. M. Auguste made bills payable to order for all his debts or for most of them, especially for the closing of his accounts with his principal suppliers. The interest on the capital has often also been paid by such bills payable to order. You see what has been his skill in supporting himself! The deficit for last year goes beyond six thousand francs.

What is to be said concerning this state of things? Must we burst out in complaints? However well they may be founded, would they overcome the evil? They might even aggravate it, making us appear too frustrated. Let us take, my dear son, our evil with a great resignation, and let us do all that is honestly possible to disengage ourselves from it. The first protest for nonpayment may be the cause of our ruin.

You speak of the economies and of the requirements of the secondary boarding school. The economies must be of the greatest rigor in all our establishments. I am speaking of economies which can be made without clashing with what is in accord with established principles. At St. Hippolyte and at Ebersmunster, a deficit of about five thousand francs was inevitable, without prejudice to overdue debts of more than seven thousand francs, again without prejudice to three thousand francs advanced by the establishment of Colmar. This establishment, which is in a great state of prosperity,[1] has been left by the Rothéa brothers to Brother Coustou with many debts and five francs in the cash-box. I have put order in the deficit presented by Ebersmunster. I am doing almost the same thing for St. Hippolyte. There is reason to believe that both will be able to show some surplus for this year. The establishment of Colmar may easily get out of its financial embarrassments by itself. The Rothéa brothers are always asking me to let them keep the surplus of their receipts to help them pay their debts, to which I did not think I should

[1] From the point of view of the number of pupils.

agree, considering our present condition of real want. I granted only the rebate of the three thousand francs.

You see, my dear son, how necessary it is to economize. What is vexing is that we have no good and experienced economists. Nevertheless, I am always hoping that, with patience and firmness, order will be everywhere introduced and that, if we are able to get out of the present crisis, in a few years we shall be well beyond mere survival. But the crisis must be stopped at any price. We must put into it the concern one puts into avoiding a death blow. . . . To this effect, figure on all the presumptive profits of both the secondary and the primary boarding schools, on the presumptive revenues of the St. Remy and Marast properties, on the wood-cutting of Marast, on the sale of the little property brought from MM. Nicod and Gobillot, on the loans we made wisely, and especially on the aid of Providence and the protection of our august Mother. . . .

Here is what Father Lalanne writes on the fourth of the current month: "If I have authorized some 'academies' of men, *velatis pudendis*, it is because of this principle, generally unknown, that the look is illicit only by the motive and not by the object. It is conformable to this principle that Christians, and even religious, may study anatomy. It is impossible to teach drawing of the human figure without human figures as anatomy without human bodies. Now, drawing is no longer mere ornament, as you may perhaps think. The actual state of teaching, the conditions required for admission to special schools, have made of drawing one of the most important branches of public instruction. It enters into the courses of studies of the royal collèges. Thus, I have had the same reasons, and as good ones, to introduce academies in our school of drawing, as the theologians of all countries and of all times have had to authorize for Christians the labors of dissection. I might have been able to go farther. I would have had still better reasons than those for which, in Rome, the obscene Apollo of Belvédère[1] is tolerated, in the sole interests of the arts, in the very palace of the Pope."

Father Lalanne thus begins his Prospectus of the secondary boarding school: "The course of studies there required of the pupils gives them the right to present themselves to some special school, whatever it may be, not excepting the Polytechnic School." Supposing that there are special schools of drawing and of painting, where practice is made on the academies, I was very far from thinking, in reading this Prospectus, that there was question of speaking of this kind of special school.

It is said that teaching is done in this way in the royal collèges. I do not as yet know if this teaching is general or particular, i.e., to a small number of pupils who are destining themselves for certain professions. I think that the anatomy of the human body could have been permitted. But, who goes to the schools where it is taught, apart from those who destine themselves for the surgical or medical professions? These professions have a

[1] The Apollo of Belvédère, one of the masterpieces of antique sculpture in the Museum of the Vatican, in no way merits the qualification given here by Father Lalanne.

rigorous need of anatomical knowledge in all its degrees. Supposing we consider the arts of drawing and of painting of equal necessity, the authorization on the part of the theologians, if such a thing really exists—something I would like to know—would seem to me to fall only on special schools, academies of drawing and painting, and not be intended to be generalized for every type of pupil to whom drawing would be taught merely as an additional accomplishment. If we say that we don't know, regarding the majority of pupils, what profession they will embrace, etc., I shall answer they could very well at least be prepared. Can they not be given practice in painting some parts of the human body besides the head and face such as the hands and feet? We could even go a bit farther with those of greater skill, in having them design and paint calvaries, as prints or in relief and, in this way, the promise made by the Prospectus would be kept. If there were some parents who wanted their children to rigorously follow the courses of the academies of drawing and painting, then it is up to the boarding school to accept or refuse them. If it accepted them, then the drawing teacher could give them private lessons, and never in the general class with the other pupils. The boarding school would receive such pupils only insofar as it could judge whether they are not moved thereto to passion and that they are not dangerous to keep among the other boarders.

We would want to know:

1. if it is possible to assimilate a special school of drawing and painting with a school of anatomy;

2. if the authorization that would be given to a special school of academic drawing can or must be extended to every other school of drawing;

3. if the reasons mentioned—that in the actual state of teaching, the conditions required for admission to the special schools make of drawing one of the most important branches of public instruction and that drawing enters into the curriculum of royal collèges—have enough force to put academies, *velatis pudentis*, under the eyes of the pupils drawing in a boarding school which holds the first rank in teaching;

4. what is to be said of the fact that is cited without confirmation, that in Rome the obscene Apollo is tolerated solely in the interests of art and in the very palace of the pope?

The principle, following which this general practice in teaching seeks to be authorized, namely, "that the look is licit only by the motive and not by the object," although true in itself, does not seem to have sufficient application here. Why then has God clothed Adam and Even with his own hand? Were they not able to admire real masterpieces in their own bodies? Doesn't the first look at an object without real necessity render the second one illicit by the motive?

My dear son, you will make a copy of this long article, since here is what Father Lalanne writes to me, as far as the end of the last paragraph, and you will send it over to

Father Chevaux. You and he—if this is done by letter, it is better that it be done by Father Chevaux—will give it to Father Cuenot, Superior of the Grand Seminary of Besançon. You will beg of him to put at the bottom of the document his advice as regards the four points to be decided. I would be pleased were he also to acquaint the principal directors of the Seminary with them and that all sign the decisions agreed upon. You will, furthermore, assure Father Cuenot and the other Rev. Gentlemen, of my very sincere and respectful attachment. . . .

Send me, my dear son, a bill of exchange for nine hundred to one thousand francs for the end of this month. I have just been notified of its falling due by Father Caillet. I have already spoken to you about it in one of my last letters. I am counting absolutely on you. The payment will strictly fall due only around the sixth of next March, but several days are needed to have it move around in Bordeaux and be negotiated there. I am positively counting upon you. Do not let me down! Believe in my entire devotedness, as of my tender affection.

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To Father Chevaux, always hesitant in the face of difficulties in direction, Father Chaminade gives counsels, inspired by his long experience, about the Academy sessions, on the holding of councils, on the pupils' confessions, the admission of postulants, etc.

727 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, February 25, 1834

My dear son, I am writing a few words to Brother Brunet. I am urging him to resume all his courses of instruction and to join you all as a missionary. . . .

The entertainment given by Brother Langue must have you understand, my dear son, that in the Academy no play or discourse should be given unless you have seen it beforehand.

Regarding what you call chronicles or reports, nothing must be read by the pupils unless the teacher of the pupil has judged that the reading could be done with profit. The teachers are not to permit any criticism other than what the pupils make among themselves. Readers are to read the plays given to them only insofar as they have the permission of the teacher who composed them or who has signed them. If the reader were given some chronicle that had not been reviewed by the teacher, this chronicle should be put into the hands of Father Fontaine. We shall see later if it were not better to suppress the matter purely and simply, but in the meantime let there be careful censoring. . . . Furthermore, this censorship must be done without any ostentation. Father Fontaine, on this matter, is in agreement with all the teachers. Then each teacher warns his pupils not to read nor to have read any chronicle before having communicated it to him. The more things are done simply, the less chance there will be for disadvantages. I presume that any contrary custom will fail of itself, provided the pupils are being trained by real missionaries.

From what I have learned, my dear son, of the separation of the two guilty ones, it seems to me they may have been treated too well. Whatever the case may be, must we not profit by this occasion to enlighten them regarding their misconduct and to win them to virtue and religion? A real zeal turns everything to profit. If the proposition of a council of teachers were really put to work, someone would be inspired to take in hand this particular

act of zeal. Even two might be employed in it usefully, one for M. de Frasnois and the other for M. Cheylus.

In great affairs more than ever, time must be taken for reflection and for prayer. It is very rare that these great affairs arise which do not allow for at least a little leisure time. But, finally, if such a situation really does arise, those steps must be taken that are thought to be most in conformity with faith and which will in greater measure please our Lord. For what concerns your council for current affairs, which are of little or no consequence, work in accord with Brother Clouzet and Father Fontaine. But when there is question of something which must be repeated—for example, the reading of the chronicles or reports—from the time that you notice an abuse or an immoderate use being made of the permission that Father Lalanne had granted, you could hold a council, to which some extraordinary counselors have been added. These could be perpetual professed like Brothers Gaussens and Brunet. The council could first stop the abuse and then make remonstrances to Father Lalanne and give me an exact account of everything. In these councils, you must penetrate all your people with the spirit of our vocation, and all the deliberations must come back to that starting point. You will understand that I have no intention here of definitively establishing a council, but only temporarily, in your present situation. If you haven't the time to send me a verbal account of the council, as well as one to Father Lalanne, ask the secretary of the council sessions to do it.

The confessor that I had given you hope for, my dear son, not having been in St. Remy because of illness or some other cause, I had counseled you and Brother Clouzet to attract one or two of the good pastors for the confessions of the boarders of both communities. I was told that you or Father Fontaine, or perhaps both, would succumb under the burden if it was not lightened. It seems from your last letter that the boarders do not give you great practice, because if they were to confess only once a month, you would still have more than twenty-five each week. But how many would go to confession oftener! All those who are permitted to receive Holy Communion every two weeks, all those who have violent passions and who need to present themselves oftener at the tribunal of penance, and now those who need to be prepared for their First Communion, etc., etc. All that we do, let us try to do it well.

Confession is one of the great means which the Lord has given us to work for the salvation of souls. I have always been of the opinion that the superior hear the confessions of everybody when he can. This unity of direction of consciences contributes much fruit to the other means, etc. I had counseled it to Father Lalanne in Gray. He seemed to adopt it, but the need which he thought he had to have himself feared made him take another form of direction. I am here neither approving nor blaming. I am speaking to you here only of what experience and sound reason have taught me.[1]

[1] We know that in these later times, and especially at the time of the publication of the Code of Canon Law, the Holy See has given different directives. Father Lalanne had taken as principle that since he was director, he would not hear the confessions of his pupils.

As regards what you tell me of the inconvenience of an outside confessor for the Sunday Communion, it seems to me only right. There must be some pupils who receive Communion every Sunday, and these are ordinarily very soon finished when it comes to their weekly confessions. All those who communicate less frequently may make a preparatory confession and have it over with, on Saturday or on the eve of a feast, and then the confessors will be but little kept from the labors of their parishes. If you can come to a suitable understanding with the pastor of Cubry, so close to St. Remy, it would be a considerable alleviation for you.

As regards Lent, do this year as was done last. Only exhort all the novices and religious to supplement, mainly by prayer and mortification, for the privations from which they are dispensed. We shall come back to this matter a little later on.

If the two novices, or rather postulants, present themselves again, admit them as postulants. Examine them, try them first, and see if they can be admitted as novices.

When a postulant is well organized, ordinarily speaking, we can be pretty definite as regards the qualities of the postulants. I had promised you notes on the subject of novices. I wrote some immediately, but the thought of rereading all that had been written about the novitiate and of making of it a permanent edition explains why these notes have not come to you. My affairs are multiplying so much and so fast that I rarely have the time to work at such matters. I shall send them on to you just as they are.

When I received your letter, in which you make mention of Brother Bonnet's desolation regarding his mother's indigence, I had answered him (doubtless, my letter had not arrived) and I precisely proposed to him to augment or rather to double the little amount for his mother and to have the pastor of Mauriac give her fifty francs each year. To save me some writing, you may write to the pastor of Mauriac to ask him to give Mme Bonnet the sum of one hundred francs, to be distributed according to her needs, and that he may be kind enough to charge you with the number of Masses that may correspond to this sum. You should also mention that you have come to a perfect understanding with me. Tell Brother Bonnet that, after all I have said and promised to him, I am sorry over his crises of sensibility. Let him communicate with me with an entire confidence regarding all the sorrows he may be experiencing.

May the Lord deign, my dear son, to shower upon you and all our children his most abundant blessings!

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Here are some notes on the novitiate referred to in the preceding letter. They were consigned such as they are to the Register of Ordinances of the Society. Later Father Chaminade recopied them with his own hand, giving them an impersonal form, and

inserted them in the Constitutions of 1839, articles 307 and the following. See more about these notes in the Spirit of our Foundation*, No. 862*.

728 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, March 11, 1834

ADVICE TO A MASTER OF NOVICES

The interest which you have in the training of the novices confided to your solicitude makes me willingly surmount the kind of repugnance I feel in the midst of numerous enough occupations, to give counsels of advice in general terms and especially on so delicate a matter. For greater utility, I shall make this letter common to all those who are entrusted in the Society with the same kind of direction.

I should want, in the first place, that a Master of Novices penetrate himself well with the spirit of the Society of Mary, that he feel intensely its nature and its end. The very name of the Society of Mary may reanimate all his sentiments. And in fact, what is the Society of Mary? It is a uniting of the Children of Mary, of those pronounced in the interest of their august Mother, who, without any human respect, come together to sustain these, first in themselves, and then in all those with whom they have any relationship.

If you have sometimes entered into the heart of our tender Mother, you have found there no other interests than those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, her adorable Son, her firstborn, our elder Brother. The fact is, that the ardent love which Mary has for us is all relative to our conformity with this her firstborn. Her ambition—if it is permissible to make use of this term with regard to the most holy among all creatures—is that all the children which her charity has engendered after him be so united to him that with him they all form but one Son, one same Jesus Christ.

Animated with these sentiments, it will be very easy for you to know whom you are to admit, among those who present themselves to enter the Society. I beg of you, never to admit anyone in whom you do not recognize any sign of a divine vocation, any of the operations of the Holy Spirit. It is true that sometimes by a secret order of the mercy of God, several have first come to us with altogether human motives. We shall be happy when we know how to penetrate this secret of Providence and to make it known to others. But, in general, when the subjects present themselves to enter the Society, first raise your heart to God and lift it entirely to the Spirit of Jesus Christ and as another Samuel look at them and examine them, not only regarding exterior appearances, but much more particularly concerning interior dispositions: *Deus cor intuetur*.[1]

Yes, it is upon the heart that you must cast your eyes. If you do not see any operation of the Holy Spirit, by that very fact neither will you see any sign of vocation. Just as all the duties of religious life may be reduced to two: separation from the world and union with Jesus Christ, so are you to recognize in those who present themselves sentiments relative

[1] Allusion to the choice of David by Samuel, such as it is reported in the first Book of Kings, Chapter XVI.

to these duties, such as, for example, fear and horror of the world, view of the incompatibility of the spirit of the world with the spirit of Christianity, the falsity of these maxims, etc. For those who might have participated less in the corruption of the world and who have not adopted its maxims, if their piety appears to be inspired by a real faith in Jesus Christ, if they manifest some devotion to the Blessed Virgin, you should see what part faith has in these sentiments. These signs may be more or less characteristic. In case of doubt, the subjects are to be received as postulants, if they have the other qualities required for admission.

The postulate may be more or less long, but, in general, it is not to be longer than the time required to determine the signs of vocation. With some you will concentrate more on the imminent dangers of the world, where a devastating plague reigns and the need to determine what proceeds from the world and what from a Christian spirit. With others you can often speak of the grandeur and the kindness of Jesus Christ and of his holy Mother, of the happiness of being called to their service, to procure their glory, etc.

When you believe that the signs of their vocation are sufficiently developed, when you have the moral assurance that they will persevere, draw up an account of all the motives that would lead you to recommend the admission of the subjects, as also of the fears you may still have, and send it to the Superior General.

Up to now, we have spoken only of novices, properly so called.

Upon entering into the usual tests, the novice is to bring a sincere desire to live in a total stripping of his mind and will. This is as a first step toward religious perfection, the total renunciation of oneself, not to want to judge again of anything, according to one's own mind nor to want anything solely by personal choice. This is a maxim that easily convinces by its truth. Without this renunciation, in fact the Spirit of God doesn't have prompt entrance. He wishes to occupy the souls of those he calls to his service, to fill their mind with his light, to supply what they lack and all that is unable to lead them. God takes his place within us only after an entire surrender of ourselves.

From this I shall draw two practical consequences: First, in view of this maxim, during the novitiate all disposal of themselves is taken from the young men; and they are gradually accustomed to place themselves in the hands of God alone, as unable to live or to do anything but by his good pleasure. It is asked, for example, that they renounce all sorts of visits of their own accord, that they no longer go out or even receive anyone but with the consent of their superiors, who hold for them the place of God. It is his Spirit and even his person that they honor in the superiors; it is he Himself they must have the intention of obeying. In obeying the superiors, they thus place themselves under the guidance of a visible God, while awaiting the time they will be in a condition for obeying an invisible God and fully capable of following his secret inspirations.

Second—In regard to studies, spiritual reading, the exercises and practices of piety, the novices must be very distrustful of their self-love, of their curiosity and of their self-will. To lead them to a spirit of dependence and submission, it must be made known to them that no one on earth is without these weaknesses.

"However enlightened and however elevated we may be," said Father Olier, "we must always expose our sentiments and submit them to the one who holds the place of God for us on earth. Such was the fidelity even of Jesus Christ, who submitted the lights and the movements of the Holy Spirit in himself to the direction of the most holy Virgin and St. Joseph, in whom God his Father resided, to have them approve the interior sentiments which he communicated to them. After Jesus Christ has given to his entire Church such an example of submission, who will be the man presumptive enough to dispense from submitting his judgment and his will to the wisdom and authority of his superiors!"[1]

You will often sustain these general principles through particular maxims, for example: To die to the world and to oneself, to show for the world the same horror shown by St. Paul when he said: "I am crucified to the world and the world is crucified to me (Gal. 6:14). To fly from the world and to fear its charms, its attractions, the contagious air one breathes therein: *Nolite diligere mundum, neque ea quae sunt in mundo* (1 John 2:15). If the world loves you, be afflicted, because you have something of it in you: *Si mundo fuissetis, mundus quod suum erat diligeret* (John 15:19). Very far from seeking the approbation and esteem of the world, it must be renounced, because it cannot esteem you if you are not conformable to itself and if you do not applaud it: *Si hominibus placerem, Christi servus non essem* (Gal. 1:10). One must be careful not to have anything that is conformable to the world and to imitate its ways of acting, of thinking and of dressing: *Nolite conformari huic saeculo* (Rom. 12:2). The proper thing for the Christian is to clothe himself in his interior with the inclinations, the morals, and the virtues of Jesus Christ: *Induimini Dominum Jesum Christum* (Rom. 13:14).

Do not speak, my dear son, of this mystic death to the world and to oneself in such a way that you do not allow the precious life in Jesus Christ that is to follow it to appear. We die but to live. All of Christianity and all its perfection is but in this death and in this life. This is the doctrine of St. Paul: *Existimate vos mortuos quidem esse peccato, viventes autem Deo in Christo Jesu* (Rom. 6:11).

Here I cannot help citing for you a counsel, however long it may be, of Father Olier to the young men of his seminary. He seems to include his whole doctrine which is also ours.

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[1] The thought of Father Olier may be thus precisely stated: Although Jesus Christ, by the interior direction which he unceasingly received from his heavenly Father, was assured of always doing what was most conformable to his divine will (John VIII, 19), he nevertheless submitted the direction of his conduct to Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:51). This passage and the one following are drawn from the *Maxims Concerning the Seminaries*. (*Complete Work of Father Olier*, Migne, p. 1142 and 1144.)

"It is not enough to have renounced the world and oneself. In addition, one must enter into the life of Jesus Christ, who is the new creature, to the image of which the perfect man in us must be formed. He who wishes to belong to me, he tells us, must then live in a continual contradiction with himself. He must inhabit a kingdom different from the world or from the flesh. He must tend without ceasing to Jesus Christ by faith, not withholding anything for his own satisfaction because faith gives no quarter to nature, to the senses, to reason or to one's own mind. It belongs to God himself, who is its author. As inflexible as he, it does not descend below him. It may well elevate us above ourselves and draw us to itself, but it never comes down to us. This is what afflicts every creature who is not dead to himself or herself: to have nothing, to find nothing in faith in which he or she can repose and taste his or her own satisfaction. Faith is the torment of all nature, for it seeks always to elevate the creature beyond himself, in spite of his own weight. What do we not owe to God for thus keeping us in a continual separation from ourselves? Because his design, in attaching us to himself by faith, is to transform us into Himself. Having arrived at this transformation, we no longer see anything but in the light of God. The human mind, made divine, no longer judges, tastes, hears things in his own way but in God's. As elevated above himself and his senses, he enters into a new nature: all within him becomes new. A soul crucified by faith now tends only to divine things and sighs only after these. Its life is in God; its kingdom and all its hopes are in God. From the height of the celestial region it inhabits, all that is not God it finds so small and despicable that it is really surprised that anything created can be loved. All creatures are distasteful to it. Does it still feel, in the lower part of itself, a remainder of the inclination for the things of the earth? It is an annoyance, a weight, an insupportable torture. Henceforth, it can no longer be content except in complete liberty to enjoy God. Like a bird freed from the snare which had prevented it from flying in the open country, it can now say: You have broken my chains. It is thus that a cleric—and with greater reason a priest—is obliged to live separated from the earth and to live in the element of faith, where flying, elevating himself and soaring in complete liberty, he allows himself to be conducted without delay or obstacle to wherever the Spirit of God brings him: *Ubi erat impetus Spiritus, illuc gradiebanter* (Ezek. 1:12.)"

One of the great obstacles ordinarily to be found in the young novices, when it comes to leading them to the life of faith, is love for parents. This obstacle is all the greater from the fact that it doesn't seem to be any. It seems favored by the fourth commandment of God and often authorized by persons who appear prudent. It is good to go into clear enough explanations, so that the novices may make this sacrifice with the same generosity as they make all the others.

It is the doctrine of the holy Doctors of the Church that the religious renounce their fathers according to the flesh in order to live only in the arms and under the authority of Jesus Christ, their only Father according to the spirit, through whom they have passed from the coarse and animal life to a spiritual, interior and divine life.

The secular and temporal fathers are the image of God, as far as the exterior and corporal life is concerned. But as we claim to die to this natural and coarse life, we thus

claim to die to the coarse and corruptible heritage of this world, to enter into the possession of the God of truth, of whom all the creatures that compose the universe, are as the veil and shade where he hides. He leaves the penetration of this shade only to his children—Christians who, having renounced their senses and the love of exterior things, receive from him a divine and interior life. These see in him, by faith, his quality of Father, from whom alone they expect their heritage. This is the testimony rendered to him by those who make the religious profession into the hands of the Superior of the Society, for the Superior represents on earth the divine paternity.

The Apostle teaches us that there are in the world several paternities: *Ex quo omnis paternitas in coelo et in terra nominatur* (Eph. 3:15). The first is the temporal paternity which expresses the fecundity of God in the communication of his being, in which man resembles the animals and plants, their generation, like that of man, being an expression of the eternal fecundity of God, engendering his image from all eternity in the person of his son. The second, of a far superior order, is that which belongs to God alone, and in virtue of which he communicates to his Church, not a natural and common being, but a being of holiness and grace, a divine being.

It would not be difficult for us to confirm this doctrine by a certain number of texts from Holy Scripture and also by so many great examples given us throughout the Christian centuries.

Following this letter, I am going to have a certain number of notes copied that I wrote at the request of a master of novices. I did not send them to him at the time, for I had the intention of adapting them to what the Constitutions have already said about the novitiates and their direction, and I haven't been able to bother further about them since. It is thus that the better is often the enemy of the good.

Direction of a novitiate causes far greater difficulty than that of a community of professed religious, especially if the novices have the spirit of their state. In proportion as you find difficulties that you could not resolve, even in prayer, let me know of them.

May the Lord deign, my dear son, to shower abundant blessings upon you and upon your precious family!

NOTES ON THE NOVITIATE

1. The first months after the arrival of the novices should be particularly used to develop in them a spirit of penance, a purification of the heart, meditation suitable to their capacity and to general or extraordinary confessions.

2. If the number of novices is large, and the novice master is not able to take care of the newcomers for the instructions on meditation and the purgative way, he can designate a few of the older and more fervent novices to give them this instruction. He, however, can

always continue in his regular conferences to explain whatever is required to make a real religious and particularly a religious of Mary.

3. When the novices have a knowledge of the nature of the five vows to be made at their profession,[1] they should understand that the three main vows of the religious life (poverty, chastity, and obedience) contain in themselves the observance of all the evangelical counsels, and that these vows are the narrow way that leads to eternal life—it is necessary that they cherish the object of these vows, and that they should spare all delay in entering this beautiful narrow way in the footsteps of Jesus and Mary.

4. Each novice should feel free to communicate at all times his troubles, temptations, and difficulties. The ordinary conferences or manifestations of conscience of the rule should deal with meditations or mental and vocal prayers, with whatever occurs in them whether coming from the Holy Spirit or that of the tempter. Sometimes the novices can give an account of their daily examens.

The novice master cannot exercise too much care in directing them in their meditations and in encouraging them to make progress in these. These conferences, however, should ordinarily be brief. At each of these conferences on meditation the novice master should limit himself to pointing out some fault to be avoided or the evident failure of a means to be employed. If the novice repeats the same fault or omission, the novice master should reiterate these same observations. A novice master who acts in this way can be morally assured of success in his work. The novices ordinarily do not waver unless they stop praying altogether or pray poorly. Since these conferences are individual, the novice master can without inconvenience confer with the new novices as well as with the old.

5. When the novices have arrived at this stage of development the novice master will be in a position to follow the directions that are given in the *Manual of Direction*,[2] either for the virtues of preparation or purification or for the virtues of consummation.

6. The novice master should not limit himself to giving conferences on the state that the candidates intend to embrace; he should also provide some interesting and impressive exhortations on subjects better calculated to stir up more and more the spirit of penance: this is the general aim of the whole novitiate.

7. In regard to meditation, the novice master will direct his novices according to the *Practice of Mental Prayer*[3]: but he will never really succeed unless he himself has acquired the habit of genuine mental prayer and continues to devote himself to this holy exercise.

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[1] The vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, stability, and the teaching of faith and Christian morals. This last vow was suppressed in 1865 since it expressed the purpose of the Institute rather than a simple means of attaining it.

[2] See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 860.

[3] See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 251.

8. The novice master can follow in his explanation of the vows what is said to the Head of Zeal on the nature of the vows in order to obtain true indications of each one of the professed and to know their progress. But on the other hand, he can use all the means and take every precaution to have them cherish the doctrine of the Gospels. This will not prove to be difficult if the novices have experienced its savor and kindness in the examples of it that the God-man and his exalted Mother have given.

9. Identical exercises, practices, and kinds of instruction should be given in the novitiate for ecclesiastical and for lay candidates.[1] The only important thing is that the novice masters should harmonize their conferences and instructions with the intelligence and even the education of their pupils.

10. During the free time that exists between the exercises of the novitiate, the various occupations of the novices cannot be the same in both novitiates: but in both of them religion should be taught in conformity with their relative understanding. This is likewise the case with catechism in a more or less developed or profound fashion as well as Bible history, always keeping in mind the mental capacity of the novices. They could also be responsible, as the novice master sees fit, for the instructions enumerated in number six.

11. All seminarians at the moment of entering sacred orders and *a fortiori* the priests, can easily obtain a dispensation from part of the novitiate and even of the triennial vows in order to move on after a year and a day of novitiate and according to the canons to perpetual profession.[2] It suffices that according to established procedure, then, that they have the habit of commendable meditation, that they cherish the holy commitments taken at the time of religious profession, that they desire to consecrate themselves entirely to God under the loving protection of the exalted Virgin Mary. The seminarians and priests as well as the laymen will declare their act of commitment according to the Statutes approved by royal ordinance.

12. The workers and artists who happen to be in the lay novitiate at the time, can devote themselves to their arts and crafts more or less according to what the novice master will plan. The same will be the case with those who are destined temporarily for military service.

13. After a certain period of probation, the renewal of baptismal vows will take place with a certain amount of solemnity in the lay novitiate as well as in the ecclesiastical novitiate for all simple clerics or those in minor orders. All the priests or those in major orders should renew the priestly spirit. Later on the practice of these two renewals can be established as a matter of procedure.

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[1] Until 1865 there was in the Society a separate novitiate for candidates destined for the ecclesiastical state.

[2] It is common knowledge that in the old orders candidates upon leaving the novitiate professed simple perpetual vows.

14. In both novitiates as the novices achieve more progress their master or director will test them more or less according to their capacity. Sometimes the tests are purely individual, at other times they can be either collective, comprising a certain number of individuals, or even general. These tests will ordinarily relate to a certain one of the religious vows.

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Here are two little notes of spiritual direction, short but full of meaning.

729 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Agen, March 3, 1834

If you really preserved recollection at the time of your occupations, these last would not be an obstacle to mental prayer. Whatever may be our labors, they are to be but a continuation of mental prayer: *Oportet semper orare, et numquam deficere*.

* * * *

730 – TO BROTHER JUSTIN DUMONTET, VILLENEUVE-SUR-LOT

Agen, March 4, 1834

With a little more courage and fidelity, you would be making headway on the right road. That road seems narrow—which, in fact, it is—but it is the one that leads to eternal life. Oh my son! Have you ever thought of these words of the Gospel: "It is the narrow way that leads to eternal life!" Let us no longer think as children, let us no longer act as children. Really, my dear son, your age is no longer that of a child. Receive, my dear son, etc.

* * * *

Brother Justin Dumontet (1813-1903), to whom the preceding note is addressed, is one of the most interesting figures of the Society at this time.

His grandfather, of Italian origin, and professor of Italian in the Lycée of Bordeaux, had been converted in 1801 by Father Chaminade, as can be read in his life. In 1823, hardly ten years old, young Justin lost his mother by death and was adopted by the Founder, who had him make his First Communion at the Madeleine and admitted him as a postulant at St. Laurent. From that time on, a great friendship developed between the child and the old man. Brother Justin loved to relate how, pressing him to his heart, Father Chaminade used to say to him: "My child, be faithful!"

After his profession in 1829, the young religious remained some time at St. Laurent. In 1831, he was sent to Agen, and in both these places, he was attached to the person of the Founder. “I had the happiness of being entrusted with the care of his person,” he writes. “For nearly a year, when he lived at the novitiate of St. Laurent, I was able to be the happy witness of his holy habits. Each evening, I assisted him as he went to bed, giving him the care he needed on account of the cautery of his arm, preparing his bed and receiving his fatherly goodnight. From the time he was in bed, he used to begin the invocation of the holy Name of Jesus, which he repeated thirty-three times, doubtless to honor the thirty-three years Jesus lived upon earth. . . . In Agen, for two years I again had the happiness of serving him. He used to take his meals in his room and each evening after supper he read P. Nouet. It is at that time that I noticed that he used to take the discipline, because the curtains of his alcove were stained with blood, to the height at which his shoulders touched the curtains, and his flannel vests were covered with bloody scabs at the place of the shoulders. This is what I pointed out to the Daughters of Mary when I used to bring them the Good Father’s linen for laundering.”

In the course of his long career, Brother Dumontet exercised the functions of director of Clairac, Réalmont, Chalabre, Servian, and Gensac. Then he fulfilled the functions of sacristan in Paris and in Bordeaux. Finally, he spent the last years of his life at the École Sainte Marie of Caudéran, where he died at an extreme old age.

Formed to virtue from his early childhood by the Founder, he was, wherever he went, a model of edification. “It can be said,” writes one of those who knew him well, “that all his life was a succession of acts of vehement zeal in the interests of the glory of God and of the salvation of his neighbor. No one could come away from him without having heard some burning words of edification regarding our Lord and the ever blessed Virgin.”

Early in his life, at a time when frequent Communion was still rare, even in religious communities, Brother Justin Dumontet showed himself faithful to daily Communion. As sacristan, he was rewarded for his respect and his piety in the care of the altars. He had a special gift for preparing the children for First Communion and at the Madeleine in Bordeaux, he devoted himself with zeal to the little Auvergnats. Brother Justin Dumontet has left very precious souvenirs of the Founder’s life.

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731 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, March 4, 1834

My dear son—I have received the bill of exchange for a thousand francs from Paris, which you sent me very opportunely. Some hours after its reception, I had a sure and convenient way of sending it to Bordeaux. I am thanking you for the promptness you put into the execution of my request.

Brother Mémain has just arrived from Bordeaux. I had your letter of last February 18 sent to him. We were not able to say a word about our financial affairs. He is on the eve of passing an examination for his Certificate for the higher degree of primary teaching. He is all absorbed. The fate of the establishment of Agen is depending upon it, after a fashion. But I have just received a letter from M. Auguste, which announces that he has just terminated a negotiation of fourteen thousand francs with M. Pommez, which will be mortgaged on the Razac mansion for seven years. In this way, M. Auguste will have Father Bardenet's mortgage on the same house lifted and some debts in arrears will be paid to M. Pommex in bills of exchange.

I found that the letter you wrote Brother Mémain was not as consoling as the one you wrote me, but I shall come back on the both of them once the affairs of the establishment of Agen have been put in order, if indeed they can be, considering how long they have been unsettled.

Anyhow, I shall send you a power of attorney, to sell the selections detached from the domain of St. Remy, replacing them later on by other sections adjoining the domain. Also do your best with regard to the sale of the little property bought last year from MM. Nicot and Gobillot.

I am writing to Brother Lassigne, but I am sending the letter to Father Meyer. When Father Meyer decides that he really has the sentiments of a true religious, I shall send an obedience to have him come to the ecclesiastical novitiate of the Madeleine. You are quite right in not liking to employ young men who have not had any novitiate, and above all, young men who are already somewhat old: Brother Lassigne is thirty-two years old.

It is good, my dear son, that you tell me all you know about Father Fontaine and the other inmates of the château, but you must watch yourself when you speak to Father Lalanne. If you always tell him of Father Fontaine's inexperience and that of the other teachers, then he will consider himself rigorously necessary, and from that—etc. You grant to everyone good will and it really seems that everyone has it. You attribute everything that happens to the lack of experience. Doubtless, Father Fontaine has not consummate experience, nor have any of the teachers, but it is not entirely true that he is without any experience. The fact is that this boarding school is a very difficult one to conduct. All those concerned must rather be encouraged than blamed. I have written to everyone in general and several in particular, as to Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine and Brother Chopard, in a quite detailed manner. I hope that, little by little, everything will get into shape and things will turn out much better than before. Perhaps, progress will hardly be perceptible at first, but being real, the whole house will be taking on another tone.

My dear son, the ground which is given over to the outdoor relief map of France must be considered lost. Father Lalanne thinks a lot of this map, prizes it highly, and he gives

very good reasons for doing so. We shall see by what follows if practice can correspond to theory.

You say nothing to me about Brother Athias. Is he cured? Father Lalanne hopes to have in him a master of horticulture whom he will want as teacher in the secondary boarding school. He is leaving agriculture to the primary boarding school, as it belongs there more expressly.

I have promised Brother Chopard to write to you in favor of his father, and in fact I greatly recommend him to you. It would seem that the relative his father is staying with would keep him for two hundred francs a year. Combine everything with his son and perhaps he might be kept for somewhat less. You are surprised that I should be speaking to you of such generosity, considering our distressful condition; but I am quite persuaded that alms well understood never impoverished anyone. I have even known persons who gave more abundant alms precisely when they were threatened with ruin and who really retrieved their losses.[1]

* * * *

An unfaithful religious summoned Father Chaminade to court to obtain from him indemnities he was not entitled to. It will be seen by the following letters with what calmness and disinterestedness the Founder answers this unjustified attack.

732 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, March 7, 1834

My dear son—Yesterday I received a call to appear before the Justice of the Peace of Amance, from M. Deshayes. I am sending you the very call and, in the other part of this letter, my power of attorney to represent me before the tribunal of the Justice of the Peace. . . . It is quite a simple affair: one must present our case in such a manner that it cannot be contested in any one of its particulars, at least reasonably. If M. Deshayes does not want to take the case before the Justice of the Peace, there will be no conciliation. We must then await a new summons before the civil tribunal. We must never attack, as there is only self-defense; and this one defense, is, for the most part, your case itself. . . .

I wrote you, three or four days ago, quite a long letter. I am now renewing the token of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

[1] Father Chaminade is no doubt making allusion to his brother Louis. He wrote about Louis at the time of his death: “Providence visibly came to his help during his exile in Spain. He did not squander his means of existence. If he seemed in difficult straits, his pious stratagem was to redouble his alms.” (Autographical Notes, in view of the funeral discourse for Louis Chaminade by Brother David Monier.)

To hasten the liquidation of the Society's debts, Father Chaminade understood that the regularization of the economic order of each house was the first priority. He provides for it by the following ordinance.

733 – TO THE DIRECTORS AND STEWARDS OF THE SOCIETY

Agen, March 15, 1834

ORDINANCE REGARDING BOOKKEEPING IN THE SOCIETY OF MARY

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary, continuing to simplify and rectify the temporal administration of the Society of Mary, and desiring to reduce it to the greatest possible uniformity, have ordered and do order what follows:

Article 1. All the accounts of expenses and receipts in our diverse establishments will be checked and settled within a month, that is to say, by April 15, 1834. The balance of the accounts will be made and brought, each month, to the debit and credit sides of the journal, which are dealt with in Article 3.

Article 2. The prohibition of other expenses besides those already authorized in each establishment—whether for food, clothing, furniture or needed repairs—is hereby renewed. Every expense other than those just mentioned must be authorized by the General Administration.

We do not include in this article the expenses that are the concern of the communities.

Article 3. There will be kept, in each establishment, three kinds of books or copy-books, which can be joined or separated as the Heads prefer. The first, called Journal, will register all receipts and expenses day by day and without blanks.

The second, call the Great Book, will open a particular account in the name of each supplier or house with which the establishment has dealings. The Head or steward of the establishment will have a special little copy-book, in the name of the various suppliers, which he will present to the latter, so that they may themselves sign the account of the articles they furnish, with the date and the month. The Head or steward of the establishment will, each week, transfer the signature of the above-mentioned suppliers into his Great Book, at the corresponding name.

A third, called Book of the Inscription of the Pupils, will open a particular account for each paying pupil—day-pupil, half-boarder, or boarders—in which all the furnishings made to the pupil will be registered, as also the receipts or payments made for or by him.

There will also be kept, in each establishment, a copy-book in which there will be kept a particular account for each subject of the Society, in which all manner of furnishings, expenses, receipts, or payments made will be registered in their proper place.

And an account for all furniture, community linen, etc., etc.

Article 4. The present Ordinance is confided for execution to our General Assistant for Temporalities.

Given at Agen, March 15, 1834, under our seal and countersigned by our private secretary.

* * * *

A new letter of direction to Father Chevaux, whom the Founder spurs on and encourages in the midst of his difficulties. Some counsels regarding ordinations will be noted with interest.

734 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, April 14, 1834

My dear son—Father Lalanne wrote me on the seventh of the current month. "Already a long time ago I asked Brother Chopard for compositions by his pupils. I wrote him three different times to repeat my request. No answer. I have no prospect of receiving anything. I sent him very detailed instructions to communicate to the teachers of the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. It seems that they had absolutely no knowledge of these. I beg of you to use your authority so that I may finally obtain what I am asking for, with the most perfect right." Find out, I beg of you, with Brother Chopard, why he has not answered Father Lalanne and why he has not sent him what was requested. Tell him to get on the job immediately and directly, if he has not already done so by the time this letter reaches you.

In general, my dear son, I do not have from St. Remy prompt and sufficiently circumstantial answers so as to be well informed about everything. I have been waiting, for example, from day to day, to know if you are all in agreement about keeping your boarders according to the views of the Society of Mary. I have good reason to think that the labors of the Easter season must have left you little time to write. But then, why not ask one of the teachers to do so?

I have just reread your letter of March 9. With reason, you complain to see the older boys get together during the recreations, not just to amuse themselves, etc., etc., and you ask me: "What is to be done?" Well, my dear son, how is it that you have not placed this same question before the Lord himself in prayer? How is it, that, according to my letters, you have not repeated the question to each one of the teachers in particular or to all of them collectively? Most certainly, you would have had an answer. Do you believe you have well accomplished the duties of a missionary superior by merely sighing over the evil you see and bemoaning your ignorance or your incapacity? Most certainly the good Lord will not refuse you his lights and his graces, so as to fulfill worthily the functions he has given you. What I am saying to you, I am saying to Father Fontaine: Take courage, my dear son,

put your confidence in God and act. Rather, act well through your confrères rather than simply by yourself.

The reading of the long letter that I wrote to you as Master of Novices,[1] might be useful for several of the teachers, for in it you have, as it were, the subject-matter of the principles to be talked over with them.

On the twelfth of March, you asked me if you were to send some ecclesiastics for ordination at Easter time. If I had written at the time your letter arrived, my answer would not have reached you before the ordination. In good faith, my dear son, do you believe that this is the way to act toward those destined for ordination? Did I not already tell you, last year, that they were first to be submitted to an examination before being sent? And that, with the proof of sufficient capacity, I was to be sent a clear attestation of their religious conduct?

Generally, at each ordination, each one of those who are to participate, is to bring to it an altogether special interior preparation. I am saying an altogether special preparation, as for the reception of a sacrament, a sacrament which is to imprint a special character. The more they are religious, the more they will feel the importance of this preparation. For the lack of this preparation at the time of the ordinations, the devil ordinarily lays snares in which those destined for ordination, as well as those who send them, are caught. He causes certain scruples in the candidates. Their directors think them very deeply impressed. The former become blinded as to their own dispositions and, as it were, go to ordination through obedience. How then can they receive the graces of the Sacrament?

Carefully look into the matter, my dear son! I would not want you to become scrupulous yourself, but I should want that your direction be enlightened by the lights of faith. The scruple is but a weakness of the mind and often as illusion on the part of the prince of darkness.

I am stopping here. This letter has been already several days in the making. During all this time, I have been considerably interrupted. Receive my very tender embraces.

* * * *

Nevertheless, in Bordeaux, the yoke of a financial dependence is beginning to weigh upon Father Lalanne, as such a thing had already weighed on him at St. Remy, and Father Chaminade is obliged to recall to him once more the principles of religious dependence.

[1] Letter 728.

735 – TO FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Agen, April 18, 1834

I shall not make you wait, my dear son, for my answer to your letter of the fifteenth of the present month. I am answering it immediately.

You say in the beginning: “The future is worrying me!” In general, the wise man ought to bother about it. The Christian bothers about it, but without concern. The first religious Heads are also to bother about it, not for themselves precisely, but for the social bodies they are in charge of though always without anxiety and concern.

You add: “Confidence in the providence of God does not exclude, as you know, the cautions of human prudence, because prudence is also a providence of God.” It is very true that confidence in the providence of God does not exclude the cautions of human prudence, and that prudence is also a providence of God, provided that this human prudence remains always submitted to supernatural prudence just as human reason is always to be subject to faith. It is only under this relationship that human prudence may be looked upon as a providence of God.

Second consideration. “From another point of view,” you say, my dear son, “the Society does not seem to me constituted in such a manner that I may abandon myself blindly to its administration in matters of responsibility.” The totality of your letter gives me to understand that you are referring to temporal matters or matters of bookkeeping. Here, at first glance, you would seem to be in contradiction with yourself. The manner in which the Society is constituted discharges you of all responsibility as regards bookkeeping.[1]

“All well considered,” you add, my dear son, in the second paragraph. “I find myself in danger of engaging myself here in a rash enterprise, in charging myself with the boarding school.”

If the “all well considered” contains only the two considerations that you mention at the beginning of your letter, I can see no danger in directing and having the boarding school prosper. Where could there be, in the present case, the rashness of such an enterprise? I do not see that you are taking on any engagement other than that of doing well what you are doing, doing it, that is to say, in the best way you can, with the means you have, which are not marvelous. . . .

“There would be,” you say, “means to escape, but if I am to find obstacles on your side, I don’t think that I am permitted to count on miracles.”

[1] Inasmuch as the bookkeeping of the houses is subject to the superiors.

I imagine that there is more coherence in your ideas than in the laconic expressions with which you express them. Whatever the case may be, I have never doubted that you would succeed with the few means at your disposal or with those we can yet provide for you. I acknowledge to you that in this matter I have always considered the blessing of God to be understood or taken for granted, because without this blessing all our attempts, however reasonable they may be, will produce nothing of any real worth, in the views of religion and of the Society of Mary. You will never find obstacles on my part, insofar as you do not ask for anything which, in conscience, I cannot grant. And as regards the latter, you are to believe with simplicity that God does not desire such and such a thing, since he puts such and such an obstacle in its way. You don't believe, my dear son, that it is permitted for you to count on miracles. Without doubt, in the ordinary course of things, we do not act, nor should we act, as if counting on miracles. That would be tempting God. But when we labor at a work which is in the ordinary course of his providence and in the order of our state, it is surely permitted to us, if obstacles arise, to count on the special protection of God, which protection may well appear to us to be miraculous. We can count on this special protection, when what we are doing is specially asked of us by someone who does it with perfect right.

You would like from me some explication about my final intentions and, the more surely to obtain them, you ask me two questions:

First: "Do you mean that M. Auguste should place at your disposal the product of the sale of the property of the departed M. Lapause,[1] or will he distribute this sum in agreement with me, in such a way as to leave me no pressing debts and to provide me with a reserve of at least ten thousand francs?" This first question is answered by the arrangement you yourself have made with M. Auguste and which I have signed.[2] Unexpectedly, the imperious and shameful debt of M. Latour has turned up.[3] M. Auguste admits the necessity of paying this debt and will not be made a fool of because of it. Payment will be made but in a different way. In consequence, I have given orders for the sale of different objects. If taken together these do not produce the necessary sum, very little more will be needed. I have no doubt we shall have means of entirely liquidating it, but patience is necessary.

Second: Will the temporal administration be directly or indirectly dependent upon the Head of the boarding school? I am always of the same opinion and I cannot have any other, since there must be only one master in a house and he is the one who is to hold and control the purse strings."

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[1] The property of Saint-Loubès, bequeathed to the Society by M. Lapause.
[2] See Letter 709.
[3] A loan of twenty thousand francs, contracted for six years on July 22, 1828, with mortgage on Father Chaminade's goods, the maturity of which was near. The creditor imperiously required the reimbursement.

The temporal administration falls very directly to the Head of the boarding school; but this temporal administration, in the Society of Mary as in all kinds of societies, both civil and religious, cannot be arbitrary. There can be but one master in the same house, but since this house is but a fraction of the Society, it must be administered in union and concord with the other houses, which also have their Heads, who are masters in the same way in their respective houses. It matters little whether or not the boarding school Head or the Master, as you prefer, likes to hold the purse strings and really holds them, or, for greater commodity, he has them held materially by another, because morally speaking he is always expected to be holding them. He has even the duty to open or to have opened the purse, so as to get an account of it for himself and also to be able to give an account to the General Administration.

At this time you finally tell me that "you needed a clerk for your temporal affairs and not a foreman." I believe I answered you that the one who is to replace M. Auguste is to be neither. He cannot be, purely and simply, your clerk, since he is that for the Society. Neither is he your foreman, since you are the master—master to command, not arbitrarily, but according to the principles of the Constitutions and of all constitutions of societies.

You apply, my dear son, to the Head or boarding school Master in the Society the principles of isolated or secular Heads or boarding school Masters. Doubtless, these last are masters to use or to abuse what is theirs, without anyone else having the right to oppose them or to interfere, but can it be so in any kind of society? The associate, head of a department of the society, has cared of the interests that are common to the entire society. It is then necessary that the society be able to interfere to see that its interests are properly handled and care for, and that, according to the conventions of the society. However, *a fortiori*, one must reason more rigorously in a religious society. The Heads, from the Superior General down to the last of the religious—if indeed we may speak of a last one—have nothing of their own. They are masters of nothing; they may dispose of nothing arbitrarily. If they have charge of goods, revenues, etc., it is only as stewards. Every purely arbitrary use is a real abuse, for which they are responsible, not only to the Society, but before God to whom all goods have been consecrated. Still, a use that might be made in virtue of a discretionary power must not be taken as an arbitrary use. You know very well what we understand by discretionary power and when it may be used.

I have no further intention, my dear son, but that which I have always manifested and I have never manifested any other but the one conformable to established principles. If we abandon the principles, we lose everything. If I strayed from them at St. Remy, it was, as I have repeatedly told you, for the necessity of avoiding a greater evil and for the blessing of peace, but our procedures were very irregular. You recall in your letter these miserable discussions, and I thought your illusion entirely dissipated. It seems to you that to do good, one has to be independent and entirely so. You are greatly mistaken. Furthermore, are we to seek to do good that is more than God demands of us? The best of servants is the one who limits himself to doing what his master wants. Let us hold to our slogan: *Servus Christi, filius Mariae*.

Let us strengthen more and more, my dear son, the links which bind us. Well united, we can do great things and always we shall save ourselves. As a sign of this union, I am embracing you with fatherly love.

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736 – TO FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Agen, May 5, 1834

I am surprised that you believe that I want to make you responsible for all the debts of the boarding school and that, at a time when I am making the greatest efforts to free M. Auguste Perrière from them. In no case, my dear son, will you be able to be responsible for any debt of the boarding school, either now or in the future.[1]

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While he was restraining Father Lalanne so as to prevent him from opening new abysses, Father Chaminade was ingenious in filling up the old ones and roused Brother Clouzet for this task, whom he considered too slow for so urgent an enterprise.

737 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 7, 1834

My dear son—You were represented before the Justice of the Peace.[2] Had you yourself been summoned? Or were you there only as my agent? Was M. Deshayes also there? What was the result of the court session? You say nothing to me about these questions.

My dear son, in response to that part of your letter in which you make known to me your worries about the departure of Brother Bouveret, I am writing Brother Gaussens. Perhaps he will understand the duties he has to accomplish. Among the young men under your influence, are there not any with talent for teaching and a real vocation? I leave it to your prudence either to seal or to leave unsealed my letter to Brother Gaussens.

I imagine that the novices transferred from the château to your community are the Brother novices. It would, perhaps, have been well to transfer the ecclesiastical novices also, to preserve them from the bad examples they may receive from the teachers. The real religious spirit leaves very much to be desired among the teachers of the château, if it has ever really existed. Each one taken separately, nevertheless, seems to have good will.

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[1] By this declaration, Father Chaminade doubtless took it for granted that Father Lalanne could never be declared personally responsible for the debts of the St. Marie Boarding School. He had no intention at all of dispensing the St. Marie Boarding School from honoring the obligations which weighed upon it since the acquisition of the Razac Mansion in 1825 and which were naturally to accompany the transfer to the abbey of Layrac in 1835. This clearly stands out from the correspondence of the time. It was, nevertheless, the proposition given precedence by Father Lalanne in 1840 when, finding himself at bay, he could not meet the interest on the mortgage debts of the Razac Mansion, and this proposition won out in the court sentence of 1844.

[2] See Letter 732.

The Revolution reports, which you speak about, may well momentarily hinder the sale negotiations, but probably not to any serious extent. Whatever the case may be, if you don't manage the present liquidation more actively, we shall expose ourselves horribly. Through the sale of the trust of nearly ten thousand francs of the MM. Armenaud, through a negotiation of fourteen thousand francs with M. Jules Pommez and through some other resources, we have warded off the most urgent payments. M. Auguste has improved his credit somewhat. He manages to get through by borrowing from some friends who have not yet lost confidence in him. But, is that liquidating oneself? Some suppliers serve the boarding school under Father Lalanne's name without having as yet received any money—only deferred payment for three months. M. Auguste has just visited me in Agen. The accounts with the small suppliers which it is urgent to settle, amount to 2.883,30 francs. I am not speaking of the running accounts. Marguerite Cotin's bill for eggs and poultry, settled by M. Auguste, amounts to 407,60 francs. I leave it to you to determine what a bad effect such debts produce and also how much the suppliers must take advantage of them. I still continue to have confidence that we shall yet become masters of the situation. In putting together all our means, we can do so without a miracle, with our wholehearted activity aided by the protection of Providence. But what causes me sorrow, is that, up to the present, there doesn't seem to me to be real union and an active enough interest to really succeed. Brother Mémain, sometimes allowing himself to be all taken up by different kinds of affairs, does not follow up this matter with the activity it calls for. And you also, no doubt preoccupied as he is with a great number of affairs, perhaps even worried by the payment of debts which have fallen on your shoulders, give very few details. There is much that is vague in the hopes that you put forth. Nevertheless, bills and promissory notes, so to say, rain down upon us from month to month.

Here you have, my dear son, what I think should be done. I have shared my ideas with M. Auguste and he left satisfied. For more than two months, he has been asking me to be freed from the bookkeeping, but he willingly resumed charge of it until the vacation. The most important settlements will surely be made at this time.

Here then are our means of liquidation. We have few establishments which today do not seem to offer us any resources. But what resources? By my ordinance of last March 7[1] all past bills are to be settled, the books of each establishment closed, all extraordinary expenses checked, etc. Brother Mémain did not believe, and rightly so, that it was up to him to have the said ordinance sent to you, without any model as to the keeping of accounts—with the intention of later coming to an understanding with you and finishing up in Bordeaux. I have reason to think that all your books are in order and that, in a very short time, you will be able to give an account of the state of your finances.

Supposing the knowledge of all the resources, a few of the Heads would make promissory notes for rather large amounts to the order of M. Auguste. They could come due sometime in the future, when they could reasonably expect they could meet their

[1] He wants to say the fifteenth of last March.

obligations. M. Auguste would negotiate these notes by signing them. The Heads who would have furnished them and who would not think themselves in a position to honor them at the time of their maturity would notify M. Auguste about it, so that he would not leave them in suspense. This is acting in such a way as to put a really hearty interest and order into this matter. The past Easter I was conversing with the Head of the small establishment at Noailles, where there are thirty boarders on rather moderate tuition charges. He thinks that with this small number of boarders, he would get a reserve of some four thousand francs.

There are two debts, each for twenty thousand francs—one from M. Latour and the other from M. Loze—which are both soon to be paid. You have their dates in the accounts that have been sent to you. It is hoped that we can have the last one renewed, but the first is rigorously required. The property of St. Loubès was as good as sold for thirty-five thousand francs, but the buyer's notary told him that the property did not have this value, and so the affair has been halted. Although the sale of this property is expected to pay other debts, we would have to pay M. Latour in the meantime, as this debt is doing us the greatest harm.

My dear son, put the greatest interest in this matter of liquidation. I shall aid you myself or have you aided to the best of my ability. You have said nothing to me about the wood cutting at Marast, and still the time for this wood cutting has passed. Give me, as promptly as possible, a sufficiently precise and detailed answer on which a certain determination can be made, whether for the present or for the future. You could also send some bills payable to order of M. Auguste, in the sense I referred to above.

I shall close by telling you a word about the remainder of the letter I am answering. I shall try to stop the miserable custom of taking trips and of the Easter vacations and even of the extended vacation for the teachers. I have begun to write Father Lalanne about it. You will recall what I said to you of John, the cook, when he left for St. Remy under Father Lalanne's direction.

I really believe that the novitiate would be better in Marast than at St. Remy; but we are not at present in a position to make this transfer, both because of the expenses which prudence does not permit us to make and because we lack the subjects needed to direct a novitiate. We must rigorously cease all expenses for the maintenance of what already exists.

May the Lord, my dear son, accord you wisdom and courage! Kindly receive my tender embraces!

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Having decided to use all his energy to liberate the Society, Father Chaminade signed, two days after the preceding letter, a confidential Circular, destined to interest the principal Directors in this vital question.

738 – CONFIDENTIAL CIRCULAR TO THE HEADS OF THE PRINCIPAL ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY

Agen, May 9, 1834

Already, my dear sons, I have let you catch a glimpse of a great pecuniary difficulty or financial embarrassment in the central Administration of the Society. You have possibly been surprised at its great length. Out of consideration for one of the first members of the Society, I have not revealed to you its main cause. Today, however, in all confidence, I want you to know all about it.

About the year 1825 I bought the Razac Mansion, and it took me ten years to pay for it in full. The St. Marie Boarding School was transferred there, and suitable repairs were made so it could receive pupils, and it was expressly understood that no other renovations would be made other than what was absolutely necessary. Unknown to me and in spite of every prohibition, major renovations were made, renovations badly conceived and at exorbitant prices. To meet the situation, the Head of the boarding school borrowed money everywhere. The supplier's bills increased to such an extent that there was no way of meeting them—the meat bill alone went up to about ten thousand francs—and the Head found himself entirely at the butcher's mercy. Still today, 407,60 francs are due the egg and poultry merchant, and that without counting the current bill.

In the first years, the Head of the boarding school used to help me with the upkeep of the novitiates; but that did not amount to much, and I even received varying amounts from him. Weighed down by the burden of his debts and seeking to justify them, the Head of the boarding school claimed that these donations were the cause of his awful financial deficit. From this moment on, it was agreed that he would no longer furnish anything to any house, and whatever profits he would make would serve to cover his deficit.

The boarding school became less prosperous. The high interest rates to be paid for his negotiations not only left him no profit at all but augmented the deficit year by year. He asked to be retired. I replaced him and consented to pay all the debts made in his name. The figure is frightening.

Do not ask, my dear sons, if he should not have himself, in conscience, paid off his own debts. This matter concerns him before God, just as do several others. But since he was assigned by the Society, he was supposed to act only in and for its interests. I thought that it was a matter of honor and delicacy on our part to pay all his debts. They have all been definitively settled as of the end of last October, by the general Head of Temporalities.

The liquidation has been started since this time. I am selling everything we can spare, and, in spite of all this, we are still very far from covering the deficit. The thought came to me, before God, to make an appeal to the Heads of our principal establishments and to invite them to get together with the general Head of Temporalities to discuss

whatever means might be at their disposal to throw into this deficit anything that could possibly come into their hands. With God's blessing upon our united efforts, we shall be able, I hope, to free ourselves in a rather short time.

The Lord is afflicting us in many ways. In his holy presence, let us draw profit from all our sorrows and worries. And yet, may nothing shake our confidence and fidelity! It is in the depth of contradictions and of tribulations that the works of God prosper, are purified and consolidated.

Receive now, my dear sons, the assurance of my tender and sincere devotedness.

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The following letter, addressed to Father Chevaux, contains directions relative to the projects of the brothers Baillard in Sion-Vaudémont, as regards what conduct to follow in the face of the spirit of discontent and different cases of conscience relative to the ministry of confession.

739 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, May 13, 1834

My dear son—I received your letter of last April 27 and to do it justice, (1) I am sending you an answer to Brother Chopard. He wrote me on April 26. You will do well to seal his letter before giving it to him. Of course, you should first read it yourself; (2) I was going to send you a letter for the teachers when I received their answer to the letter I wrote them about the end of last Lent. I shall write them later.

I have your three letters before me, but I shall begin with the one of May 6. You will answer Father Baillard, pastor of Favière,[1] "that, on the communication you made to me regarding the object of his letter, I told you to welcome with joy the two subjects he proposes to you as the first fruits of Lorraine, perhaps two young plants worthy to be planted in the nursery of the mountain of Sion. If the projected establishment—which will certainly be realized, since the matter is being conducted with zeal and prudence—would, nevertheless, not happen to succeed, the Society of Mary would not be able to sing in Sion the praises of its august Patroness. If the two young men, following a good novitiate, came to the point of taking engagements, then we would not be able to grant them a refund. Father Baillard would very easily see the reason: the lowest rate of tuition was two hundred francs per head per year, without including their bare upkeep; if their parents are too poor to pay this small sum, I think that the protectors of the projected establishment will easily make up for it. If our circumstances were other than what they are, we would not have

[1] See Letter 713.

made this observation." The studies of these young men will concern primary education. The novices, although very much distinct from the boarders, are to go to their classes.

Brother Clouzet has not yet written me about the young men from St. Loup.

If the young ecclesiastic sent by Father Meyer is the young Marchand, already at Courtefontaine for a year, he seemed to me to be a "minus habens," not having enough talent to continue his classes with any advantage in view of the priesthood, and I doubt very much that he has enough for primary education. You will see what might be done with him as a lay religious.[1]

In several of your letters, you speak to me of a general discontent, but you tell me nothing either about the cause or about its principal elements. You seem, nevertheless, to indicate it, but in an insufficient manner, in saying that some do not seem to know how to put limits on their desires. I imagine that you are talking about the discontent of the religious and not of the boarders. How is it that you have not sought to discover who first gave signs of it? Discontent is an epidemic which must be attended to. Might the discontent not come from Brother Clouzet's economies? The latter surely makes them only as part of the duties of his charge. This he has as an imperative duty, first of all, so as not to stray from the spirit of the religious state, and so as not to put others in a condition to fail in the same way; but also because he is strongly urged thereto by my special letters, as well as by two circulars which he will communicate to you. The last is a general one, addressed to all the heads of establishments, while the other is altogether confidential. In my answer to the teachers, I said a few words to them about it. They would be greatly in the wrong were they to lay the blame at Brother Clouzet's door.

In rereading your letter of April 27, I understand that Brother Chopard has contributed much toward the discouragement of the other teachers. It would have been good, from the first time that you noticed it, to speak to him about it quite seriously in private. You might also have taken notice of it, since neither you nor Father Fontaine were receiving expressions of support from him. In the answer I am sending him there is no sign of my having been informed by you, so as not to overwhelm him. Do not be discouraged. Your little rapport with the teachers may well result, not only from your defects, but much more so from their defiance and their dispositions. The defiance or lack of confidence shown you naturally tends to restrain your heart. Go right ahead. Do all you can, interiorly adoring the Lord's designs.

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[1] Brother John Baptist Marchand, (1801-64) did not justify Father Chaminade's fears. Born at Esserval-Combe, he entered the Society in Courtefontaine in 1833, made his profession the following year and was employed as professor and director in the schools of Moissac, Agen, Clairac, Salles, and Villeneuve d'Aveyron. He spent the last years of his life in retirement at Réalmont. "You know," wrote his director, "how his fervor, his regularity, his devotedness have edified the Society." In delicate health, tried by malarial fevers, he never complained, always showed himself amiable in conversations, and seemed visibly happy when he could render some kind of service to the Brothers.

M. Lassigne will come to Bordeaux only when we can be morally assured that he has a truly religious vocation.

If the young man you speak of were sincerely repentant and had been well disposed before his falls, he would have to be admitted provisionally. You would have to write me about his conduct, awaiting my reply before employing him in teaching. Nevertheless, keep him occupied according to his talent.

I am now coming to your letter of April 22. The ordinary absolution of censures, which is found in the formula of absolution, suffices in the case proposed. I suppose that this was your intention. I take it for granted that you have given your penitent to understand well the censure he had incurred.

It had been decided, at the beginning of the year, that, on the first possible occasion, young Benedict Meyer would be sent to Bordeaux rather than to Courtefontaine, where his older brother seemed to want to have him. The young man seemed altogether satisfied. It is very annoying that passions have prevailed and that he fears as much today to go to Bordeaux as he had desired it at the end of the vacation. Do everything that depends upon you to bring him back to virtue.

I have never believed, my dear son, that it was possible to settle upon a general method of direction with regard to bad habits. The application of the absolution must be left to the confessor's prudence. It is certain that the confessor may not give the absolution to his penitent if he does not believe him sincerely and sufficiently penitent. A first time, he can more easily believe in the resolutions and efforts of his penitent, when the latter has spent, without falls, periods two and three times longer than those which formerly intervened between his sinful acts. However if a relapse follows shortly after the absolution, then the confessor has reason to believe that his penitent was not converted, that his contrition was insufficient. In that case, the confessor's test period must be longer, and the penitent's efforts must be more evident. If the penitent again repeats his falls, the test period must become still longer and more serious, as must the works of penance on the part of the penitent. When contrition is supernatural and supreme, relapses are few and far between.[1]

Work, my dear son, so as to advance in mental prayer, for it is there that you will derive the courage, the strength, and all that is necessary for you.

Continue, my dear son, to work at the formation of your novices. You have done well to unite them to the second community.[2] There, they will be more recollected and will not

[1] It will be noticed how Father Chaminade, in this delicate matter, avoids all absolute statements and leaves all to the prudence of the confessor. Concerning the application of the principles in the case of old offenders, the rules he applies are those of the best moralists of the time, e.g., Gousset, who propagated the doctrines of St. Alphonsus Ligouri in France.

[2] The Community of working religious.

have before their eyes the habits of the teachers, so frequently disedifying and so lacking in true religious tone.

Obedience alone will cure Brother Perchet of his scruples. He will have to be given a little rule of conscience and accustom himself to follow the decisions of his spiritual director, as if they were divine oracles.

May the Lord, my dear son, grant you his light and his peace!

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Father Benedict Meyer, who was just mentioned, born in Eguisheim on March 19, 1815, was the brother of Father Leo Meyer, who introduced the Society to America and younger than he by fifteen years.

Toward the middle of 1827, young Benedict having reached the age of twelve, the pastor of Eguisheim told his parents that he was to prepare himself for his First Communion. To the great surprise of all, the child answered that he did not want to perform this great act in Eguisheim, that he needed a place of greater recollection. As he persisted in this desire, his brother Leo, the chaplain of the hospital in Strasbourg, sent for him and confided him to the care of one of his friends, Father Mühe, who spent his entire life in the humble functions of assistant pastor of the Cathedral and died there in the odor of sanctity. One day, when Benedict had gone to the Cathedral, some time before the hour for catechism, a priest came out of the sacristy to say Mass at the altar of our Lady of the Seven Dolors. The child approached the altar, devoutly heard Mass and, at the elevation, was seized with a thought that never left him: “I have to become a Brother of Mary!”

Returning home, Benedict told his brother of his determination. But who are the Brothers of Mary? Where can they be found? Benedict knew Brother Enderlin, the director of the little School of Ammerschwir, and that was about all. Father Mühe came along. The preceding year, he had met Father Chaminade, then passing through Strasbourg, and had learned from him the existence of the boarding school at St. Remy. Leo then brought his brother to St. Remy. Father Rothéa received him, and Benedict recognized him as the priest whose Mass he had heard in the Cathedral in Strasbourg. (All this is from the Remembrances of Father Benedict Meyer, 1892.)

Benedict made his studies at St. Remy under Father Lalanne, as a postulant and made his first vows in 1833 at Courtefontaine, where he spent the first years of his religious life under the direction of his brother. In 1839, he formed part of the community that opened the house in Fribourg. Two years later, Father Chaminade sent him to Besançon, there to follow the seminary courses and to prepare for the priesthood, which he received in 1844.

In the course of his long career, Father Benedict Meyer led a most active life in the diverse houses of the Society. He directed the boarding schools of Courtefontaine and St. Remy, founded the establishment in Strasbourg (1844), opened the Institution Sainte Marie of Bonaparte Street in Paris (1852), which was to merge with the Little Collège Stanislas; then the Institution Sainte Marie of the Rue de Berry (1856), which was to be transferred to the Rue de Monceau (1863); he started the Cannes Institute Stanislas (1866); he was placed at the head of the houses of formation in Réalmont, Ebersmunster, and Bordeaux; and finally he exercised the functions of Provincial of the Midi (1849-52) and of Alsace (1860-62).

He spent his last years at Ebersmunster (1881) and after the sale of Ebersmunster to the Sisters of St. Mark, at St. Hippolyte (1889) among the retired religious of the Province of Alsace. It is there that he peacefully expired on January 9, 1894.

Father Benedict Meyer was of rather slender build, of commanding appearance and refined manners joined to a great affability. In his religious life, he was a man of faith, of the rule, as was his brother Leo, in whose school he had been trained. Also like him, he had a real veneration for Father Chaminade, whom he had met on several occasions and of whom he has left precious remembrances. From Good Father Chaminade, he had received his tender piety toward the Most Blessed Virgin. “I was struck,” he wrote during his last days, “by the solicitude with which the Good Father, during his visit to St. Remy in 1829, wanted to have several interviews with each of the postulants, even with me, the youngest of all. It is especially a long conference of the Good Father on the Blessed Virgin which impressed me and remained indelibly and deeply engraved in my memory and on my heart. He compared the Blessed Virgin to Rebecca, about as I have read in the *True Devotion* of the Venerable Grignion de Montfort. We must beg of her to wash us, he used to say to us and to clothe us in the garments of her Son, that is to say, in the resemblance to Jesus Christ, so as to present us to the Eternal Father. This idea has served me all my life and almost never, before Communion, and later, before Mass, have I forgotten to say: O Virgin Mary, Mother Immaculate, most humble, most sad, most glorious, supply all that may be wanting to me!”

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740 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 14, 1834

Before yesterday, my dear son, and in a great hurry, I sent you the new summons which M. Deshayes had just had someone give me. I did not have the time to add any reflection. . . . If there should arise some honest method of settlement, I think it would have to be taken, even if we should lose something by the fact. It is to be presumed that he would prefer a settlement by arbitration to a court sentence, in order to avoid the defamation that a court case might involve. For us also, with the times the way they are, a

settlement by arbitration would be preferable, and then some sort of compromise. Give the matter all the attention and wisdom you command.

You have suppressed, my dear son, some superfluous expenses in the secondary boarding school and you have done well. Nevertheless, I have heard that there has been some murmuring on that account. Being able to write a letter to all the teachers at once, without telling them what I had learned, I put in the postscript of this letter what follows: "I have just written a circular to all the heads of establishments[1] to ask them to be in agreement with the General Head of Temporalities, in view of paying an enormous debt which the Society of Mary is burdened with, through the fault of several persons whom charity forbids me to point out by name. You must not be surprised at the economies that Brother Clouzet is trying to put into practice, because of the interest which you have in the Society. You must rather encourage him or at least make the process easier for him. Nevertheless, I should not want anyone to really suffer as a result."

After this, you will find this circular, which you can make known to one or the other community, as you think best. In fact, all the communities must take their part in these economies, and I am hoping that they will do so with a willing and cheerful heart.

I have also written a confidential circular to the heads of our principal establishments.[2] You will also find a copy of it herewith enclosed, and you may communicate it to Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine, so they may know, at least in a general way, the supervisor of the boarding school we were talking about. M. Auguste would not have gone by himself into all these excesses, had he not been pushed thereto by Father Lalanne, but it is M. Auguste who seemed to be acting on his own initiative.

It is said that the town of Vauvillers[3] is quite agitated against the establishment of St. Remy. What might be the cause of this? I can well imagine that you are well aware of what is happening around you. I shall never grow tired of repeating the token of my inviolable attachment.

P. S. Brother Pelleteret wrote me on the ninth of last month. I have not been able to come to him until now. He was telling me, among other things, that he would have more than an ordinary taste for the study, above all, of mathematics and mechanics, that he would have need of it for the perfecting of the farm implements. I am telling him to speak to you about it, that you are in a better position to judge whether he has sufficient aptitude to make rapid enough progress and whether or not this study might be harmful to piety.

(Here Father Chaminade had the confidential Circular of May 9 inserted and he continues:)

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[1] The ordinance of March 15 on bookkeeping.
[2] Circular of May 9.
[3] The town neighboring St. Remy.

I recommend to you, my dear son, the greatest discretion as regards the contents of this circular. You see that I have kept silence for so many years so as not to harm the reputation of the one who has thrown us into such great embarrassment. Nevertheless, do not believe that I have remained an indifferent spectator to such great disorders, without resorting to all kinds of means, either to settle them or to repair their consequences. But all has been to no avail. For one thing, the evil has not been all-pervasive and its cause was but slightly discovered or known. Furthermore, the head, whom you know well, allowed himself to be dragged into this abyss, only by illusion and the counsel of a neighbor,[1] in the pretended interests of the Society. His conduct has otherwise been fairly edifying, and it still is.

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741 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, May 21, 1834

From all that you say, my dear son, about Brother David's relative, I think you can admit him as a postulant, without any other condition than not making him pay tuition, or at least, very little, until he has proved himself and we know whether he is really called to the religious state. During this time, we could see where we could conveniently place his child; or rather, we could send her to Acey[2] as a boarder. While we arrange things for him, we could also do so for the child. But before doing so, it is also good to talk with the child. During his postulate, you will also test his general capacity as well as his intelligence.

I have twice written you by these last mails on the subject of Brother Deshayes. . . . Herewith enclosed is my answer to Brother Marres.

Mme Perrin should never have given money to her son[3] except upon the authorization of his superiors. She could well be certain that he would never be lacking anything essential to his well being. The last trip home without permission, has been very harmful to him, and his too good mother allowed him to travel again before his return to the postulate and furnished him the money for it. He manifests a desire for a change during this month of Mary, but this desire is little supported by practice, remaining pretty much in the wishful thinking stage. It seems he will not delay asking to withdraw. Not that he does not believe himself called to stay in the Society, but because he realizes that he is a habitual subject of scandal to the establishment of Agen. His bad example has produced very annoying effects, although he is otherwise a rather good fellow. I am very much against his entry into St. Remy. I have not dared send him to any establishment, as he himself knows

[1] Father Lalanne.
[2] To the boarding school of the Daughters of Mary.
[3] Postulant of the Society.

and for the same reason. Let Mme Perrin know, while assuring her of my respectful remembrance, these short details. I shall write to her at the end of this month.

I have answered you on the subject of the establishment of Marast. My letter must doubtless have crossed on the way the one I am answering now.

I am rather surprised that you say nothing about the important matter of the liquidation of the Society. This affair, doubtless, must not occupy you exclusively; but it must, so to say, dominate all other affairs. Your mind and heart must find themselves more habitually in its very depths. Not that it is to absorb all the faculties of your soul.

God alone is to absorb them: but if you act exclusively for God, you will never think more of God and you will no longer give Him the token of your fidelity and love but will occupy yourself essentially with him. . . .

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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742 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, June 2, 1834

Your letter, my dear son, stamped in Vesoul on May 22 came to me on the twenty-seventh. You had forgotten to date it. In general, your letters arrive pretty well on time. We shall look into the delay of those that I write to you. Always tell me, if you would be so kind, the exact date on which they arrive.

I have given and I am continuing to give thanks to our Lord and to his august Mother, our patroness and protectress, for having inspired you to write to M. Deshayes and thus to have had a means of terminating our affair with his son, and that without any court procedure. You will, nevertheless, let me know of the final and complete conclusion of this affair.

My dear son, make the expenses you speak of, for they seem to me indispensable, just as they seem so to you.

I would have desired an answer from Brother Gaussens. Perhaps a little correspondence with me on his part would be useful to him.

You are doing well, my dear son, to let me know of the abuses in the temporal administration of the secondary boarding school. I hope they will keep on diminishing. It is morally impossible, in this state of things, for you to settle on the amount of profit to be made from this boarding school. I am going to write Father Fontaine to this effect in greater detail. He is kept in check regarding this up to a certain point by Father Lalanne, and this is one of the reasons for my patience. He has just written to me, and he does not speak about when he is going to get his diploma.

It had not been precisely my intention that you should be in direct agreement with M. Auguste as regards the liquidation, but it is evident that, M. Auguste being in charge of the bookkeeping, it is a lot better that you should be in direct agreement with him than to have everything pass through Brother Mémain's mediation. I am going to send him the very copy of the article in your letter. He will be pleased to get it. Father Lalanne is always trying to break the bonds which prevent him from making excessive expenses, and this is even a

matter of suffering for M. Auguste but one which he can always moderate by saying in a friendly way to Father Lalanne that he wants to have it over with, that the liquidation must take place, etc.

At the moment I was beginning this letter, I received one from M. Auguste, in which he tells me that we need not worry about the twenty-thousand francs to be paid M. Loze, at least by the end of 1835. As regards M. Latour, the same is not the case. He must absolutely be paid around the beginning of next July. It seems that sale of the property at St. Loubès is not supposed to take place before this time, unless we wish to dispose of it at a figure far less than its value. There is then question of finding twenty thousand francs, without counting what is necessary for the payment of bills, which fall due from month to month. M. Auguste has had no little amount of trouble withdrawing this amount for the month of May. As he has friends and some credit still, he is able to get out of difficulties. At the time of his last visit to me, he told me that, if promissory notes were made to him, the name would have little importance and that he could get by more conveniently by negotiating them. I answered him that I objected strongly to the making of so-called pleasure notes, but that some Heads—yourself for example—foreseeing the entries which you can presumptively make, could possibly make some notes in terms more distant than these entries. If there were delays to these entries, M. Auguste would be informed about it, so as to make suitable provision. This method seemed to please him much.

This method has just had a final trial. The younger M. Armenaud made a promissory note of three hundred francs for M. Moulinié. M Mazières made one of the same amount, payable at the same time, next August 15. The latter has made one to the order of M. Auguste Perrière, of one thousand francs to be paid on next September 1. I am going to send it to M. Auguste. Next year, we shall be able to make the promissory notes for much higher amounts. These three establishments[1] made considerable expenditures this year.

Brother Galliot[2] recently asked permission to make repairs, which would have totaled nearly four thousand francs. I withheld my consent, for the reason you will understand. The idea came to me that you could be the financial pivot for the establishments at Courtefontaine, Besançon, and Orgelet. I am not yet speaking of the one at Salins. With the Heads of these establishments, you would see and reckon what they could presumably expect to get. They would make their promissory notes to you and that would increase your means of helping M. Auguste more effectively. Brother Galliot is quite experienced and is a good steward, but I don't know if the misunderstandings which have occurred at Courtefontaine in regard to Brother Bouveret would have somewhat set him against us, i.e., to the extent that he would no longer have confidence in you. These misunderstandings have been the pretense for Brothers Lassigne and Chevassu's withdrawal, and they may also cause Brother Bouveret to withdraw next vacation, when his engagements end.

[1] Villeneuve, Moissac, Lauzerte.
[2] Director of Courtefontaine.

It is not to be doubted that there are some inconveniences in making such promissory notes, but see if, with the precautions that can be taken and which have already been taken, the advantages do not largely make up for the inconveniences: 1) all the establishments are obliged to a great regularity in their accounts; 2) they are taking the habit of economizing and of giving an account of all their receipts and expenses; 3) the liquidation is now taking place far more easily. All this does not prevent some loans from being made, if a favorable occasion can be found for them.

When I have some funds sent to M. Auguste, I shall tell you about it for your guidance, just as you should tell me about everything that you send him directly. It is useless to tell him the thought behind your figures, but for my own guidance, you should tell me about it in the greatest detail.

You should not despair, my dear son, concerning our ending this liquidation. As for myself, I have never had any fear or misgiving, as my confidence in the Lord has never been shaken; but we have to do all in our power, without trouble or anxiety, so as not to be tempting Providence. . . .

Courage, my dear son. I admit that you stand in need of it, and you know the source where you will find it. Go there and draw often. I am obliged, as you can well imagine, to save, often to close my eyes, sometimes to say nothing where there would be something to blame, etc. We are not treating our own affairs but those of our Lord and of his holy Mother. . . .

Receive my tender embraces.

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743 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, June 10, 1834

My dear son—Although your letter of last May 30 does not exactly require an answer, I am glad to talk to you about it a little anyway.

Whether you refuse or grant what is asked of you, always do it gracefully. . . . It has been said that you caused discontent, especially in the town of Vauvillers.

As regards promissory notes, you say, “There are some people who should never have known that money can be procured in this way, or that the Society authorizes, etc.” Is it only in general or through fear that you say this, or do you really know any who should never have known about it? Up to now, I know of only four to whom this has been said, and you and Brother Mémain are of this number. The Society generally does not authorize it, but

it does authorize it in cases of urgent need, according to the strictest principles of morality . . .

It is possible that Brother Perrin has several particular occasions for doing harm in Agen, but it is not these occasions that are the cause of his great irregularity, for this occurred long before these occasions, which have been suspected for only a short time.

Brother Jacquot is writing me a note, which he inserted in Brother Langue's letter, dated the first of the current month. This note, just as the letter, is written in a very good spirit. There is no question of water-places or baths.

You have forgotten, in their own time, to receive the promises of Brother Haas and Martin.[1] You have since thought of making up for it, but the supplement is worthless, from the fact that they have added neither the place, the date, nor the approbation of the text of the promises. . . . Brother Athias is not to be found on any list . . .

I am leaving you now, after having tenderly embraced you.

* * * *

744 – TO BROTHER JUSTIN DUMONTET, VILLENEUVE-SUR-LOT

Agen, June 10, 1834

I was pleased to hear, my dear son, that during the month of March you asked for the spirit of prayer. We shall never do anything in the order of salvation without the spirit of prayer, but with it we can succeed in everything. However, my dear son, you must not content yourself with asking for it—rather be rigorous on the subjects of prayer. If you are really faithful in praying with faith and humility, the temptations against the amiable virtue will weaken little by little, and besides, you will always grow stronger in resisting them.

I shall give you another secret which is almost infallible, especially if joined to the first. It is that of never seeking to do your own will in anything. If you try to put it into practice, you will not be long in realizing the good effects. On this subject, I have seen, as it were, miracles accomplished by this practice and for that, only a little courage is needed. Whatever you wish, my dear son, the cowardly will never enter the kingdom of heaven. I am sure you know it only too well!

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[1] Brother Anthony Haas (1810-84) from Colmar, Working Brother, of great faith and solid piety, of an amiable and jovial character, was pleased to recall the words he had heard from Father Chaminade's lips. He spent his life at St. Remy, St. Hippolyte, and Ebersmunster, where he died piously.

Brother Martin Michael (1813-36) if he is the one referred to here, was from La Chapelle, Jura. He entered the Society in 1833 at Courtefontaine, where he died on Christmas Day during the midnight Mass, shortly after having made his perpetual vows.

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745 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, June 20, 1834

. . . I have received with interest, my dear son, the details you give me about the moral situation at St. Remy. It is somewhat better than I thought. In proportion as zeal increases, everything will improve. Patience is necessary.

With your letter of the seventh of the current month, my dear son, I also received Brother Brunet's to the editor of the *Mentor*. I wrote about it to Father Lalanne, and I left him free to write one to Brother Brunet. I told him that, if he did not do it, I would do it myself. That is where the situation now stands. I do not at all approve this correspondence of Brother Brunet's, and still less the manner in which it is carried on.

I believe that Father Fontaine should have been present at the meeting held by the teachers, in order to be in agreement concerning the answer they were to give. Doubtless, they are to be free, but for the accomplishment of the greatest good, to which they are to be inspired by their Heads. . . . The Council of the Teachers, when well conducted, also tends very much to preserve union of views and sentiments in the direction of the pupils. Do ask Father Fontaine for me, I beg of you, not to let it fall into disuse, but to hold it properly. It will do good and help matters if those questions that are to be treated are foreseen. The very ones who would have some to propose would do well to submit them to him before the council meeting.

Yesterday, I got the idea of going to see you, but it seems to me that the concurrence of my visit with Father Lalanne's would not have a good effect.

Take courage, my dear son. Give yourself into the hands of the Spirit of the Lord. May you no longer depend on anything other than his operations! Always be assured of my sincere attachment!

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746 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 2, 1834

My dear son—I have answered Brother Gaussens' long letter, and I shall learn with pleasure that he has communicated to you the contents of this answer.

You told me, my dear son, that you had sent M. Auguste, on May 20 nine hundred francs, to be cashed in Paris on June 20. I have let him know of your surprise at his non-acknowledgement of its receipt.

I have also written Father Lalanne regarding the news you give me about his letter to Father Fontaine, on the subject of the cession of the St. Marie Boarding School. I am telling him that this news is somewhat inexact, since, on the same date, June 20, I received a letter from Father Fontaine in which there is no mention at all of this news. Nevertheless, you have done well to tell me about it, such as you know it. For my own guidance, I need to know everything; and, I can assure you, there is no lack of difficulties.

My dear son, I had spoken to you about Vauvillers because of another rumor. The Inspector of the Academy, leaving St. Remy, had told the Collège of Vesoul that the establishment in St. Remy was in a state of decadence. Someone, unable to explain what might have led the Inspector to make such a statement, thought it might have come from the pretended discontent of Vauvillers. This statement of the Inspector of the Academy still remains without explanation.

I have reason to think that Father Fontaine, having the same patron as Father Lalanne, will not have thought it his duty to change anything for the celebration of this feast day, and perhaps this is good. Anyhow, there are many abuses in connection with those long walks, and still more so when they take on the character of trips. I hope that, little by little, everything will be regularized.

Father Fontaine writes me for permission to use about fifty francs to sow or plant something in the gardens of the property map, because the products will far outdo this little expense. I answered that I would be of the same opinion as he and that I would shortly write to you about it. In all cases, harmony must be preserved.

Only one real purse is needed. It matters little that Father Fontaine should have several, provided they are only branches of the main one and that the employment of their funds be in conjunction with this one. But always treat Father Fontaine and Brother Prost with mildness, patience, and discretion. Doubtless, be firm, but never stray from the careful practice of these virtues. You will see that, little by little, everything will turn out for the best.

Always put the greatest interest in the Bordeaux liquidation. This thorn, sunk into our feet, prevents us considerably from advancing. Urge M. Auguste to give you the explanations you will need. You well know his apathetic character. I am embracing you tenderly.

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747 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Agen, July 4, 1834

My dear son—Very foolish, says an old proverb, is the one who forgets himself. Would we not merit to have the thing applied to us if, by zeal, we would wear ourselves out in the work of the sanctification of the neighbor, while not working efficaciously enough at our own. Meditation, my dear son, and a good meditation is necessary for us. Always prepare the subject well: *Ante orationem, praepara animam tuam, ne sis sicut homo qui tentat Deum*.

I hope that you will gradually bring back M. G. to his first simplicity and fervor, making him understand the dangers of dissipation and curiosity.

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748 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, July 10, 1834

Your letter, my dear son, includes a great number of views and observations, from which I shall draw the best possible results. You end it by a question, which it is difficult to answer. “In general,” you say, “the teachers have little confidence in me and in Father Fontaine. How can we recover this confidence?” Putting the question this way presupposes that you and Father Fontaine have already had the confidence of the teachers. What are the occasions or particular and principal circumstances that have caused you to lose this confidence? What leads you to talk about it is the circumstance of Brother Langue’s having solicited from Father Fontaine some observations that produced only a bad effect on his mind. Since he is not very reflective, he communicated to the other teachers, by his indiscreet remarks, the weakness he drew from them. From this it evidently follows that Father Fontaine has been imprudent, even supposing that he said nothing but plain truths. The proverb which says: “Not every truth is good to say,” very often has its application. After these few data, it is not very difficult to answer your question. If the confidence has been lost by imprudence, you will recover it, you and Father Fontaine, by a line of conduct that is truly prudent. I could easily believe that Father Fontaine might lose much of the confidence that he has inspired, both by his imprudences and also by a certain presumption, which makes him act without first taking salutary counsel. As regards yourself, I could believe that what makes you lose it is a certain lack of energy, joined to a spirit of uncertainty. The reaction of each on the other must bring about this combination which is far from attracting confidence. I hardly know any natural remedy to this evil, but there are many of the supernatural order and, for you, I am reducing them to two: to good meditations and an entire confidence in your grace of state.

Your zeal, my dear son, must doubtless take into account the needs of all, since they are all given to you as the object of your solicitude. Nevertheless, it would be prudent to exercise it more specially on some of the principal ones, through whom you could more easily reach the others. For example, toward Father Fontaine, toward Brother Clouzet (although you have a different relationship with him), toward Brother Brunet and perhaps also toward Brother Langue. All these must be intimately convinced of the zeal you are exercising, both as to their salvation and to their perfection in the practice of virtue. An ardent charity, which engenders a natural friendship, produces this effect: *Si vis amari, ama*.

Receive, my dear son, the token of my paternal tenderness!

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749 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 20, 1834

I have received, my dear son, a very long letter from Brother Mérigot, dated the seventh of the current month. I would not have thought him capable to explaining himself so well. After having spoken of his interior disorder and of the insufficiency of the means which he finds at St. Remy to put himself back into shape, he describes for me his position relative to his exemption from military service. As things are at present, the least suspicion that will arise to the effect that he is not employed in teaching may well occasion investigations likely to become dangerous to the young man and compromise to your establishment. We have already had such adventures and, among others, one last week which it was very easy to ward off, though requiring great sacrifices. When I say easy to ward off, I hope that is so, because I am not yet sure of it.

We lack, as you know, many teaching Brothers. With a little culture and education, Brother Mérigot might be employed in a small class and at the same time look after the kitchen of a small establishment, but you will be at a loss for a cook. I believe that Brother Guyot, who is at Courtefontaine, is really not necessary there. By yourself, you might be able to find a way of replacing him. In this case, you could send him to me. I would keep him a short time, only to enliven him a little and then assign him to some community.

I am going to send a few words of consolation to Brother Mérigot. Give him some good encouraging words without reproaching him on any score. He is not complaining and his letter shows great submission. All he does is expose his interior and exterior situation.

I am saying no more to you for the time being. Receive, my dear son, this new token of my very tender friendship.

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In the following letter, Father Chaminade finishes the task of acquainting Brother Clouzet with the financial difficulties he is struggling with, without, however, ever losing courage. His last word is always one of faith.

In Alsace, the Rothéa brothers, always poor administrators, have burdened the houses of St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster with heavy debts. Their family, which has contributed some of its money to the acquisition and furnishing of Ebersmunster, and which, on this account, lays claim to some right in intervening in the affairs of the Society in Alsace, wanted the surplus from the other Alsatian houses to be reserved for the building up of St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster. Father Chaminade cannot consent to this.

750 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 23, 1834

Brother Perriguey writes me, my dear son, on the fifteenth of the current month, that you have had the kindness to give him an assistant; but he tells me he feels an insurmountable antipathy toward him. Brother Perriguey wants to work either entirely as porter or entirely in the linen room, it makes little difference to him, and have his assistant work entirely at the other post. However, he tells me nothing against the assistant you have given him. This seems to be a weakness on Brother Perriguey's part. If you see that he is unable to master it, it would seem to me easy to separate the two employments involved.

M. Auguste has given me information about the shipments he made to you of eight thousand francs in money-orders in Paris. You wanted twelve thousand francs to be furnished at the same time, half by Alsace and half by the establishments of the Midi. If this had been possible, we would thus have been clear of M. Latour's entire debt. I remarked to you that there wasn't enough time to carry out these negotiations, but that, in adding two thousand francs, M. Auguste hoped to have a little time for the other ten thousand and, at the same time, I gave him advice to this effect.

As regards Alsace, things are not in the state that you imagine. The Rothéa brothers have done for St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster in a small way what M. Auguste did in a large way for the St. Marie Boarding School. They have gotten into debt with outsiders to the extent of seven or eight thousand francs. I am saying with outsiders, for these two establishments, besides, owed nine thousand francs to the house at Colmar. I remitted the nine thousand francs advanced by Colmar. They asked me to let them have all the savings and surplus they could make during three years at St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, the first of these years being the current one. They were not yet satisfied. They made their

complaints to their family, which was rightly irritated, since they explained matters in their own fashion. I wrote to them later on that their debts would be part of the great liquidation, but in their proper turn. I believed everything settled, because Brother Rothéa wrote to me about his having satisfied all the suppliers of Ebersmunster. I sent him the same confidential Circular that I sent you and, at the same time, I sent the second Circular to all the Heads of establishments. Brother Rothéa saw with displeasure that we wanted to make the four establishments—except Colmar, Ammerschwir, Ribeauvillé, and Sainte Marie aux-Mines—contribute to the liquidation, as he says, of Bordeaux and not allow them their surplus for Alsace, that is to say, for St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster. All their expenses for Ebersmunster have been made unbeknownst to me, and even against my authorization. Anyhow, they have admitted being in the wrong.

When I noticed that Brother Louis Rothéa displayed his bad humor in the establishments, I dispensed him from dealing with the three establishments of Colmar, Ammerschwir, and Ribeauvillé. I also told him that, as regards Sainte Marie aux-Mines, of which he is the Head, he might do as he pleased.

I recommended especially to Brother Coustou, Director of Colmar, the strictest economy and to see, at a rough guess, the returns the establishment could take in, with its presumed expenses. When Brother Rothéa turned over the establishment to Brother Coustou, he left him five francs in the cash box and about four to five hundred francs in debts. When the latter received my last letters, he had just supplied the establishment with linen and other necessities. He promised me all kinds of savings and, a short time after, he had a money-order sent over to me for five hundred francs. I have just written to him that I would give you an idea of the bad humor which had prevented Brother Rothéa from informing him as regards how much he could presumably take in during the year and that I thought that you might be able to go and see him. Colmar is the easiest establishment and one of the most regular, and Brother Coustou most of all. We must pray that the general esteem he is enjoying will not turn his head.[1] Until the present, he has always conducted himself with great modesty and a great mistrust of himself. The little establishment of Ammerschwir, directed by Brother Benedict Enderlin, who is very clever in all that affects the temporal order, and that of Ribeauvillé, have very meager material resources. Nevertheless, they economize as much as they can and always put aside some little amounts in reserve. There you have the condition of Alsace. See what can conveniently be done and how much can be obtained. It is better that one single head should support everything.

For the time being, there is nothing to be done in the Midi. At another time, I shall speak to you of the situation there.

[1] Father Chaminade seems already to have a presentiment of the fate of the young Director of Colmar.

Let us be confident, my dear son, for the Lord will draw us out of all embarrassment in his own good time. He wishes to try us and it is very just that he should do so! Receive, my dear son, the testimony of my inviolable attachment!

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751 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 4, 1834

Your letter, my dear son, left Vesoul on July 24 and came here on the twenty-ninth. I have the idea that Brother Galliot will be able to help you a lot, if he takes the matter sincerely to heart. Do you know the arrangements he made with his family after the death of his father?

I don't think that M. Auguste has reserved the thousand francs for M. Latour, but I have known from Brother Mémain, who lived in Bordeaux, that M. Latour was creating difficulties, so as to receive ten thousand francs. M. Auguste has not yet written me anything on this subject. Possibly, you may know more about it than I. M. Auguste would want to borrow, and so, a new contract, other mortgages! . . . If it were possible to follow the course already taken, most surely we would get out of trouble, economizing everywhere, making in all places only the most urgent repairs, selling what is disposable, etc. The St. Marie Boarding School is about full, but there is need for some expenses, so as to receive a greater number of pupils. Will the secondary boarding school of St. Remy maintain itself? Father Lalanne has finally reconciled himself to the inevitable.[1]

I believe it would be suitable that Brother Brunet still remain at St. Remy. I shall shortly write to this effect.

I have reason to believe, my dear son, that you are willingly making efforts for our liquidation; but to speak frankly, I can hardly believe that you are using all your intellectual means to bring the matter to a successful end. I understand quite well that you are not to put yourself forward indiscreetly, that it is difficult for you to estimate what you will get from the boarding schools, especially from the secondary boarding school in its present situation, and from the property revenues. Accidents can always happen. On July 29 last, an awful storm arose over the parish of St. Loubès. The pending harvest was completely destroyed by hail. Nevertheless, in important affairs, which we wish to settle once and for all, we turn, return, compare, compensate, examine, appreciate, etc. See to it that every kind of effort is made, but always sustained, and I hope that God will accompany it with his blessings.

My dear son, make all the loans necessary to provide for your supplies of wheat and wine, since both are now available at reasonable prices and are of good quality. It will be very difficult to do the same thing in Alsace. The debts of Ebersmunster had left it with a few cents and a house full of people! The boarding school in Bordeaux and the Madeleine

[1] To remain in Bordeaux, because St. Remy was always attracting him. He still had relationships and great influence there. On July 8, he still had written at the end of a rather bitter letter, as regards Father Chevaux: "All the attempts I have made and had to make, in order to come back to St. Remy, have been fruitless. . . ."

kept at St. Loubès the largest portion of their wine supply, and you know how things are. May the Name of the Lord be blessed in all things!

You have done well in reclaiming the two burses and a half which are due you in 1833. Let me know Brother Galliot's answer. Has he gotten his burse and a half?[1]

Receive, my dear son, the expression and assurance of my inviolable attachment!

P.S. I have tried, my dear son, to write to you precisely for the fourth of the current month.[2] Since last evening I have been wishing you, pretty much in all my prayers, a happy feast. I ardently desire your sanctification.

* * * *

752 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Agen, August 5, 1834

Let us work, my dear son, with all our strength at the work of the Lord, but let us not forget ourselves! Let us often recall the counsel of St. Bernard to Pope Eugene, his former disciple: *Concha esto et non canalis*.[3]

* * * *

753 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 13, 1834

My dear son—Your reasoning in regard to Brother Mérigot is entirely correct. I shall write a few words to him in order to console and encourage him. You will do well to have him write a little from time to time, and to have him conduct a little class, as a substitute for some confrère. However little he may write each day, be it only two or three lines, in time he will learn and you and he will have no further worries. We are living in difficult times.

I have also received Brother Marres' complaints. This young man is but little intelligent. With him, certain patience is necessary, one which never grows tired. Otherwise, he looks after the kitchen fairly well. People were well satisfied with him in Gray, but I don't think we can associate him in any way with another cook, as he is not sufficiently prudent and not virtuous enough for anything of this kind. Since you are not satisfied with

[1] This refers to burses, affected by the Departments of the Haute-Saône and of the Jura, to the normal schools of St. Remy and of Courtefontaine.
[2] Feast of St. Dominic, Brother Clouzet's patron.
[3] Be a reservoir and not a channel.

John, you will do well to be rid of him when the boarders are on vacation. Until then, let nothing be said. I shall have the first sheet of Brother Marres' letter sent over to you. Do not let on that you have received it, but favor him with some mark of attention. I shall also write him a few words.

Brother Louis Rothéa and also his brother Xavier[1] seem to be recovering from their prejudices. Here are a few passages from Brother Louis Rothéa's last letter: "The temporal affairs of St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster have considerably improved, thanks to the wise precautions taken in raising the tuition, paying less for provisions, and in the increase in the number of boarders. For the end of the school year, I am looking forward to a profit of about six thousand francs, not counting the two or three thousand that had to be spent during the year on beds, linen, and other furnishings. With this profit, we can pay, and we have already paid in part, the overdue debts of the two houses, not counting in the loans of six to seven thousand francs owed to three particular parties. I hope that with the blessing of God and with wisdom in the direction of the two houses, with union and good accord among the members of the Society, we shall be able to settle all our debts within the next two years and develop these two interesting and very useful establishments more and more."

"Xavier, my brother, had been ill-disposed to the Society of Mary for some time, because of some indiscreet small talk he overheard, but he seems to be getting over it. He sent sixteen hundred francs to Brother Geng to buy land being offered for sale near the garden of Ebersmunster, to provide a supply of wine to St. Hippolyte, etc."

Brother Louis Rothéa, furthermore, seems sorry that I have charged you to take advantage of the surplus of Alsace. He insists on his devotedness for the Midi as for the North. I think you will still be able to derive quite some advantage from Brother Rothéa regarding the economy of the establishments of Alsace.

Brother Robé can still be steward at St. Hippolyte, but still under the inspection of Brother Louis Rothéa. Both of them still have to be held, as it were, by the apron strings. I am not yet settled concerning Ebersmunster. In the meantime, it is Brother Louis Rothéa who is administering through Brother Geng, but this is insupportable. I am not making any reflections about all this. You must be able to understand how many letters I have been obliged to write in order to put into Alsace the order that is actually reigning there. . . .

Have I told you that the hail had done a lot of harm also in St. Loubès? In all things, let us not cease to bless the holy Name of God!

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

* * * *

[1] Affiliate of the Society.

Nevertheless, the project of travel in the North, implied in the letter of June 20 to Father Chevaux, had become a matter of firm resolution.

Father Chaminade saw more and more clearly that he could find the indispensable resources for the liquidation only there and that his presence was necessary for the success of the operation.

Besides, a visit to these distant provinces was imperative, after stormy years such as had followed the Revolution of 1830. Finally, the future had to be prepared and put on a solid footing regarding the houses of formation of both Franche-Comté and Alsace.

Toward the end of August, the journey is definitively decided upon, and Father Chaminade informs Father Chevaux and Brother Clouzet about it.

754 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 25, 1834

My dear son—I received your letter of the fourteenth of the current month. Several letters that I had written before the arrival of this one must have settled you about the vacation and my very earnest desire that there be no excursions as long as it lasts but that everyone spend it together agreeably, usefully and in an edifying manner.

I hope to arrive at St. Remy perhaps before the twentieth of September, and then we shall decide regarding the other points of your letter. Pray for and have prayers said for travelers. Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

755 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 26, 1834

You may already know, my dear son, that my project of going to St. Remy is now entirely settled, barring unexpected obstacles. I shall be leaving around the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. I shall pass through Noailles, where I shall spend as few days as possible. I have no idea of stopping elsewhere, at most at Besançon and perhaps one day at the grand Seminary. You might notify the gentlemen concerned, if you happen to have the occasion of meeting one or the other of them.

I shall soon send a packing-case to your address, containing old clothes and objects still in my use, and I shall send you the ticket you can use to claim it. I shall take along only an ordinary suitcase, containing my personal belongings.

I am longing now to enfold you within my arms, now that all is decided. In the meantime, receive the token and reassurance of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

756 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 29, 1834

I am repeating to you, my dear son, the formal design I have of going to see you at St. Remy. I expect to arrive before the twentieth of September. I cannot as yet give you the exact date of my arrival, because I shall have to make several stops on the way . . .

Continue with M. Auguste. We shall speak of all things.

I am hoping that with the assistance of the Lord we shall come to a successful end in everything. Let us not complain about the weight of our cross, for the one which he carried for us was incomparably heavier.

I am herewith repeating to you my tender greetings.

* * * *

757 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Agen, September 3, 1834

My dear son—I am answering Brother Bouveret. It is most certain that, if he has no desire for his salvation, if he has no fear of the judgments of God, if the knowledge of an unhappy eternity for impenitent sinners cannot rein in his disorders, it is certain that he must quit, not because he has no vocation, but because he is rejecting the signal favor granted him by the divine mercy. You will explain these great truths to him, and for this you may profit by the occasion of my answer to him. The negligence which he would put into wanting to meditate upon the great truths of religion would be for you a proof that he has fallen into a state of blindness and hardness of heart which would not permit us to keep him any longer. . . .

What you tell me about your young brother Benedict pleases me very much. Try hard to give him the foundation of a practical faith. I always greatly fear for a piety which, so to say, is only superficial and which has not for basis the pure motives of faith.

I do not quite understand what you tell me about Brother Troffer's travels. I am going to seek information without, however, talking about you.

Encourage Mlle Coudre to buy the ophicleide[1] and, if it is necessary, pay her back with Mass intentions.

[1] Miss Coudre, foundress of the establishment of Courtefontaine. The ophicleide is a wind instrument then used to accompany singing in church.

It is still good to have your brother apply himself to writing. All will be well, I hope. I shall write him a few words.

My dear son, in a short time I am going to come quite close to you and that gives me the hope of seeing and embracing you and perhaps even of stopping in Courtefontaine. What I desire is that you always advance in the religious and sacerdotal virtues and that you become really a man of mental prayer!

Count, my dear son, on my inviolable attachment!

* * * *

At the moment of leaving Agen, Father Chaminade wrote Bishop Jacoupy a goodbye, saddened by the remembrance of the old conflicts.

We are ignorant of the nature of the obstacles which detained the Founder and prevented him from visiting the bishop. Was it the illness of the old prelate, or rather certain susceptibilities of his surroundings? This last hypothesis is the more probable. What is certain is that the reciprocal sentiments of esteem and affection had not changed. The following letter proves it, as far as Father Chaminade is concerned; and in what concerns the bishop, the warm approbation given by him of the work of the Founder at the moment when the latter was presenting his Constitutions in Rome.[1]

758 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY, BISHOP OF AGEN

Agen, Before September 8, 1834

Your Lordship—I am leaving Agen, perhaps for a long time. I am leaving it with great regret, not having thought that your door would be open for me to come and render to Your Lordship the homage of my very sincere sentiments of profound respect for and tender attachment to your person, regret for not having been able to do for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary what the amiable Providence of God seemed to call for during my long stay in this city. I have adored, as I always adore, the impenetrable judgments of God.

[1] "My dear Abbé," wrote the bishop to the Founder, "I consider it a great pleasure for me to second the request you have addressed to me," and the prelate expressed himself in these terms in his supplication to Gregory XVI: "Father Chaminade, venerable priest of Christ, asks me to recommend his work to Your Holiness. Responding with all my heart to this request, Most Holy Father, I humbly and confidentially supplicate Your Holiness to deign to approve the Institute of the Daughters of Mary . . . that, if former vexing conflicts have arisen, their only cause, unless I am much mistaken, was the fact that the Constitutions of the Order had not yet been confirmed by apostolic authority." August 3, 1838.

The community of the Daughters of Mary of Agen does not cease to deplore the illusions that have been a source of distress to it. Nevertheless, I am leaving it in happy dispositions.

I am with profound respect, Your Lordship's very humble and very obedient servant.

P.S. I have made known to Father Mouran the reasons which led me to believe that my visit would not be agreeable to Your Lordship.

* * * *

On the eighth of September, accompanied by his secretary Brother Bonnefoi, Father Chaminade left Agen, stopped at Noailles, went down to Lyons, and passing through Besançon, finally arrived at St. Remy toward the end of the month.

A work to which his correspondence of 1834 makes no illusion but which had, nevertheless, occupied him during the last months of his stay in Agen was the revision of the Constitutions, edited by Father Lalanne in 1829. The work was completed at the time of his departure, at least in its first part, that which treats of the spirit of the Society and of the religious virtues of its members; for, from the time of his arrival at St. Remy, he promulgated it, accompanying it with the following Circular:

759 – CIRCULAR TO THE ENTIRE SOCIETY

St. Remy, October 2, 1834

William Joseph Chaminade, Superior General of the Society of Mary, to his dear children of the Society of Mary.

You have had ample reason, my dear children, to expect a more prompt answer than the one you are receiving today.

By my last circular, that of January 4, 834, I expressed to you the desire I had of seeing reestablished among you complete uniformity as regards the religious habit. I was generally edified, both by the expression of your submission and by the details which the older members gave me about all that had been practiced since the beginning of the Society. I was on the point of concluding the Regulation—the letter of expedition was practically finished—when the most pressing needs of the Society turned up, and the energy I was obliged to devote to correspondence forced me to suspend this work, at least for the time being.

I might have been able to resume it sooner, but the general Heads of the Society were inviting me in such an urgent manner to work at the Constitutions and put before me, with much wisdom and discretion, my great age and its inevitable consequences.

I was somewhat anxious about this matter, which is so important, because there seemed to be few religious societies in the Christian world that were better regulated and constituted than the Society of Mary from its very beginning.

Several years before the Society of Mary, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary existed, with extensive Constitutions and both general and particular Regulations, together with a system of Direction in the ways of religious perfection about complete.

When the time marked by Divine Providence had arrived, a general plan of the Institute or Society was formed, according to the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary, and submitted for examination and approbation to Archbishop d'Aviau, then of Bordeaux. The Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary were adopted, with the changes which the difference of sex necessarily called for. These variations were settled by the organization and put into practice by the first members, who formed the nucleus of the Society.

What was there still lacking so that the Society could develop with courage? The good pleasure and the favor of the sovereign Pontiff. The general plan, though still more abridged, was put before him in a supplication, with a new approbation on the part of Archbishop d'Aviau. The Brief which resulted, consoled and encouraged the nascent Society still in its cradle, so to say.

In the Council of the General Administration, it was already decided six years ago that an edition of the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary would be brought out under the name of the Society. These Constitutions were already so developed that it was necessary to abridge them to obtain the approbation of the Holy See. This abridged edition was developed five years ago by the first members of the Society. It is not entirely accurate, especially in the parts referring to the organization and government. Father Lalanne is not to be blamed, for, in doing this work, he only had the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary; he lacked the general plan of the Society, as approved by the Archbishop of Bordeaux and the supplication originally addressed to the sovereign Pontiff.

Your first Heads, my dear children, feared that, should death come to take me out of this world before the completion of this new edition, some storm would again arise in the Society. As a result, I thought it my duty to occupy myself with the matter. Each day, I give over to it all the time I can spare from my other occupations, just as if it were a kind of preparation for death. I thought it my duty to begin by an Extract of the general Regulations which belong to the Office of Zeal, while bringing together some analogous constitutive articles, and to make of all of them one complete whole. I am joining to it the Regulations regarding Christian education. Then will follow particular Regulations.

I have begun my work with this Extract as the most important part. That which concerns the clothing is but a very weak part. The accomplishment of these general

Regulations, from the point of view of the Constitutions, really makes the religious. It is why the name of regulars is given to religious.[1]

What a satisfaction for me, my dear children, to learn or to see with my own eyes—because I am in the course of a visit—that regularity reigns everywhere; that if there have been some abuses, they have been corrected; and if some, under illusion, have given false interpretations to our Regulations, they now recognize and abjure these! Furthermore, the general Head of Zeal can better fulfill his important office when he knows you are all instructed as regards your religious duties.

Another advantage that you will draw from it will be always to have subjects for your weekly conferences. In the various establishments, the Heads are often embarrassed in finding suitable subjects or even have not sufficient time to prepare themselves. Henceforth, all they will have to do will be to open the Extract that I am sending you and read a few paragraphs from it. Each one will make his own reflections, etc. The coulpes and the chapters will also be able to have greater integrity.

My dear children, I would like to give you an account of what goes on in my soul. I think only of you. I am occupied only for you. My strength and my life are being consumed for you. During all the time of my pilgrimage in this land of exile, I shall work to render you happy for time and eternity. For time—I am not saying too much, for no mortal upon earth is happier than a true religious.

If you happen to see any among yourselves who find displeasure in the Society of Mary, is it not those who are lax and do not fulfill the duties it imposes on them? Those, on the contrary, who are truly fervent, have they not the peace of God, which is a foretaste of the heavenly fatherland? Oh, yes, my dear children, the yoke of the Lord is sweet and amiable. In this sentiment there is not the least trace of bitterness.

In receiving this Extract, several may anxiously look for a paragraph on the devotion of the Society to its august Mother and Patroness. Others will expect to find an abridged direction, with regard to mental prayer. These subjects, however precious they are for us, are not to form part of an Extract of Regulations, but I shall supply the want as soon as possible, and it will be the subject matter of another Circular. This one will find you possibly in retreat. I am deferring the retreat of St. Remy precisely because of this Extract, so that all the establishments may receive it before the beginning of the new school year.

May the Lord, my dear children, under the mediation of the august Mary, shower upon you all his most abundant blessings!

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[1] See the *Spirit of our Foundation*, No. 830. On the subject of this first part of the Constitutions, Archbishop Mathieu of Besançon, wrote to the Founder: “I have read with much edification the Extract of the general Regulations of your Society, which you have been kind enough to send me. There is, in these Regulations, the Spirit of God, great skill and understanding of the Congregation in general and of all its parts and very useful details.” (November 20, 1836)

P.S. Perhaps several among you, my dear children, who know our Constitutions well, as well as the edition of them that was turned out six years ago by a rather delicate pen, will say that there is nothing new in it, and I shall rejoice over the fact. I have no other intention than that of putting before you only what it was always your duty to be. It is up to you to see if you measure up to this ideal, to see if you recognize it in yourself.[1]

The Extract of the general Regulations was sent out on October 8, and the text was followed by the following declaration: Here end the general Rules that affect all the religious of the Society of Mary. They are faithfully extracted from the general Regulations and Constitutions first approved by the bishop of Agen, then by the archbishop of Bordeaux and then adopted by the Society from its origin.

The rules referring to Christian education were placed among the general ones because they apply to most of the religious directly, the Brothers devoted to manual labor and the arts and crafts working indirectly according to the same views.

Having noticed, as much by our correspondence as by our visits, that there was degeneration in the primitive spirit of the Society and that several constitutive Rules were being neglected in various establishments, under the pretext that they were not sufficiently known, we made haste to include them in the Extract. We make an original copy of them, which we have carefully verified and signed *Ne varietur*.

And we have immediately ordered that copies be made for each establishment and that they should all be verified by our private secretary and immediately sent to all the Heads of establishments.

We order all the Heads to communicate this Extract, without the omission of any article, to everyone under their charge and to make sure that they have full knowledge of it. We permit them to have copies made for all those who have taken definitive engagements.

We permit the Heads to communicate it to our Lords, the bishops and Archbishops, as well as to their Vicars General, if the bishops should want it so. They may communicate

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[1] As has already been noted, the text of the Constitutions prepared by Father Lalanne in 1828-29 and then submitted to the examination of the older religious had never been published because of the troubles of 1830.

The Extracts of the general Regulations of 1834 reproduce almost integrally the First Book of the 1829 edition with the exception of a small number of articles either suppressed or added. The only important addition is that of articles 203-29, treating “of the manner of living in oneself and with oneself.”

And this same edition was still preserved apart from some few modifications in the text of the Constitutions sent to Rome in 1839.

It was only in the Second Book of the Constitutions, treating of the organization and government of the Society, that the primitive work of Father Lalanne was recast in great part by the Founder. See the *Spirit of our Foundation*, No. 828.

it also to their confessors, but the latter will always return these: care must always be taken that no copy passes into hands other than such as we have expressly permitted.

Given at St. Remy, where we are in the course of a visit, under our seal and the counterseal of our private secretary, October 8, 1834.

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760 – TO ARCHBISHOP CHEVERUS OF BORDEAUX

St. Remy, November 22, 1834

Your Excellency—I was preparing for my return to Bordeaux and I was ready to start out when I realized the need for at least going through the establishments which the Society has in the northeast of France. My Council judged that it was more prudent to start from Agen than to pass by Bordeaux and I was thus deprived of the great satisfaction I would have had of greeting Your Excellency and of following your directives.

I stopped at St. Remy, where I expect to spend the greater part of winter, barring a trip to Besançon and the old Abbey of Acey in the Jura, where the Daughters of Mary have quite a large convent. I shall try to make my stop in Besançon coincide with the arrival of the archbishop of this vast diocese.[1] In the time that I can snatch from my correspondence and from many other occupations, I am working at the edition of our Constitutions and general Regulations. I have just made an Extract of these last inasmuch as they belong to the domain of the one we call the Head of Zeal. My secretary sent it to all the establishments of the Society, and I have asked Father Caillet to have a copy made for you, to verify it and to present it to Your Excellency. . . . I should feel very much flattered should you deign to give it your approval.

Father Caillet asks, by this mail, a certificate for Father Saussol, the same as the one I gave for Father Fontaine.[2] I do not precisely recall its form, but I hope that the one which I have the honor of addressing to you by Father Caillet will answer the purpose.

I hope to send to Besançon at the time of the Christmas ordinations three candidates for the subdiaconate and one deacon for the priesthood.

The Society of Mary is advancing, to speak truly, very painfully but, thanks be to God, it has not halted. It is altogether glorious under the powerful protection of its august Patroness.

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[1] Archbishop Mathieu, transferred from Langres to Besançon, after the death of Archbishop Dubourg (See Letter 762). He took possession of the See on November 25.
[2] See Letter 624.

Father Caillet habitually keeps me informed of your many kindnesses toward us. This fact touches me deeply, and I am filled with sentiments of the most lively gratitude. As thanks, I beg you to receive the tribute of prayers we offer the Lord for Your Excellency's preservation and as the token of the most profound respect with which I am Your Excellency's most humble and most obedient servant.

Herewith follows the Certificate mentioned:

I, the undersigned, Superior General of the Society of Mary, promise to sustain and maintain during his entire life Father Saussol, in time of health as of illness, in such a way that he will never be in the care of the diocese of Bordeaux, although ordained *titular paupertatis*, in testimony whereof. . . .[1]

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Of the correspondence of Father Chaminade during the winter months, only these few mutilated remnants remain, preserved by Father Leo Meyer.

761 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, February 9, 1835

. . . Today, he is asking to make his vows. What do you want me to answer? Write me all the circumstances that you may know about this trip. I have never seen in him anything of what one would like to see in a true religious, and especially in an ecclesiastical religious, one who shortly expects the holy priesthood. To speak truly, there is nothing exteriorly unfavorable about him but his stubbornness, even in serious matters. What increases the difficulty here is his promotion to the subdiaconate, and this is now the third year after what I would almost call his misfortune . . . I happen to think that, if after the new report you will have for me, I cannot find the means of coming to a decision, we could consult his bishop, as he still belongs to him. He does not belong to us. . . .

6. The abstinence of Quadragesima must be observed. That is the Rule. Are there obstacles to its observance, in general or in part? The Head of each establishment is to make known these drawbacks and the establishment is dispensed, if there is sufficient reason for the dispensation.

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[1] Father Peter John Saussol (1787-1850), born in Martinie de Loubous, near Réquista Aveyron, had at first exercised the functions of teacher in Rodez. Afflicted with premature infirmities but animated with a profound religious spirit, he entered the Society at Bordeaux, to live therein in retirement, rendering whatever services he could. After having made his first vows in 1833 and his perpetual vows in 1834, he was ordained priest in 1835 and sent to Courtefontaine, where he ended his career. Being a religious of great austerity of life, he took but one meal a day, slept on the floor, prayed day and night, took an active part in farm work but exercised no other functions of the holy ministry outside of saying Mass. He is remembered as a devoted and holy penitent.

7. I am going to write a few words to Brother Claverie and recommend to him great sobriety.

8. Every form of infidelity and impurity places an obstacle to union with the good God. To succeed in making mental prayer, try, while beginning it, to renounce every form of worldly affection, unite yourself to Jesus Christ, as our Head and Mediator before God, so as to pray by him and with him. Unite yourself also with the most holy Virgin, who will dispose her adorable Son to serve as your Mediator.

The reading of the *Treatise on the Love of God* by St. Francis de Sales is very good and much to be recommended. The first books, nevertheless, are more a study than spiritual reading.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender greetings.

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762 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, February 17, 1835

A blind obedience seems to me to be the only remedy for the scruple which is bothering Brother Perchet. The scrupulous must often be kept in a very large sphere, especially when they are really pious and have the fear of God. If you find that I am giving him too much latitude or that I am omitting some essential circumstances, you will be kind enough to let me know about it.

Let us always advance, my dear son. Let us work for the glory of our good Master and that of his august Mother, in spite of the contradictions, the pains, and anxieties of all sorts, but let us always act with wisdom and prudence.

Receive my very tender embraces.

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763 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, March 12, 1835

I have great confidence, my dear son, in what you tell me by your letter of the eighth of the current month, that the Lord will bless you and Brother Galliot, not only in your persons but also in your labors.

Time will explain to you, my dear son, the enigma that Brother Jacquot's conduct presents to us. Let us be patient! Always conduct him along the beautiful ways of the spirit of Christianity and of the religious state, and notice how he cooperates.

If I have not said how Brother Silvain was to make his vows on Ash Wednesday, the fact is that there was nothing to be changed in the ordinary ceremony of the pronouncement of vows. You could nevertheless have added some special little ceremony, which would have had as witnesses only those who are already engaged definitively. After the ceremony, he could have signed the formula of civil engagements[1] and you would have transmitted it to me.

Death is always to be feared, although desirable. Try to have Brother Claverie accept it in a spirit of penance and also in the spirit of faith, as a Christian and as a religious. Have him always keep himself united to our Lord dying, and dying on the Cross . . .[1]

Yesterday I wrote to Father Bardenet to have a final decision concerning the offers he had made to Brother Galliot. How can you say that it is not necessary to construct new buildings for a novitiate? And you say, nevertheless, that class is already being conducted in the study hall of the community! There should be no question of a partial use of the two thousand francs given to Brother Galliot. Father Bardenet will hold to the offers he has made or we shall make an altogether different decision. I like frank and loyal conduct.

The dispositions you propose for the admission of the older M. Bertin[2] seem very reasonable to me, and when he has taken some engagements in the Society, it would be right that he come to the aid of his two brothers. When he is all set, let me know. These three children must be well cared for, since they belong to such good and thoroughly Christian parents.

Brother Perchet gave me no news at all about his presence in Vesoul.

I am hoping, my dear son, that finally you will belong entirely to God; that your heart, entirely detached from every kind of created object, will fill itself with the love of the Lord; that this divine love will dilate it; and that it will become always more and more capable of

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[1] See Letter 711.

[1] Brother William Claverie died on the eve of the day on which Father Chaminade wrote these lines. Brother William Claverie, we read in the Annals of Courtefontaine, died on March 11, 1835, at one-thirty in the morning. His death was one of the most edifying, and he departed this life for the next as a real child of Mary. One must have been the witness of his sufferings and of his great resignation to the will of God, to be able to judge of this fact. He spoke of death as one speaks of any other current thing or event. He himself was surprised at not being frightened at the thought that he only had a few moments to live. Faith in him was so lively that he counted entirely upon the mercy of God and the protection of the Blessed Virgin. (About Brother Claverie see Letter 433.)

[2] We have no other information about this older M. Bertin and his young brothers. We suppose it refers to M. J.B. Bertin, older brother of Brother Claude Bertin, who delivered to this last, as a tutor, on February 15, 1829, the authorization to contract the ten-year engagement. (See Note 899.)

loving. The Holy Hour is an excellent means of succeeding in this holy endeavor. Very great and precious graces are also obtainable through the observance of the Forty Hours' Devotion.

My dear son, I shall present to the great St. Joseph all my children of Courtefontaine and all their needs. I am thanking them for the greetings and good wishes they offered me on the occasion of my name day. They will have a great part in all my labors, during the remainder of the time that God still leaves me upon earth.

May the Lord deign to shower upon you and upon them abundant blessings!

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Here is the first letter we have of Father Chaminade to the new archbishop of Besançon, the future Cardinal Mathieu. It treats of the ordination of some religious of the Society.

Archbishop Jacques Marie Adrien Césaire Mathieu (1796-1875), born in Paris, where he was blessed by Pope Pius VII, at the time of his first journey in France; Bishop of Langres in 1832, Archbishop of Besançon in 1834, Cardinal in 1850. During his long episcopate of more than forty years, he played a role of the first rank in the Church of France. During all this time he had close relations with the Society of Mary. He professed a great esteem for Father Chaminade and if, at the time of the difficulties of his last years, misled by the reports he was receiving from Bordeaux, he denounced him to the Holy See, later, better and more correctly informed, he loudly professed "his veneration for the memory of the Founder." (Circular of the Society, February 27, 1868) At the time of the difficulties of the Society in 1868, he was named apostolic Visitor, a charge which he fulfilled until his death with admirable devotedness. It is by his solicitude that the Decree of January 30, 1889, was obtained, determining the proper constitution of the Society. It was he who, in his title as Visitor, presided in Paris at the General Chapter of 1868, and in Besançon, at the General Chapter of 1873. The Society of Mary must look upon him as one of its most distinguished benefactors.

764 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

St. Remy, March 12, 1835

Your Excellency—I have received the two letters you had the great kindness of addressing to me. Words fail me in expressing the sentiments of my gratitude for all the attentions of your charity and zeal. I understand very well that it is not the expression of sentiments that you are awaiting but deeds which are rather their concrete proof.

Before having our three candidates for ordination start their retreat, in consideration of my responsibility before God, I thought it my duty to have them pass an examination. Here is the abridged report of the professor of theology who gave it to them: Brother

Langue, very good; Brother Fridblatt, less good but sufficient; Brother Mauchamp, rather poor. I have reason to hope that you will not find it out of place that I should delay sending the last for ordination and that you should reserve your favors toward him until, after a second examination, I can make up my mind to send him to you.

Brother Fridblatt is not a subject distinguished by his talents. I don't think he is fit to exercise the holy ministry exteriorly, especially that of preaching, but he has a suitable knowledge of religion. He loves it and is continually studying it. He is quite suitable for the work that is so interesting, but which the Revolution of July has caused us to suspend—the normal school erected for the two Departments of the Haute-Saône and the Doubs.

I shall send the two candidates for ordination to our humble establishment of charity, the Hospital of Besançon. I hope that the good superioress will not find it out of place that they should lodge there. I shall write about it to the Head, as I must be honest with him.

Brother Fridblatt has been very touched by the paternal letter that Your Excellency had the kindness of addressing to him.

I immediately wrote Father Cuenot[1] to ask him for two places, one for Brother Fridblatt and one for Brother Langue, for the retreat in your Grand Seminary. But I easily foresaw that he would be much embarrassed, considering the bad weather we are having. However prompt his answer, the candidates could not possibly be present for the opening of the retreat. They will be there Saturday evening, after we have been able to replace them at their respective posts.

I am with the most respectful devotedness, Your Excellency's very humble and obedient servant.

Brother Mauchamp caused the Founder anxieties, not only on account of his ecclesiastical studies but also by reason of his religious conduct. This explains the very firm letter addressed to him by Father Chaminade.

765 – TO BROTHER MAUCHAMP, ST. REMY

St. Remy, March 18, 1835

My dear son, I am withholding my answer to the last letter of the respectable Prelate of this Diocese, until I have a clear and honest expression of your sentiments. You seem to have little liberty to express them verbally, but you are free to do it in writing.

[1] Superior of the Grand Seminary.

Are you always tending to the perfection of the Christian and religious virtues, according to the spirit of the holy state you are embracing and, in consequence, endeavoring to instruct yourself according to the direction of the Society of Mary? Do you intend to put a real interest in the work undertaken by the Society of Mary in becoming, by the priesthood, one of its special members? Will you act always in accordance with the impulse and direction given you—whether agreeable or disagreeable, light or heavy, ordinary or extraordinary—lending them heart and soul and doing all you can to carry them out with success?

It has been told me, my dear son, that during the time that preceded the pronouncement of your vows, you had declared your unwillingness to make your novitiate during your stay in the community. If this was the case, you would have a means for asking for the annulment of your vows. If you persevere in believing that God calls you to the religious state in the Society of Mary, we shall proceed to a renewal or to a new pronouncement of the vows of your profession.

May the Lord, my dear son, deign, on this beautiful feast, to shower abundant light into your mind and lively sentiments of his love into your heart!

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In the following letter we find a new allusion to the financial difficulties of the St. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux and to the independent ways of Father Lalanne, which were soon after to manifest themselves in a more serious manner, at the time of the transfer of the boarding school to Layrac.

766 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

St. Remy, March 21, 1835

God be praised, my dear son, that you are again in Bordeaux! . . .

I come now to the two difficulties that you have presented to me.

1. Enter into the views of Father Lalanne. In fact, it is not his name that is to figure in various financial affairs. It is rather yours, as steward of the St. Marie Boarding School. No expense is to be made but by your orders. In all kinds of needs, recourse must be had to you. You are to keep yourself prepared to meet all the ordinary needs created by custom according to rule. As regards extraordinary expenses, if you see the necessity for them or the great suitability, which is a kind of necessity—and the demand for them continues—then ask Father Lalanne to call for a meeting of the Council.

2. If there are promissory notes that you find you cannot pay at the time of their maturity, you may make M. Auguste others of the same value, so that by negotiating them

he can withdraw the former ones. But be careful; the best thing you can do is to end the need of exchanging notes, since these negotiations must have greatly contributed to the want that we are experiencing. Anyhow, M. Auguste merits all our confidence.

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Father Chaminade thanks the archbishop of Besançon for his kindness towards the candidates for ordination of the Society.

He shares with him his own views about the ministry of the priests of the Society in the large primary schools.

The letter, finally, discloses the case of a young subdeacon of the diocese of Besançon, M.G., who, for some faults, the gravity of which we are ignorant of, had been stopped in his career and who, repentant, was asking for admission into the Society. Father Chaminade was very hesitant to receive him, and if, as will be seen later on, following the counsel of the archbishop of Besançon, he finally decides on putting him to the test, he was not to congratulate himself on the fact because M.G. did not remain in the Society.

767 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

St. Remy, March 24, 1835

Your Excellency—Brothers Langue and Fridblatt left Besançon Saturday evening, full of joy and consolation over the great goodness you have shown them and over the charity and many kindnesses they experienced in your Grand Seminary. Their one and only regret was not being able to express to you in person their sentiments of deep appreciation and gratitude. The first thing after their dinner, they ran to the archiepiscopal palace, but they did not have the pleasure of finding you. Brother Cuenot really wanted to take upon himself the pleasant duty of expressing to Your Excellency the sentiments of their gratitude and appreciation.

Brother Mauchamp is conducting himself fairly well. He has a good enough character and a sound judgment in matters that are within his capacity; but up to now I have not satisfactory proofs of the interest and zeal he ought to put into the various employments he could handle, as, for example, teaching catechism to the little ones, etc.

The Society of Mary, for certain types of work, would call for priests not precisely learned and enlightened but virtuous and zealous. Our primary school establishments, even in episcopal cities, do not find confessors in proportion to the number of pupils. Thus, the teachers have to put a great deal of interest into soliciting pastors and assistants so as to secure their assistance in the matter. For the pupils to go to confession two or three times during the year is already a great deal. One priest could be continually occupied hearing confessions morning and evening, besides occasionally conducting general

repetitions of catechism lessons that the teachers would have explained in their classes. These schools of the Society could thus more easily attain the object we propose to ourselves.

Whatever need, Your Excellency, we may have of priests, I shall wait, with your kind permission, until Trinity Sunday before presenting Brother Mauchamp to you for ordination to the priesthood.

M.G., having been made subdeacon in Besançon and since rejected for the priesthood by reason of misconduct, came to throw himself into my arms some time ago. I told him to put down in writing in all frankness what he is accused of and what he is really guilty of. He says he has delayed doing so because he has been ill. He seems to be honest about the whole matter, and so I am taking the liberty of sending you the letter he wrote to me.

Would I do well, Your Excellency, in putting him to the test? And in the supposition that a conversion we thought real and sincere had taken place, may I hope that he would be admitted to the ordinations? Or would Your Excellency prefer to give him dismissory letters, that he may present himself to another diocese? I was forgetting to tell you that Brother Mauchamp is bearing up resignedly and even with generosity the disappointments that have come his way.

I am, with the most profound respect, Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant.

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768 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

St. Remy, April 1, 1835

Your Excellency—I have had the honor of transmitting to you the letter in which M.G., subdeacon, told me of the details relative to his misconduct. He had hardly left St. Remy when he thrust himself into the arms of his uncle, the pastor of Russey. This respectable old man immediately wrote to me. I also thought it suitable to have this letter sent to you.

The Rev. Superior of the Grand Seminary will also surely have submitted to Your Excellency, or will not delay before doing so, the information and the observations he has received against the young subdeacon. Your wisdom will consider the entire matter and will perhaps be able to draw therefrom a decision favorable to the young man, which will not make him a burden to his family. The shame which the young man feels on account of his errors would prove that such things are not habitual with him. He has asked me, through the mediation of a close friend of his, to procure for him a change of diocese and to be sent far away, should he have the pleasure of being admitted. I am going to answer his uncle, so

as to quiet the family, and tell the former that his entry into the Society of Mary is subject to Your Excellency's decision, and that everything can be expected from your kindness.[1]

The little rigors being used on Brother Mauchamp are having a good effect upon him and upon several others.

It is with great edification that I am learning about the labors of your pastoral solicitude. I shall not cease to pray that the Lord may deign to accompany them with his blessings.

I am, with a very respectful devotedness, Your Excellency's very humble and very obedient servant.

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After the sojourn of six months at St. Remy, Father Chaminade, on the point of leaving for Alsace, reorganized the House Council and determined its functions. This document, the first in date of a series of analogous ordinances left in the principal establishments visited shows us the importance Father Chaminade attributed to the holding of councils in the Society.

769 – TO THE COMMUNITY OF ST. REMY

St. Remy, April 23, 1835

REESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ST. REMY

In consideration of the importance of rendering the general direction of the secondary and primary boarding schools uniform, even though the studies and the diet are different, there are some particular distinctions to be made.

In consideration of the importance of preserving and strengthening more and more the union of hearts and minds among the members who direct the different sections of the large establishment of St. Remy, everyone being supposed to have, in all his functions only the same ultimate views and the same interest, I have determined what follows:

Art. 1. The Community of St. Remy, although divided into the secondary boarding school and the primary boarding school, forms but one and the same community.

Art. 2. The Council of the Community of St. Remy is reestablished. The members are taken from both sections.

[1] On April 4th, the archbishop recommended M.G. to Father Chaminade and gave him an exeat [permission for a cleric to transfer from one diocese to another].

Art. 3. The following are members of this Council: Father Chevaux, superior of the secondary boarding school; Brother Clouzet, superior of the primary boarding school; Father Fontaine, director of the secondary boarding school; Brother Brunet, subdirector of the same boarding school; and Brother Fridblatt, substitute for the Head of Zeal in the primary boarding school.

Art. 4. This Council will assemble regularly once a week, on the day and at the hour which will seem most convenient for its members and in extraordinary session when the two superiors believe it necessary. Father Chevaux will preside and in case of his absence or illness, it will be Brother Clouzet.

Art. 5. One of the five members will act as secretary. A bona fide secretary may be introduced to take notes and draw up a verbal report of the meetings, but he will have no deliberative voice.

Art. 6. The decisions of the majority of four will be carried out in matters on which the Council has taken a final decision. At each Council meeting, a written report of the deliberations will be made in which the opinion of each councilor for or against will be clearly indicated. If the majority were of only three and if one of the councilors insisted upon a later decision, due to the importance of the case, the report would be sent to the General Administration.[1]

Art. 7. All affairs which would be over and beyond what the regulations permit, or which would be exceptional to what they forbid, will be considered in Council. We say all affairs, whatever they may be, that is to say, in the order of morality, in the order of religion or in the temporal order of receipts and expenses. All that regards the interior of each boarding school falls back directly upon the head who is its Director, but all exterior relations become Council matter.

Art. 8. Neither the Council nor any one of the Heads that comprise it will ever be authorized to take a final decision concerning the suppression or change of any accepted rule, the change of approved methods, the final settlement of extraordinary expenses, unless there has been some urgent necessity making it impossible to have recourse to the General Administration. In the case of such urgency, the Council will have recourse to its discretionary power.

Whatever permission, change, or modification of an accepted rule the council deems it its duty to give or to make, all such will be considered only as momentary exceptions and have no effect at all as regards the future.

[1] At this time, there were as yet no Provincial administrations.

Art. 9. The Council will have power neither to introduce new usages nor to suppress old ones which have had a legitimate origin, a word, power to make no change, whatever the pretext, even of improvement or amelioration, without an authorization from the General Administration. Consequently, it will be able and should repress all the abuses in fact or manner which have been introduced or are in process of introduction.

Art. 10. All permissions and all propositions for changes or extraordinary expenses which the Heads request of the Superior General of the Society will be, generally speaking, submitted to the previous consideration of the Council.

Art. 11. The presence of the councilors in the weekly or extraordinary Council session is of obligation whenever possible. It is an obligation in conscience. However, once the days and hours have been fixed, they may be changed in agreement with the President, on account of obstacles that may have arisen.

Art. 12. May all the members of the Council always remain in the dispositions of abnegation of their own private judgment and of their own personal affections and may they search but for the interests of God and religion, by a wise direction of the labors of the Society of Mary!

Art. 13. Of the present Order of the day, five copies will be made, and each one will be given to the five councilors mentioned above.

Given at St. Remy, under our seal and the counterseal of our private secretary, April 23, 1835.

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The preceding document was completed, some days later, by the nomination of Father Fontaine as "Substitute for the Head of Zeal" for the secondary boarding school.

770 – TO FATHER FONTAINE, ST. REMY

St. Remy, April 30, 1835

NOMINATION OF FATHER FONTAINE AS SUBSTITUTE FOR THE HEAD OF ZEAL IN THE COMMUNITY OF THE SECONDARY BOARDING SCHOOL AT ST. REMY

Considering 1. that Father Chevaux, joining the titles of superior of the community which controls the secondary postulate with that of the Head of Zeal, being almost the only confessor of the two boarding schools and of the two communities, is overcharged;

Considering 2. that the religious conferences, being the most important function of the Head of Zeal, require on his part an attention and a sequence of direction, which it is almost impossible for Father Chevaux to give and to follow, we have, in consequence, named and we name by these present our well-beloved son, Father Fontaine, Substitute to Father Chevaux, Head of Zeal, in the community of the secondary boarding school, with all the attributions of a Head of Zeal. We wish, furthermore, to express that in this capacity, Father Fontaine has the care of the community conferences and the particular conferences, according as he will judge these necessary or even suitable to attain the purpose of the community conferences.

We do not intend, by these present, to take away from Father Chevaux the general care of Zeal, which is inherent in the office of superior, but only to relieve him from the habitual discharge of this Office.

We hope that from joining the general and the particular cares of Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine, the fervor and regularity that are the normal fruit of these cares will be not only maintained but will keep on steadily increasing.

Given at St. Remy, April 30, 1835.

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WHAT FOLLOWED THE VISIT IN THE NORTH: ST. REMY, EBERSMUNSTER, ST. HIPPOLYTE, AND COURTEFONTAINE; REORGANIZATION OF THE NOVITIATES; THE LAYRAC AFFAIR; RETURN TO THE MIDI; FOUNDATION OF THE THIRD ORDER OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY

(APRIL 1835 – SEPTEMBER 1836)

The following letters are the point of departure for an operation which was to have serious repercussions in the history of the Society. We wish to speak of the acquisition of the abbey of Layrac.

Two leagues to the south of Agen, on the last ridge of hills which border the valley of the Gers, its outlet in the valley of the Garonne, rises the old Benedictine Monastery of Layrac, with its eleventh century church and its eighteenth century constructions, surrounded by a park with a magnificent view.

Secularized at the time of the Revolution, the monastery had been transformed into a boarding school and for several years had belonged to M. Dardy, a sodalist of Agen, who

had assisted the religious of the Society at the time of their beginnings in this city (see Letter 147).

As the result of circumstances we cannot enter into, M. Dardy offered his boarding school to Father Chaminade, suggesting to him the idea of confiding it to Father Lalanne: "In the hands of the Society," he used to say, "with Father Lalanne as director, it would become another Sorèze." Sorèze was then the most celebrated establishment in the south of France until the time when, later on, Lacordaire came to bring it new luster.

The matter was urgent, by reason of the concurrence of a certain M. Chalès, M. Dardy's principal collaborator in the direction of the boarding school. As Brother Mémain and Father Lalanne strongly supported M. Dardy's offer, Father Chaminade thought he could accept it, with the reservation, however, that the three members of his Council, Fathers Caillet and Lalanne and Brother Mémain, give their entire and formal consent.

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771 – TO M. DARDY, LAYRAC

St. Remy, April 27, 1835

My dear son—I have received your letter dated from Layrac on the eighteenth of the current month, which left Agen on the nineteenth. By the same mail, I received a letter from Brother Mémain, dated from Bordeaux on the nineteenth, which left on the twentieth. These two letters have about the same object: they both propose to me the purchase of your beautiful property of Layrac. They even invite and urge me not to defer giving my consent, as any delay might make it impossible for you to give me the preference.

You tell me, my dear son, the conditions under which I can make myself its proprietor at once and in fact. These conditions are the payment of your debts which amount of 34,800 francs, charging myself with the education of your little daughter who is at present with the Daughters of Mary in Agen, and that of the little boy, the last of your children, as well as the expenses of a decent maintenance for him, and finally of a life annuity for your wife and yourself.

You understand, my dear son, that in the sale of the beautiful establishment of Layrac such as it is today, all the dependent properties are included.

Naturally, my dear son, I would have had several reflections to make to you concerning these propositions or conditions, but as time would not permit the reception of an answer, I hold to their form and content. I accept them and I promise to pay all your debts, amounting to the enormous sum of 34,800 francs, to charge myself with the education of your youngest daughter and that of your youngest boy, to furnish the expenses of a decent maintenance during the course of their education and to supply a life annuity of

one thousand francs for you and Mme Dardy, all for your establishment or Collège of Layrac such as it is at present, enclosed in walls. I promise you to have an official deed of sale drawn up as soon as possible, with you continuing to rule and govern it, as you have done heretofore, just as if you were not deprived of all property and authority.

You will have the kindness, my dear son, to let me know of your reception of this letter, with suitable details, so that the matter may be considered as settled and concluded, as this is necessary both for us and for you.

You could keep this matter secret. If M. Chalès presses you too much and threatens to leave you, you could simply answer him that he is free to leave. There is no doubt at all that he doesn't want to finish the year and, in the supposition that we take possession of the place before the end of the classical year, we will still be obliged to pay him the salary that you allot him for the entire year. At least, he might require it, unless, of course, he should want to retire of his own accord.

My dear son, you offer Mme Dardy for several years to take care of the economic management, and she herself offers to do so through affection and interest. It is almost beyond doubt not only that we shall accept this gracious offer, but we shall also ask you that thus, we do not separate, even momentarily, what God has brought together. What we would not be able to tolerate, and still less ask for, would be the reuniting of your young ladies to the authors of their existence.

I have suppressed all reflections, my dear son, so as to have this affair over with, considering the urgent situation in which you find yourself: 1. because I am dealing with a son and a daughter—I am referring to Mme Dardy—our liaison has been of long duration and never wounded. I hope that both you and she will subscribe to all the reasonable modifications[1]; 2. because you will not receive this letter directly from St. Remy, but it will be sent to you from Bordeaux. It is of service to you that it has passed through the hands of the principal heads of the Society of Mary. Answering without delay your letter which is so expressive and affectionate, the delay in its reception will hardly be more than one or two days.

Deign to share, my dear son, with Mme Dardy the token of my tender devotedness.

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772 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

[1] It is seen, by this reservation, that Father Chaminade, while granting his consent in a definitive manner, by reason of urgency, by subordinating it to the advice of his assistants, intended later on to make the conditions more precise. He declares it expressly to his Council in the following letter. By the totality of the letter, one sees, besides, that he considered the opportuneness of not taking immediate possession of Layrac but of leaving it for still some time under M. Dardy's direction.

St. Remy, April 27, 1835

My dear son—With your letter of the nineteenth of the present month, I received one from M. Dardy which had the same object as yours. I am sending you the answer I am giving him. You will see that it is conformable to our desires as well as Father Lalanne's, according to what you tell me. Nevertheless, I did not want to come to a conclusion, without having the complete and formal concurrence of the three principal Heads, Fathers Caillet and Lalanne and the elder Brother Mémain. This is an affair that properly concerns the whole Society, and you know that, in this type of matter, good government demands the assent of the entire Council. This letter will be mailed only after having passed through Brother Clouzet's hands, since he has such a great influence in temporal matters.

I had taken almost as great and perhaps more energetic precautions, when I bought the Razac Mansion and when we transferred the boarding school (of the Rue des Menuts). We were not in so grave and awkward a position then as we are at the present time. We would not have known the thousand and one disappointments we have endured for so many years if the Head of the boarding school had not allowed himself to be drawn along by his own ideas or by those of someone else[2] and had never acted except in concert with others and with authorization. If the Society of Mary were looked upon only as a civil society rather than as a religious one, a mere commercial organization, would it allow one or several of its members to undertake enterprises without the consent and, worse still, against the consent of the Society and of its Head? Would there not be a real injustice and a personal obligation for the member who would do such things to compensate it as such as would lie in his power? I am not making these reflections, my dear son, for you to transmit them to M. Auguste, as they might irritate him and make him lose the calmness that we need to get to the end of this affair. It is in a friendly spirit that you could meet him and find a way to make him understand how much he is lacking in his duty toward God and men. Naturally, you would have to use a great deal of moderation and say only as much as you thought he could stand.[1] He has on his side and for the relief of his conscience the authority of some counsels which are favorable to his desires and pretensions. He would have against him counsels that are not of the same authority in the hierarchical order, but which, nonetheless, should produce uncertainty if he could examine things at bottom and in themselves. Now, in the case of uncertainty in the moral order, is it suitable to act when superior authority merely counsels and does not command? Well, once again, all this is just between us and for your personal guidance, as with all the other explanations I have given you in this affair, so that you can make use of them when you find occasion to do so. You may nevertheless communicate this letter to Fathers Lalanne and Caillet.

The transfer of the St. Marie Boarding School to Layrac would offer great advantages of several kinds and would not seem to involve any serious drawbacks, provided we found a

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[2] Father Lalanne.

[1] Father Chaminade was continuing to doubt the legitimacy of the conditions relative to M. Auguste's withdrawal, even though the latter was more or less covered by the authority of Archbishop Cheverus, and to continue to hope for his reentrance into the Society. See Letter 709.

way of renting the Razac Mansion and the adjoining house, which we used in such an advantageous manner. This could happen in offering the tenant all the boarders and half-boarders—taking for granted the consent of the parents—who could not figure in the transfer. A little tact is needed here, without trickery or imprudence, and Father Lalanne is fully equal to it.

What modifications will we propose to M. Dardy? How will the deed of sale have to be drawn up? What prior precautions are needed? The answer to these questions will be the object of another letter once I have received an answer from M. Dardy himself. You will answer me yourself on the contents of the letter I am writing to M. Dardy, which will also be communicated to Fathers Lalanne and Caillet concerning both your own feelings and the prudence of sending it.

I have explained to Brother Clouzet how M. Auguste understood how he could come to the aid of both of you as far as it was possible for him, and that he did even the impossible. With these more or less abundant helps, your industry and the good Lord's blessing, you will do what you can. We are not to desire to do more than the Lord has permitted us to do.

I believe I understand that, if the transfer actually takes place, you would need to find means to settle your accounts with all the suppliers and to meet the expenses of the transfer itself. This is something you will have to handle among yourselves and also with Brother Clouzet. Things will never go better than when they are done together with perfect agreement. The principal cause of the bad conditions at St. Remy is precisely the lack of concerted effort. I had reason to hope for a gradual remedying of the situation through harmony. Oh, that we could well understand the immense good God has placed in union, especially in religious union! We would then have no trouble in making the sacrifice of our insights, however good and reasonable they might seem to us, when the Heads as a group are not able to appreciate them as well as ourselves.

If the transfer were to take place this summer, certain economies should not be made that could call for expenses to realize them. The case is different concerning those that concern the suppliers and the table service. . . .

It is very good, my dear son, that your change from Agen has taken place without expense. It is to be hoped that little by little you will grow accustomed to Brother Gaussens' tone.[1] He is capable of doing well if he can master his humor and his tastes, which sometimes make him go beyond the limits of what might be thought just and suitable.

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[1] Brother Gaussens had been named director of the schools in Agen to replace Brother Mémain, who was charged with the stewardship of the St. Marie Boarding School. The new director was not accepted by the municipality, which took back from the Brothers the place where they had been teaching since 1820 and deprived them of their salary. Brother Gaussens then withdrew to a house bought the preceding year by Brother Mémain and, to procure resources, he opened there, along with the free school, an upper-class school requiring tuition.

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While awaiting the consequences of this serious decision, in the first days of May, Father Chaminade left St. Remy and headed toward Alsace. He visited Colmar and Ammerschwir and stopped at Ebersmunster, which he was seeing for the first time (See Letter 516). It is from there that he wrote to M. Auguste and to Brother Clouzet the following letters.

773 – TO M. AUGUSTE, BORDEAUX

Ebersmunster, May 17, 1835

I am surprised that Brother Clouzet has not answered your letter of April 8. He was probably alarmed at the heavy demands you were making, alongside of those made of him by Brother Mémain. Brother Clouzet happens to be very short of resources, especially this year, so that his receipts hardly equal his expenses. I encouraged him and told him to send all that was possible, that it would be easier for you to settle matters with the first odd money available than if you were left entirely to yourself and that, besides, in giving such odd sums you could obtain delays for the cash balance, etc.

In St. Remy, major and very much needed repairs are being held up, precisely on account of you. If, for the establishment of two novitiates, one in Courtefontaine (Jura), and the other in Ebersmunster (where I am now), big expenses are being made, they in no way fall upon us.[2] The money for these expenses does not even pass through our hands, so much is Bordeaux feared. These two novitiates will open, without prejudice to the regular novitiate in Bordeaux, when Providence deigns to grant us the means. With this same mail, I am sending Brother Clouzet a copy of your letter of the eighth of the current month with this one.

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774 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, May 17, 1835

I am transmitting to you, my dear son, a copy of M. Auguste's letter which you had sent over to me in Colmar. You would have done well to open it, since you have all the concern for these types of affairs. Do all that depends upon you for the good conduct of these affairs in Bordeaux. Be careful not to preoccupy yourself unduly even about the bad

[2] In Courtefontaine, it is thanks to the generosity of the foundress, Mlle Coudre; in Ebersmunster, it is thanks to the contributions of M. Xavier Rothéa.

news you might receive, as preoccupation is extremely harmful in affairs one has to deal with. I am also sending you a copy of the little letter that I am writing to M. Auguste.

Here I am not repeating to you any of the counsels I have given you about the holding of the Council and in general, about what concerns all the needs of the secondary boarding school. Father Fontaine seems quite discouraged and so I wrote to him from Colmar that I hope that, if he conducts himself well and follows the advice I gave him, everything will work out to the satisfaction of all. But I need to know frequently enough what is going on, good as well as bad, in detail.

Everything is going well in Colmar and Ammerschwir—the schools are attracting many paying pupils. There is also hope that the spiritual life of all the religious and a real regularity will be resumed in both establishments. I also hope that everyone will be settled in Ebersmunster and that I shall be able to find the means of starting there a fine novitiate for Alsace.

Receive, my dear son, while awaiting further details, my tender embraces.

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At Ebersmunster, Father Chaminade left instructions similar to those he had given in St. Remy. We shall cite the principal passages of the Ordinances relating to the government of the house.

775 – NOTES ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EBERSMUNSTER

Ebersmunster, May 22, 1835

1. The government of this establishment, like those of the entire Society, is vested in a superior and three principal Heads.

2. The three principal Heads are those of zeal, instruction, and of work. Under the names of zeal, instruction, and work are included everything concerning the persons and the objects that are within the province of the establishment and constitute the field of action of the government.

3. The superior is, at the same time, head of zeal, of instruction, and of work. He takes in, so to say, the entire field of action of the government, and each principal Head occupies himself with the part of government assigned to him, always under the inspection of the superior, who has the right and the duty to control him in the functions of his office.

4. When a Head exercises some function of his office in the presence of the superior, he does it only after having asked him for a sign of approbation. The superior, should he so desire, could directly fulfill the function at which he would be present.

5. When a community lacks one or two of the principal Heads, the superior may directly exercise their functions, for example, he can be Superior and Head of Zeal, Superior and Head of Instruction, and in the small establishments, the Head or superior exercises directly, in his small community, the functions of zeal, instruction, and work.

6. When the functions of a principal officer are too extensive, there may be substitutes who then depend upon him and always under the authority of the superior.

Concerning the ordinance on the holding the Council of Ebersmunster, which reproduces in its general lines the ordinance of St. Remy, we shall cite only the following passage, which shows the extreme energy of the Founder for the maintenance of discipline and the suppression of abuses.

Art. 19. The Council will be able neither to introduce new usages nor to suppress old ones that have had a legitimate origin, nor, in a word, make any change, under whatever pretext, even of perfection or amelioration, without an authorization from the General Administration. Should the authorization be taken for granted, the verbal report of the Council will make express mention of it. In consequence, the Council will be able to, and should, in reality repress all abuses in fact and manner, that have been or were being introduced, even when such would not have been noticed by the Superior General or by the particular visitors sent by him. The superior of the establishment, as well as his representative, are to have a great concern that no abuse ever exists. In case of doubt about whether some custom being introduced is actually an abuse, the General Administration is to be consulted.

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From Ebersmunster, Father Chaminade continued his efforts for the liquidation of the Society, and the following letter shows us what great difficulties he encountered, even where he had no reason to expect them.

776 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, June 5, 1835

. . . The primary boarding school, my dear son, is now as large as the secondary boarding school. The former increases, the latter decreases. This would not be the case if the secondary boarding school had been well directed about both teaching and religion. I like to hope that everything will get better and better, but, without special solicitude, much time will be required for this boarding school to rise from the discredit it has fallen into. Send Brother Charles Boillon[1] to Ebersmunster, because the repairs needed for a fine novitiate should be started. The master carpenter is one of the most needed workers. I shall try to get him to listen to reason during our time together. You may urge his departure. Before he arrives only the most ordinary jobs should be taken care of.

I very well recall, my dear son, the permission given last year for the repair of the roofs, both of the château and the outhouse, but I don't recall similar permissions for the stables and the barn. Without doubt, you included them in some vague expression that I could not quite appreciate. I'm sure I didn't ask for any explanation because of the entire confidence I have in you. I am surprised that, during my long stay at St. Remy, you said not a word to me about it, and, hardly had I left when you immediately started work. I would not even now understand anything about it, if I had no other means of understanding than the precious little you told me.

[1] Carpenter, see Letter 707.

But are the actual expenses you are making for the stables and the barns really necessary? Are they indispensable? What did your animals have to suffer at the time I left? What accident has happened since? To change or improve, do you call this indispensable expenses? In that case, that would be language unintelligible to me. In its own good time, you received an ordinance—if I can remember correctly, it was dated March 7, 1834[1] requiring that all repairs not strictly necessary should be stopped, etc.—considering our condition of extreme want, which you yourself know better than anyone else.

You have good reason, my dear son, to think that the running of the domain and of all that pertains to the farm operations are not matter for the Council. It is very clear that, if there are provisions, there must be a place to store them. There is no farmer who would accept the running of the domain if he were not provided with space to store the harvests he would gather in. It is the same with suitable repairs, but it is not the same with regard to stables to increase the livestock. The steward has no obligation to increase the livestock, when the domain has sufficient animal-power to cultivate it, or when the stables are large enough to lodge all the necessary animals, and they are not supposed to be the finest stables in the Department.

You know, my dear son, why the community Council has been established at St. Remy. You have often represented to me the false expenses occasioned by the arbitrariness of the Heads, and your representations were very just. All have understood, and you yourself have admitted it, that the best means, so as to hurt no one, was to reestablish or to establish a community Council. I was not to make any exception in your regard, as the exception would have been outrageous for the others. But, you say, and rightly so, the running of the domain is not Council matter. It is true, no more than the running of the classes and the studies. But, how can you consider as part of ordinary management extraordinary repairs such as require considerable expense and which, most certainly, an ordinary farmer would not undertake without at least a conference with competent authority? Furthermore, what inconvenience is there for you, the manager, to let the Council know of your views, as regards amelioration, augmentation, etc.? If you have good reasons, and—let us suppose—the Council does not accept them, have you not the right to pass on the verbal report of the Council to me? The delay of some days, in such circumstances, is in nowise harmful, and your deference has done good to all the other Heads, that is to say, it has had them learn the habit of not commanding in any arbitrary manner.

To all these strong reasons, others equally strong can be joined: 1) The embarrassing and vexing position in which the Society finds itself, as you well know. What is to be thought if, while everyone is suffering, we continue to go more deeply into debt, and if you make extraordinary expenses that are really not necessary? If you answer me that they are necessary, I shall answer you in my turn: Why would you refuse to have those examine them who are interested in our getting out of the rut we have been in for so long? You would

[1] In reality, it was March 15th.

thus remain silent, not only as regards the community Council of St. Remy, but as regards most of the other establishments. This Council regulator is not needed only at St. Remy; but, for the moment, it is needless to enter into further details; 2) How could you ask others to put up with privations when they see you making unnecessary expenses or those which are thought to be such? For example, the château is in need of linen. People there may change stockings only every two weeks. The religious are saying nothing because they know we are in want, but would you not be giving occasion for complaints that do have foundation? Especially since in your capacity as superior of the primary boarding school and manager of the domain, you join functions of Head of Temporalities which take in the two communities!

I hope, my dear son, that, after all these considerations, you will repress the repugnance you might have about bringing all extraordinary expenses before the Council. If these expenses do not directly concern the Council, as belonging to the management of the domain, they do concern it from other points of view, as it is easy for you to see and realize. Always keep in mind the reform which it was necessary to introduce in the primary and secondary boarding schools. Even if there should be cases, which, by the context of the ordinance, you might not feel obliged to bring to Council, you would do well to bring them there anyway as a matter of good example and to strengthen more and more the union which should reign among the Heads of the two sections of the community of St. Remy.

Send to Ebersmunster the mathematical instruments which Brother Colin took along from Noailles—a graphometer, a compass, a decameter of ten pins, ball and socket, sextant of the plane-table. Boillon will have the care of packing these various objects, together with the indispensable tools, so that he can get to work on arriving here, because he won't find even a carpenter's bench here. Thus he should bring along forceps, two saws, a hand-ax, a rough file, a jointing plane, two planes, a pair of joiner's grooving planes for the floors, a rabbet plane, chisels, and a mortise-chisel, the tools that are needed for finishing the window moldings. I was forgetting a saw, for sawing or cutting lengthwise, a center-bit. Once everything is well packed, he should put the case on the goods wagon in Vesoul, taking a receipt, to have it handled as promptly as possible, to the mayor of Ebersheim for Brother Rothéa in Ebersmunster. Ebersheim is just about a three miles away from Sélestat.

Receive, my dear son, the token and assurance of my inviolable attachment.

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The correspondence continues very coherently with Father Chevaux.

777 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, June 5, 1835

This fall into insanity, my dear son, on the part of young L. is certainly distressing. It is an accident that you, Father Fontaine and perhaps others might draw profit from in the case of several pupils. This young man was a very bad subject, corrupt from his very infancy. Shameful practices attract all kinds of maladies. Their effect is proportionate to the type of weakness to be found in the individual. I find nothing surprising in the fact that this vice, the very name of which is shameful, should have produced insanity. I have not as yet seen cured any of the maladies caused by this miserable vice, but I have seen many not falling victims to these maladies when they seriously strove to cure themselves. I could not have made these reflections to you had you not named the individual. If the young man had been found to have faith and the fear of God, perhaps his repentance, for fear of the chastisements of God, might have been a lot more useful to him than bloodletting and leeches.

I do not believe that Brother Vermot's defect[1] would hinder his employment as a teacher if really he has all the other qualities needed for this work. This defect would become very annoying if he did not have the knack of keeping young people in tow.

The idea of reducing the tuition to four hundred francs[2] would not be bad with the appearance of a new Prospectus. It could be preceded by a discourse given by Brother Brunet at the meeting for Father Fontaine's feast.[3] I would like to write Brother Brunet about it, but I cannot do so at this time, and later would be too late. I think that the play that is to be performed is conceived as I had wished it to be. Perhaps the speech in which Brother Brunet skillfully sets aside the vexing rumors being spread about the boarding school has already been made. In this speech, the plan of instruction drawn up by Father Lalanne in the Prospectus is to be praised. Brother Brunet will know how to explain in what way education attains this universality of knowledge that the pupils can acquire in the course of their studies. This method is none other than that which I have tried to have Father Fontaine and Brother Brunet learn. The new Prospectus, if there is a possibility for it, will have to contain the same things, but with a somewhat different distribution. In the councils of the teachers, all these questions would have to be brought up, and all views made known to me, edited in complete simplicity. I would then later make known to you the manner in which, to my way of thinking, the Prospectus should be edited. I would busy myself with it with interest, although I am distracted by a great number of other occupations. Let Father Fontaine and Brother Brunet take courage, as they have reason to

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[1] Brother Désiré Vermot (1812-65), born in Cluse, Doubs, entered at St. Remy in 1834 and there made his profession the following year. He spent the greatest part of his life there as teacher of mathematics and later as bookkeeper for the school of agriculture. Although quite stout and possessed of a robust constitution, he was half blind—this is the defect Father Chaminade alludes to in his letter—but this did not prevent him from forming very good pupils. Above all, he had the piety and the simplicity of a child and never would have permitted himself to do the least harm to anybody. Having fallen ill, he swallowed at one gulp the entire contents of a medicine bottle which he was supposed to take in small doses, and he died from poisoning.

[2] Under consideration was reducing the tuition for the pupils of the secondary boarding school, in view of possibly increasing their number. This was a rather risky measure, as was soon realized. See Letter 782.

[3] The feast of St. John the Baptist, the patron of the director.

hope for success if persons and things become regularized and especially if among you all there is formed a real union of mind and heart.

You will tell Father Fontaine that I wrote to Brother Clouzet regarding the matters to be brought up in Council. I have found nothing to change in the order of the day, which the Council members have all received.[4]

It would be desirable, my dear son, for your guidance, that Brother Clouzet communicate to you the letter which I have just written him.

Receive my very tender embraces.

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From Ebersmunster, in the plain of Alsace, Father Chaminade transported himself to St. Hippolyte, on the first slopes of the Voges, a distance of only 12 miles, which made for rather easy relations between the two houses.

778 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

St. Hippolyte, June 13, 1835

You must have received, my dear son, my answer to your second last letter. If Brother Clouzet communicated to you the letter I wrote him at the same time, you will know, as it were in detail, all that I think of the repairs you speak of. Concerning what Brother Clouzet added, that if he could not make all the repairs without the participation of the Council, he would thank the commission—doubtless, the management of the domain. This word or threat must be looked upon as the effect of a fit of temper, to which no attention should be paid.

I am thinking of your eleven-year-old nephew whom you would like to get into Courtefontaine. I shall gladly ask Brother Galliot to receive him for 150 francs, and I shall specially recommend him to Father Meyer. I take it for granted that you have recognized in the child suitable dispositions to receive a good education and an inclination to piety. . . .

Brother Mauchamp writes to me in his own way about the Chapter matter that caused Father Fontaine to deprive him of going for ordination. He protests his attachment to all the Rules. It was only in joking that he spoke against the Chapter. He requests its change. I am going to answer him, leaving the letter open that you may pass it on to him unsealed. This will give you another occasion to make him feel still more what the religious state is all about.

[4] Letter 769.

Reason in particular with Brother Brunet, for his head is full of prejudices, and he harbors many illusions. If you can't succeed in setting him straight, tell him that you will write me about his difficulties; or, if he prefers, that he can write me himself about them.

I would not like to call extraordinary those penances which are needed only by the subjects we direct and those that the Spirit of God may demand of them.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my very sincere attachment.

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The Council of the Society, assembled in Bordeaux, had deliberated the acquisition of Layrac, a matter which Father Chaminade had formally left in its hands. In the meantime, Father Lalanne had gone to the place and had noted that, though the buildings were big enough for the projected establishment, they were practically in ruins and that at least thirty thousand francs would be needed for the initial repairs. The Council was of the opinion that if funds necessary for the repairs at Layrac and for the transfer of the boarding school could not be obtained as a pure gift, the place was not to be acquired.

Father Lalanne returned to Agen and thought he had found the desired sum. He was being offered six thousand francs by the Superioress of the Daughters of Mary and twenty thousand francs by one of the postulants of the Daughters of Mary, Mlle Aurière. It was understood besides that if the postulant did not persevere in the Institute, she was to be reimbursed. But hardly had Father Lalanne returned to Bordeaux than the offers of the Convent of Agen already seemed doubtful. Brother Mémain, in his turn, on May 13, went to Agen, came to an understanding with the Daughters of Mary on the fourteenth and, on the fifteenth, placed in M. Dardy's hands Father Chaminade's letter of acceptance.

There still remained the regulation of the manner of utilizing the new house and land. Father Lalanne did not hesitate. He wanted to establish without delay a complete collège, run on a big scale and offering all desirable advantages to the families. Father Chaminade saw the entire matter from another point of view. At a time when the Society was still struggling in the anxieties of a painful liquidation, the hour did not seem propitious to him to launch into the uncertainty of a grandiose and noisy foundation. He wanted to gain time and placed before his Council the following two questions.

779 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

St. Hippolyte, June 20, 1835

1. Can the transfer to Layrac be made in a suitable manner, without the obligation of making, either on entering or beforehand, great repairs and without needing to fix up this establishment with all the perquisites of a house of education on a grand scale?

2. If the transfer cannot take place immediately in a suitable manner without great inconveniences, would it not be more prudent to change nothing in Bordeaux and simply to take possession of M. Dardy's boarding school and to have it directed in a modest way?

The Council dismissed the second hypothesis, insisting that the transfer of the boarding school to Layrac be made without delay. Father Chaminade answered on July 6, asking if it would not be possible and sufficient to have Father Lalanne simply show himself in Layrac, to prepare for the transfer at a later period. Or, should this solution be set aside, could not the transfer be made immediately, limiting the repairs to those that are most urgent? He thus developed his idea on this point in a letter in which the following passage has been preserved.

780 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

Ebersmunster, July 6, 1835

If the transfer were made in the near future and sometime before the close of the school year, it is to be presumed that nearly the entire boarding school and the semi-boarding school would follow. The entire tuition at Layrac is only the price of the semi-boarding school in Bordeaux. If the desire for the change became rather ardent, everyone would follow. Pupils would drag one another along, even those who are only for the French. Father Lalanne surely has all he needs for that, if he really wants to, if he goes to it with all his heart, abandoning all contrary ideas. . . .

Still, all the embarrassment of the situation in Bordeaux would remain. It would be necessary to regulate everything, even to pay, as much as possible, all the suppliers and all the creditors. We would have to depart with a sort of dignity. . . . It is possible that you might find some friends who would advance some money to you with the idea of facilitating the realization of so beautiful an enterprise. It is also possible that you could borrow a sum, more or less considerable, and at a low rate of interest. Furthermore, some of the parents of the pupils might also possibly be willing to lend money. What possibilities there are! Always work well together. . . . Even if the pupils should find themselves somewhat hampered on entering Layrac, they would easily be patient if they saw repairs going on and continuing even during the vacation, etc.

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We shall see somewhat later on, what happened. Before leaving St. Hippolyte to get back to Ebersmunster, Father Chaminade left behind, as at St. Remy and Ebersmunster, a detailed ordinance regarding the holding of the Council, different in several points from the preceding ones and, for this reason, meriting to be reproduced here.

781 – TO THE COMMUNITY OF ST. HIPPOLYTE

St. Hippolyte, June 24, 1835

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ST. HIPPOLYTE

We, the undersigned, Superior General of the Society of Mary, having transported ourselves to St. Hippolyte, one of our establishments in Alsace, after having visited all the sections of this interesting establishment, and having had an interview, in particular, with Father Rothéa, the superior, and with teachers and officers, have thought it our duty to render a just homage to the good order we have found everywhere. This is especially so of the harmony which reigns among the teachers and supervisors and of the good management of the boarding school.

To cement more and more the union which reigns among the Heads, to sustain and improve the good discipline and order established in this boarding school, we have formed a Council of the Community and boarding school as follows:

Art. 1. Are members of this Council: Father Rothéa, Superior and President of the said Council; Brother George Loetsch, Head of Zeal; Father Bouly, Head of Instruction; Brother Robé, substitute Head of Temporalities; Brother Fidon, substitute to the Head of Instruction; and Brother Dormoy, substitute to Brother Robé.

Art. 2. The six members here mentioned, whom M. Xavier Rothéa will join when he happens to be at St. Hippolyte, will essentially make up the Council of the Community. When the Council has to treat more particularly of matters relating to studies and the good running of the boarding school, MM. Peg, Giros, and Barthélemy will be called.

Art. 3. When the Council has to treat only of matters relating to instruction and the good conduct of the pupils, Brothers Dormoy and Robé will be dispensed from taking part in it, and the same for M. Xavier Rothéa, should he be on the premises.

Art. 4. The Reverend Superior presides, points out all the difficulties, opens the discussion while proposing the ideas, for and against, without making known his personal opinion. Each one of the councilors makes known his observations in good order. The Reverend Superior is the last to develop his opinion. During the discussion, some who had already made observations may be allowed to give new developments or to speak against the opinion they had already given or to refute some opinions contrary to their own. When the discussion has been closed, the President puts the question to a vote, by secret or open ballot, according to the nature of the subject discussed. When there are only six members in the Council, the Reverend Superior has two votes. The affair is decided only when there is a majority of five. If the majority is less and the members who have proposed the question are much in favor, it could be sent to the Superior General, with a copy of the minutes of the session.

Art. 5. One of the members of the Council will be secretary. We will take exact notes of the opinions of each councilor, as also of the results of the voting. He will make a summary in what is called a Council register. This register will be paged and signed by us. It would be permitted for the Council to choose a secretary from outside its membership, but this secretary would have but a consultative voice.

Art. 6. The matters to be treated in the Council are:

1. All exceptions, in whatever order, to regulations, customs or methods already established and expressly authorized. These exceptions will serve only to confirm the Rules, the order established and the methods authorized. If there were question of some change, the decision of the Council would be no more than advice. A summary would be sent to the General Administration.

2. All current expenses, whether for provisions, clothing or repairs. The extraordinary expenses having to be approved by the General Administration are previously submitted to the Council.

3. All important affairs which might arise regarding the boarding school. The Council may decide upon the dismissal of pupils, whether they are boarders or day pupils, but never, unless there is great urgency, upon that of a member of the Society, under whatever title he may have been admitted. The Council may not even give him a change of establishment.

4. All that pertains to the good conduct of the pupils, to the emulation to be maintained in the classes, especially the Christian emulation; abuses of whatever kind, whether on the part of the pupils or the religious.

5. Works of proselytism, whether for drawing pupils to the boarding school or for attracting or training postulants to the Society, or again for obtaining help in the maintenance of the boarding school.

Art. 7. Each week, the Council, by a matter of duty, will hold a session. The presence of the Councilors will be a matter of conscience. The President, in accord with the members of his Council, will arrange for the day and hour most convenient for all concerned.

Art. 8. The Council may be summoned in extraordinary session, at the request of its members, for the treatment of some special affair.

Art. 9. The Council, thus held in this religious way, will attain the end we propose to ourselves: to cement more and more the union which must reign among all the members of

the Society, forming the Community of St. Hippolyte, and also leading it in the two sustaining virtues of union and fraternal charity.

Art. 10. One of the sessions of the Council will be able, in a short time, to take the place of the chapter. Upon the reports which the Reverend Superior will give us after about a month, we shall fix the time for it and that in the joy of our soul.

The part of the Council which will take the place of the Chapter will never be reported nor carried to the register of the Council.

Art. 11. We have named as members of the Council all those who essentially form the Community of St. Hippolyte, although some among them have but temporary engagements and even such as are very limited. Others have only the title of novices, and Father Barthélemy has no title at all, except by the confidence which he has always inspired in us. We hope that the regularity which Brother Pelleteret will henceforth observe will soon put us in a position to invite him also to the Council.

Art. 12. All the members of the Council, at the first session, will make the promise of keeping inviolably secret everything that has been said or has happened in Council, not only while they are part of it but also thereafter.

Art. 13. The present order of the day will be sent by our private secretary to Father Rothéa, who remains in charge of its execution, after having read it with interested members, whether in common or each one for himself.

Given in St. Hippolyte under our seal and the counterseal of our private secretary, this twenty-fourth day of June, 1835.

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782 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

St. Hippolyte, June 24, 1835

. . . The Council, my dear son, has decided and for a good reason, to elect Father Fontaine as secretary. There are certain articles which, by reason of the consequences, may be of great importance for those who will come after you and the account of which must be given in the official register only after having been read and approved by the members of the Council . . .

It has been rightly observed that the reduction in the tuition might be accredited to the rumor about the failure of the establishment. I presume that it is known that this rumor has become quite widespread. The establishment can retrieve its losses and will actually do so if everything is wisely planned and carried out. The rumors will gradually be forgotten.

It seems to me that before my departure we had adopted excellent principles of action. As soon as the work Father Fontaine is doing with the teachers has been finished, let me know about it. In the meantime, there are, as we have observed, a certain number of precautions to be taken and a certain number of abuses whose suppression can and must take place.

All our establishments in Alsace and especially the two principal ones, St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, are making progress, whether in the eyes of the general public or in those of the Academy. There were many more difficulties to be overcome than at St. Remy and fewer means for doing so; but, in general, the Heads, teachers, and employees zealously follow the directions given them, and with complete submission.

You will tell me in detail what is going to happen regarding Brother Brunet. If he is to leave, you will tell Brother Clouzet to give him fifty to sixty francs. That will be enough for him if he takes the most direct route and does not stop as he had the intention of doing. He has an obligation of conscience to make this trip as it is being indicated to him. If, as may happen, he threatened to leave the Society, and if, in fact, he used the money given him to go elsewhere, don't worry but write to tell me everything.[1] I had not promised Brother Brunet to send money to his brother when the place of his retreat became known. His brother, a soldier in the garrison of Libourne, had a bad fall. He was carried to a military hospital, and I promised to write to Father Caillet that he should give him some little comforts during the time he was in the hospital. These were to be very slight, as the hospital furnished whatever was necessary. . . .

I have never permitted Brother Brunet to take stock in the paper, if he was dispensed from advancing money as bail. There has never been question of anything but the insertion of some articles in the said paper. Neither was there question of any kind of profit.[2]

If there were, in fact, a certain number of pupils at St. Remy to be confirmed, and you could presume that the Archbishop would be staying in the neighborhood in the course of his visits, you would do well to notify His Excellency and to invite him to make a short stay in the establishment. Everybody knows his zeal. I must write Father Cuenot and also His Excellency as soon as I am relieved of my most pressing work, and I shall excuse you. I shall also write a few words to Brother Mauchamp. I answered Father Fontaine regarding Brother Dumont. Take good care of Brother Mauchamp. See if he can be awakened from his lethargy. Receive the assurance of my very tender attachment.

P.S. I am returning to Ebersmunster tomorrow.

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[1] Brother Brunet, as poor a religious as he was distinguished a teacher, had already done an act of desperation a short time before (see Letter 721). This time he succumbed to his independent humor, as will be seen in what remains of this correspondence, and he definitively withdrew from the Society. We meet him again at Layrac in the following years, after which all trace of him is lost.
[2] See Letter 745.

783 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, June 26, 1835

My very dear son—Charles Boillon arrived at St. Hippolyte on the nineteenth of the current month, feeling well and full of courage. We all suffer that the case which you say contained his tools and the mathematical instruments does not really contain them as I had expressly demanded of you that it should. For how long will he be unable to work? If he had at least enough to make other tools for himself! There is hardly anything we can do but go to Strasbourg and buy ready-made ones. Your manner of economizing is becoming very expensive. . . . If you have another carpenter you could get along without, you might send him to aid Brother Boillon in his work. The other workers will look after the most common jobs, and Boillon will look after them.

It is not Boillon who interfered with Cretin. The latter tells me so in his little letter brought by Boillon, and I am not far from believing him, from what I know of him. You will never get anywhere with him by complaints and reproaches. The light of faith alone, accompanied by grace, can alter his dispositions. He is otherwise a good subject, but he is not strongly built.

As regards the repairs on the barns, begun immediately after my departure. It seems I have only expressed to you the interpretation given about them at St. Remy. The expenses, as you say, are certainly not of little consequence. You would have avoided this muddle with a little more humility and zeal and also care for the reestablishment of order. Why not, with simplicity, speak of it to the Council?

I think it would be well to send me Brother Roussel[1] in Ebersmunster considering his bad humor. I shall try to cheer him up. From St. Hippolyte, I wrote him a short letter in which I said that I thought he would soon receive an order from you to come to me. You believe him lost if he is put into contact with the children of Besançon and nevertheless you send him there to settle certain matters with the bonnet-maker Guérin! Doubtless, my dear son, benefits for the Society must be sought after—in particular, those for the establishment of St. Remy, where you happen to be—but we must first seek after the welfare of the subjects we receive and employ, I mean to say, their spiritual good. The first aim of the subjects who enter must be to save themselves at whatever cost, and we must truly promote this before all else. Why, considering the weak degree of virtue this young man was in, did you leave him as porter and linenkeeper, in spite of all his complaints and representations?

[1] Brother Philip Roussel, brother of Father Roussel, who having become Assistant General, played an inauspicious role in the last years of the Founder, and of Brother Justin Roussel. Neither of them died in the Society.

You tell me, my dear son, that things are going badly in the secondary boarding school, that everyone commands and no one obeys. I know what is going on with regard to Brother Brunet, and I wrote Father Chevaux to tell him what was to be done. He may have told you how I saw things. Complete union among all the members can alone do away with the evils that have slipped in, both among the teachers and the pupils, a truly religious union founded upon abnegation of self, fraternal charity, and search for the glory of God. You can greatly contribute to it by the continual practice of these virtues.

You would have done well, my dear son, to have given Brother Fridblatt a little more time to prepare himself for ordination to the diaconate. I am asking him to prepare himself seriously for ordination to the priesthood at the beginning of September. He absolutely needs time, both for study and for entering more and more into the dispositions required by the priesthood. It is suitable to replace him at year's end, even if it should involve some difficulties. You could usefully employ Brother Michaud to this effect. Let us not fear to go to too much trouble to attain our end.

I think it necessary to employ Brother Fridblatt as sub-Master of Novices in Ebersmunster. There will be a great advantage once he is priest. This novitiate will become important from its very beginning. It will be the only novitiate of the Society for some time. Brother Galliot is leaving us no hope of having a novitiate at Courtefontaine, because of his persistence in holding to his own ideas. The new construction, which has been so painfully undertaken, cannot even serve for the boarding school. I shall be obliged to send all the novices to Ebersmunster who would otherwise have gone to Courtefontaine, even those who are already there. What I had predicted to Brother Galliot is unhappily beginning to be realized; his boarding school is shaking at its foundations. He has already lost several pupils, and in the countryside many are already murmuring about how poorly things are going. What good is a Head who does not take control of his establishment, who does not occupy himself with the progress of his pupils, who takes next to no interest in their good conduct or in the direction of the religious confided to him? This establishment, which seemed in line for much prosperity, may be ruined in one or two years, and we shall be obliged to abandon it. This is the sad prospect that Brother Galliot's unfortunate obstinacy in following his own ideas puts before us.

Since Brother Bousquet could no longer stay at Besançon, I sent him to Courtefontaine to relieve Brother Galliot of the supervision of the workers so that he could give more attention to his establishment. He is far from profiting by this transfer, since he uses Brother Bousquet only for hauling stones. I shall send Brother Bousquet to you at St. Remy, because you can put him to a more advantageous kind of service. Father Meyer will be sorry because of it, since he is his only source of consolation. He is the only one at Courtefontaine besides Father Meyer who has preserved the religious spirit. But I am going to send a teacher of writing and drawing there. He is very pious. I am fearing and hoping: fearing that he may be shaken at the sight of the lack of order and regularity in everything and hoping that, because his piety is already deeply rooted, Father Meyer will be able to sustain him.

My dear son, I had approved Brother Athias' taking the water-cure, since the price of it seemed to me rather moderate. I am writing him a few words, asking him to address himself to you. His condition, according to what has been told me, is very sad and is getting steadily worse.

Receive, my dear son, this new assurance of my inviolable attachment.

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Brother Peter Joseph Michaud (1812-1870), mentioned in the preceding letter, is one of the religious who left the most sympathetic impression among his contemporaries. Born in Montjouvent, Jura, he had completed his studies in the Little Seminary of Vaux, but not believing himself called to the ecclesiastical state, he presented himself at St. Remy in order to embrace the religious life (1834). After his profession, he was employed for several years in Alsace. Then, in 1841, he was sent to the Novitiate at St. Anne in Bordeaux, where he was to spend the rest of his life, combining the functions of steward, teacher, and gardener, to which he even joined, in 1859, the charge of Supervisor of the Province of Bordeaux.

Brother Michaud had a lively and cultivated intelligence, a right judgment, a strong and energetic will, and, under a somewhat rough exterior, he had a heart of gold that made him loved by all his Brothers.

For a long time, he was Father Chevaux's right-hand man in the training of the novices of Bordeaux, among whom were Father de Lagarde, Good Father Simler, and Father Demangeon. A tireless worker, he moved from study to work in the garden, having a rare talent for the care of the vegetable garden, for the growing of flowers and the trimming of trees. Besides, each year, neighboring communities had recourse to him for such services.

It was in the course of one of these journeys, in Réalmont, that he caught cold. They begged him to stay, but he said: "My orders are to return to Bordeaux as soon as my work here is finished," and he started out. He had to stop in Castelsarrasin, and feeling the approach of death, he asked that a priest of the Society would come to hear his last confession. Father Demangeon came quickly. After the confession, he finished putting order in the affairs he had left in Bordeaux and added: "Now, speak to me of the good God," and he wanted to hear of nothing else. The next day, in the evening, the community gathered around him. He remembered it was Saturday, the day on which the Litany of the Blessed Virgin is sung in Bordeaux, and he invited the Brothers to sing it. Hardly had it been started, when he rose in his bed and in a broken voice, which nevertheless dominated the other voices, he began to sing, his hands and eyes raised toward heaven, with an expression of such fervor that it drew tears from all those present. He died a few hours later, the death of the predestined.

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784 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, July 7, 1835

. . . My dear son—The Novitiate of Ebersmunster will be beautiful and comfortable and entirely distinct from the boarding school. There is hope that we can bring the postulants there at the end of summer, when everything is nice and dry. There exists at St. Remy a certain ferment or vague discontent on the outside. Do what you can, my dear son, that there may be fraternal union among all the religious, especially among the teachers of the two houses. No one can work more effectively toward this union of sentiments than yourself. The sacrifices, more or less great, more or less costly, which you will have to make, will incline and induce others to do the same. In what concerns the pupils, I have not ceased, as you well know, to say what should be done, whether toward them personally or toward their parents and all your outside acquaintances. This is a difficult situation, one which must be carefully watched and which consequently should absorb us entirely: it would be good to take it up in Council.

These difficulties at Layrac are painful—the whole history of them is rather long. But I hope you can reach a happy outcome by the time the mail coach returns.

Make no further expenses other than what is necessary or of demanding propriety until we rid ourselves of this affair.

Receive, my dear son, my paternal embraces.

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785 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, July 14, 1835

It seems to me, my dear son, that Brother Clouzet is at fault for not communicating to you the letter I wrote him in its entirety. What did Brother Clouzet have to fear in telling the Council about all the repairs and the construction work, which is considerable? The only inconvenience to him would be in not acting arbitrarily. Perhaps he would give the other Council members an example of modesty and subordination. He could cement the union among you more and more and heal little by little the wounds he has caused. If he came to believe that the Council had decided badly in a grave and urgent matter, could he not let me know about it?

Enclosed is a response—or rather a reply—to the letter Brother Brunet wrote me. Undoubtedly you have read his letter, even though it was sealed. I did not seal my reply—you can read and reread it and even make a copy before giving it to him. If, despite my letter—which I would prefer not to believe—an alternative is necessary, either to quit the geology class or to handle his courses, it would be better to accept his quitting the class. This would be a way of teaching the geology students that geology is an accessory to their primary studies and not something they should give their principal efforts to.

May the Lord be blessed, my dear son, in all the mishaps that stand in your way! Let us draw profit from them before God, without ever letting them discourage us. Would that we would have learned our lesson from these mishaps concerning the entire direction of St. Remy and particularly of the secondary boarding school! Have an understanding with Father Fontaine and the two of you with all the teachers and employees to follow a path of wisdom and regularity and to walk together in these beautiful paths which alone will bring you success. I go now to respond to Father Fontaine who has spoken to me of the same mishap.

Here is my answer to Brother Mauchamp. It is presumed that his great irritability arises from his sickness; we must nevertheless make sure that his blood-spitting comes from this and see if it only developed little by little. This is important.

I end, my dear son, by urging you to always remain at peace. Humble yourself before God. Pray, sigh, hope—but always submit to the impenetrable decrees of Our Lord. If there were a great union among you all, if each saw himself in solidarity with everyone else—and this has happened up to a certain point—I think that the passing wounds of the establishment would heal themselves, although imperceptibly, and the Lord would bestow new blessings on the work. Brother Clouzet could help you greatly, but he seems to fear compromising his authority—or rather, his influence over the entire establishment. Actually, it should be just the opposite among Christians and religious.

May the Lord, my dear son, deign to shower upon you His abundant blessings and fill you with courage and confidence!

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786 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Ebersmunster, July 18, 1835

When you cannot, my dear son, easily free yourself from distractions, make mixed mental prayer. You can thus more easily guard yourself against their force, preserving yourself to combat their causes outside of prayer: *sublata causa, tollitur effectus*.

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Father Jules César Perrodin (1806-1900), to whom the following letter is addressed, came originally from Epy in the Jura. He was Vicar of Arbois when the Revolution of 1830 forced him from his rectory along with his curé. A little later, in 1833, Father Bardenet obtained permission for Father Perrodin to share with him the chaplaincy of the Daughters of Mary at the Abbey of Acey, where the former had retired. It was there that Father Perrodin came to know the Society of Mary and its Founder. Encouraged by the Founder and by Father Leo Meyer, then a superior at Courtefontaine, he decided to enter the Society and made profession in 1841. He remained at Acey until Father Bardenet's death in 1844. The following year he was named superior of Courtefontaine and at the same time pastor of the parish there. In 1849 he joined to these charges those of Provincial of Franche-Comté, which he filled for ten years.

In 1860, when the General Administration of the Society was moved from Bordeaux to Paris, Father Perrodin was sent to the Madeleine to continue, following Father Caillet, Father Chaminade's work there. There he remained forty years, until his death, exercising in the pulpit and especially in the confessional a most fruitful ministry. Through his goodness, his patience, his delicacy, he won all hearts. Having an ardent and enterprising zeal, an unbounded confidence in Providence, an irrepressible indulgence for human misery, he knew how to console, to quicken, and to encourage—not by lengthy discourses, but by living and warm words that went straight to the heart. Every day he spent hours in the confessional, and on the even of great feasts, he remained there from five or six in the morning until ten or eleven at night, allowing himself hardly any time for nourishment. He was a tireless confessor to several religious communities. He was frequently called out for the dying who had refused the assistance of religion, because he had a special gift for bringing them back to God. Very devoted to the Sacred Heart, he contributed powerfully to the success of the "Great Family of the Blessed Sacrament," a work devoted to nocturnal adoration in the parishes of Bordeaux. After the closing of the monasteries in 1880, he generously welcomed those who had been turned out, and the Madeleine became the center of the most diverse works directed by Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans. A true servant of Mary, he had a special affection for the rosary, which became his great and nearly unique occupation in the last years of his life. Weighed down by old age, Father Perrodin died piously and gently at the Madeleine.

Father Jules César Perrodin had three nephews who left edifying remembrances in the Society—Father Auguste Perrodin (1836-1890), Brother Narcissus Perrodin (1843-1931), and Brother Louis Perrodin (1843-1882). See *Apôtre de Marie* XXII, p. 333.

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787 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Ebersmunster, July 21, 1835

I bless the Lord, my respectable son, that he has made you see more and more the unique necessity and the perfection he destines for you—it is a grace of predilection. Henceforth we will walk together on the narrow way that leads to life. Jesus Christ is this way, as He is the gate. We still strain ourselves to follow Jesus Christ, accompanied always by our august Mother, the sublime Mary.

I hope to come to Acey by the end of the summer and to develop for you there in a few talks the advantages of the beautiful state you have embraced. We can then determine the difficulties you would have to enter upon with total liberty. I will make an effort to visit the Bishop of Saint Claude. It may even, perhaps, be convenient to go to Saint Claude with the promise of a foundation in the capital at Toussaint.

While waiting, remain tranquil in the same way as Father Danne.[1] Work, both of you, to believe in the love of God and in the abnegation of yourselves—both of these necessarily go together. I would wish also that, while waiting, you make yourselves masters of novices for each other: that several times a week, if not every day, you mutually note the defects you notice in each other and offer each other words of encouragement to keep moving ahead.

Receive, my respectable son, my tender embraces and my paternal blessing.

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788 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, July 22, 1835

My dear son, Brother Brunet will not take any advice. He believes himself perfectly justified. He prides himself very much on the certificate you have given him. He left yesterday, ostensibly for Agen. I congratulate you on being rid of such a subject. Father Fontaine will be very occupied, it is true, but I believe this surcharge will be less painful to him than having to work with Brother Brunet. It will work out if you remain united in everything with the bonds of true charity, a charity which brings each of you to an entire abnegation of himself. You can live in great harmony if each one has the devotion he ought to have. I hope that this latest event, far from casting you down, will rather revivify you. May you find new reason to strengthen Father Fontaine and Brother Clouzet and bring them first to the fraternal union of charity, so necessary and even indispensable in our present position, and then to a truly religious life . . .

[1] Father Danne, priest of the Diocese of Saint Claude, also sought entry into the Society.

Concerning the assembly[1] it is too late to dream of new compositions or to make awards for less than finished pieces. See how you can repeat some former customs, applying them to accommodate the present situation. Perhaps Father Lalanne can pull something off. It would be better, though, simply to adapt an older piece, even a short one. It would be easy enough to insert it, I should think, either before or after the young men or children offer their little declamations.

If everything goes well, I will take steps to support a trip to Lorraine for Father Fontaine.[2] Meanwhile, send me the address of the curé who came to see me last winter at St. Remy and who had a nephew in school there.

Take courage my dear son. Receive my affectionate greetings.

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789 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, July 22, 1835

Brother Brunet arrived at Ebersmunster, my dear son, during the night of the fifteenth of the current month. He wasn't able to recognize in himself any defect at all. He considers himself always just and without stain of any kind. He left yesterday morning, the twenty-first, apparently for Agen . . . Brother Brunet's departure is a real good for the Society and even for St. Remy. He could have been very useful there had he worked with less touchiness, with more modesty and in closer concert with his confrères.

Remain in peace, my dear son, in the midst of all your worries. I have the firm confidence that, if you constantly work toward an increase of the love of God and of abnegation of yourself, and if charity and fraternal union reign among all of you, the Lord will see to it that you find a happy way out of the numerous embarrassing situations at St. Remy. But what is to be expected as long as this ferment and this discontentment, more or less underhanded, reign both among the pupils and almost all of the religious? Those who are most virtuous and who, at bottom, excuse everything are not satisfied. Before God, my dear son, see to all that is suitable or desirable to do; but see to it or rather look upon it in great peace of soul and with an entire resignation. Anything that purely human reason and your personal experience can present to you would be absolutely insufficient if you happen to be in a state of trouble and ill humor.

I am stopping here with these reflections because you are in a condition to make them yourself and draw the right conclusions from them.

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[1] For the distribution of prizes.
[2] Without doubt concerning the Sion-Vaudémont affair. See Letters 713 and 739.

Receive, my dear son, this new assurance of my inviolable attachment and devotedness.

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790 – TO BROTHER GOBILLOT, DIRECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE HOSPITAL ST. JACQUES BESANÇON

Ebersmunster, July 24, 1835

I see, my dear son, with great satisfaction that you are acting with prudence and real devotedness. Nevertheless, spare your health as much as good order permits. You have found the way to attach Brothers Salmon and Toussaint to yourself, and that is saying a great deal. Brother Roussel is delighted over the fact. He told me that you were all so united that it was really hard to tell who of the three is really the Head of the establishment.

Concerning reform measures, you will do well to await my arrival in Besançon before adopting them. This has no reference to little disorders that have no definite root or cause. It is the same with the hall where those we call sodalists come together. Father Oudet[1] seems to take an interest in it. Have perfect harmony with him, and don't fail to present to him the assurance of my respectful remembrance also.

For the time being, I have only to wish you courage. I am doing so with all my heart, while giving you the token of my tender devotedness.

P.S. It is not possible for me, my dear son, to answer the request of the Pastor of Louhans for the establishment of a primary school because of the lack of prepared subjects.[2] This kind of request has been coming in for some time, but we cannot go everywhere.

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In Bordeaux, the Layrac affair was painfully following its course. Meetings of the Council had been held on the seventeenth and eighteenth of July in which Father Lalanne, giving free reign to his ill humor, had expressed himself violently against the views of the Founder, even putting in doubt his authority, letting it to be understood that it was he, Lalanne, who had to sustain and reform the Society. Finally, on July 20, the Council

[1] Chaplain of the Hospital St. Jacques, who lived and died in Besançon, where he left the reputation of a saint.

[2] The desires of the Pastor of Louhans, Laône-et-Loire, could be realized only in 1848, by the foundation of the day school, to which a boarding school was later joined. The work was very prosperous and did much good until its suppression in 1903.

acceded to the views of Father Chaminade, deciding that the transfer of the boarding school was to be made under modest conditions—not before the end of the school year but at the time of the next reopening of classes.

A P.S. added to the minutes of the Council meeting, furthermore, declared that "the Council, considering the seriousness of the proposal, had later decided that there would be a delay of two weeks before undertaking anything, so as to be able to receive a new answer from the Superior General."

However, Father Lalanne had not signed the postscriptum. Further, he had declared to Father Caillet and through him to Father Chaminade that he did not consider himself bound "by his religious engagements, as long as the authority of the superior was not regularized and legitimatized, 1) by the approbation which ecclesiastical authority gives to Constitutions clearly edited and accepted by the subjects; 2) by the frank and entire carrying out of these Constitutions, on the part of the superior, in what concerns him." Finally, he himself wrote to the Founder that he considered himself sufficiently authorized by his previous statement to go right ahead in what he was doing (July 20).

And in fact, on July 29, the contract for the acquisition of Layrac was signed in Agen by Father Lalanne and Brother Mémain. Brother Mémain had allowed himself to be forced by Father Lalanne's hand. The latter informed the Founder of the accomplished fact and added: "Be pleased to give your blessing to us and to what we have done. In the actual situation of things, we are obliged to go ahead somewhat by ourselves and remain calm, as we have attained the age of reason. . . . " (July 31) Before receiving this last news, Father Chaminade had addressed Father Lalanne and Brother Mémain the following answers.

791 – TO FATHER LALANNE, BORDEAUX

Ebersmunster, August 4, 1835

(According to a citation of the paper *LeDroit*, April 23, 1846)[1]

I have just received, my dear son, the messages of the Council, with a letter that you inserted, dated the twentieth of last month. Already six or seven days ago, I received Father Caillet's opinion by a letter of the same date. Your messages have been sent to England, the sender not having designated the Ebersmunster in the lower Rhine region. In England, there was added "by Schelestate," which sufficed for my getting them.

[1] This letter and several others were published by the paper at the time of a court case involving the Society of Mary, in 1846, by one of Father Lalanne's creditors after the catastrophe of Layrac. We cannot enter here into all the details of the Layrac affair. We are limiting ourselves to retracing, along broad lines, as much as is necessary to clarify the sequence of Father Chaminade's correspondence. Of his correspondence about these affairs, we are reproducing only those letters that offer some interest from the historical point of view.

You must understand, my dear son, what affliction you caused my fatherly heart, by renewing, under other aspects, the sad and painful discussion of St. Remy, and this at the moment of decision about affairs as serious as those you have made me undertake in Layrac. But let us come to the most essential matter of your letter. You do not believe yourself bound by religious commitments, you say, as long as the authority of the superior has not been regularized and legitimatized.

1. The authority of the superior of the Society of Mary is sufficiently regularized and legitimatized by the approbation which ecclesiastical authority has given from the beginning and has since continued to give to our Constitutions, such as they were when we began and such as they are today. They were known and accepted by subjects who made vows by them from the beginning.

We are always agreed that it was suitable that a more precise and uniquely appropriate edition be made. You have worked at this edition, so to say, under my very eyes, and, from my rapid reading of the sheets you gave me, in proportion as you worked, I had reason to believe that they exactly represented our Constitutions. When I came to the point of examining the totality, I saw that you had been seriously mistaken on some essential points. As soon as I noticed this, I wrote to you at St. Remy, not only that I did not approve the edition, but that I was setting it aside because of the part about the government.[1] You know better than anyone that I have never wanted to change it. If, in fact, a new edition contained new Constitutions, it would have to be known and accepted by the subjects. The edition of the general Regulations that I sent last year is rigorously in conformity with what has been vowed to from the beginning. Furthermore, I have not consulted concerning the basic Constitutions except on some articles regarding the rules pertaining to diet.[2] At the same time, I gave to the principal ecclesiastical authorities authentic copies of this Extract from the general Regulations with the letter of advice which precedes my ordinance which follows it.[3] I believe, my dear son, that you are bound in conscience and before God, whom you have taken so often as a Witness to the sincerity of your vows, by your religious commitments.

Why, you will say to me, my dear son, have you begun by bringing out the Extract of your general Regulations and why are you now working at the particular Regulations? I have so acted: 1) because it was urgent to reform certain abuses and omissions that have been introduced in diverse establishments, and also because I wished to give, for reading and meditation, these General Regulations to those who present themselves for entrance into the Society. These readings and meditations have attracted to us a certain number of subjects, and four in particular, who are of a certain distinction by their deep piety and by general talents that are far from ordinary. Three are priests,[4] and the other one is a simple

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[1] See Letter 759.
[2] See Letter 563.
[3] See Letter 759.
[4] Fathers Perrodin, Lamotte, and Danne. This last one did not enter the Society. (See Letters 787 and 797)

theologian. 2) I also willingly delayed the articles which concern high government, because I saw, or I believed to see, your head still agitated by this matter, and it seems that I have not been mistaken. I move to the second number.

2. You do not believe yourself bound by your religious commitments so long as the authority of the superior has not been, as you say, regularized and legitimatized by the frank and complete observance of the Constitutions on the part of the superior in all that concerns him. This second requirement, my dear son, would imply some kind of contradiction. If, in fact, to pronounce our vows, we would have needed other approbations of our Constitutions than those we have obtained, no one up to the present would be bound by vows, or at least all would have made vows rashly. Everyone would have lacked one of the three conditions of the oath prescribed by the prophet Jeremiah,[1] but this reflection is not the one that I wanted to make at first. How could you have the proof of the frank and entire observance on the part of the superior of Constitutions which would just have been approved by ecclesiastical authority, and which would require new authorization to regularize and legitimatize the authority of the superior? However, as I imagine this is not quite what you had in mind to say, I move on to the very basis of the proposition.

Am I frankly and entirely carrying out and observing the part of the Constitutions that concerns me? As regards frankness, I shall say yes. As regards integrity, I am again saying yes, in all that is possible in our present situation. If I can do more, the fact is that I do not know about it, that I do not see it. If you see better than I, have the charity to let me know about it.

I easily understand that your "frankly" is put here in relation to yourself. You imagine that I suspect you injuriously, that I am acting in an underhanded manner, that I am compromising you, etc. You believed, for example, and you said that, if the six thousand francs of Mother St. Vincent and the twenty-four thousand francs of the young postulant were not actually at our disposal, it is because I was keeping them back, etc. You are very much mistaken, my dear son. I knew positively, to speak only of the young postulant, that not only was her fortune not at our disposal but that great impediments could arise, if we came to understand that she wanted to dispose of it. She has not yet settled the accounts of her minority, the shares have not been allotted, and a sister, with whom she is to share, is still a minor. She is only sixteen years old. If the division is not freely made, the postulant is obliged to bring her mother to justice. There was even much danger in our knowing the intentions of this young person. The Council held in the community about her signifies nothing, on the one hand, and could, on the other, give rise to imprudences. A lady of Bordeaux, a friend of the mother, learning, I don't know how, the postulant's intentions came to Agen and expressed a thousand odious complaints to Mother St. Vincent. She also spoke of it later to the young postulant's mother, who, in her turn, spoke a thousand coarse insults to the Mother Superior in the presence of the young lady. The latter, nevertheless,

[1] "You will swear with truth, discretion, and justice." (Jer. IV, 2).

was in no way disconcerted. She is holding to her vocation, and I propose to allow her to take the religious habit on the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin.

Would not all these disconcerting results, you say, come from the fact that I put no faith in the sign you thought that God was giving you of his will for the acceptance of Layrac?[2] No, my dear son, there is no such result, since God did not give you such a sign, and you were definitely wrong in taking it as an indication of his will. God had not given it to you, but he had given you another, that of the free and religious expression of the Council.[1] You could not take it as a sign of God's will. That is not the way of doing things in the order of grace. It does not seem that you have read and seriously thought about the works of St. John of the Cross and, in particular, the second book of the *Ascent to Mount Carmel*.[2] Moreover, your lack of faith has come only as an afterthought.

Several false steps had already been taken. All I did was to remedy the inconveniences that could result from them and, it is very possible that, with care and long-suffering, we shall put our hands on these twenty-four thousand francs.

I am going to answer separately the minutes of the Council meeting. Just now I don't know how. I must reread them . . .

My answer to the minutes has been shorter and more prompt than I first thought it would be. In rereading it, I saw I had nothing to say, since the execution has followed the decision, and that all that was left for me to do was to encourage you. Nevertheless, my surprise was great because, after your letter and Father Caillet's, you seemed to put conditions, especially such as regard the religious state.[3] The Society of Mary is doubtless at the same time both a civil and a religious society. The civil is entirely based on the religious society. This is its essential and vivifying quality. Layrac cannot be governed religiously. I readily believe that, by probity, you will direct it well and as dependent upon the Society of Mary, but all that is left for me to do is to beg the Lord to enlighten you and to adore in trembling the judgments of the Lord.

* * * *

Father Chaminade had only too well foreseen what was to happen at Layrac . . .

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[2] It seems Father Lalanne had considered it a sign of God's will for Layrac, that, against all appearance, he had found at first sight among the Daughters of Mary the sum needed for its acquisition.

[1] Requiring, before drawing up the deed of acquisition of Layrac, a new answer from the Superior General.

[2] In the second book of the *Ascent to Mount Carmel*, chap. 16-20, St. John of the Cross puts the soul on its guard against the tendency of letting itself be led, not by faith, but by the visions and divine words, which, even if they are true in themselves, may be for us an occasion of error. This may have been acceptable under the ancient Law, but no longer under the New Law.

[3] Father Lalanne had declared to Father Caillet, that, in the actual situation, he believed himself obliged to follow the directions of Father Chaminade "by the principles of honor and probity," but not by his religious commitments.

792 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, BORDEAUX

Ebersmunster, August 4, 1835

My dear son—Somewhat late, as I have stated to Father Lalanne, I got a copy of the minutes of the Council meetings held on last July 17, 18, and 20.[1]

I have not kept any copy of the letter, dated last July 6, which provided the reason for the Council meetings, but I am quite sure of not having made the first proposition, as stated in the minutes, as that would have been somewhat absurd on my part. I am not surprised that it was immediately and unanimously rejected. I am coming now to the second proposition.

It is said that it seems necessary to accept it as a necessity, the acquisition of Layrac being morally irrevocable, and the impossibility of its being able to be established according to all precedents, but rather only by the person who first designated and promised it to the public, etc. There would have been prudence, in the first place, had the person designated not been spoken about. If the affair had entirely taken place among ourselves, who could have promised it to the public? From this imprudence now comes the necessity.

Concerning the basis of the affair which includes the second proposition, I have nothing to answer, since Father Lalanne believed it his duty immediately to carry out the affirmative decision of the Council, and in spite of the Council. His zeal seems to me very active and courageous. . . .[2] Still remaining is the drawing up of the deed of contract and the disposition of the Razac mansion.

Concerning the drawing up of the title-deed, there is as yet no urgency, since the transfer, in part, of the boarding school is being deferred to the reopening of next year's classes. Doubtless, Father Lalanne has his own means of morally assuring himself of the entrance of this portion of the boarders into Layrac.[3] Concerning disposition of the Razac mansion, there is no little difficulty. There are a certain number of pupils in the boarding school only for French. They could have been kept and the French teaching organized on a big scale, but how to find the teachers who would be needed? The suppliers would have themselves been less disconcerted. I am well aware that this measure might please M. Auguste. Nevertheless, I would prefer that the house be rented or sold advantageously. I am saying this, so to say, only from the natural point of view, such a drain is this

[1] See Letters 779 and 780.
[2] First wording: The deliberation of the Council, nevertheless, was leaving terrible chances for the contrary. Father Lalanne has more courage than one would have, at first, been able to believe, in taking upon himself the responsibility for the success of so important an enterprise which can have such serious consequences.
[3] First wording: It is really no longer a matter of transfer—as in the case foreseen by Father Chaminade, Letter 780—but of an invitation given to a part of the pupils and their parents.

establishment on us and we cannot know what Layrac may bring! The members of the Council have never had more need to be united than at present, through the bonds of a fraternal charity and of coming together oftener, but in a spirit of faith.

As I was about to end this answer, here is an idea that came to me. It would be possible to engage M. Dardy to hold the boarding school at Layrac for some time at least, until we can get out of our confusion. The Bordeaux boarding school would continue as if nothing special were happening. M. Dardy would continue his profits and risks in the same way. The agreement would remain, some repairs would be made and, when we were ready, we would carry out our plan. M. Dardy should tend to agree to this, considering that I answered his invitation so promptly and helped him out of the tight spot he happened to be in. He would now be doing the same thing for us. Brother Mémain could go there and write a short note delaying the actual taking possession. I am not precisely giving an order, but I can easily presume that the Council will adopt this idea. Otherwise, we risk ruining the Bordeaux boarding school and replacing it very insufficiently by the smaller one at Layrac. And how many other inconveniences will surely present themselves! In this way, public expectation is not being frustrated. No reasonable person will be surprised at these measures to insure a more solid operation.

I am now closing this letter, my dear son. It is meant for the Council. You will notice that I sometimes forgot I was writing only to you, so as to better speak to all. I embrace you tenderly and greet Fathers Caillet and Lalanne with much affection. I presume that M. Chalès is continuing to run M. Dardy's boarding school until the end of the year and that it would be difficult for M. Dardy to have him continue in that capacity until our taking possession. If this is the case, would M. Roy perhaps render him this service? And if he does it well, we would be only too glad to give him credit for it.

* * * *

793 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

St. Hippolyte, August 10, 1835

Seven to eight days ago, my dear son, Father Caillet wrote me that Brother Seguin was going to start out for St. Remy accompanied by Brother Kessler. Everything was also arranged for the transportation of the machinery.[1] If they have not yet arrived, they cannot be much longer delayed, as their departure took place on July 21. Father Caillet has never spoken to me about Brother Laugeay, although he has received the letter in which I indicated to him what we had agreed upon. Take good care of Brother J. B. Boillon. You will do well to make efforts to replace Brother Mérigot, as it is very likely that you are going to lose him. The young Mouchet[2] could possibly have learned quite promptly. I did not know

[1] See Letters 516, 576.
[2] See Letter 846.

that Brother Pelleteret had rheumatism in his shoulder. Does he suffer from it constantly? Is this rheumatism incurable? I really think we could use him well in some small schools. Take good care of what concerns him spiritually, as there is a lot that is basically good, reasonable, and religious in this young man. Keep me informed of what you may learn about Brother Brunet.

You know, my dear son, that I have always had the intention of drawing some suitable profit from Marast,[1] to better fulfill the intentions of the first donor. I am saying "to fulfill" because it was understood by the Archdiocese of Besançon that the establishment of St. Remy would sufficiently meet its intentions. Furthermore, you know that the Government was not satisfied with the Archbishop's and the Seminary's donation but that we had to have an express donation from the heirs, and only then did the Government approve it. The present good Archbishop may not be aware of this. Nevertheless, I am happy to be prepared for any invitation he may wish to make.

I can hardly see, my dear son, the harm I would be doing your establishment if I were not present at your distribution of prizes on the first of September. You doubtless have reasons for advancing this date.

Concerning what pertains to the novitiate of Ebersmunster, I have reason to presume that it will be entirely regular, but there are still many things to do. I do not as yet know what we can do for the many postulants of Courtefontaine and elsewhere. I had so much counted the possibility that, at Courtefontaine, everything would be finished and habitable for the reopening of classes. If Brother Galliot had held less strongly to his own ideas, we would not now face such great embarrassment. You will do well, my dear son, to have Brothers Pelleteret and Vermot follow a real course of instruction. We shall still be some time before resorting to any shift. In fact, I have promised the Bishop of St. Claude three Brothers for the reopening of classes, as I have promised three others for the little city of Soultz.[2]

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[1] Marast, old priory of Canons Regular, suppressed by the Revolution and acquired by M. Lieffroy, had been ceded by him to the Archbishop of Besançon in view of establishing there an educational house. The Archbishop, in fact, opened a small seminary there, transferred in 1822 to Luxeuil. The building, now vacant and free, was given to the Society of Mary in 1826, which developed the property and then in 1836 opened an educational house. The work survived until the events of 1903.

[2] The foundations of St. Claude and of Soultz really took place at the opening of the school year of 1835. At St. Claude, in the Jura Department, seat of the bishopric of the same name, the school was opened in a place that was too small and unhealthy. In 1839, thanks to the help of Father Labrousse, pastor of the city, and of Father Bardenet, it was transferred to the former Convent of the Carmelites in the Poyat quarter. There also a boarding school was soon attached, which rapidly developed and still exists today. The school of Soultz, Upper Rhine, was obtained by the persuasive eloquence of the pastor of the place. "Having learned that Father Chaminade was in Alsace, he went to see him and pleaded his cause so well that the venerable Founder could not refuse. The good pastor, all joyous, congratulated himself in a meeting of his fellow priests, for having obtained, by his eloquence, what many others were soliciting in vain." The school remained until 1874.

Brother Philip Roussel seems to be going back to his first fervor, but he is afraid of his return to St. Remy. He is almost always occupied with studies of all kinds and it is believed that he may turn out to be a good teacher.

As regards yourself, my dear son, fight with courage against everything that could prevent you from advancing in the practice of all virtues. Pray much. I hope that at the time of my visit to St. Remy, if you are full of good will, the Lord will enlighten us on what will have to be done to answer to the designs of favor he makes upon us.

Someone has just written me from Courtefontaine that the Ministry is going to pay the half-burses which have so long been delayed. I presume that you have received a notice to the same effect.

I am embracing you, my dear son, with great tenderness.

* * * *

794 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Ebersmunster, August 20, 1835

My very dear son—I am answering your last two letters of July 24 and of the second of the current month. If there is a possibility, we are going to form a novitiate at Courtefontaine. It is only with regret that I would remove the novices from Courtefontaine, because, when everything is said and done, we must keep on moving ahead. We have several novices in the Midi, whom I was to send to Ebersmunster but who were really intended for Courtefontaine. If, before their departure, some indecision remains, I shall send them to Courtefontaine anyhow and you will take them if they can be accommodated in the novitiate. At the beginning, things may not be too comfortable.

You tell me that M. Jeanneret has been sent off to his home during your travels in Alsace and for pecuniary reasons. Had this gentleman any real vocation? Could he have become a good subject, a good teacher? We should never send away a good subject solely because of adversity or the lack of pecuniary means. Be sure to take good care of your little postulants, twelve to fourteen years of age. I received the copy of the Archbishop's letter too late, and I was too encumbered with work to go to Acey during his stay there.

The Novitiate here is advancing beautifully. We can soon have, even without French, a fair nucleus of good postulants. I have just seriously taken steps, both to pay the old and new debts of the establishment and to sustain yearly this beautiful and interesting Alsatian novitiate. I presume that we could take somewhat similar steps at Courtefontaine. It seems to me that there are far fewer difficulties there than here. Here it is like being in a foreign land, so to speak, because of the language. But, if there is no union at Courtefontaine, we

shall succeed at nothing. If we become strong in Alsace, it will be because there is union and submission.

Take good care of your two young pupils who have recently decided for the religious state. The same thing has just happened here.

Courage, my dear son! The pains, the tribulations, the contradictions in the works of the Lord augur well. The enemy of Jesus and Mary seeks to shake the Society and does in fact shake it, and it is even this shaking which will purify and consolidate it. At our first meeting and interview, you will tell me all that you have upon your heart.

Receive my tender embraces.

* * * *

795 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, August 22, 1835

. . . Always remain at peace, my dear son. Do with simplicity everything that depends on you for the good order and regularity of the two communities. In particular, excite fervor in the château. I am writing to Father Fontaine on the subject of the vacations.

I shall come to see you at St. Remy, but as yet I do not know just when. It would seem to me most suitable when everyone has returned. We shall try to rekindle fervor again during my stay.

If M. Donzé's health is well reestablished, I don't see any reason why he may not be admitted; but concerning M. Duval, there is something more than merely an over-excited head. Write to him to build up his health while he spends the vacation at his home. Then write him at the end of the vacation and give him the counsels and advice that you think will do the most good.

Receive, my dear son, the expression of my inviolable attachment, with my fatherly blessing.

* * * *

At the end of his sojourn in Alsace, Father Chaminade profited by the occasion of the transfer to Layrac of the Ste. Marie Boarding School to invite Brother David Monier, who lived there, to retire to the North, as he had long wished to do. Father Chaminade determined to leave in younger hands the Secretariate General of the Society. This is the object of the following letter.

796 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Ebersmunster, September 11, 1835

I have happily learned, my dear son, at almost the same time, of your anxieties and your arrangement with the members of my Council, Fathers Caillet and Lalanne and Brother Mémain. The goings-on you have noticed in the boarding school must have made you fear for your future. These gentlemen should have notified you of them in advance. You renew my continuing intentions to give you retirement worthy of the friendship that has constantly united us and worthy also of the rank you have always held in the Society of Mary. I have never ceased to manifest these intentions to all those who approached you in the most stormy times that have just passed.

I gladly ratify the three articles regarding the arrangement which you have made:

1, The eight hundred francs that have been or will be given to you on one of the promissory notes you have in your hands. It is understood that you are remitting all the others, as having annulled them and, if necessary, annulling them a second time.

2. The request that you make to retire to St. Remy for the remaining years of your life, without prejudice, my dear son, to the possibility of changing this place of retirement, if you should so desire, to the superb abbey of Ebersmunster. The repairs at Ebersmunster are actually being entirely completed; in a short time, it will be completely furnished. This vast establishment is developing a great deal better than St. Remy, as it is generally loved and favored in Alsace, and maintained, to a large extent, by the Alsatian clergy.

Although St. Hippolyte does not offer the same advantages, nevertheless, as it is better situated, you could also find there the very kind of retirement you are looking for. This establishment is doing well. It is loved and well frequented, but it is just this very thing that makes it tight. In fact, it is rather difficult to lodge everybody comfortably. Many repairs were made by the tenants, though, and the grounds have been embellished and enlarged.

If the current patronage continues, I shall have a second story added to the new house adjoining the château.

I am able to tell you frankly, my dear son, that I have a real ambition to accord you and do accord you the most quiet, the most happy place of retirement that it is in my power to give, so as to prolong, as much as possible, the days which the good Lord will deign to grant you on earth. It is my hope that you may continue there the labors you have undertaken and prepare yourself seriously to die a death that is precious in the sight of God.

3. As regards the papers of the Society which are committed to your care, you can give them to whomever I may indicate. I shall do so in writing and so relieve your responsibility, and this in a way that you will indicate. Or, if you prefer to expedite things somewhat, I shall authorize Father Caillet, by this same letter, to relieve you of the responsibility of them in my name. If, for any other purpose, you have need of my signature, I also authorize Father Caillet to sign anything in my name.

The order of Providence, so admirable, although impenetrable in its designs, could well reunite us one day. If the good Lord continues to bless the Society by multiplying its members, by purifying it from all those who have rendered themselves unworthy of their vocation, I shall very willingly resign my authority, so as to put the Society into the hands of the one whom the Lord will deign to make known. It is this very thing which the old General of the Lazarists has just done,[1] as you can find out from the current news. What a good fortune to have, toward the end of one's days upon earth, nothing else to do than to prepare to die well!

Receive here, my dear son, my tender embraces.

* * * *

The one replacing Brother David as Secretary General is not mentioned in the preceding letter. It is Brother Bonnefoi, private secretary to the Founder since the end of 1833, who was destined for this post. He was officially designated only on the following October 25, after Father Chaminade had Brother David's answer.

Concerning the latter, lapsing more and more into neurasthenia, he did not go to St. Remy but, after having caused Father Chaminade many difficulties, retired to the Madeleine, where he remained until his death on January 16, 1849.

797 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Ebersmunster, September 14, 1835

[1] Father Salhorgne.

I am having my secretary take up his pen somewhat tardily, my dear son, to answer your letters and you must guess the reason. I am starting with the one Brother Clouzet was carrying, dated the seventh, and then I shall go backwards.

I am now almost entirely cured of my leg ailment, and furthermore, I am feeling fairly well . . .

The Bishop of St. Claude had someone write me that he hoped to be in Lons-le-Saunier on October 15 and that he would perform an ordination. Let our two candidates prepare themselves, as also Brother Prost. In doing some review work with Brothers Prost and Fridblatt, Brother Langue will only strengthen himself in the subject matter.[1] In this way, he will postpone his trip. I am planning to leave in a few days for Courtefontaine. Thus we shall be getting closer to one another, until I arrive at St. Remy.

All is doing well in Alsace, even better than I had reason to expect. When we meet, I shall enter into greater detail on account of the interest which you take in the Society.

The crisis of my legs is one great cause for the delay in my departure, but there are also other causes which will hamper me not a little, as regards my other visits. May the Name of God be blessed for all!

Regarding the Menotey affair,[2] as I need to travel through Dôle, I shall have the honor of seeing Father Boillon,[3] pastor of Menotey, and we shall see what we can do.

When Father Lamotte[4] comes back from the baths, talk with him and keep him occupied. He will make a kind of intern postulate until I arrive, and then we shall make up our minds as to where he will finally make his novitiate. In the meantime, you can give me news about him which will help me to know him still better.

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[1] Brothers Langue and Fridblatt were to be ordained priests and Brother Prost subdeacon on the following October 25.

[2] It is not known what kind of foundation was projected in this little town in the Jura region. Father Chaminade went there with Father Bardenet in the course of October, and there will be reference to it several times in future correspondence. See Letters 920, 926, and 1007. But the work could not be undertaken.

[3] The brother of the Brothers of this name.

[4] Father J. B. Lamotte (1802-1887), born in Poussay, Vosges, first exercised the holy ministry in the diocese of his origin, then tried the Trappist monastery of Oelenberg, Alsace, where his weak health and the political events of 1830 did not permit him to stay. Always desiring the religious state, he knocked at the door of the Society of Mary and was received in 1835. During his long career, he exercised the functions of sub-Master of Novices at Courtefontaine, 1836; of Director at Marast, 1838; and at Gensac, 1846; of pastor of the parishes of Flaujagues and of Coubeyrac, 1852; of Chaplain at Marast, 1868; and at Salins, 1873, where he ended his long life. He was remembered as a pious and zealous priest, of right judgment, of a fine mind with smiling equanimity, leading a regular and austere life. He was very devoted to the education of children, whose hearts he knew how to gain, in order to lead them to God.

You have not said anything about Brother Mauchamp since your letter of August 3. Doubtless he is always in the same state of illness. Always take good care of him, trying to raise his soul toward God by a spirit of faith.

Take courage, my dear son! You see how much St. Remy has need of being purified and reformed. The good God has himself come to our assistance. The trouble at St. Remy had its origins in the place itself. The crises which it is experiencing in its illness are, I hope, salutary to it. Let us pray much, but with entire confidence. Our Lord is the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation.

Receive my tender embraces with my fatherly blessing.

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It is at this time, or shortly after, that Father Chaminade wrote the ten letters to a Master of Novices quoted in the Spirit of Our Foundation. *They are preceded by the following message.*

798 – TO FATHER METZGER, MASTER OF NOVICES, EBERSMUNSTER

Ebersmunster

My respectable son, at last I fulfill your desires. You asked me to trace out for you the direction you are to give the novices confided to your care. Already ten postulants are gathered at Ebersmunster. There are several at St. Hippolyte and a certain number scattered in various establishments. All are waiting only on some repairs on a beautiful property that is destined for them.

Nothing less than urgent necessity has determined that I take up this work. I would not have dared to undertake it if the hand of God had not coerced me, so to say. Every time I've thought of this work I have seen only difficulties and a delicate task; but now I count on the assistance of the Spirit of our Lord, in whose Name we work. There are no difficulties for him.

It will be through correspondence, my dear son, that I will give you the direction you desire. This mode adapts itself much better to my present circumstances and perhaps better to yours also. I can return to matters that do not seem sufficiently clear to you and respond to difficulties I had not foreseen. It will be easy at the end to make a methodical summary of the entire correspondence.

* * * *

Before leaving Ebersmunster, Father Chaminade erects a secondary house there by the following act.

799 – TO THE COMMUNITY AT EBERSMUNSTER

Ebersmunster, September 28, 1835

ERECTION OF THE FORMER ABBEY OF EBERSMUNSTER AS A SECONDARY HOUSE OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY.

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary, in the interests of the spread of instruction, especially in the Departments of the Upper and Lower Rhine, wish to profit by the generous offer that Father Charles Rothéa, venerable member of the Society, makes of the former Abbey of Ebersmunster (Lower Rhine), acquired with his own funds since June 3, 1830. (The deed of sale was notarized before MM. Renecker and Lange, Notaries-public of Strasbourg.) In virtue of Article 10 of the Statutes of the said Society, approved by royal Ordinance, dated November 16, 1825, we have accepted the Abbey of Ebersmunster as a Secondary House, with the stipulation that this creation will never harm the independence of the Motherhouse and the action which the Superior General of the said Society has upon it and that this acceptance which we are making of the said Abbey will never, in any way, harm the property of the said Charles Rothéa, priest, according to Article 6 of the Statutes of the said Society.

Let us, furthermore, order that the new house of probation will in every way conform, in the manner of keeping its registers, to what has been ordered by the very Statutes of the said Society of Mary for the Motherhouse.

Given at Ebersmunster, at the time of our visit, September 28, 1835, under our seal and the counterseal of our private secretary.

* * * *

On the first of October, Father Chaminade completed this act by signing in flourishing style the register of the house.

We, the undersigned, Superior General of the Society of Mary, admit the present register, containing 190 pages, to serve, in the new house of Ebersmunster, for the inscription of entries on probation, temporary and perpetual engagements, in the order and manner prescribed by Article 9 of the Statutes of the Society of Mary.

* * * *

Everything being thus regulated at Ebersmunster, the Founder prepared to leave Alsace. On October 4 he went to Colmar and on the sixth he arrived at Courtefontaine, where he was to stay until November 18. It is from there that he addressed this first note to Father Chevaux, which closes so affectionately.

800 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Courtefontaine, October 12, 1835

I have in my hands the dimissory letters of Brother Fridblatt for the priesthood and of Brother Prost for the sub-diaconate. I have already had someone write Brother Fridblatt to come to Courtefontaine to prepare himself for the priesthood. Brother Prost could do as much, since his destiny remains the same. He will be sub-Master of Novices here, and I shall be very glad if he takes instructions in view of this position.

If Father Lamotte seems likely to you to become a good religious, he could come with Father Fontaine and he will enter the novitiate with Father Perrodin. If Father Lamotte seemed to be a doubtful case—not to have a good spirit and a good, tractable character—he would still have to remain a postulant, as we want to have a really fervent novitiate.

I shall soon go to Menotey with Father Bardenet. From there, he wants to take me to St. Remy. If such is the case, I shall have to come back again to Courtefontaine. We shall have many things to say, but nothing is more pressing for me to do than to express to you my sentiments of fatherly tenderness.

* * * *

Father Chaminade was more and more worried about the Layrac affair. Father Lalanne had gone there around mid-August. He was making extensive repairs and introducing "new and very expensive arrangements." He had not yet answered a letter which the Good Father had written to him on September 7. On the other hand, Father Caillet, very little sympathetic regarding Father Lalanne, was sending of his own accord alarming reports to Father Chaminade. The Founder thought it his duty to intervene more energetically and dictated the following letter to his secretary.

801 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Courtefontaine, October 10, 1835

My dear son: I was waiting for a prompt, satisfying, and consoling answer to the last letter I wrote you.

During all the time that I could believe that you were not sharing with others the bad principles you direct yourself with, I limited myself to trying to dissipate your illusions. You want to make a name for yourself in the world, and to succeed in this, you desire the absolute and independent superiorship of some big establishment. You do everything you can to shake off the yoke of obedience, under the pretext that the Society of Mary is badly administered, that its Superior General abuses the confidence of his subordinates by keeping them for so long without fixed Constitutions and without a regular administration.

You say that if he retains the government of the Society for a long time, it will be lost. It is doubtless you who are destined to rescue and save the ruins. You nevertheless say that you have in mind carrying out his orders, but only when these are not contrary to the reason which is directing you. You are obstinate and you say it openly in believing that the engagements taken in the Society are null and void.[1]

You must easily imagine, my dear son, how much such notions are harmful to some and actually scandalous to others. Perhaps you are under an illusion to the point of believing that zeal suggests them to you and that they are a means of eventually obtaining Constitutions that will favor your desires.

My dear son, I shall rigorously hold to the Constitutions we have sworn to uphold from the beginning. They are approved and continually receive new approbations, direct and indirect. The essential part of the Society's government has been fixed from the start on the fact that the General Administration has never varied since its beginning. It has always been in conformity with the spirit and manner of everything that had been approved. The subordinate administrations may have abused authority—yourself, for example, when you were superior of St. Remy and resided there. The abuses of authority and the infringement of the Constitutions, when they are not tolerated by the General Administration, prove nothing against the Constitutions or even against the General Administration.

You seem to avail yourself of what I have said to claim that it was suitable to make a clear and abridged edition of our Constitutions and general Regulations. My dear son, does this suitability, which is correct, imply the need of change? In no way at all, as it would no longer have been an edition, but a code of new Constitutions.

There was a possibility of having embarrassments in the General Administration. There still are some, and, presumably, there will continue to be for some time to come, until the Society has a sufficient number of subjects for the development it has taken on and that it is improving each day. This obliges me to form large novitiates, in proportion as Providence provides me with the necessary resources. Is a machine defective because the mechanic has not yet finished making important parts? At best, it is not finished and the most we can say is that it is still imperfect.

Whatever the case may be, my dear son, if you persevere in your illusions, in looking upon the engagements taken in the Society not only as null and void but even as doubtful; if you do not recognize the Superior General's authority and carry out his orders and the functions of your superiorship only according to your reason and the counsels you can get (no matter where, even if they were given in the tribunal of penance), I believe myself obliged to act as is done in similar circumstances. As you have publicly proclaimed this

[1] Father Chaminade reproduces here the same terms of a long letter of Father Caillet, dated the preceding September 16.

false doctrine, I shall be equally obliged to assure myself of the dispositions of all those I could suspect of the same errors. This will mean a great deal more to me than if my doctor in Ebersmunster had decided to amputate my two legs.[1]

You say, my dear son, that the Society of Mary cannot sustain itself. How come, then, that it is making continual progress and that it is only those who have been under you that have experienced serious anxieties? It is true that you have had bad examples under your eyes, but you are surpassing them a great deal, at least so it seems to me.

I shall do nothing, at least nothing important, to stop the evil that seems to be spreading until the time needed to get an answer from you has passed. If you enter into good sentiments, I shall have nothing to do. It is you yourself who will seek to lead into the dispositions required by faith and religion those whom you know to have been led astray. I shall always pray the Lord to dissipate your unfortunate illusions, but he will listen to me only insofar as you humiliate yourself before him and join your prayers to mine.

I did not intend writing you this letter. But recollecting myself before God, I believe I received an order, as it were, to write you. May it have the effect that I so ardently desire!

I look upon the Society, it seems to me, as upon a work of God. I believe myself the most incapable of men to govern it and to lead it to success in its purpose and mission, but the Lord is my light and my support. I fear no contradiction, no persecution, provided I am not guilty of provoking them. I would regard it as a signal favor were God to send me someone I could give all superiorship to. I could then look upon myself as the very last in the Society, as I very sincerely believe myself to be in the sight of God, but I shall stay at my post as long as I believe God requires this work of me. The pains, humiliations, the contradictions, even the persecutions will be for me a real gain and benefit.

I am saying nothing about all our affairs. The one which concerns me here is above all the rest.

Receive, my dear son, the expression of my fatherly tenderness.

* * * *

This letter had not yet been mailed when a long answer came from Father Lalanne, dated September 24 but sent only on the twenty-eighth. In it, he exposed his needs of money and personnel. He exonerated himself of Father Caillet's attacks, summarizing the situation in these terms: "We both got angry, but before separating, we were as before . . .

[1] The allusion is here to the pain Father Chaminade had suffered in Ebersmunster, which he spoke of in his letter to Father Chevaux, dated September 14. Already during the Revolution he had written: "My legs are worth nothing." Letter 5.

loving each other cordially but having only a very mediocre confidence in each other." He finally ended with this cry from the heart:

"When you are better, I shall answer several points of your last letter, on which, it seems to me, you are badly informed. For the moment, I shall limit myself to renew for you the assurance of my good intentions and of my deep affection for your respectable person. The wish I have expressed to you to see you spend peacefully, alongside of me, the days which it will please God still to give you for our salvation and his glory, is very deeply, very intimately enshrined in my heart. It is my need, it is your need, it is that of the Society. If we are well united, who will be able to divide it? However, to arrive at this so desirable unity, so that my heart, as you say, dissolves into yours, we must be able to come to some agreement, but we are too far separated from one another for this. Our eyes, our ears, our hearts are affected by persons and things that are too different. Recall the entire past. Have you not always found me rather close than far? If you had me in your hands, you would do with me as you please, and in making use of me, you would complete your work, you would render it so good that it would please God, and men would have quite a task in destroying it."

Father Chaminade did not send the letter he had prepared but replaced it by the following one, of which we have only a quotation, and even that probably incomplete.

802 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Courtefontaine, October 12, 1835

My dear son—You have many repairs to make in Layrac. Of that I have no doubt, but you will easily understand that we must not hurry these repairs at present, lest we prejudice the charges that are our burden. It may even be possible for me to come to your aid. At least, I have reason to hope so, without being certain. But, before all, we must exactly do honor to these charges.

I shall say nothing about the too lively discussion which took place between you and Father Caillet. It seems to me that both he and you have been mistaken, as it is never permitted to go beyond the limits of moderation: *"Sermo autem vester sit: Est, est; non, non."*[1] Which is the one who has the greater wrong? I shall be very careful as to deciding this point. I know very well that Father Caillet has manners that are sometimes quite rigid or possibly even harsh, but he is full of uprightness, zeal, and the best intentions. You may also frighten him by the proclamation of erroneous principles and the rashness of following your own reason rather than obedience.

As regards the twenty-four thousand francs, you could use twenty thousand to take away the mortgage on the Razac mansion. The corresponding interests would be the same,

[1] "Let your speech be Yes, Yes, and No, No." (James V, 12).

but time would be gained and it seems even considerable time, which in our present situation means a lot. Perhaps we would not have to sell this house. The other four thousand francs can be mortgaged even on Layrac, and you would be making use of it in the meantime. To mortgage them on St. Remy would seem an imprudence to me, in our present situation.

But why, you will say to me, not edit this essential part of the Constitutions? Well, my dear son, it is not the difficulty of editing that is holding me back, since it would suffice to write what has been done from the beginning in the Society. But it would be imprudent on my part to want to bring up for discussion what has always been and what I desire should be. I would have willingly done it, but I noticed right away the trap that was being set for me. You would fight, for example, for the absolute and unlimited or at least slightly limited superiority of a big establishment. It is unnecessary to say why: it is up to you to see it before God. In the Society of Mary, all local authority is always subordinated, and I know of no religious order where the same is not the case, although under somewhat different forms.

It is high time, my dear son, that we move on, in a uniform manner and with the same principles. You are mistaken to carry out the orders of the Superior General only when they are not contrary to your reason, even when you might enlighten this reason by the counsels of persons you would judge to be wise and instructed, even if these counsels were received in the tribunal of penance. Well, my dear son, it is time to come to an end.

P. S. I was forgetting to tell you, that, in coming back through Colmar, I met a young pastor, a sorbonniste of Strasbourg,[1] and I begged him to ask the Archbishop's permission to go to Layrac, to teach under your direction, so as to continue to improve himself. If he gets this permission, I shall speak to you of him in greater detail. He is a very handsome man and has very distinguished manners.

* * * *

On October 14, the annual retreat opened at Courtefontaine. It was preached by Father Fontaine. Father Chaminade reserved conferences for himself. "At the end of the retreat," recounts Brother Bernard Meyer in his memoirs, "at the fraternal kiss, Father Chaminade counted the Brothers present. There were thirty-six, three dozen. . . . The Apostles were only twelve," he said, "and they converted the world. . . . Three dozen Apostles of the Blessed Virgin, what an amount of good they can do!"

Toward the end of the month, Father Chaminade took steps for a work which his advanced age seemed to counsel him to undertake and that Father Lalanne, since 1830, had suggested to him (Letter 563): the transfer of the property of St. Remy, which then

[1] Pupil of the Little Sorbonne, house of superior studies for the clergy, founded at Molsheim by Bishop le Pappe of Trévern of Strasbourg.

depended on him, to some members of the Society enjoying his confidence. It will be noted that, faithful to his principles, he did not, for a moment, think of availing himself of the Ordinance of 1825 to assign this property to the whole body of the Society. He deemed it a surer policy to base this transaction on common law than on the exceptional laws from which the congregations were then supposed to benefit.

803 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, EBERSMUNSTER

Courtefontaine, October 23, 1835

I have reasons for selling St. Remy. I would want to sell it to a little group of four members of the Society who presumably would have something to buy it with. I think that Xavier[1] might be good for a fourth, you and your Rev. brother for another fourth, possibly Xavier for a third, you and the Rev. Father for another third. Brother Clouzet would manage the last third. As soon as I go to St. Remy, some days from now, I would want the sale to be submitted. I believe it would suffice if one of you three put in his appearance at St. Remy, supplied with the procuration of the two others, Xavier, for instance. See if the thing is feasible. As regards the sale, I mean only the exterior part of the domain, as I shall reserve the woods to myself.[2] The procuration of each one of the two could be formulated somewhat in this way: Having learned that the château and domain of St. Remy were for sale, he gives full power to M. Xavier Rothéa to buy, in his name and jointly, the portion of the domain proportionate to his money supply and to his resources, etc. . . .

Get together immediately and answer me. Then I shall, without delay, assign you the day of the reunion at St. Remy.

* * * *

804 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Courtefontaine, October 26, 1835

Your letter of October 18, my dear son, addressed to the Abbey of Acey, reached me at Courtefontaine only on the evening of the twenty-fourth.

I would have liked to have seen you at Courtefontaine. I would have listened to your counsels with interest; but it is to be presumed that, after a short discussion, you would have admitted the choice of Brother Galliot for St. Claude. The good which will come from it will make up for some disagreements that this change will likely cause.

I agreed with Father Curot that he would be given a class and some supervision, that he would spend a year without being completely occupied, whether he remained in the Society or left it, but especially that he would have charge of teaching catechism to older persons and give other instructions that Father Chevaux would deem it suitable not to give himself. He asked me if he could hear confessions. I answered him affirmatively for the

[1] M. Xavier Rothéa, affiliated to the Society. He had taken and was to continue to take an active part in the financial administration of the Society in Alsace, helping largely with his personal fortune. However, he does not figure in the deed of sale at St. Remy, which was drawn up only by his two brothers and Brother Clouzet on April 20, 1836.

[2] The woods were to form the object of a special sale to Brother Clouzet.

boarders who would ask to come to him. Although he is not asking for it, I permit him to preach in some neighboring parishes one sermon per month in logical sequence. During the free time he might have, he could prepare his instructions and sermons. He seemed to receive all this with pleasure. Treat him with consideration and friendship and show much confidence in him. It is to be presumed that you will turn everything to good account.

Brother Olivier is not available, but he could be in the immediate future. I have already been asked for him by several establishments. Father Fontaine, in particular, has strongly insisted on having him. I shall reserve him for St. Remy.

I believe that Brother Silvain will be useful to you as, even by himself, he is worth more than two. Sustain his fervor and regularity, get along well with him, but not as Brother Galliot did, leaving him with practically no direction at all.

Besançon has just changed again. The hosiery manufacture is reestablished and, as a result, the spinning-mill. I shall nevertheless see if Brother Toussaint could not be replaced by Brother Athias. It is much to be feared that the former does not instill piety into the little ones as the latter does. The carpenter shop is suppressed. It is more than useless to speak at present of retirement, which was the principal object of your letter.

Through Father Meyer, send me one of the recent numbers of the newspaper, in order to inform myself somewhat concerning recent happenings. You would do well to send me the papers as you receive them, after you yourself have given them the onceover. You know that by putting them in a wrapper, the postage is but one sou per sheet.

Herewith enclosed, I am sending you the note I have just written Brother Louis Rothéa. I wish that as soon as I arrive at St. Remy, one of my first tasks will be the sale of this domain. I am of the same opinion as Father Bardenet, and I am going to send a similar note to him. See if you have something to observe. If your observations referred to precautions the Rothéa brothers would have to take, you might write to them directly.

More than anyone I must keep death in mind and prepare myself for it. Pray for me and for all those whom God wishes to lead to heaven through me, and you are no exception. I am tenderly embracing you.

P. S. Everything is coming along well enough here but still somewhat painfully. We shall have some fine young men as the first kernel of the novitiate.

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Here are inserted ordinances and obediences required by the needs of the Society and of its new foundations.

805 – TO BROTHERS DAVID MONIER AND BONNEFOI

Courtefontaine, October 26, 1835

ORDINANCE

We, the Undersigned, Superior General of the Society of Mary, after having maturely reflected, have prescribed as follows:

I have named and do name, by these presents, Brother Bonnefoi (Charles Francis) Secretary General of the Society of Mary, replacing Brother David Monier.

This is a token of confidence and of gratitude for the services which he has been rendering us for several years as private secretary.

An honorable retirement, at his choice, in one of the establishments of the said Society is accorded to Brother David Monier.

Brother David Monier will turn over all the documents of the Society of Mary into the hands of Father George Caillet, who will give him a receipt for the same.

The present ordinance will be inscribed on the register of the orders of the day, which, at present, is in the hands of our private secretary, and it will be sent to Father Caillet, who will place it in the personal hand of Brother David Monier.

Given at Courtefontaine, where we are in the course of a visit on October 26, 1835, under our seal and counterseal of our new private secretary.

* * * *

806 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, COURTEFONTAINE

Courtefontaine, November 8, 1835

OBEDIENCE TO OUR DEAR SON, BROTHER PETER GALLIOT,
HEAD OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COURTEFONTAINE

We have named you, my dear son, as we name you by these presents, Head of the small primary school establishment in the city of St. Claude, without prejudice to the more elevated functions to which a second nomination calls you on this present day.

It is to please His Lordship, the Bishop of St. Claude, just as the Rev. Pastor of the Cathedral, by whom you are well known, that I have named you Head of this establishment,

erected by the Rev. Pastor and under the protection of His Lordship. You have conducted the establishment of Courtefontaine so well.

You will leave shortly, my dear son, to occupy your new post. You will find there, already assembled, a certain number of pupils.

Given at Courtefontaine, where we are in the course of a visit on this eighth day of November, 1835, under our seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary.

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807 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, COURTEFONTAINE

Courtefontaine, November 8, 1835

TO OUR DEAR SON, BROTHER PETER GALLIOT,
HEAD OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ST. CLAUDE

In naming you, my dear son, Head of the primary school establishment of St. Claude, we reserve to ourselves naming you, by these presents, Visitor of the establishments of Orgelet, Salins, and Courtefontaine, for the maintenance of good order and economy in all that is understood by temporalities. Not having a definite class to teach at St. Claude, you will easily be able to fulfill these functions. Your visits will be made regularly, about every three months, counting from the past All Saints Day, and still more frequently if you deem it necessary. Given at Courtefontaine, where we happen to be in the course of a visit on this eighth day of November, 1835, under our seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary.

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808 – TO BROTHER GOUVERD, MOISSAC[1]

Courtefontaine, October 26, 1835

LETTER OF OBEDIENCE

My dear son, we have designated another teacher of the Society of Mary to replace you at Moissac, and we have named you, as we name you by these presents, first teacher of the new establishment which we direct in St. Claude. I have already favorably spoken of you to His Lordship, the Bishop. Your nomination is much in the nature of a present, which I thought it my duty to make to His Lordship, as much on account of the knowledge you have already acquired, as of the wise and irreproachable conduct that you will continue to follow under his eyes in the establishment, which he protects very specially.

You will leave quickly and directly, my dear son, by the shortest route, because the opening of the establishment is to take place very soon.

Given at Courtefontaine, where we are in the course of a visit, this twenty-sixth day of October, 1835, under our seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary.

* * * *

[1] Brother Amiable Constant Gouverd (1807-1880), from Bretonvillers, Doubs, knew the Society in St. Remy, from whence he was sent to the Novitiate at St. Laurent in 1827. He there received formation from Father Chaminade, who at his request taught him to give himself the discipline. He liked to relate how long he found the first lesson, which John Larquey, the devoted domestic of the house, sodalist of the Madeleine, gave him, while Father Chaminade recited the Miserere. He was faithful to this practice throughout the course of his life; and equally until the end of his life, according to the habit contracted during his novitiate, he was faithful in writing out each day an account of his meditation.

Brother Gouverd was, later on, the founder of the Schools of Morez, 1849, and of Olonzac, 1851, where he spent the greatest part of his life. He died piously in Besançon, where he was in retirement.

He was of rather tall stature, of polite and distinguished manners, loving to recall that, finding himself at Collège Stanislas in Paris, he had the honor of teaching the future King of Spain, Alphonse XII.

During his stay at Courtefontaine, Father Chaminade visited the convent of the Daughters of Mary in Acey and the new foundation in St. Claude. Before leaving Courtefontaine, he had organized a Community Council on the type of those in St. Remy, Ebersmunster, and St. Hippolyte. Having been appointed to be part of it, "Father Leo Meyer, already Head of Zeal and pastor of the parish, now Master of Novices and first Head of the establishment in place of Brother Galliot; Father Fridblatt, Head of Instruction and Director of the boarding school; Father Prost, Head of Temporalities and sub-Master of Novices; Brother Noir[1] special substitute for the Head of Instruction; and Brother Verrier[2] substitute for the Head of Temporalities; he is also substitute for the Head of Zeal, for all those who are employed in manual labor." (November 17)

Having left Courtefontaine on the nineteenth, the Founder passed through Salins and Arbois and arrived at St. Remy on December 2, where he was to remain all that winter.

Before leaving the establishment, he addressed the following letter to the Bishop of St. Claude.

809 – TO BISHOP CHAMON, BISHOP OF ST. CLAUDE

Courtefontaine, November 17, 1835

Your Lordship: I am leaving Courtefontaine. I am going to visit the convent of Arbois while passing through Salins. The little establishment in this last town seems to inspire ever greater interest as the days go by. It is making progress and growing stronger.

I am leaving Courtefontaine in good condition. The nucleus of the novitiate is twenty persons. This is made up of truly fervent youths, promising high hopes for the future. Construction is not yet completed. The natural enclosure cannot as yet have taken place, but even the recommendations made up to the present seem sufficient.[3] The boarding school is also doing well. Not all the pupils who will compose it, have yet entered. I have put Father Fridblatt at its head, a young priest you had the goodness to ordain recently, and he has good assistants. Independently of the village school, there are a certain number of day-pupils, giving great consolation. The organization of the entire establishment is simple but coordinated in such a way that all the parts form but one regular whole.

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[1] Brother Jean Benoît Noir (1806-1871) from Pannessières, Jura, entered the Society at St. Remy in 1834 and was employed in teaching in various houses, especially in Cuiseaux and at Givry where he died. His conduct was regular to a fault. He was moved by the best intentions but somewhat abused by his imagination, which created many a difficulty for him in his religious life

[2] Brother Claude Louis Verrier (1813-1889) from Audeux, Doubs, entered the Society at Courtefontaine in 1833 and remained there except for a short stay in Marast, until 1869, a real mainspring for the temporal order of the house. In 1869, he was sent to the orphanage of Luché, where he took charge of the kitchen. He ended his life there, remembered as a religious who was full of the good spirit, of right judgment, of great charity for the poor, and of the most complete devotedness to the Society.

[3] The material enclosure of the novitiate does not yet exist. In the meantime, opportune recommendations are serving as a supplement.

A few days ago, I submitted a small subscription project to Father Bardenet, and I invited him to lead the way, but he did not seem to like the idea. I am, then, limiting myself to giving some instructions to Father Meyer so that he may make friends for himself and that Providence may come to the assistance of a work which is undertaken but for the glory of God and the maintenance of religion in Your Lordship's diocese. I imagine that Father Bardenet thinks of himself as a powerful agent in the hands of Providence for the support of the Novitiate, and Father Meyer will act only according to the occasions that present themselves, so as not, as we say, to tempt Providence. And he will do that only insofar as he is clothed with your protection.

The considerable foundation that Mme Coudry wanted to start cannot happen at the present time. While I was gone paying homage to Your Lordship, someone terrified this good lady and her respectable daughter. Although I am going away, I shall not lose sight of this affair nor of the establishment which you desire for St. Claude. On every occasion I shall try to enter into your solicitude for your diocese and to give you proofs of the very respectful devotedness with which I am Your Lordship's very humble and very obedient servant.

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810 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, December 12, 1835

Be very careful not to introduce into the Novitiate any subject whose sentiments you are not sure of, for it is much better, if difficulties do exist, that they be resolved in the Postulate rather than in the Novitiate.

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At Layrac, the conflict was becoming acute. Father Chaminade called upon Father Lalanne to declare clearly what he intended to do and to declare definitely whether he wanted to live under obedience.

811 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, December 24, 1835

My dear son, your letter of the fifth of the current month came to me only on the evening of the twenty-second. By a mistake in the address, it was sent to another St. Remy because you had forgotten to add “Haute-Saône,” and the word “Vesoul” was hardly legible.

It is with great regret, my dear son, that I tell you that I cannot accept your answer to the honest declaration I requested from you.[1]

I would end my letter here if you did not inspire me with much interest, if God had not inspired me with very fatherly sentiments toward you. At the end of your letter, you ask me, by very sacred Names, to end all discussion; and it is for this very reason that I later asked you for the said declaration; because, as I have written to you several times, as well as to Brother Mémain, this matter has to come to an end.

By the general tone of your letter, you do not seem to have a correct idea of superiorship in the religious state. According to you religious superiors do not hold their authority precisely from the Church, nor from an extraordinary mission of God, but from the free will of those who vow to God to be submissive to such and such a man whom they choose as superior. These vows are then of obligation when they have the conditions required for the validity of vows. Ecclesiastical authority is to have a knowledge, at least in general of the end and the principal means that the one who is chosen as superior intends to use. This authority must know the person chosen as superior. No more is rigorously needed, so that the vows have their entire validity and impose on those who have taken them, their respective obligations.

I have some knowledge of the organization of a certain number of religious orders, ancient as well as modern. I know of none which has begun invested with as many formalities calculated to inspire confidence as the Society of Mary.

1. Its institution is similar to that of the Daughters of Mary, whose Constitutions, general Regulations, and even little Regulations for subaltern functions had been approved by the Bishop of Agen and his Council.

2. The application of the general principles of the said Constitution of the Daughters of Mary, approved by the Archbishop of Bordeaux—you must know this very well, for I have repeated it several times—before the first profession of vows (Letter 102).

[1] By the letter of October 12. Father Lalanne’s answer, without doubt evasive, has not been preserved.

3. You know that at the end of each annual retreat, after the profession or renewal of vows, we used to go to receive the blessing of the Archbishop. During the last years of his life, His Excellency used to come himself to St. Laurent to say Mass for the retreatants, to give them his blessing and that during all his pastoral visits, active or passive, we were accustomed to give him an account of the progress of the Society.

4. A short time after the foundation of the Society, I informed the Sovereign Pontiff of this work in my quality as Missionary Apostolic. The little account I gave him of the Society and of its general organization was taken both from the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary and from the application which was made to the Society, approved by His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux. The request I presented to His Holiness was favorably recommended by the Archbishop of Bordeaux. You know the Brief that His Holiness addressed to us and with what goodness he accorded us the favors we were asking of him, the most remarkable of which, in the matter now occupying us, is the plenary indulgence accorded to the profession of vows in the Society. (Letter 110)

5. When there was a possibility of having the Society of Mary approved by the Government, weren't the Statutes that were presented and approved always in perfect conformity with the same Constitutions? This is what constitutes what is civil in religious constitutions, the only thing we had to have approved by the Government and which properly comes within its province.

6. During the lifetime of Archbishop d'Aviau, I found a favorable occasion to have the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary approved by the Holy See. I consulted His Excellency, because, all the while he was alive, I did nothing of importance for the Society without first consulting him. His Excellency told me in a friendly manner that, on his part, he would do whatever was necessary, but that he would advise me to wait a little longer, because, with the development of the Institute, I might want to change some article or add another, and that would entail difficulties once the Constitutions have been approved by His Holiness. His Lordship, the Bishop of Agen, when he knew of the counsel of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, completely approved it.

7. You know that the Apostolic Nuncio in Paris, Cardinal Lambruschini, approved in great measure, all that we had done in the institution, in the Sodalities, in the Institute of the Daughters of Mary or in the Society of this amiable name. You know the obliging offers of service which he made to me in person and later on repeated in writing.

By your letter, my dear son, you seem no longer to recognize any Constitution in the Society. "Was it the Regulations of the Daughters of Mary that was presented to us at the beginning," you say, "to give us an idea of what ours would be? But, this copy-book has been suppressed and replaced by a new edition." This first copy-book, which was presented in the beginning, has not been suppressed. The new edition, somewhat retouched in a great number of articles, is looked upon only as an abridgment which can explain the first edition, and when we recognize that it is only an interpretation of the same,

it will be presented to the Holy See without ever suppressing the first edition. That edition is too long and somewhat diffuse, but it nevertheless expressed the order, such as it was intended to be constituted. In general, women like prolixity and this kind of diffusion.

"Is it the forty articles that His Excellency the Archbishop has clothed in his approbation? But for a long time already, they have been lost in oblivion." I do not recall the number of the articles that the Archbishop of Bordeaux has clothed with his approbation, but here the number of the articles has nothing to do with the matter. I could easily verify them. But, 1) these articles are but a succinct extract and an application of the general constitutive principles expressed in the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary; 2) they may have been lost in oblivion, but they expressly said that all the regulations which would follow upon them would carry the spirit of these first articles. Drawing upon them as principles, all the other regulations would be but consequences of them, which indicated a constant coming back to the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary. These articles, approved by His Excellency the Archbishop of Bordeaux, are not our entire Constitutions, but only, as it were, the fruit of the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary, suitably applied and in the same spirit.

"Are these the Statutes submitted to the approbation of the Government under Charles X? But the Society is considered only in regard to its civil state." These Statutes enter into the totality of the Constitutions of the Society or, better, they are included in the Constitutions, if not textually, at least eminently and according to their spirit. They had more force when I presented them (Letter 355), and really the civil Code permitted all this force. It was only with great difficulty and by different premises that I obtained them such as they are. The member of the Society of Mary who would admit only these Statutes would not take in the entire extent of the obligations he assumes by the profession of his vows. I don't believe, for example, that M. Auguste can have a safe conscience and be on the way to salvation while keeping his properties, even supposing the legitimacy of the dispensation from his vows. I shall never believe that the dispensation from a law is able to give this law a retroactive effect. In my youth, I have seen some religious secularized by the judgment of the Parliaments, but these parliamentary decisions have never had a retroactive effect. By the Statutes alone, I cannot cry out injustice: all I can do in similar cases is fall back on conscience. When it was necessary to have the Daughters of Mary approved, I consulted the Apostolic Nuncio on what was to be done in regard to the vow of poverty. We agreed to insert a note in the Constitutions that we would present.

"Is it the edition that we made together at Gray? But you have annulled it." In fact I did annul it because I did not find it entirely conformable to the Constitutions adopted and approved.

"Is it the Regulation that you sent last year to all our houses? But this Regulation touches almost none of the fundamental tenets of a religious society." (Letter 759) These general Regulations touch many more fundamental elements of the religious Society of Mary than you seem to believe.

These are all the elements that generally interest all members of the Society. They are those which are presented to all who definitely want to enter the Society, whether laymen or priests. All are to examine them before God. All are to understand the extent of the obligations they contract. No one makes profession without adopting them in mind and heart. Everyone understands that there is but one authority to have them observed. Everyone sees this authority as a fact, sees its organization, its administration, etc. I explain it to those who desire to know it in a more precise and exact manner.

"What can I then answer? Please have consideration for my embarrassment." I am hoping, my dear son, that, if, in a humble spirit and without seeking to promote your ideas, you read the answers to your difficulties, you will emerge from your embarrassment. You will find yourself able to make the declaration I have asked of you, and that, frankly and honestly. I say frankly, without any equivocal sense and without any mental reservation, as the first of your answers appears: "Yes, I look upon myself as irrevocably committed to live religiously in a Society formed under the name and under the auspices of Mary."

I am no more a friend of discussions than you, my dear son, and I have no less need than you of economizing on my time. It is for this reason that I omit, in my answers, different incidents, and especially those that are personal to me, so as to adhere more strictly to the matters that concern both of us. It is for this reason that I am also as terse as possible, counting on your intelligence to understand me perfectly. It is for this that I suppress so many exhortations and considerations that I might be inclined to make by reason of the great attachment I have for you and by the interest I have in your salvation and sanctification. It is for this also that I am urging so strongly that the whole controversy between us be definitely ended.

You understand, my dear son, that if we do not start out from the same principles, if you are not a member of the Society of Mary, of the already existing Society, I cannot let you have subjects who would be or who would want to be truly members of the Society of Mary. There would be at Layrac another Society of Mary, one according to your principles and your conduct. This purification would do you very little harm, considering the dispositions of most of those who surround you and whom I know well.

I have written Brother Mémain, to put an end to the affairs of Brother Olivier.[1] Since Layrac necessarily needs the same articles of furniture as Noailles, let Brother Mémain take them at their true value and not more. I shall send a promissory note for two hundred francs. If, with this help, Brother Mémain could not pay the difference to complete the deal, I would send the difference of the surplus advanced on the true value. I have never had the idea that Layrac would be the loser. Brother Olivier always told me that his furniture was worth about a thousand francs at the very least and that his debts were not higher. I told

[1] Brother Olivier, Director of Noailles, unfaithful to the wise counsels Father Chaminade had given him, had just left the Society and his leaving had caused the closing of the establishment.

him to address himself to you. I did not have in mind that he should render you a burdensome service or at least a very burdensome one.

Answer, my dear son, as soon as possible. Receive my very tender embraces.

* * * *

The end of this letter was categorical and Father Chaminade was resolute: if Father Lalanne persisted in his rebellion, the Founder had decided, no matter how much it would cost him, to separate him from the body of the Society. He had also asked Brother Mémain, Father Lalanne's steward, some frank and clear declarations, and having obtained them, he wrote him these lines:

812 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, LAYRAC

St. Remy, December 31, 1835

As far as you yourself are concerned, my dear son, do everything I tell you in my letters. Since you wish always to be faithful to the Society of Mary, I shall trace out for you, little by little, what you will have to do successively, from the time Father Lalanne declares himself. We will also do this for all the subjects who are or who seem to be with the Society. At the same time as I pronounce the separation, I shall send you an obedience, telling you to withdraw. After that, I shall settle whatever remains of the business matters you might have with Father Lalanne. Remain in peace and let there be no kind of preoccupation!

* * * *

The serious cares and worries which come to him from Layrac do not prevent Father Chaminade from pursuing with solicitude the formation of his religious. As a proof, the interesting letter to Father Prost follows and then the little note to Father Meyer.

813 – TO FATHER PROST, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, December 28, 1835

My dear son—Your letter of the sixteenth of the present month includes two very distinct parts: the first is personal to you, the second regards the temporal matters which you administer at Courtefontaine; but the two are closely connected. Let us begin with the first.

Why doesn't faith in the presence of God, of God alone, Who is all in all and our all, any longer make the same impression upon you? You rightly attribute the reason to a certain dissipation of mind that exterior affairs have brought about. What is to be done in such dispositions?

It is certain that exterior affairs would not produce dissipation if they were managed entirely for God, in a true spirit of faith. How many saints have had more of such affairs than you and were not dissipated! They always preserved recollection, by which they raised themselves to a still greater degree of sanctity! From this you should conclude, my dear son, that you are to make efforts at fidelity so as always to grow in faith in the presence of God, of God alone, Who is all in all and your all. He is all and in consequence the rest is nothing, and you yourself are nothing. Your all consists of wanting none but him, seeking only him in all things, conforming your will to his, etc.

To reach this point, give yourself seriously to mental prayer. May your day be a continuation of mental prayer. At the beginning of your principal actions, enter into your recollection and to succeed better, renounce, as at the beginning of mental prayer, all the bad dispositions and the inclinations of corrupt nature, to seek only God in everything that you will have to do.

In the beginning, my dear son, you will find in these practices only a certain subjection that will be little agreeable to you; but with some constancy you will find great peace of soul in them. Have an understanding with Father Meyer, as he will be able to help you and, certainly, will always encourage you.

I have read, my dear son, all your final settlements of accounts. It seems to me little prudent to have reduced your total cash balance to 150 francs. Under such conditions, you have to borrow four thousand francs, and I consent to it. Father Meyer knows a lady in Courtefontaine very well who has a like sum invested, I believe in Poligny and which can be paid back in a very short time, if she so desires. Let Father Meyer take this sum, under the same conditions as she offered me. Nevertheless, I would think, before doing anything toward this loan, 1) that Father Meyer hold a little finance council, made up of himself, you, Mlle Coudre, and Father Fridblatt. In this council, the state of the establishment's finances would be made known and the urgency of the four thousand franc loan would be decided upon; 2) discussion would take place on how to procure resources for your establishment other than those means you indicated to me. I made some suggestions to Father Meyer and to Mlle Coudre, because it was very easy for me to foresee that you could not keep going very long with the resources you had, especially if the number of novices increases. And it is important that no good subject be refused under pretext that he is not able to pay all his tuition or even anything at all. However, take notice that I am saying good subject, that is to say, one whose good qualities can make up for his lack of money.

Mlle Coudre will willingly accept, I have no doubt, being Father Meyer's vicar-general in what concerns the temporal order, that is to say, when it comes to finding funds. She knows the lay of the land a lot better than he, and she is esteemed. Furthermore, her devotedness to the work is not without fearlessness. If you all go ahead with great confidence, the good God will find resources to sustain his work in Courtefontaine and some persons who will attach themselves to it with all their heart. I am recommending very especially to you as well as to Father Meyer the supervision and management of the

Novitiate. Take care of it, both of you, as if it were the apple of your eye. May the Lord, my dear son, deign to bless your cares and your labors. I am repeating for you my tender embraces.

P. S. You will be able to read in Council the second part of my letter. I am embracing very tenderly all my children at Courtefontaine. I am greeting Mlle Coudre very paternally, for I regard her as my daughter and I have the greatest confidence in her.

* * * *

As an answer to Father Chaminade's offer, Brother David had agreed to go into retirement at St. Remy, but to get started, the capricious and meticulous old man wanted an obedience. The Founder hastened to give it to him, which, in the end, did not prevent him from staying in Bordeaux.

813bis – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

St. Remy, January 2, 1836

OBEDIENCE TO MY DEAR SON, BROTHER DAVID MONIER,
FORMER LAWYER IN BORDEAUX

My dear son, as soon as you have finished all your preparations, leave for St. Remy, (Haute-Saône): this establishment has been chosen as the place of your retirement. Nevertheless, if the state of your health does not permit you to brave the rigors of the season, you could await more favorable weather conditions, only you would have the care of notifying the establishment. If nothing opposes your prompt and early departure, you will still find me here, where I am detained by several important matters.

* * * *

814 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, January 10, 1836

Neglect nothing to have the novices enter into the spirit and the practice of the religious life, though always with prudence. The action of grace in them must be followed. Although it is abundant for all, it is not the same strength for each one.

* * * *

During the greater part of the year now beginning, the correspondence between Father Chaminade and Father Lalanne is going to continue until the act of July 28, in virtue of which, the latter, while still remaining a member of the Society, will take completely

under his direction the work of Layrac, surely an abnormal situation but motivated by the exceptional circumstances in which Father Lalanne had become imprudently entangled, and which was, some years later, to end by a catastrophe (1845).

In this long succession of letters, the character of the correspondent is well demonstrated. Father Lalanne, ardent and adventurous, lacking in administrative sense, letting himself be drawn blindly by the force of events after having rashly laid down his principles. He continued to be pulled about by his excessive love of independence, but he maintained his real devotedness to the Society and his profound attachment to the Founder. Father Chaminade remained patient and long-suffering, feeling acutely the weight of his responsibilities, attentively weighing the consequences, in all circumstances consulting conscience and duty. While not recoiling an inch before any of these requirements, he nevertheless kept for his firstborn son a thoroughly paternal affection.

* * * *

Before receiving Father Lalanne's answer to his letter of December 24, Father Chaminade learned that the former refused to honor the ordinary charges of the Ste. Marie Boarding School, which he had recognized until then. Indignant, the Founder addressed the following letter to him, accompanied, as will be seen, by letters from the Vicar General of Agen and the Superioress of the Daughters of Mary. He had the letter addressed to Father Lalanne pass through the hands of this Superioress.

815 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, January 12, 1836

I have learned, my dear son, that you refused to satisfy M. Loze, whose interest claim was to be one thousand francs on the eleventh of the current month, that you sent it to me or to Father Caillet as my representative. I have also learned how difficult it was for Mlle de Maignol to receive her 650 francs for her semester that ended on December 5. I am notifying you, my dear son, that if you do not pay the debts on the Razac mansion as soon as they come in and if you do not pay back what Father Caillet has already advanced you, I am going to have recourse to the Courts against so crying an injustice. I have already written you several times, as well as Brother Mémain, on the same subject. I would never have thought that you would come to the point of refusing creditors who would address themselves to you directly.

You can avoid this scandal. So as not to have to reproach myself for not doing everything possible, I am writing Father de Trincaud[1] to ask him to beg of you to stop this commotion and at least do simple justice. To save time, send your answer and your promise to Father de Trincaud.

[1] Vicar General of Agen.

I have been told that you bought the old stables of the Abbey and that you even bought an open cab. If this is true, it would ill become you to claim that you have not money to pay what is plainly a matter of justice and, consequently, of conscience. I am not sure if this is the time to speak of honor and delicacy.

I have learned with bitter sorrow that you have presented M. Leroy and M. Jacquot for ordination, the first for the priesthood and the second for the diaconate.[2]

I am praying the Lord without ceasing, my dear son, to enlighten you about the bad direction you are following. If my prayers and those of a great number of pious persons have some efficacy, I will have obtained for you a fine New Year's gift, because, as you see, I ardently desire a year of salvation for you. Do not believe that on account of this I do not care about your temporal prosperity, but what is the worth of the prosperity that hasn't conscience, justice, and religion as its foundation?

* * * *

816 – TO FATHER TRINCAUD,
VICAR GENERAL OF AGEN

St. Remy, January 12, 1836

Father Lalanne's hot head makes him neglect serious obligations. Strict and intrinsic justice demands the payment of creditors who have a mortgage on the Society of Mary's goods and especially on the Razac mansion.

The Ste. Marie Boarding School, established in this house, has paid interest on the Razac debts until its transfer to Layrac. This transfer took place to augment the profits of the boarding school and to pay all the Society's debts more easily and now, inconceivably, Father Lalanne refuses to pay them and sends the creditors to me. I feel obliged to have recourse to the Courts. I really hate to do this and so, I thought that, if you had the goodness to write to Father Lalanne, he might prevent the scandal of a court case or lawsuit.

I ask you, Rev. Father, to receive his categorical answer and to communicate it to the Mother Superior of the Daughters of Mary. I have patience in other matters. I always hope that God will enlighten him and that he will recognize his hotheaded mistakes. Of course, you well know his merit and his talents.

I am with respectful remembrance, Rev. Father, etc. . . .

[2] Father Lalanne had presented for ordination these two subjects, simple postulants of the Society, by means of dismissorial letters from their Ordinary.

* * * *

817 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

St. Remy, January 12 1836

I have as yet received, my dear child, no direct answer to the last letter I wrote Father Lalanne. You know of this letter through the copy I sent Brother Mémain in your envelope. I would be patiently awaiting the answer to it, if serious incidents did not reveal his intentions to me and oblige me to act.

He seems to have employed for Layrac the funds which had been given him to pay the chirographic debts of the boarding school. He owes at least twelve thousand francs to the suppliers and teachers of this boarding school. I am not yet saying anything about this—Brother Mémain has not as yet sent me a sufficient accounting, but concerning what is of crying need, I simply must act. Father Lalanne refuses to pay the interest on the capital mortgaged on the Razac mansion. The boarding school, nevertheless, was the guarantee for the payment of this interest and has paid it without any interruption. One of the reasons I listened to M. Dardy concerning the sale of Layrac and to Father Lalanne concerning the transfer of the boarding school was to be able to better satisfy all our creditors. Father Lalanne, in transferring the boarding school, has taken upon himself the obligations for which it is the guarantee. This is an evident thing. I am writing to Father de Trincaud to ask him to open Father Lalanne's eyes concerning the scandalous commotion he is going to stir up if he does not fulfill this obligation in all justice. You can communicate to Father Trincaud the contents of the letter I am writing Father Lalanne. I am leaving it unsealed for this purpose, but you will seal it after communicating its contents and then send it to Father Lalanne. I have reason to hope that Father Trincaud will be interested in it, if for no other reason than to avoid scandals in the Diocese of Agen.

If Father Lalanne, against all good sense, refuses to do justice and intends to put himself on the defensive, call M. Ducos.[1] Come to an understanding with him about what measures will have to be taken. He himself could confer about it with some legal adviser, and especially with some of the judges with whom he has the greatest and most frequent contact. You will inform me about everything.

It is evident, my dear child, that Father Lalanne, to accomplish his vast projects, is seeking to shake off the yoke of all religious dependence and that, to this effect, he wants to make himself Head of a Society of Mary. This is evident, 1) because, when he saw himself in St. Remy at the head of a vast establishment, he sought to persuade one of the main Heads to join him and separate himself from the Society.[1] On several occasions, he

[1] A lawyer of Agen.
[1] Brother Clouzet immediately refused.

gave expression to subversive principles but adroitly and, as it were, as a copperplate engraving. 2) Several times, I have noticed that he has the same principles he had when he was Head of the Ste. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux. 3) Since the Layrac question arose, his discourses and his conduct all speak of a partyman to whom everything is good, everything is praiseworthy, provided it helps him in attaining his ends.

Why, you will ask, have you authorized him to put himself at the head of Layrac? He is unable to show any express authorization. On mere conditional beginnings[2] he went beyond all conditions and transferred the Ste. Marie Boarding School to Layrac. He bought it in his own name and Brother Mémain's, without any kind of authorization, in such a way that M. Dardy finds he sold it twice, once to me under private seal and the other time to Father Lalanne and Brother Mémain by public contract. The latter let himself be roped in, in good faith, as if good faith could favor all Father Lalanne's projects. Brother Mémain could stop him so easily and would have done so if he had kept me informed about everything and if he had exercised the functions of his office.

I have learned many things about Father Lalanne I did not know before. He has with him at Layrac those who share his interests and sentiments. In a letter which he has just written to Bordeaux, he calls them his adherents. Have as few connections as possible with him, and let those you must have be always honest and always short—that means say only what is necessary and related to the matter at hand. Never enter into any discussion, and always let me know whatever comes up. Also take precautions that he have no relations at all with any of the members of the community. You will quietly put an end to having one of the Sisters confess to him, although he is little capable of understanding anything about this kind of difficulty. That will not be difficult for you, since he is not on the property with you, and you cannot function together except in case of need.

To facilitate your interview with M. Ducos and so that you may not be obliged to tell him about this letter, I am going to write a little note to be consulted. You may even put it in his hands, always in the supposition that Father Lalanne will continue resisting the payment of the debts on the boarding school.

The multiplication of our pains and worries seems to me to augur well for the future. It seems to foretell the repose and the prosperity of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary as of the Society of the Brothers of Mary. 1) It is the usual order of Providence that the great works of God are contradicted, agitated, and shaken. 2) You and I, do we not deserve chastisements from the great Master whom we serve? Let us be submissive, let us adore his designs, let everything be a source of merit for us! If this good Master is satisfied with us, we shall also be satisfied with him.

[2] By this expression, Father Chaminade softens the bearing of his letter of April 27, 1835, which well indicated a firm will, not merely conditional. A more complete and more exact expression of this thought will be found in Letters 821 and 822.

I am repeating for you, my dear child, the expression of my tender devotedness.

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Father Lalanne's answer to the letter of December 24 reached Father Chaminade and called forth, on his part, the following reply.

818 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, January 20, 1836

By your very short letter of the eighth of the current month, my dear son, you protest to me before God that you are not asking for anything better than to be perfectly and definitively in agreement with me; but it seems to you, you add, that I am requiring of you what you think you are unable to do.

I am requiring of you, my dear son, only what during long years you have thought yourself able to do, what you have vowed and sworn to do. Whatever may be new in the Rules and Constitutions of the Society of Mary can only be regarded as an amelioration and a development of what existed from its very beginning.

On the eighth of October, 1834, I concluded an Extract of our General Regulations. I did not join to it any Extract of the organization of the Society of Mary nor of its government, because both existing by the very fact, I wanted to draw attention especially to all that a member of the Society of Mary is supposed to do. It is a mirror, sent to all the establishments, in which each one may look at himself and judge whether he is truly religious, etc.

For several years, both here and in Bordeaux, except during the short interval of your repentance, you always called into question your dependence upon the Superior General. You have plans that seem to call for independence. There is nothing more contrary to the religious spirit than that, not only of the Society of Mary, but of all religious orders. And, what would happen, even in human and purely civil societies, if each member were free to act arbitrarily? In a religious order, how many infractions of the vow of poverty must such an independence cause? In this condition of things, would it not have been the utmost imprudence for me to publish the Regulations relative to the organization and especially to the government of the Society? It is evident that you were lying in wait for me there, thinking to find, as it were, ostensible rights, so as to combat them and then withdraw with an appearance of justice.

It is you alone, my dear son, who are delaying that other Extract that is much less essential than the first. I am saying "less essential," since by the very fact of profession, application is made of it and that no one in the Society is anxious about it except yourself and those whom you worry. In fact, everyone knows very exactly what he has to do and

recognizes the authorities placed over him to lead him on the road traced out for him. Is anything else necessary for persons who are in good faith?

If ever this affair should be discussed in the presence of persons acquainted with all that has come to pass, they would be struck with amazement. In the discussions I have had with M. Auguste, he pretended that I was not following our old Constitutions, that I am turning aside from them. He asked to see all the authentic documents, and this satisfaction was given him. At the same time, I asked him to examine exactly and rigorously all the articles of the said documents and to point out to me the slightest contradiction originating from me, based on what he himself knew or could find out about by writing to all our establishments. I drew up a memorandum in which I proved that the General Administration had always been in harmony with our Constitutions. I had just sent this memorandum to Bordeaux when you stopped in Agen. I read the entire memorandum to you, and you seemed to look upon it as unanswerably correct and exact. M. Auguste was then interested in maintaining that there was a change in the Constitutions and, today, you, having different interests, pretend that there are no Constitutions, at least as regards the government and the General Administration. You would want that a particular superior of an establishment be independent, that he be not held to obedience, that he be able to act arbitrarily in the establishment confided to him, buy, sell, borrow anything and everything as he sees fit doubtless with excellent intentions in order to fulfill your vast plans conceived for the good of the Society in general and of religion in particular. Nor were you yourself forgetting the glory you might draw from it, as well as the celebrity of your name; but since your name has always been linked with the Society's, this glory and this celebrity would fall back upon it too. Doubtless, you are religiously holding to your vast ideas and projects. Your intentions and your motives are so great and so pure, at least in your own eyes! You pity me, by reason of the remains of filial love on your part. You also pity the Society of Mary for having such a Founder and Superior General. You would want to be in perfect and definitive accord with me, but it seems to you that I am requiring of you what you think you cannot do.

"You want," as you say, "that I declare to accept and recognize as obligatory, in virtue of the vows I have made into your hands, everything to which you have given the name of Constitutions and to all the interpretations you have given and still give them. Isn't this the way things stand?" It is, my dear son, and yet it is not, because of your vague manner of speaking. You have the statement of the declaration that I ask of you in my letter of last October 12, written at Courtefontaine. As regards the interpretations I may have given, they are all correct and in the spirit of the Constitutions, even according to you. You cried out only against the very unimportant matter of the black tie in the costume of the lay religious. You protested against this. Regarding interpretations I could give in the future, there is very little to be feared, since practically all necessary interpretation has already been made, through the Society's development to date. I have already been in a position to make application of all the articles of the Constitutions. I am giving you notice that, in the edition which will be made of the important paragraphs, touching the organization and government, the articles referring to the dependence and obedience of the particular

superiors will neither be changed nor interpreted according to your way of seeing things. This could not be, even in a purely civil society.

It is for this reason that I have already written to you and that I have asked Father de Trincaud to write to you. If you do not honor the interest on the sums mortgaged on our goods, especially on the Razac mansion, I would be forced to have recourse to the courts. I have not ceased to write to you or to Brother Mémain, that conscience, justice, honor, and delicacy ask that you pay this interest. I have made up my mind to this effect, only after I learned from the actual facts that you had answered one of our creditors negatively, M. Loze, and told him to see me or Father Caillet, my representative in Bordeaux. Are you not the first to take up arms against me or the Society? Am I not obliged to defend myself, since I really represent the Society, both religiously and civilly? And if I were not able to pay, would there not be in Bordeaux a much more shocking lawsuit, perhaps much more scandalous? And you would find yourself much more seriously compromised. As soon as I knew of your refusal, I firmly made up my mind that M. Loze would receive his thousand francs. I hope I shall succeed in persuading you, although I have no assurance of it. I have reserved to myself the right to bring the lawsuit to Agen, after having notified you of it. You can and you must stop any further enlargement of the case.

In asking for justice in this pressing affair, I shall be forced to draw on all my reserves if there is no complete and definite arrangement between us. In my heart, I feel very sad to be obliged in conscience to have recourse to such measures, especially toward you. Who could have ever imagined it! You are aware of everything you made me suffer at St. Remy and of the concessions you practically forced me to make, to avoid greater evils: *Minima de malis*. At Layrac, you managed things somewhat differently. You said: “Let us suppose that there are no fixed Constitutions. My vows have no longer any object and I am no longer bound. I may act arbitrarily; I may make myself the master of Layrac; I am not held by obedience to give any account of my activities; I can now carry out the projects my reason inspires me with, etc., etc.” In the illusions you cherish, you have cast aside the holy yoke of obedience which you vowed to the Lord. You should have considered at least that if you did not consider it your duty to act as a religious, you had to act at least civilly and conscientiously. Our Society is at the same time religious and civil, and you are aware that I shall be very careful not to attack you on the first point.[1]

In this regard, which is the more important before God, and even before men of faith, you still seem uncertain. You do not believe you can answer me frankly. Nevertheless, you will consult; but before consulting, you thought it your duty “to assure yourself of the state of the question.” The state of the question, my dear son, has been, I believe, sufficiently explained in my different letters. I have habitually answered all kinds of difficulties that you presented. . . . You will consult. It is not a matter of indifference to bring up such a question and to do some consulting about it. But, finally, if, in the mischief-making of your imagination—I could almost say, of your ambition—you think it your duty to

[1] In the law courts.

consult, thinking you have found a way to safeguard your honor, then consult; but may any statements you furnish always be communicated to me.

A last consideration, my dear son. It is altogether certain that in putting yourself perfectly and definitely in accord with me, you will not sin but will avoid great scandals and very vexing consequences. In not doing so, you expose yourself to the commission of great crimes followed by great scandals, with consequences more or less vexing and the loss of several souls. Is it at such a cost that you want to carry out the vast projects you have in mind? Do you actually believe before God and in good faith that God will call you to account for the nonconsummation of these projects, if you have stopped at the sight of the crimes that might result? Or of the horrible scandals you might be giving? Or of the vexing consequences they would bring? When I say nonconsummation, I am taking the thing here at its worst, because: 1) Your projects have no other sanction,[1] in their extent and their execution, than your own reason, and you must realize how very weak this sanction is when one is agitated interiorly by secret desires. 2) Who has been able to tell you that there is neither sufficiency nor temerity in defying every consideration? 3) You know and must know that I really desire the good and that I am always glad that the talents of our members are employed in reaching it. I am always disposed to help each one succeed by all the means in my power. With helps from the Society—*Vis unita fit fortior*[2] you would have more efficaciously attained the possible consummation of your projects. Precipitation, imprudences of all kinds are not opportunities for success, and it is impossible that God should approve them. If you have sustained successes until the end, it will be a very bad sign. You will then have to reckon on the judgment of God. Great reverses and great contradictions would be a lot more useful to you: There would be a means of having you enter into yourself.

I have believed it my duty, my dear son, to put these considerations before you. I have shortened them as much as possible. The long and close relationship we have had really doubles my obligations in your regard, especially at the beginning ofa new year, when you beg me to accept your greetings and good wishes as well as those of the Layrac Community.

It is not for political reasons, my dear son, that I always style myself and especially today your very loving father.

P. S. I was going to sign this letter, my dear son, when I received information from Bordeaux about your interview with M. Auguste, in which you told him of the requests I was making to you by my letter from Courtefontaine of last October 12, in which I asked you to adopt the interpretations which I would give to the Constitutions. You were not telling him in what manner I would be giving them, nor on what they would be based. Both of you found that conscience would be against it and that there could be no pure and simple

[1] Approbation.
[2] In union there is strength.

subscription to them, etc., etc. If you do the thing rightly and correctly, why not read to M. Auguste, the requests I have made to you by the above-mentioned letter? Why, also, in the extract of them you sent me in your letter of last December 5, have you made important and essential suppressions, but less than what you made for M. Auguste? Here I am not restoring the texts. Compare my letter with what you told M. Auguste and also with what you have written to me.

* * * *

Here is placed a little note addressed to the Bishop of St. Claude to justify the absence of Brother Galliot, Director of the school in this city.

819 – TO BISHOP DE CHAMON, BISHOP OF ST. CLAUDE

St. Remy, January 27, 1836

Your Lordship—I shall do justice to the letter of Brother Saron, which Your Lordship had the kindness to send me, as soon as it is possible to do so. So as to neglect nothing, it is sufficient for me to know that you are interested in its concerns, but I cannot as yet say when I shall be in a position to do anything about it.

Our Novitiate at Courtefontaine is doing well. However, before assigning the subjects to various places, they must be educated and formed sufficiently. Brother Galliot had just arrived in St. Remy when I received your messages, and he had not been able, before his departure from St. Claude, to have the honor of presenting you his respects. But, before leaving, he had made arrangements that the good running of the classes would in no way suffer. It is in the interests of the establishment projected for St. Claude, and somewhat with the encouragement of the Pastor of your cathedral, that he came to speak to me in St. Remy. His trip to Courtefontaine had already been agreed upon when he first came to St. Claude, and he was to make it only when everything would be in working order, in agreement with the Rev. Pastor. I promised that I would justify him before Your Lordship.

I thank Your Lordship for the wise and just observations that you have had the goodness to make to me, in regard to the dangers of absences. I would not be able to penetrate myself more thoroughly with their reality. I shall never permit any, unless I am convinced of their necessity and suitability.

I am with a very profound respect, of Your Lordship, the very humble and very obedient servant.

* * * *

To the pressing letters of January 12 and 20, Father Lalanne had answered through the intermediary of Father Trincaud. To this answer, which we no longer have, were joined the following lines (January 28th):

You must have received, my Good Father, my answer to Father Trincaud. This short letter, which I am adding to it from a motive of conciliation, is to ask you to stop in time in an affair which could be very annoying to you and baneful for religion. You are badly informed as regards my intentions and my conduct. I might even be able to say to you that you are badly advised that jealousy, envy, and the rancor of wounded self-love pursue me as far as you are concerned. However, I do not want to come to any conclusion or to form any judgment that might wound charity. May God be merciful to all of us, because we all have need of his mercy . . . And your poor son . . . Oh! will you then be happier when you have renounced him, when you have turned him against you? Will the loss of him be a gain for you and for your Society? Is the evil that you are fearful of greater than what you are going to cause for yourself? Weigh, weigh well all these things before God, my Father, and if this is the last time that I give you this name, this letter will serve to prove that I have not wanted all the evils that are going to take place. I am still offering you, while greeting you respectfully, the tribute of my very devoted services.

Father Lalanne thus evaded the answer that Father Chaminade, conscious of his responsibilities, was trying in vain to obtain from him. The Founder continued to urge him with irresistible logic, no matter what the cost, to come back to the path of duty, which was also that of salvation . . . but the last word of the letter was, as always, a word from the heart and inspired by faith.

820 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, February 6, 1836

My dear son—I have received your short letter dated from Layrac on last January 28, but I did not receive your answer to Father Trincaud. “You are adding this short letter to your answer,” you tell me, “only from a motive of conciliation and to ask me to get out of an affair in time, the issue of which would be very vexing for me and baneful for religion.” You want that I put an end to this affair, but isn’t it you who have commenced it? Isn’t it you who have made the first raising of swords by refusing M. Loze the payment of the interests due him, sending him back to me or to my substitute in Bordeaux, Father Caillet? Is it not to end this

injustice that I had him pay a sum which had a very sacred destination, so as to give you time to enter into yourself?

Were you not notified of the obligations you were contracting by the transfer of the St. Marie Boarding School to Layrac: 1) by the representations, perhaps too hasty, of Father Caillet; 2) by the representations, based on conscience, justice, honor, and delicacy? These representations must have been repeated to you by Brother Mémain, who also heard them from me. They are contained very especially in my letter of last October 12 which you surely have received.

Now that you are hard-pressed, you answer: "I would like, but—" but nothing impossible is called for. And nevertheless, you would want to have Brother Mémain borrow forty thousand francs in life annuity, to pay for the new acquisitions that you have made[1] on your own account, or, you have in mind to make the Society responsible for the four thousand francs of interest money you would owe, which I do not presume, on the very establishment of Layrac. Have you noticed that four thousand francs form almost four-fifths of what you are to pay for Bordeaux? Where is then the impossibility?

I have admitted, my dear son, as I do admit, that bringing this affair before the law courts would be troubling for both of us. But, tell me frankly, would it be less troublesome if our creditors attack me in Bordeaux so as to be paid as a matter of justice? The counsel to be taken here is not precisely to know if the matter of your proceedings for payment will be disturbing, but whether it will be more disturbing than my direct proceedings! *Minima de malis*.

There can well be another danger, my dear son, in bringing this affair before the civil courts which you may not foresee. These last may not want to have anything to do with it, at least with the totality, and may send the case or a part of it to the University courts. How would we be treated under the Guizot Ministry?

What is the source, my dear son, of all these anxieties? Without you and all your schemes, would not everything be at peace? Would not the Society itself be in a flourishing condition? It is generally in a state of prosperity in the north of France, and in the south, there are not disturbances other than those which you are causing. The establishment of Layrac, with a little patience, was going to draw us out of the terrible penury we have been in for long years, and you know whose fault and whose counsels got us into it.[1]

I know of no real complaints in the totality of the Society other than those you are behind. You want to act in an independent and arbitrary manner so as to realize your vast conceptions about education and anyone or anything that tries to stop you means nothing

[1] The acquisition of the old barns of the Abbey, etc.
[1] Fr. Chaminade here implies what he says clearly elsewhere, namely, that the expenses made in Bordeaux by M. Auguste had been counseled by Fr. Lalanne.

at all to you. The small number of subjects you have drawn to yourself as teachers have entered into your views. In fact, I know of none of these who are fit for the Society. Those who were definitively engaged were fit, by their conduct, to be pushed away from the Society, such as Brother Brunet, C . . ., etc. The others have not made vows in the Society. M. Leroy, and M. Jacquot, etc., needed you to be pushed ahead for sacred Orders. M. Dürr and M. Rohmer are your pupils, and so can they think otherwise than as you do? You feared that, if this small number went to the common retreat, given in Bordeaux for all the associates of the South, it would possibly turn them too much away from the views you had concerning them.[2] Besides, you wanted, against all established principles, to give a special retreat for them in Layrac. This is no false interpretation of your intentions. In this retreat, you took care to make it known that you were not in accord with me, and everyone promised fidelity to you.

You say, in the course of your short letter, "that I am misinformed about your intentions and about your conduct . . . that, perhaps, you might even say that I am badly advised that jealousy, envy, and the bitterness of wounded self-love pursue you in my regard." I am on my guard, my dear son, against all interpretations of intentions, and you clearly see that I stick to facts and only to facts. In this affair, you are obliged to give an account to the Society of the management of the establishment of Layrac. You may not borrow considerable sums, you may not make the acquisition, etc., except with the consent of the Society of Mary. You have a very strict obligation of paying the debts in question, without prejudice to the payment of all other debts which might come your way, by well-conceived economies or by a prosperity we could have good reason to expect from the more than ordinary talents which it has pleased God to give you. In all truth, you must be thinking me very weak and limited not to be able to distinguish whether, in the counsels given me, jealousy, envy, or the bitterness of wounded self-love figure to any extent.

The remainder of your letter, my dear son, is a very pathetic exhortation to pray and to avoid the dreadful evils which my lawsuit against you is going to produce. But, my dear son, are you not able to avoid this lawsuit? Am I asking for anything other than what you have an obligation to do? And, even in the case that these obligations do not seem to you so strict and rigorous, would you be doing wrong in following the rules of order that I am asking for? Will you do wrong, a moral wrong, by not following all your ideas, by not abandoning yourself to all the uncertainties of time and events? Do you believe, on the contrary, that I have no obligation of conscience to oppose all that I plainly see to be disorder and serious imprudence? . . .

On several occasions, you said that in contradicting you, I was throwing down the Society but that you would be gathering up the debris. Well, then, my dear son, if you think that my present action against you could really bring about the Society's downfall, why do you not avoid this catastrophe by not doing something you can let go of without moral

[2] Allusion is made here to Fr. Lalanne's refusal in October to allow his community to go to the annual retreat, which Fr. Caillet was to give at St. Laurent.

failure, but which, if you actually carry it out, will become for you a great crime? Why will you do such a thing unless you want to gather the debris to form your own party and become Head of an extinct Society that has been reanimated and vivified under you? I believe myself obliged in conscience to stop these plans of yours, except for taking counsel on the method I must use to avoid the great evils I foresee in your opposition. Do you believe yourself the emissary of God? Or do you think that all the ideas your mind—what you call your reason—suggests to you are orders from God which must be carried out, against all counsels of wise persons and against all legitimate authority?

I have just followed, my dear son, the spirit of your short letter of January 28. I shall make a few more observations on some expressions and phrases in this letter.

You add it to your other letter, you say, from a motive of conciliation. When one reads and rereads this letter, it is difficult to find in it motives other than those which are likely to irritate. There is so much irreverence in it, and, you seem to suppose that I do not act by myself and by my own lights, but by the counsels suggested by jealousy, envy, and bitterness against you. Or again, you imply that I am sinning gravely against you, to the point of crying for mercy for myself at the same time as for you. You soften it somewhat by saying that we both have need for mercy . . .

"And your poor son! Ah! Will you then be happier when you have renounced him, when you have turned him against you?" You will have turned him against you! What motive, my dear son, of conciliation can there be in the suggestion I should be afraid of making you an enemy! Is the spirit of vengeance already in your heart? It would seem so, since you add: "Is the evil you have come to fear greater than what you are going to do to yourself?—This letter will be a proof that I did not want all the evils that are going to take place." You are mistaken, my dear son, in the belief that your letter will bear witness to the fact that you have not wanted them. On the contrary, it will be proof and a powerful one that you have wanted all the evils that you foresee. You will keep this letter as proof against them and I shall keep it as a proof for them.

You want, my dear son, the consequences of our discussions, since you do not want to fulfill, in a serious matter, the duties required by justice. You are to render an account to the Society of the management of the establishment at Layrac. You may not use its funds arbitrarily. You have an obligation of not contracting new debts. These are all obligations that you have understood very well, overriding obligations which result from the enterprise you have undertaken as an associate. No pretext, no illusion can free you from this obligation, not even the need for making repairs. You are not to make any repairs other than those the Society permits you to make by placing the means at your disposal.

I would have many other observations to make, my dear son, about your brief letter of January 28 mentioned above, especially such as would be moral and religious; but I must say I do not find you well enough disposed to receive them. Although you still call me your father, you seem to say that it will be for the last time. Although you may no longer call

me by this name, I shall nonetheless remain what the name connotes. David always preserved sentiments of tenderness toward Absalom, although the latter waged open war against him and would have obliged him to come down from this throne so he could get it for himself.

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Father Trincaud, moved by Father Lalanne's situation, had asked Father Chaminade not to have recourse to legal action against him. The Founder answers by the following letter and observations.

821 – TO FATHER TRINCAUD, VICAR GENERAL OF AGEN

St. Remy, February 12, 1836

Dear Rev. Father: I am afraid I have not sufficiently answered your letter of last January 27, and so I am coming to it again.

You have the kindness to say to me: "I am asking you, Rev. Father, in Heaven's name, and with the greatest urgency, not to carry out your threat of a court action. The sensation it would be bound to create would certainly not fail to bring about the greatest harm to religion and to the priesthood, to your Institute, and to the important establishment of Layrac." It is surely to avoid the sad consequences that my action against Father Lalanne might have that I took the liberty of asking you to write him and to put before him my obligation of suing him in a court of justice if he did not submit to the duty of justice I was asking of him. What, in fact, am I asking of him?

To give an account of his management of the establishment of Layrac to the Society of Mary, in whose name he is carrying on. If he carries on arbitrarily, isn't the Society exposed to much greater worries than those it experienced in Bordeaux? Already, in the first month, after the entry of the eighty boarders, he did not have enough money even for current expenses. Brother Mémain was obliged to borrow five hundred francs. I am told he is obliged to borrow large sums on interest to pay the principal suppliers, etc. Isn't this what happened in Bordeaux in spite of all my prohibitions? There is no difference between Bordeaux and Layrac, other than the fact that the Society is going to ruin more rapidly in Layrac than in Bordeaux.

I know well that he will not fail to make people believe that I am inspired with mistrust toward him and that, if he is allowed to follow his vast conceptions, he will surely pay all the debts he contracts in Layrac. He will also suggest that he pay all the Society's debts as well as sustain and develop it. However, if he met with failure, if he happened to die, or, in any other way, he were unable to continue the establishment of Layrac, where would the Society of Mary be?

Foreseeing that he could well be stopped in the projects he has been cherishing for a long time, he is seeking to shake even the foundation of the Society of Mary. He has protested against his vows and the obligation of recognizing me as his superior. This is the reason I am attacking him only as a member of civil society. He has sought to gather adherents about him, complainants like himself, so that, after having destroyed the Society, he could collect its debris and be the Head of a true Society of Mary. He has said it several times and has even written it to me that he wanted to present written statements to our Lords and archbishops and bishops and first of all to His Lordship the Bishop of Agen and then, later to refer all to the Sovereign Pontiff, etc.

But, finally, without getting away from the main question, I am asking you, Rev. Father, not only if I have the right, but even if I haven't the obligation of requiring of Father Lalanne the accounts of the receipts and expenses of the establishment of Layrac, of requiring that he make no expenses or loans other than those that the Society, in whose name he acts, judges fitting and necessary?

I would be obliged to you if you would put your answer at the bottom of the statement for consideration which I am taking the liberty of sending you.[1]

I shall ask you also if Father Lalanne is not obliged to pay the debts which are weighing on the St. Marie Boarding School in Bordeaux as a result of his having transferred it to Layrac and transferred practically all its furnishings and furniture? I think that, before God, and even before men, he has a strict obligation of justice to pay, in general, the debts of the Society, in proportion to the means he has and is likely to have; means handled with not only his own wisdom, but with that of the Society he represents in Layrac.

I would again be obliged to you, Rev. Father, to put your answer to the second question at the bottom of the said statement.

You tell me, Rev. Father, "that it seems to you that I would have very little chance for success before the courts, since the action would be brought by me, legal owner of the Razac mansion, against a man unacquainted with this property from a legal point of view and whom no title renders liable for the burdens encumbering the said mansion." You say very truly, Rev. Father, and it is for this reason that I am paying the debts as they come in. But have I not the right to call for the payment of the said sums from those who have taken the obligation to do so? You tell me further "that Father Lalanne declares in conscience that he has never taken any special commitments touching this matter." Was it necessary, Rev. dear Father, to take special commitments? Is this commitment not inherent in his office as master or superior of the St. Marie Boarding School of Bordeaux, the boarding section of which he transferred to Layrac with all its furniture? "You admit that it seems to you, that there is only what is reasonable in the idea of making all the members of the

[1] This statement, drawn up on February 9, is a simple exposition of the question of Layrac, such as we know it from the correspondence of Fr. Chaminade.

Society responsible for his burdens, in proportion to their respective resources." Father Lalanne knows for a certainty that the whole Society exhausted itself, so to say, to meet the immense deficit brought about in Bordeaux, that even available properties[1] were swallowed up and that the Society will soon have nothing left but mortgage debts.[2] In this state of things, can Father Lalanne reasonably reject, in some vague way, such burdens on the whole Society? If there are still debts in Bordeaux other than those tied up with mortgages, are they not due to him, at least in very great part? Why does he not give an account of the considerable sums he had in his hands to pay them? Why has he used a part of these sums for the establishment in Layrac, without any necessity and even against all propriety? For example, four thousand francs to draw up the deed of acquisition of Layrac in his own name and in Brother Mémain's before I knew anything about it? (And he even believed it right that I should know nothing about it.) Why did he begin by having what we call the big library transported[3] altogether independently from the community's and the boarding school's? This project cost thirteen hundred francs, etc.

It is evident that the contract of acquisition was hurriedly drawn up so that I should know nothing about it from a letter communicated to me and written by one of the Heads at St. Remy, last July 31. Here is a literal copy of this letter: "My dear friend, Brother Mémain, and I have just ended a major transaction. We have bought Layrac on good terms, after having assured ourselves of the conditions of payment, the costs of repairs and of the needs of the first establishment, without overburdening the Society. The transaction was managed according to all the rules of prudence, and with all the maturity consistent with our age and experience. Nevertheless, Father Chaminade will blame us for one point and it is to inform you about it that I am hastening to write you. It is that we made the purchase, not in his name, as he seemed to have wanted, as Father Caillet wanted—but collectively, in my own name and Brother Mémain's. You know, you will appreciate better than anyone else the reasons that prompted us to act in this way, you will understand all the consequences for the future of the Society. If some blame fell to our lot on the part of our superiors, you would know what attitude to take and on what side the wrong is to be found . . . Be without anxiety or worry, just remain always united in principle and heart to your old friends and all will end up in great
style . . . Adieu."

The same contestations, dear Rev. Father, which I have with Father Lalanne today at Layrac, I have had with him when he was superior of the establishment in St. Remy. He wanted an absolute superiorship, the right to dispose arbitrarily, not only of the buildings, but also of the property and the park, which are quite large. The Head whom we call Head of Temporalities and administrator of the property, constantly opposed the greater part of his undertakings. Father Lalanne proposed to this man a separation from me. The very idea horrified the latter. If Brother Mémain, who exercised the functions of Head of Temporalities

[1] For example Saint Loubès coming from M. Lapause.
[2] The original text says: The Society will soon owe only debts on mortgages.
[3] Fr. Conne's library. See Letter 857.

for Father Lalanne, had had the same firmness, our debts in Layrac would not have practically doubled from what they were when we got there. Bordeaux would be free from debt and all would be at peace. By this mail, I am asked for a loan of ten thousand francs, said to be urgent and of absolute necessity. I would ask you, dear Rev. Father, what you would advise me to do in my present position?

One of our friends, a benefactor to the Society[1] has just taken a rather long trip, in this severe season, to counsel me to make a public declaration to the effect that the Society of Mary has no intention of being responsible for all the loans and debts that Father Lalanne contracts while awaiting the outcome of the discussion. Doubtless, Father Lalanne will try to prolong these until he can end up at what he reached at St. Remy—being absolute superior in a vast establishment, completely equipped, and practically no boni to the Society.

Dear Rev. Father, I have a great many observations to make to you, some of great importance. However, for the time being, everything comes down to Father Lalanne's obligation of giving an account of his management and that he promise to pay the Society's debts, in proportion to the means he can get together. If Father Lalanne refuses to give you an honest and clear promise to do so in writing, neither you nor His Lordship will disapprove that I make a public declaration to the effect that the Society has no intention of being responsible for the debts which he contracts in Layrac.

All those who take an interest in these matters tell me to go to Agen, and Father Lalanne himself some time ago urged me often to come to Layrac. I am much inclined to do so, so much do I desire peace and union! I wrote to Father Lalanne, that, before I made up my mind to come, we would have to come to some agreement as regards principles. If you believe, that, with the desire for peace that fills my heart, I can, without compromising myself, go to Agen and even to Layrac, I shall surmount many difficulties and start out as soon as possible.

I am with profound respect, dear Rev. Father, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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[1] Fr. Bardenet.

822 – TO FATHER TRINCAUD, VICAR GENERAL
OF AGEN

St. Remy, February 14, 1836

OBSERVATIONS OF THE SUPERIOR OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY ON THE SUBJECT OF A NOTE OF FATHER LALANNE, CONCERNING THE ADVICE OF THE LAWYER CONSULTED.

All trace of quarrel between the superior and Father Lalanne will soon disappear if the latter accepts in good faith to reckon with his superior and his associates and to share the profits and benefits. However, the superior does not believe he can accept the condition that Father Lalanne brings to this settling of accounts,[1] 1) because it would drag out the contestations that have already arisen. It would have to be proven to me that benefits to the Society would result; 2) because his refusal to pay some claims has already brought discredit on the Society of Mary in Bordeaux and it is only with a great union of views and of resources that it is possible to repair, little by little, the harm done.

If the superior of the Society has determined to threaten Father Lalanne to file court action against him, it is only by reason of the strict obligation connected with the post he occupies in the Society of Mary, and he has done it only as a last resort. How many prayers, observations, and exhortations have preceded these exterior threats!

The lawyer who was consulted has not been misinformed. The transfer of the St. Marie Boarding School having become necessary by Father Lalanne's acts, the superior simply had to consent to it. I even proposed to make this transfer before the end of the year, as it seemed to me more reassuring. I said nothing about my advice not having been followed. Did I not have to make a virtue out of necessity?

It is quite true that Brother Mémain, a council member, had proposed to the superior, in the month of April, to make the acquisition of Layrac, in his own name as much as in Father Lalanne's and that the superior was not at all against it. It is also true that I wrote, if the transfer was to take place, I would send the necessary power-of-attorney and that I send my Council my letter of acceptance of M. Dardy's offers. I told Brother Mémain expressly, in a letter intended for the Council: "What modifications will be proposed to M. Dardy? How will the deed of sale be drawn up? What precautions will have to be taken beforehand? I will write another letter about these matters once I have received M. Dardy's answer."

[1] Fr. Lalanne asked that "the obligation of paying the creditors who have a mortgage on the goods of the Society of Mary would solidly be the task of all the members of this Society."

At the same time, I wrote Father Caillet, my substitute in Bordeaux, to consult a capable lawyer about whatever precautions would seem suitable in the drawing up of a contract of this nature, if indeed it was to take place.

Father Lalanne says in his note: “It is only after having asked for the approval of the superior of the Society, that the public deed of sale was authorized; which approval had not been refused when the final possible date for the drawing up of the deed had arrived; which approval was not rashly presumed, as is shown by a letter of the Superior General, dated August 4.”

The superior observes 1) that there was not date fixed for the drawing up of the deed of sale; 2) that the pretended approval, asked of the superior, depended, by his express will, on the Council and particularly on Father Caillet, president of the Council and representing the superior; 3) it is far from evident that this approval was not rashly presumed since my letter of August 4 was making virtue out of necessity in regard to the transfer.

But, nothing is more of an established fact than that Father Lalanne wanted to draw up the deed in his own name and without the presumed approval or consent of the superior. Here is what he wrote at this time, July 31, 1835 to Brother Clouzet:

FOLLOWING IS THE CITATION REPRODUCED IN THE PRECEDING LETTER

The Superior of the Society of Mary is making such observations about the transfer to the boarding school and the drawing up of the deed of sale only to justify the advice of the lawyer and not to come back on the past and make the best of it, unless Father Lalanne did not want to fulfill the duties of his state in regard to the Society, by entering honestly into its views and needs.

Father Lalanne must have enough confidence in his superior and in his associates, to believe in all the interest they have in the prosperity of the establishment at Layrac, that, if they have to oppose even promises that he makes indiscreetly—none are known up to the present—he will have to submit himself to it without there being any need of proving the contrary.

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Let us here include two fragments of letters to Father Meyer.

823 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, February, 1836

The details, my dear son, which you give me of your trip to Salins, by your letter of last January 15 and the reflections you join to them interested me much, and everything seems to me very correct. I am going to send your letter to Brother Troffer, who has fallen again and who has been taken to Colmar. As regards your travels, only such must be made as seem to you really necessary and suitable for the good of your establishment. Even then, take all sorts of precautions so that they may not be harmful either to soul or body.

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824 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

St. Remy, February 23, 1836

I shall answer a little later M. P.'s letter. In the meantime, let him always vigorously continue to correct himself. Let him make real progress in self-abnegation. Have him understand well that self-abnegation is, as it were, the pivot about which all religious life turns.

* * * *

Father Lalanne, now reduced to the last extremity, had conceived, for the maintenance of Layrac, the project of constituting a financial Society by means of shares. He lets Father Chaminade know of it, and the latter answers him in the following terms.

825 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, February 26, 1836

I have received, my dear son, your letter of the fifteenth of the current month, with the Prospectus annexed to it, and I am answering it immediately.

I wrote to you on February 6, and that was an answer to your letter. It is surprising that you have not received it—all the others, going by the same mail, seem to have reached their destination. Herewith included is the copy.

The Prospectus of the Society proposing shares for the establishment of a complete college at Layrac in no way meets my approval—not by its form, since it is the work of a clever notary—but by its contents. I look upon this idea or this plan as another rash act, a desperate attempt at something unattainable. At this time, it is useless to expose all the motives which lead me to reject this plan, and I believe that you are harming yourself greatly in placing it before the fathers of your pupils. You prefer, my dear son, to depend upon a Council of outside administrators, which calls you to account, rather than on the Council of the Society of Mary, which also holds you accountable. How many reflections and sad ones at that, such conduct inspires!

Nevertheless, my dear son, all our discussions on the subject of the establishment at Layrac have no other foundation than your determination of not wanting to render an account of your administration at Layrac—or what amounts to the same thing, your determination to thwart the intervention of the one the Society has named as your accountant. The truth is, that, up to now, I know nothing more of your administration than that you are owing money on all sides, that you are borrowing, that you are buying, that you are not paying back and can't pay back. Do you believe that the financial Council of the Society would permit you to act thus arbitrarily? And if you act against its wishes, the Administration would no longer be responsible for your acts; but the Society of Mary, in whose name you are always supposed to be acting, would remain responsible for them.

Our discussions, my dear son, can end only insofar as you submit yourself entirely, in your management of the Layrac establishment, to reckon unconditionally with the Society of Mary, as I recently explained in my answer to your note on the advice of a lawyer you had consulted. If there is still, my dear son, the least delay in this real and honest submission, you will oblige me to publicize my declaration that the Society of Mary in no way intends to consider itself responsible for the debts you might contract.

In sending my remarks on the subject of your note about the advice of a lawyer you had consulted to Father de Trincaud and M. Ducos, I asked the former, in case you submitted with honesty and good faith, unconditionally, to go to Layrac and to try to arrange everything on a satisfactory basis. Do you think that I am not interested in the prosperity of Layrac? But the interest I have in it must always be subordinate to the resources that prudence may admit. My dear son, in your present condition it should not be necessary that I prove to you the reasons for my orders or my warnings. Doubtless, I shall listen to your observations, but after that, you will have to abide by what is regulated and decided, acting with a good heart and doing all in your power in the interests of the establishment and its further development. You must understand that, without a previous arrangement, I cannot go to Layrac without compromising myself or rather without compromising the whole Society. It would also be possible that my presence in Layrac and the praiseworthy concord that would grow up between us would stifle the germs of scandal which are beginning to show up in several places and which are already causing so many to sigh in anguish and dismay. It might also be that the boarding school would gain greater patronage, because your arbitrary way of doing things will indubitably be little relished by a good number of wise and discerning persons. It is still possible that you come to understand the language of religion, which is always the language of faith. The light of faith is not contrary to reason but far superior to it. Take, for example, this maxim applied to the proposition you make me in regard to a financial Society: *Nemo militans Deo implicat se negotus saccularibus*.[1]

I am stopping here, my dear son, so as not to make you wait too long for my answer. I shall not cease to attest that I am sincerely and paternally devoted to you.

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[1] No one engaged in the service of God busies himself with the affairs of the world. (II Tim., II, 4)

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To Father de Trincaud, Father Chaminade expressed, on the same day, the hope "of subduing this head, so proud and so stubborn in its ideas, and which, on the other hand, might be able to do so much good."

He was not mistaken. Father Lalanne, threatened by the declaration which would disengage the Society from his loans and debts, adopted a more moderate language, and while taking from the letters of his superior the passages open to discussion, he slowly entered into the way of concession and submission.

Whence the following letters.

826 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, March 7, 1836

I am answering your letter of February 26, my dear son, immediately after its reception. I cannot assign any reasonable cause for your not having received my letter of February 6 before the twenty-first other than the fact that it was stamped only on the sixteenth. If your answer, which you call decisive, had been sent to me, it surely would not have irritated me. In all my life, I cannot recall ever having been irritated over good reasons even though they were contrary to my views and sentiments.

If it is true, my dear son, that you sincerely desire a reconciliation between us, if it is true that you are seeking only peace and the glory of God, why do you not accept, with simplicity and in good faith, accounts with the Society of Mary, in whose interests you direct the establishment of Layrac? The whole difficulty lies right there. I have stated it in writing clearly enough. It is an altogether civil affair. Let us not mix religious questions with such as are purely civil, although they have, so to say, the same object. You desire a reconciliation, but you are constantly pushing farther away the date of it.

I shall not here interpret your intentions. But if, after having received this letter, you do not reestablish the system of accounts which you have so unjustly abused, if you do not put into the hands of Father de Trincaud or of M. Ducos, a promise of always reckoning with the Society and of always holding, in the use of all revenues that may come to you, to what has been decided and decreed for the maintenance of the boarding school, (repairs, constructions, changes, etc.), I shall ask M. Ducos to publish my declaration that I have no intention at all of being responsible for all the debts you might contract.

You tell me, my dear son, that Brother Mémain has given me your accounts. No, my dear son, Brother Mémain has not given me what must be called accounts when speaking of real bookkeeping. Lately, he sent me a list of all your creditors—the sum total of the debts rose, I believe, to more than nineteen thousand francs—and admitted there were twenty francs in the cash box without saying a word about the amount of the receipts. Where in the world would any kind of society accept such a statement of accounts, involving even considerable receipts?

I shall select from your letter an expression which I consider very much out of place: "Although the will of my superior seems to me openly hostile." If this will were hostile, it would have expressed itself very differently. It is astonishing that you do not see the too great cautions which his great friendship for you induces him to take, at the risk of seriously compromising the interests of the Society to which you belong.

I shall not cease, my dear son, to pray and to have others pray, that God may finally deign to open your eyes. As I am truly devoted to you, the interests of your soul touch me a great deal more and otherwise than temporal interests.

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827 – TO FATHER DE TRINCAUD, VICAR GENERAL OF AGEN

St. Remy, March 8, 1836

Dear Rev. Father: By the letter of last February 26 that Father Lalanne has just written to me, I get an idea of all the interest you have the kindness to put into the matter of a complete reconciliation between us, and I am sincerely thankful to you for it. As you may know its object without knowing its terms, I have the honor of transmitting to you a copy of them, along with a copy of the answer I am giving him directly by the same mail.[1]

If you are not careful, dear Rev. Father, Father Lalanne will slip out of your hands precisely when you think you are holding him. To appear to be a logician and untouchable in his opinions, he plays the part of a clever sophist. He wants to drag out discussions, so as to make, in the meantime, as much headway as possible in favor of his projects—etc., etc. There is nothing bad, nothing really vicious and malignant in his intentions; but there is empiricism, serious imprudence, and, in consequence, proportionate danger. It is no longer time to try to hold him back by the laws of religion and of conscience. My authority, in this regard, is no longer anything when it is contrary to his views. I really believe myself under obligation to make use of human prudence, to make sure of justice and good faith! *Quae graviora sunt legis*.

[1] Fr. Chaminade's openhandedness will be remarked in this manner of procedure, something which is habitual with him, namely, to communicate to all interested persons all the correspondence he receives and that he sends out.

No one will doubt that I sincerely desire the prosperity of the establishment of Layrac whether it remains attached to the Society of Mary or be separated from it. If it remains, it will be one of our great instruments for finally getting out of our awful financial mess. Without Father Lalanne, this mess or rut would not have existed. If he separates himself from the Society, how will he be able, without considerable revenues, to pay the Society what he owes it? And he can gain these only in proportion as Layrac is flourishing. But the Society is not counting on having dealings with him. It is he who ought to count on the Society.

In spite of all the disagreements and wrongs he causes us, everything will be ended if, in good faith and honesty, a real accountant's office is established, as is required, in all justice and prudence, as had been foreseen. It is to be found in the spirit of our Constitutions, as he very well knows, since we have been battling on this one subject for nearly three years. When he was superior at St. Remy, so that I could end the whole business and avoid the scandals that might arise from a complete break, I made great sacrifices. That is about where he would want to lead us, acquiring complete independence, doubtless, through some retributions he would pay or not pay but which he would promise to pay when he could.

You may say to me, how can all this be in a religious priest whose words and conduct are so upright? He gets away with it very well. The Society, he says, is without definite, approved, and authorized Constitutions, especially by the Pope. On that account, he does not consider himself bound by his vows. When he sometimes enters into himself, he believes it his duty to carry out the orders that I give if they are conformable to his reason. He communicates to those he believes disposed to receive them his fears and his principles. He represents the Society as shaken, but happily he is there, he who is the real mind of the Society. He will gather up the debris, he will go throw himself humbly at the feet of the Sovereign Pontiff, etc., etc.

The infractions of the vow of poverty are easily explained, since he, doubtless believing himself independent and obliged to act in the interests of the Society, his joint partners knowing nothing or too little about it, may he not buy, alienate, borrow, etc., etc.? Is it not true that his habits according to the position and rank he occupies or wants to occupy, suggest a love for vain and prestigious ways for, in a word, display? In the illusions he cherishes, he can piously excuse all the infractions of the vow of poverty, he can even believe that all is for the glory of God and to be offered to Him, looking upon all others who do not think as he does, as jealous, envious, and even as enemies.

When beginning this letter, dear Rev. Father, I wanted to speak to you only of the facts in question, but I see I have let myself be drawn along to speak also of the person involved. Was it a duty that the Spirit of the Lord may have wanted me to fulfill? I desire it with all my heart. Deign, etc.

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828 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, March 15, 1836

My dear son: With Father de Trincaud's letter of March 5, I have received your answer to my observations concerning your note regarding the advice of the lawyer consulted in Layrac, dated the first of the current month. I have just received also your letter of the third. Let us cease quarreling, my dear son, since we are now almost of the same mind. Send me, through Father de Trincaud's hands, the pure and simple declaration of your submission to the accountability with the Society of Mary of all the receipts that the establishment you direct in Layrac could take in, an accountability covering the past and present. The past would include the payment of the Society's debts in Bordeaux and also those you have contracted in Layrac. The present refers to the maintenance and support of the establishment as a boarding school or collège, its improvements, its enlargement, etc., falling back entirely on the wisdom both of the accountant and of the Council of the Society of Mary to which he is responsible.

Do not be afraid, my dear son, of this measure, however rigorous it may seem to you. If the establishment of Layrac is in the views of God, it will not fail to prosper. It is very possible that the excessive rapidity of its success might become the first cause of its failure. Let us doubtless work with all our strength for the utility of religion and the glory of our august Mother, but let it be with wisdom and according to the principles of justice, uprightness, and honor.

I am very far from accusing your intentions, my dear son, or from believing that you want to be unjust, and that you pay no attention to honor and refinement. But I am, nevertheless, not quite of your opinion when you tell me that the intention sanctifies even the most worldly affairs. I also believe that the maxim of St. Paul: "Nemo militans Deo," could have a very correct application in the place where I quoted it,[1] but, no matter, since we are somewhat in agreement on the matter of accounts. Give Brother Mémain all liberty, even encourage him to fulfill his duties well.

You will do well, my dear son, to make the declaration I am asking of you on a separate sheet of paper and put it in a separate envelope, but this precaution is not intended to prevent you from writing to me separately everything you judge to be apropos.

My dear son, I am to go to Layrac in the course of the month of April. I still have serious matters to conclude here. I also want to pay a final visit to the Novitiate at Courtefontaine, which is receiving good subjects and where great fervor reigns. I shall,

[1] See the end of Letter 825.

nevertheless, send everything as promptly as possible, and I shall not delay in going to embrace you all effectively, since now I can do it only interiorly and in writing.

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With this same mail, the Founder traces out for Brother Mémain his line of conduct.

829 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, LAYRAC

St. Remy, March 15, 1836

Now is the time, my dear son, when we must take on new courage. There is reason for believing, from the letters I have received from Father Lalanne, that he will no longer interfere with the accounts at Layrac and that, in good faith, he will make the declaration I am asking of him through the letter of which I am sending you a copy. Doubtless, you will find the accounts in a pitiable condition—next to nothing in the cash box of the establishment, with debts to be paid on all sides. Perhaps you can ward off the first shock by the five thousand franc loan. Your financial arrangements have three aspects which must always be wisely considered: The Society's debts in Bordeaux, the actual debts at Layrac, and the support of the establishment. Consider them all. You are going to have considerable receipts. Don't tire Father Lalanne by placing your embarrassment before him, but always honestly resist anything that would be inconsistent with a strict and severe economy. Father Lalanne says he is going to put an end to all buying of furniture, until the means for purchasing what is suitable have been found. Nothing is to be done arbitrarily, but be careful—nothing must be stopped with any kind of display, as if some kind of accident had just occurred.

Your employment, my dear son, makes you responsible before God and men: before God, since the oath for the faithful accomplishment of duty that is required is made for Him; before men, before the Society of Mary, since it confides to you an employment which enables it to fulfill all justice and safeguard its honor.

If Father Lalanne offers some resistance, if he makes the scale lean on the side of his ideas and projects of enlargement and magnificence, you should immediately tell me about it, resisting him in the meantime. Even if everything goes along smoothly, write to me every ten or fifteen days about your financial situation, as indicated by the contents of your cash box.

If everything works out well, as I hope it will, I shall come to see you some time next April, as I told Father Lalanne. I have already been obliged to send five thousand francs to Bordeaux at three different times, so that the unhappy misunderstandings that have taken place might not become public.

In your turn, encourage Father Lalanne, in case he believes that his reputation before the public or the confidence he enjoys in the Society, has suffered some change. With God's help, good days will return and we will grow. I am embracing you, etc.

* * * *

On the occasion of the feast of St. Joseph, Father Lalanne and the religious of his community offered the Good Father, following the old tradition of the Society, their greetings and wishes for a happy feast, to which Father Chaminade answered by the following letter.

830 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, March 25, 1836

My dear son: I have read with great interest all the signatures of the community of Layrac, following the greetings and good wishes. The occasion was precious and delicate, as we were in agreement and my name day was approaching. I don't doubt that this is a manifestation of your filial friendship. I am hoping from the goodness of God and the protection of St. Joseph that the days that are going to follow the storm that has so much disturbed us will be the finest of our life.

The expression of suspicion, which you can detect in my letter of the seventh of the present month is in no way injurious, as you seem to believe. In the settlement of affairs, it is not unusual to take precautions that prudence has suggested, although there may be no special thought of the person with whom the settlement is made.

Remain calm, my dear son. Let us always love each other. Let us always strengthen more and more the bonds that unite us that there may no longer be any recrimination between us concerning the past. Let us henceforth talk only of the present and the future. Let us do the work of the Lord with zeal, without hesitation, but also with prudence.

Believe, my dear son, in my very tender and very sincere friendship.

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On the same day of the feast of St. Joseph, March 19, Father Lalanne had addressed a personal letter to the Good Father, containing the declaration of submission so long awaited. It was dated on the eve and conceived in these terms:

Father Lalanne accepts in good faith and with simplicity, a settlement of accounts with the Society of Mary, in whose interests he directs the establishment of Layrac. He has never violated this settlement, he has never refused to cooperate with it, he has never knowingly and voluntarily put any obstacle in its way. He has no difficulty in promising into the hands of Father Trincaud and M. Ducos always to reckon with the Society of Mary and always to justify the use he makes of its receipts of whatever kind. As regards the second part of the required promise, namely, always to hold to what will be decided and decreed for the management of the boarding school, he asks that a direct and complete communication of this regulation be made to him first, no one being able to engage himself before knowing positively what the whole matter is about.

* * * *

However, all the clouds were not dissipated, because, to speak truly, Father Lalanne had written this declaration only against his will and in self-defense, and on the next day, March 21, he again wrote to the Founder in the following terms:

Let us save time, my venerable Father, because time is fleeting for me as well as for you. In the letter you received yesterday, I asked of you the regulation you want to give me regarding temporal matters in the management of the boarding school. This regulation, truly I do not know it, nor can I guess what it may be. However, I happen to know indirectly, by a letter shown me by Brother Mémain, what its bases are to be. I also know that he gave you an account of the interview we have had on this subject, but I would be very wrong, in so serious a matter, to adhere to any other interpreter of my thought than myself.

I have no idea of making myself independent. I do not refuse to place my accounts in your hands. Several times already I have told you this; and even today, while you are questioning my probity, I desire it. In the future, everything I do will be submitted to your judgment and approval, all free and clear revenues of the establishment will be at your disposal. I shall do no repair work, no borrowing, no acquisition, even in the line of furniture, and in sizable amounts, without your previous authorization. You will have my books examined as often as you please. You may place anyone you wish near me, so as to supervise everything I do.

But an administrator of what is temporal and responsible in the sense that you ask of Brother Mémain, definitely no! That would be a master, another Head in the same house. Neither my responsibility toward the parents of my pupils, who lean upon me for their physical as well as for their moral education, nor the principles of my commitments toward the Society, nor the unhappy experiences of three painful years of my life, permit me to consent to it. I have said this to Brother Mémain, and I am letting you know my energetic protestation in advance, so that you may know where you stand in the matter. My resolution is unshakable. Neither fear, affection, nor respect will make me depart from it. There is no post, no humiliation, no suffering that I would not rather put up with. I cannot agree to that any more than I could agree to sin.

There, nevertheless, would be means of attaining your end without pushing me to baneful extremes. I shall tell you of it. God grant that it may be agreeable to you! This is, that you yourself, who are my superior, be also this administrator of what is temporal . . . It is worth the trouble. Right here may be the saving or the loss of all your works. Come! When you are here, you will cause to be accomplished, by whomever you choose, those functions of this office that you cannot accomplish yourself. If you are so much afraid of my hot head, if you consider me so much of a lost soul, come! You yourself will be my supervisor and my guide. Keep your eyes upon me and keep me close to you! Come, we shall wipe away the past, and we shall work together to consolidate the present, so as to

assure the future to ourselves. However, in taking possession of your finest establishment, of the one which seems in line for the greatest prosperity, you will receive the entire and definitive submission of the one who, for a long time, you have called your son only with bitterness. Peaceful and serene days, some moments of rest before sleep are reserved for you under the same sky which saw the innocence and piety of your early days. Come! Delay no longer, the season is favorable, your apartment will soon be ready, all your friends invite you! May I soon be able to throw myself into your arms and give you unmistakable evidence of the affection and uprightness of my heart.

To which Father Chaminade answered:

831 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

St. Remy, April 4, 1836

By the same mail, my dear son, I received your two letters, those of last March 19 and 21. In the first there was enclosed a threefold copy of the declaration I had asked of you.

My dear son, I would not be receiving this declaration in so serious an affair if it were not accompanied by your last two letters. But, to prove to you the sincerity of my friendship, of my confidence and of the desire I have that we may live in perfect agreement, I am going to write to M. Ducos to hold up everything.

In the meantime, my dear son, so that we may be able to truly embrace, be truly and in good faith my accountant in all the interests of the Society. You understand well that this accountancy does not consist only in justifying the use you make of the receipts of all kinds, but in not making any other expenses at Layrac than those rigorously necessary for the routine maintenance unless you have permission. It also means practicing economy in everything so as to be able to pay the most pressing debts whether of Bordeaux or of Layrac itself.

After all is said and done, it is you, my dear son, who, as Head of the establishment, are the accountant and the one responsible to the Society. You have noticed that, in our serious discussions, I have never blamed Brother Mémain.

Accounting in a big establishment is a taxing employment, capable of absorbing all one's energy, and it is for this reason that it is an assignment all by itself, even sometimes calling for helpers, according to particular needs. In small establishments, however, there is no other accountant than the Head, as he takes upon himself all responsibilities. In larger establishments, this is impossible; but, although the various offices are distributed, the Head is nonetheless the actual responsible party. If the employee or principal temporalities officer is also responsible, it is in the interest of the Head and of the Society. In an establishment, the Society is completely represented by the head of this

establishment. The employee or chief temporalities officer is not the less master in his job. He is to resist the orders of his superior only when the latter gives him arbitrary orders or such as are contrary to the essential duties of his particular charge. Besides, he is not to carry out an order when such is evidently contrary to what his employment requires of him, because he is not the judge of his Head or superior. In case of real doubt, the matter must be brought to the attention of the General Administration.

It is inconceivable that you manage to see, in what we call a Head of Temporalities, a second first Head; or, which comes to the same thing, two Heads in the same establishment.

You imagined, my dear son, that the principles of administration of the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary, which we follow, were somewhat arbitrary and had no other basis than the submission or obligation contracted by the emission of the vows; and that, in shaking or rendering this obligation problematic, the Heads could act arbitrarily according to their views when good, just, and reasonable in their eyes. You were greatly mistaken, my dear son. And from the time that I noticed your mistake in such a serious matter, I had recourse to the principles of natural morality, which make up societies, even civil ones. Our religious society has been approved as a civil organization only because it was so based. I would not have been so bold as to ask for its approbation if it had not had this real foundation.

I was this far with this letter last Saturday, and I could not continue it on the holy day of Easter. But I received your letter last March 25, and so, I shall continue this one as an answer. The sketch you give me of your financial situation is frightful, and it is to be presumed that the real situation, both actively and passively, is actually somewhat worse. You seem to be unworried because the establishment easily has the value of all these debts in materiel and furnishings. As I do not want to hurt you in any way, I shall not characterize this method of speculation, but I shall conclude from it and much more rigorously the need for wise and prudent accounting. Such accounting economizes in every way as much as possible, contracting new debts only insofar as everyone concerned agrees with them.

You believe that, before this rigorous accounting goes into effect, you would need five thousand francs. The father of one of your pupils has offered to lend you this, and you want to accept the offer if, as you say, he is willing to content himself with your promise of repayment. I answer, 1) that the same drawback exists, whether you borrow under your private name or under a collective name and you know very well that your own personal name would be little more than an oak leaf—that if the loan were made to you simply in your name, apart from your quality as Head of the establishment, the lender would have no kind of guarantee. Most certainly, he would not lend that sum, if, as you should, you let him know of this abstraction. 2) You may accept the five thousand francs in your own name, qualified or not, as it makes little difference, provided that this sum be lent legally, without designation of any time limit or, at least, one of long duration. It must fall back on the

propriety of the Society you represent, which will pay it back as soon as it extricates itself from its most urgent debts. I am saying legally, that is to say, without other interests than the genuine concern for the education and instruction of the children.

Concerning the completion of some repairs rigorously needed including the privies, we shall, I hope, be able to provide for this. It is only, my dear son, and I repeat, through a very severe order called for by wise accounting, with help from on high, that we can undertake the maintenance of the beautiful establishment of Layrac. I have confidence in this help from on high, if wisdom and prudence direct everything you do. Without such prudence, such help will not come to us. You look upon the prudence which directs me as timid, my dear son, but do you know that timidity enters essentially into the character of real prudence? That, if you apply the timidity to the person rather than to prudence, you would then have to give me a tutor or guardian, whichever you wish . . .

You are going to leave for Paris to obtain your title of Bachelor of Science there. I am surprised that the parties concerned were so long in asking you to come, but you do not tell me who will replace you temporarily as head. You tell me still less who will replace you as accountant. Nevertheless, in your hurry to get away, you shout as a thunderclap, without having the time to make any kind of arrangements. I see no other subjects you could suitably use than Brother Roy, as Head of the boarders for the care of morals, education, and instruction; and Brother Mémain for the bookkeeping in the strictest sense of the term. I understand very well that Brother Mémain has not all the self-possession necessary in such a situation, but something must be done. He already knows all our affairs, and I shall hold him to the most active correspondence. You can already let him know of this obligation. I don't think you can be replaced in any way by Brother Brunet.

I shall direct my occupations and my itinerary in such a way as to arrive at Layrac only after Pentecost. Otherwise, we shall always be in correspondence. If I can conveniently pass near Paris, I shall go to join you there in such a way that we may leave together for Layrac.

As regards M. Olivier,[1] his promissory notes will have to be paid off, since this had been agreed upon, although the little furniture he sent you is worth precious little and cannot cover them. For something so trifling, we must not put ourselves in a position to fall back on a lawsuit, whatever hope we may have of winning it. If the treasury of Layrac suffers too much from a surfeit of payment for the furniture, at my arrival I shall throw in a few twenty-franc pieces to help it along, and nothing further will be said of them. I shall not speak of Olivier here. But, as far as you are concerned, have no dealings with him other than such as will lead to a final and complete break.

Brother Mémain's nomination as effective bookkeeper, in the strictest sense, will not be prejudicial to anything we might decide upon, once we are together in Layrac. It is

[1] See Letter 811, towards the end.

determined and settled that he is to have real responsibility there—responsibility, which takes in, as I have said several times, the past and the present. By whom and in what way will this strict accountancy be taken care of? It is on this point that we may differ until our reunion, when we will make a final decision. I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, with heart and soul.

P. S. When you think it apropos, I shall explain how, in the sale of the domain of St. Remy,[1] there is nothing contrary to the Statutes of the Society of Mary. But right now, we are too busy to bother about it.

* * * *

Mid-April had come and Father Chaminade was preparing to return to the Midi after an absence of two years. Here are the last letters written from St. Remy. The first is a simple obedience to Brother Galliot; the second is a request for information from Father Perrodin about a trip to Acey; the third is addressed to the Directors of Alsace and settles certain details regarding the food and costume which had been the source of difficulties in the communities there. The last, finally, written at the time of the departure, concerns the recent foundation of St. Claude.

832 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, ST. CLAUDE

St. Remy, April 12, 1836

OBEDIENCE TO MY DEAR SON, BROTHER PETER GALLIOT

I have named you, my dear son, to supervise the extensive repairs that are being made at Marast, under Father Bardenet's direction so that we can form a large establishment there. You will go to Marast as soon as possible. You will take care of Brother Boillon, carpenter, whom I have sent to fulfill the functions of his trade. I hope that both of you will conduct yourselves as true religious.

May the peace of the Lord, my dear son, be ever with you!

833 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

St. Remy, April 14, 1836

I would have answered immediately, my respectable son, your letter of May 6 if I had not believed I was to leave earlier to go to Acey and be myself the living answer. I shall be leaving only Monday or Tuesday, the eighteenth or nineteenth of the current month. I am allowing some time to pass so as to get an answer from Father Bardenet, if he has one to

[1] See Letters 803 and 804.

give. From St. Remy, I shall go to see Marast; and from there I shall go to Besançon, where I shall bring the sale of the domain of St. Remy to a conclusion. Brother Clouzet is to be my guide on this first excursion. I may even be able to find a satisfactory answer from Father Bardenet at Mlle Get's home. Upon arriving, I shall either call there myself or have someone else call.

From Besançon, I will follow my heart and go straight to Acey, as I would want: 1) to embrace Father Bardenet, perhaps for the last time; 2) to embrace you and speak with you; 3) you may well imagine that I always have Brother Danne in mind. If he were to go into the next world, I would have many errands to give him. If he is still to remain among us, as an effect of the divine mercy, we shall not be lacking in things to say, provided he is in a state to bear them; 4) you may also take for granted that I am thinking of the convent of our good Daughters of Acey.

How will I travel from Besançon to Acey? You have a road that my bad legs could not take . . . Otherwise I could take the public coach . . . I hope you will give me your advice, as to what might be the best thing for me to do. I shall receive your reply at Mlle Get's home. Be pleased, my respectable son, to transmit my hearty greetings to the beautiful and respectable population of the Abbey of Acey and to receive my altogether paternal sentiments toward you, etc.

* * * *

The following letter is an interesting token of the Founder's zeal for religious observance and the practice of poverty.

834 – TO THE DIRECTORS OF ALSACE

St. Remy, April 15, 1836

TO MY DEAR CHILDREN, THE SIGNERS OF THE COLLECTIVE PETITION, DATED IN COLMAR ON JANUARY 9 AND TO ALL THE HEADS OF ESTABLISHMENTS IN ALSACE

The collective petition, my dear children, addressed to me last January 9, gives me reason for supposing the existence of a certain ferment which is rather opposed to the spirit of the Society, which is a spirit of peace and union. I have answered only temporarily the collective petition, and each one of the signers in particular, on last January 24 and 25. It was a matter which seemed important to me, and I took all sorts of information as to its possible causes. All the answers I received and all the information I gathered elsewhere have convinced me that I have in all the Alsatian establishments, both large and small, only very submissive and docile children, but that decisions on questions that had been proposed to me by them had been indirectly suggested by Father Rothéa, without any previous notice or explanation, as something new. Because, my dear children, when some difficulty regarding some Regulations can arise—for example, on those that concern the

costume or the diet—it is then to the spirit of the Society of Mary, as expressed in the general Regulations, that recourse must be had. Let us come to the fact.

On last October 6, Father Rothéa wrote to me, as it were in your name, to know officially my intentions or my decisions on five questions which had embarrassed you and which seemed even to worry you.

1. "If it was permitted to season vegetables with pork fat, following the custom of the country, in such a way that each one gets a little portion of one or two ounces to eat with his vegetables?" I answered affirmatively: "I grant permission to the establishments of Alsace to season vegetables with pork fat, according to the custom of the country, and that each one of the diners may have a small portion of it to eat with his vegetables. This is to be understood only for dinner . . . " Later in my answer to Father Rothéa, on other difficulties caused by the effort to have equality among all the establishments of the Society, I added "that the little portion of pork which would be served to each diner would be in diminution of the first service of meat." See, my dear children, if it is possible to give a more just decision, one which would comply with the spirit of the general Regulations, which had not foreseen and could not foresee, the diversity of countries to which the Society would spread and the usages it would have to adopt.[1]

2. "Is it permitted to have a dessert at dinner? It seems unjust that several of our establishments—those, let us suppose, that receive much fruit as a present and those that have gardens—eat dessert every day at dinner and that others are not able to make use of this advantage." Here is my answer: "The establishments which receive much fruit as a present and which have gardens are to use less of what they have or of the presents received, and in this way there will be a sort of equality everywhere." My dear children, where would there be injustice? Is it possible to maintain more equality? Those of the establishments which receive more presents or which have gardens with fruit trees would they not rather have reason to complain that they are deprived of a prepared and seasoned nourishment? But no, they will not complain, because they will recall that their religion forbids them to seek their tastes in the nourishment that is served them.

3. "Would it be permitted to take coffee or even chocolate on big feasts in the houses which would receive them as presents?" The answer: "Coffee and chocolate are always considered luxury items, out of place among religious vowed to the practice of poverty. The presents of this kind that are received may be served in case of serious infirmities and sometimes for certain guests. If these objects were too abundant in the

[1] The diet of the Society was thus fixed by the Extract of the General Regulations of 1834: "The breakfast consists of a slice of bread with some wine and water. It is easily permitted to add fruit or a little cheese or even some soup, broth, or milk. The dinner consists mainly of soup, one dish of meat and one of vegetables. A fruit dessert will be added when it can be gathered in the establishment or received as a present. There will always be a dessert during Lent, on fast days, on all feasts of the Blessed Virgin, of St. Joseph, and St. John the Evangelist. The supper will consist of one warm dish and a dessert: never of meat."

small establishments, these could send them to the two large ones, St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, which are more likely to have sick or infirm members, and to serve as food to visitors of importance." You see, my dear children, that St. Hippolyte and Ebersmunster do not find themselves treated more advantageously than the small establishments. Their Heads of all ranks may make no more use of these presents for themselves than those who direct the small establishments, as their destination is definitively settled.

4. "There is also the desire to know whether it is permitted to season the food—as this is done, say, in several establishments—with cinnamon, cloves, pepper, etc." The answer: "It is not permitted to season the food with delicate spices; for example, cinnamon, cloves, etc. Pepper may be used for certain dishes, which would be too insipid if none were put in. The contrary practice, which I am told is to be found in several establishments, is a veritable abuse and must be proscribed." I don't believe I know any of you in Alsace, my dear children, capable of asking such a question in good faith. It is, doubtless, asked through zeal, for the purpose of stopping an abuse that someone believes has somehow slipped into some establishments of the Society.

5. "Is it permitted to use liquors, whiskey, foreign wines, which are given as presents?" The answer: "It is not permitted to the religious to use liquors, whiskey, foreign wines, even when these are received as presents. Such presents are to be sent to the big establishments. Their Heads who would have these things to serve to outsiders are themselves to abstain from their use; and if, sometimes, honesty requires that they seem to use them, it must be only for form's sake." It follows from this answer, my dear children, that when you find yourself at some table outside the community, whether when traveling or otherwise through some necessity, you are to accept neither liquors, nor foreign wines, nor coffee. Be everywhere and in all circumstances true religious. Honor everywhere the perfect sobriety of the august Mary, whose great Name you bear.

6. "Is it permitted to wear boots, to put horn instead of cloth buttons on the Prince Albert coats and the vests?" The answer: Boots, horn buttons on the coats as well as vests are absolutely forbidden. The buttons must be of the same material as the article of clothing. Those, however, who would have some coats or vests with horn buttons and who could not easily replace them with cloth buttons will be permitted to continue using them as they are."

Such were, my dear children, the questions which were asked me by Father Rothéa on last October 6, and such were my answers on the twenty-third of the same month. I was then at Courtefontaine.

Before and since, another and more serious question has been asked about the cut and shape of the clothing, but Brother Louis Rothéa makes no mention of it. This question had been decided since February 12, 1835. Brother Coustou had provoked this decision concerning several worries that had arisen on this subject in the establishment at Colmar. Here is the answer to all the letters: "Nothing is more just than to ask for the great

uniformity possible whether in the costume or in the diet. The costume of the teaching Brothers of Colmar is about the same as the primitive costume and that which comes closest to a really religious costume. The differences that are found in the other establishments are only abuses. The horn buttons would indicate only a little vanity, mitigated by some specious pretext. The cut of the coats is otherwise important. If cut to the height of the waist, it gives too much prominence to the form of the body, which, in general, is opposed to Christian modesty. We should avoid such a close-fitting cut, for no man of the world, rich or poor, could appear in public with it, without making himself ridiculous and being ridiculed."

Brother Coustou, my dear children, doubtless for reasons of prudence, has made this decision known only to his establishment at Colmar; but it is a real decision, which must be generally applied in all the establishments.

With great strictness, you are to hold to the correct form and uniformity of the clothing and be troubled when you find yourselves obliged to come closer to the styles of the world. If you have sincerely left the world, why would you want to come close to it by wearing its livery? The uniformity of the costume, although it still differs little from that of seculars, nevertheless distinguishes you as members of the Society of Mary. Would you blush because of your devotedness to the Queen of the heavens and of your wearing of her livery, in the state of life you have embraced? Do you realize that these defects in uniformity in whatever part of the costume they occur, seem to suggest a kind of apostasy?

I surely want to believe, and I do believe, that not one of these considerations has come to your minds, but rather some good intentions, the more easily to gain the esteem of the world, so as to be the better able to do good. But take care, my dear children. The illusions of self-love might very easily soil the purity of your intentions.

The same principles hold for the quality of the coats as for their form. Several believe that they will the more readily win for themselves the esteem of seculars by wearing new and expensive coats. But again, take care. Illusion is not far off if you have not already become its dupes! You have embraced a state of poverty, and do you love your state? Have you the love of poverty, and especially its spirit, which is one of the things that has contributed the most to the conversion of the world? Would several of you, my dear children, still be ignorant of the fact that the state they have embraced is altogether in the order of faith and seeks no support on principles of purely human wisdom?

To do away, my dear children, with the different abuses concerning the price and the durability of the articles of clothing, I have asked Brother Coustou to give me a note about the old custom of this establishment and one, for the most part, constantly followed. Here is what I answered him on June 6, 1835: "While awaiting, my dear son, the appearance of a new law fixing the price and duration of the articles of clothing which make up the costume of the lay religious, you will follow the old custom which will become law until the appearance of the new rules which will not differ, or at least very little, from the old usage."

And here is this usage: Prince Albert coat; price of the cloth: fifteen to sixteen francs per ell; duration, three years—two years for the Head and the two sacristans. Trousers; price of the cloth: eleven to twelve francs per ell; duration eighteen months. Vest; price of the cloth: eighteen to twenty francs per ell; duration, three years. Shoes; duration, one year. Hat; price ten to twelve francs; duration two years, and eighteen months for the Head and the sacristans. Tie; price four to four and a half francs; duration, two years.

Since then, I have received several observations, all contrary, as regards the matter of duration. Some for example, found the duration of three years for the Prince Albert coats somewhat long. Others did not find long enough two years for the Head and sacristans, because they desired no difference at all between the Head and his confrères, the former always being supposed to give the example of love for poverty and put aside as illusory the motive of needing to make more frequent public appearances. I quieted those who found it hard to believe that one can be sufficiently neat and clean with Prince Alberts that are renewed after three years of use only. I have as yet answered nothing to the elderly Head who wanted the same duration for the Heads as for the others. There is, in fact, some difficulty for me to settle here. There are reasons for two years and there are others for three years. One could reason in the same way in regard to the hat. What is certain, is that the Heads are very free to make all their articles of clothing last as long as they want. I desire to see among the Heads, and especially among the older and higher ones, this edifying emulation in the practice of poverty that exists among the Daughters of Mary. Generally, the first Heads among them have used their authority only to be poorer than those they were governing.

This decision, my dear children, of last June 6, was, at first, only for the Colmar establishment. But I see no disadvantage at all in sending it to all the Heads of the establishments in Alsace. Then it will become a fixed rule for all though provisional until the General Administration finds it suitable to make some kind of modification.

Each one of the Heads who will receive this Circular, signed by my hand, will read it attentively, consult his own heart—and above all, his reason, enlightened by the lights of faith—and let me know of his true sentiments, whether of complete and entire agreement or opposition. All those who adopt its principles and practice will be able to say so to the confrères of their respective establishments, to explain it to them well and to let me know the honest sentiments of each one.

It is high time, my dear children, that all discussions on the points of this Circular should cease and that all of us be united as regards its principles, sentiments, and practice. I know full well that there are some other points that it will be good to settle later on, but as there has been little generality up to the present,[1] I shall leave matters stand as they are for the present.

[1]As there was question only of some particular cases.

Watch carefully, my dear children, that the enemy does not spread his illusions of false lights, so as to introduce abuses against the observance of your Regulations! Read these last often, especially those parts which rather rule the interior of your souls than your exterior practices, and penetrate yourselves well with the true spirit of the Society of Mary. May the peace of the Lord, my dear children, and the most abundant blessings of heaven be showered upon the real observers of the Regulations which have been given to you!

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835 – TO FATHER MONTGAILLARD, VICAR GENERAL OF ST. CLAUDE

St. Remy, April 18, 1836

Dear Rev. Vicar General—When I promised to equip the private school of St. Claude, on the urgent demands of the Rev. Pastor of the Cathedral and based on the recommendations of His Lordship, I was lending myself to the task with all confidence and ease. It had been understood that the Rev. Pastor would stand all the expenses of the first establishment and of the teachers' support, until the establishment could become self-supporting by the fees received from the pupils whose parents could pay. I have always understood—and I declared it to His Lordship when I had the honor of meeting him when he came to Dole—that any who would not be able to pay would be received gratuitously.

Nevertheless, Very Rev. Vicar General, Brother Galliot writes to me that he has already spent more than six hundred francs and has taken in hardly more than three hundred. Brother Gouverd came to St. Remy in the interests of the establishment of St. Claude. The Rev. Pastor refused to meet any of the expenses. All he did was to have some money loaned to Brother Galliot by the secretary of the archbishop's palace. I am taking the liberty of telling you of the fact. I think that, with your sense of justice, you will deem it necessary to arrange for some kind of agreement between the Rev. Pastor and the Society of Mary.

During his short stay at St. Remy, Brother Gouverd took some definite commitments in the Society of Mary, and I named him Head of the establishment of St. Claude. Brother Galliot had been there only temporarily, to equip the establishment, as he already had acquired more experience in surmounting the difficulties usually met with in such circumstances.

I am, Very Rev. Vicar General, with profound respect, your very humble and very obedient servant. . . .

* * * *

On April 18, Father Chaminade left St. Remy. He went to Marast on the nineteenth, to Besançon on the twentieth, to Acey on the twenty-second, and arrived at Courtefontaine on the twenty-third.

He left from there on May 2, visited Salins and Arbois, went on the sixth to the Seminary of Lons-le-Saulnier, and from there went to St. Claude.

From St. Claude finally on May 13 he headed in the direction of Lyons and Toulouse, and arrived in Agen on May 22.

The correspondence with Layrac during the trip had not been interrupted.

Brother Mémain, in his turn, was beginning to create difficulties which were to separate him first from Father Lalanne (1836), and then from the Society (1837), without in any way wearying the patience of the Founder.

836 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, LAYRAC

Courtefontaine, April 25, 1836

My dear son—I have just received your letter of April 12 addressed to St. Remy. . . . I hope that I shall never be found to contradict myself and that you are in Layrac what you should have always been—a real Head of Temporalities according to the spirit of our Constitutions, just as in Bordeaux. Possibly, you may not have entirely understood this fact. For the sake of brevity at this time, I shall not come back to the explanation of this Office or of the way the incumbent is subordinate to the first Head or how and in what case he may and should oppose him. The same is the case with the Heads of Instruction and of Zeal. In the larger establishments, they are doubtless subordinate to the main Head and are responsible to him for their labors. Nevertheless, they always remain responsible to the Society, and there are cases when they must find themselves in opposition to their Head. All our troubles have arisen only in regard to the Office of Temporalities, because matters are more urgent. But, even at that, there would be many things to say about the first two Offices.

In his last letter, Father Lalanne, for the first time, gives me some details about the Office of Zeal. He advances and he backs up. When he enters somewhat into himself, he seems to speak honestly, but his hot head and his ambition soon make him swerve in another direction.

You think that I could settle everything, and you invite me to come to Agen or to Layrac as soon as possible. As you see, I have already left St. Remy, I have visited Besançon and Acey, and now I am in Courtefontaine. It is the place where I will stay the longest. I shall have to be here at least a week, especially on account of my correspondence, which takes up a great part of my time. I shall stay the shortest time possible in Salins, in Arbois, etc., etc., and always with Agen in mind. Remain calm. Father Lalanne writes to me that he will leave for Paris only at the beginning of May and that he will arrange everything, as I have asked him to do. Mother St. Vincent seems to doubt that he will really go to Paris. This is a possibility that it is well to foresee, but as regards yourself, always act with great prudence, mildness, and firmness.

I am amazed that you have picked out the expression I thought it my duty to use to Father Lalanne, namely, that you could have more self-possession in the administration. 1) Who cannot increase and grow in what is called self-possession? 2) How is it that you did not notice that this expression, taken in context, was not what is called a recommendation? Do you believe, my dear son, that if I had believed that you would have

taken offense at it, I would have sent a copy of my answer to Father Lalanne to be seen by you?

The less confidence you have in Father Lalanne, the greater the need you have for prudence; and when I say prudence, I have no intention of speaking of artifice. Always be honest and frank but also clear-sighted, as regards faults against honesty, against crafty refinement—in this there is always prudence. You have serious reasons not to have what is called confidence, but prudence obliges you not to give any exterior evidence of its opposite—defiance.

Concerning confession, I left you free from the beginning, and with all the more reason continue to do so. I am stopping here and embracing you with heart and soul, always counting upon you as firmly as one would count on a new bridge.

* * * *

837 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Courtefontaine, April 26, 1836

Your letter of the fifth of the current month, my dear son, arrived at about the same time as I myself in Courtefontaine. I am blessing the Lord if my letter of the fifth[1] puts an end to all our discussions, as you assure me that it will. Nevertheless, I am saying nothing in this letter which may not be according to our Constitutions; and, if you take careful notice, I have never spoken or acted in a contrary sense. But, whatever the case may be, I shall readily and easily consent to consider all the past a matter of misunderstanding, if you really hold to the promises you made to me, and if the accounts are well established in the true and honest sense, as required by our old customs of administration, the bases of which I have so often and in so many ways explained to
you . . .

The reading of my letter would not have discouraged Brother Mémain if you had explained it a little to him. It is quite possible that in his way of thinking he considered the duty of opposing his first Head as a kind of obligation, considering the superfluous expenses which the latter was making for the maintenance of the establishment he has to govern and direct. It would have been easy for you to have him understand that this power or duty did not give him any authority over you. Actually it gave him less, in proportion as you have the duty to reprimand him if he does not exercise it; and, if he did not amend, you have the duty of reporting him to superior authority, etc.

The regulation for the temporal administration of the Society is already made and well made. In my various explanations, all I do is recall the fact either wholly or in part,

[1] Or rather of the fourth.

according to need. I agree nonetheless that, at Layrac a regulation of current ordinary or extraordinary expenses could be made. The first Head of the establishment would have to observe and maintain these, and the Head of Temporalities would have to be responsible to him for them. This Regulation would be more than useless were the first Head and the Head of Temporalities in complete agreement about the good maintenance of an establishment and also about necessary economy. I had the job of an official trusteeship for sixteen to seventeen years, quite a large establishment[1] but never did I have a word with my first Head; and the establishment, as miserable as it was, kept on becoming prosperous. I learn, from several letters coming from Agen, that the repairs are continuing at Layrac or have been resumed as if nothing at all were the matter, repairs that were not even urgent. What do you wish me to say? Where are you heading? Is there some error in the dates on the letters or in the reports made to me? Are there misunderstandings, ambiguities in the expressions used in your letters? Or am I not speaking clearly enough? Is it possible that, by dint of speaking and explaining, I have given you an excuse for some kind of retrenchment; but I assure you such has never been my intention. In all sincerity, I always hold to the first declaration I asked of you, so as to end all these difficulties. Your recent letters have given me reason to believe that you understood well what I had in mind.

I do not cease saying in regard to the five thousand francs you borrowed that if it was really necessary to honor the orders you had made previously and before the request for the declaration, that we are properly and personally responsible. It will be up to you to tell me the real use you have made of this sum.

As regards the stables affair,[2] only what God permits will happen and whatever will be suitable to our position by maintaining the *status quo* until I get there, which will not be very far off. In fact, I am already on the way, visiting all the establishments we have as far as Agen, and going by way of Toulouse . . .

I am taking a great part, my dear son, in the consolation your pupils and your teachers are giving you. Take care, however, that the beautiful indications of piety and regularity they give you are not being interiorly worn away by some worm. By the postscript of the letter I am answering, your departure for Paris seems uncertain; but by the preceding letters it seemed necessary and decided upon. If you leave and you should answer this letter, your answer can reach me by addressing it to St. Claude (Jura), care of Brother Gouverd, Head of the primary school. Receive, my dear son, this new token of my paternal affection.

P. S. Father Bardenet is in Marast making the necessary repairs for a new establishment. Father Meyer is mindful of your kind remembrance.

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[1] In the Collège of Mussidan.
[2] See Letter 815.

838 – TO REV. MONTGAILLARD, VICAR GENERAL
OF ST. CLAUDE

St. Claude, May 12, 1836

After having duly reflected on the conditions which the Rev. Pastor of St. Claude thought he could offer, contrary to what had been agreed upon last evening between him and me, and seeing that a definite arrangement cannot be concluded before my departure tomorrow morning at the latest, I believe myself obliged to declare in writing that, in honor and in conscience, I can give up nothing of what was decided upon yesterday between the Rev. Pastor and myself relative to the school of the Brothers of Mary.

I am limiting myself to the acceptance of the cession of the place, purely and simply, by a deed under private seal, bearing receipt of the purchase, cash for value received.

By means of this cession, the school of the Brothers of Mary, placed under the sole auspices of Providence, will maintain itself, I hope for desire it ardently. But the Society which I have the honor to direct cannot, in any way, guarantee its continuance as long as the conditions I have proposed have not been accepted by the Rev. Pastor of St. Claude.

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Father Chaminade has arrived in Agen and he is being awaited in Layrac. But before going there, he insists on receiving from Father Lalanne some absolutely categorical declarations, which leave no room for equivocation.

839 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Agen, May 22, 1836

My dear son—I arrived in Agen with the thought and desire of going to Layrac, especially after your pressing solicitations and the just and praiseworthy sentiments you have expressed to me. My weak body, nevertheless, does not permit me to follow the impulse of my heart, although the latter is the bond of union. Before leaving for Layrac, I wish to have a yes or a no, without any kind of conditions, on the following points:

1. You are really the superior of the establishment of Layrac; and if you believe that something is lacking in your nomination, I am ready to regularize it.

2. There must be in Layrac a real Head of Temporalities, as in every other establishment. As this Head only shares your responsibility to the Society in the matter of accounts, you always remain the superior. He always owes you an account of the

management of his Office as to his superior, and you have the right and, very especially, the duty, always to determine if he fulfills the duties of his Office well.

3. The Office of the Head of Temporalities is, with a wise economy, to look after the ordinary and extraordinary needs of the establishment. The ordinary needs or running expenses must be regulated and controlled, and the superior must require the steward to see to this in such a way that no one in the house has any reasonable cause for complaint. As regards extraordinary expenses, if they haven't been foreseen or controlled, they must be referred to the General Administration. The same for improvements and repairs, purchases or loans of materials for the establishment. These expenses may not be made without the authorization of the General Administration. It is only on these occasions that the Head of Temporalities, without ceasing to be a lower officer, may and must offer a kind of resistance to his superior, though without ever lacking in the respect he owes him. Expenses for a suitable maintenance, whether of movables or immovables or even of extraordinary expenses that an urgent need in unforeseen cases may require, are not to be looked upon as extraordinary expenses. The superior may then use the discretionary power that the Society accords to all first Heads, and he alone is to inform the General Administration of the use they have been obliged to make of it. It is thus that the Head of Temporalities always remains responsible to the Society without ceasing to be responsible to his local superior.

4. I have the idea that the establishment Layrac belongs to a category that seems to be exceptional by reason of its newness and of the immense repairs and furnishings of all kinds it may need during the first period of its existence. I always remain disposed to make all the exceptions that are in the power of the Society to make, but the Society must be the judge of them. It must necessarily be that the superior of the establishment submits to the rules of prudence and that he also follows the principles of the justice that is due the Society.

I am ready, my dear son, to fly to you and to embrace you with an altogether paternal tenderness, without any recrimination for the past, provided that we are in agreement concerning the principles. I shall add only one more reflection. It is that a superior cannot have an arbitrary and independent authority. That of the Superior General also has its bounds and its limits. Even that of the Founder, which is by far the most extensive possible, is limited by the first principles of the divine laws.

Receive, my dear son, the provisional token of my tender and sincere affection.

* * * *

Father Lalanne answers by an unconditional yes, but he believed himself authorized by the fourth proposition to ask to remain temporarily sole master of the three offices of Layrac, until the establishment has reached a normal state. Father Chaminade, too well

instructed by the experiences of the past, could not abandon the interests of the Society to Father Lalanne. They were already too seriously compromised. He clearly told him so.

840 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Agen, May 25, 1836

My dear son—I shall briefly answer your letter of yesterday. Neither in honor nor in conscience, can I comply with what you ask of me. Every kind of interest must lead you to the pure and simple acceptance of the four articles I called to your attention in my last letter.

I have learned from several that the parents are already murmuring about your separation from Brother Mémain. If he continues to allow himself to be blinded by his self-love, I shall replace him for you as advantageously as possible.

I cannot go to Layrac unless we are in complete agreement on all points. I would not want any discussion, and it is for this reason that there will be no recrimination about the past. I wish only an examination of your present position so that we can arrange to have peace, not only between the two of us, but also with all our creditors. I can say nothing about the purchase of the barns until I have carefully weighed everything.

I hope, my dear son, that you will find nothing in this answer contrary to the tender affection that I am always pleased to show you.

* * * *

The patient energy of the Founder finally triumphed. Father Lalanne came to throw himself at the feet of his Father and unconditionally laid down his arms. The conclusion of the conversation was the following decision.

841 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Agen, May 29, 1836

Since the long talks we had yesterday, my dear son, we remain convinced that the arrangements established by my letters of the twenty-second and the twenty-fifth of the present month, remained unchanged and settled, with the addition of the following two observations, as a kind of postscript:

1. The office of the Head of Temporalities is subject to the superior, but in the sense made clear by the number 3 of the letter of the twenty-second of the current month. What is said in No. 2, that the Head only shares the responsibility of the superior, means nothing more than that he has the same obligation toward the Society as the superior himself.

2. When some doubt arises about an expense ordered by the superior, if it figures in the category of ordinary or extraordinary expenses, the doubt will be resolved in favor of the superior, provided that the expense does not go beyond twenty to thirty francs, but the Head of Temporalities has the obligation to notify the General Administration of it immediately. Its answer will then serve as a rule to apply in all future similar cases.

You say, my dear son, that you notice my voice giving out toward the end of our conversation. A few hours later it had about died out. I hope to be able to go to Layrac anyhow, on Tuesday. Receive my dear son, etc.

* * * *

Father Chaminade went to Layrac during the first days of June, and having returned to Agen, he gave an ordinance of temporal administration about the bases decided on in the preceding letters.

842 – TO FATHER LALANNE AND BROTHER MÉMAIN, LAYRAC

Agen, June 15, 1836

TO MY DEAR SON, FATHER LALANNE, SUPERIOR THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF LAYRAC AND BROTHER MÉMAIN, HEAD OF TEMPORALITIES
IN THE SAID ESTABLISHMENT.

I am sending you, my dear sons, the written agreement of interior administration for the Layrac establishment, relative to what is purely temporal. This agreement is literally the one you have just taken notice of. I have only rendered it executory. You will let me know as soon as you have received it, by means of a receipt signed by both of you.

Father Lalanne writes me in a note dated today that he hesitated to accept this first attempt to reform the establishment of Layrac only because of the lack of confidence that I was showing him. This is doubtless related to the too great expenses that were made in Layrac, whether for the property itself or for the maintenance of the boarding school. But I am asking him if my lack of confidence had not a just motive. The signs of lack of confidence I may have given have never had any other connections. Besides, everything proclaims the entire confidence I have in him as an older son in my numerous family and as one of the principal heads of the Society of Mary.

As regards the numerous debts that you have contracted under your private names, is it not a matter of suitability that you continue your conduct toward your creditors and furnishers without taking qualified names and that the Society thus finds itself completely left out of all your financial operations?

The present ordinance is somewhat too general and may lead to some difficulties in the matter of execution—for example, in the expressions of ordinary and extraordinary expenses—but, as you know, on my arrival in Layrac, we shall form a more detailed plan of economy. I shall take it up as soon as you have acknowledged reception of this letter as well as of the ordinance.

I shall very willingly work with you at the reform of the personnel, and I admit to you that, since Father Lalanne spoke to me of it, I have thought it over and caught a glimpse of the means to work it out. Have no doubts, my very dear son, about the real interest I have in the prosperity of the Layrac establishment and receive here the expression of my fatherly tenderness.

* * * *

ORDINANCE

INTERIOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAYRAC ESTABLISHMENT,
RELATIVE TO TEMPORALITIES.

1. The establishment has only two heads, the first whose authority extends over the three principal Offices, of Zeal, of Instruction, and of Temporalities. The first Head also takes in the two principal Offices of Zeal and Instruction. He shares with a Head of Temporalities all accountancy with regard to temporalities.

12. The Head of Temporalities is subject to his first Head . . . not only in order of precedence but also in the exercise of his functions.

3. The functions of the Head of Temporalities are: 1) To keep the books in good order, so as to be able to give a very exact account of all the receipts and expenses of the establishment and, in consequence, the first Head must always place every receipt in the hands of the Head of Temporalities. Generally speaking, this must be done on the very day of the reception, by reason of the correspondence of dates. The superior is free to keep a little cash-book, but he always has the duty to inspect the books of the Head of Temporalities, by the very fact that he is the first superior and responsible for all offices. The first Head can cease to be responsible for the faults and mistakes of the Head of Temporalities only by making them known immediately to the General Administration. 2) The Head of Temporalities is not to give out any sum he cannot justify. Bills and things received from the ordinary suppliers of the establishment or by the promissory notes of the providers must pass through his hands. No one in the house is authorized to make a bill of

any kind except with providers chosen in concert with the first Head and the Head of Temporalities but directly under the orders of the latter even if by vouchers of the superior himself relative to the needs of the members of the community. As regards the needs of the boarders, and even for their little pleasures, the Head of Temporalities will furnish nothing except on the strength of vouchers from the superior or of the person named by him to judge the suitability of these expenses. The Head of Temporalities is free to have someone keep track of these little details for him as the providers do. 3) The Head of Temporalities makes all the ordinary expenses, current or agreed upon, without intervention on the part of the first Head. He will also honor the vouchers of the superior, which would be only for ordinary expenses. But if they were related to extraordinary expenses not previously agreed upon, he would have to notify the General Administration about them. 5) Nevertheless, if some doubt arises, whether the expenses ordered by the superior are ordinary or extraordinary, the doubt would be resolved in favor of the superior, provided the expense does not exceed twenty to thirty francs, and the Head of Temporalities has the obligation of notifying the General Administration without delay. 6) If the needs were those of the superior himself or those of the Head of Temporalities, the superior would make his request in writing to the Head of Temporalities and he, on his part, would ask the superior, who would give him a voucher, in case one were needed.

4. The General Administration: 1) may at any time inspect the books and the cash-box directly or by anyone sent for that purpose; 2) judges of the use of funds relating to extraordinary expenses. Extraordinary expenses, if they relate to construction or land purchases, are permitted on plans and estimates.

5. The two Heads of the establishment, that is to say, the first Head and the Head of Temporalities must be intimately united. The bond which is always to secure this union, is 1) interest in the establishment of Layrac; 2) the interest they must bear toward the Society of Mary, not only as members but also as having in their hands one of the most precious assurances of its confidence. The first Head has every obligation of maintaining its rights and of fulfilling its duties as if he had taken an oath to do so when he received his charge, as is required by the Constitutions of the Society. The oath is required also of the Head of Temporalities, in view of the importance of his functions; and he must conduct himself just as if he had really taken it.

We, the Superior General of the Society of Mary, have decided and we do decide the present agreement, relative to the interior administration of the establishment of Layrac, to be honestly carried out and under the faith of the oath. By the present ordinance, we in no way intend to enter into any responsibility for acts to come or for any done in the past, the ordinance being simply in the regular order of things and an indication of means of reform.

This ordinance will be sent to Father Lalanne, superior of the establishment of Layrac, and to Brother Mémain, Head of Temporalities in the said establishment, and transcribed into the registers of the Society of Mary.

Given at Agen, under our seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary, June 15, 1836.

* * * *

At the end of June, Father Chaminade went to Auch, where he realized a desire, long cherished by him and by Mother de Trenquelléon of holy memory, the creation of a Third Order Regular of the Daughters of Mary, destined to extend to the country places the benefits of their apostolate.

The center of the new work was to be in the departmental relief center, where pious girls, directed by Father Chevallier, devoted themselves to the care of the insane and hoped one day to form a regular community. They were ten in number and new recruits declared themselves, permitting better hopes. On the first of July, the preliminary acts were passed. Here is the text.

843 – TO THE FIRST SISTERS OF THE THIRD ORDER
OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY

Auch, July 1, 1836

We, the Founder of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, etc.

We, after mature examination and having taken all necessary information about their past conduct, have admitted, to the number of Sister companions of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, the young ladies whose names follow here with:

1. Sister Béatrix, bringing, on entering, a dowry of 700 francs.

2. Sister Mélanie, bringing, on entering, a dowry of 560 francs, etc.

If the said young ladies withdraw from the Institute before two years, dated from today, the sum which they have brought will be given back to them six months after their withdrawal. But after their definitive reception and after these two years, they will no longer be able to reclaim the sum brought in as dowry. The young ladies herewith mentioned, all of mature age, will make their commitment from today on, conformably to the clauses of their admission, in witness whereof, we have signed at Auch, on July 1, 1836.

844 – TO THE ADMINISTRATORS OF THE
DEPARTMENT RELIEF CENTER, AUCH

Auch, July 1, 1836

HONORABLE PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN

The ten young ladies who direct and take care of your relief center are today incorporated into the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, in the capacity of Sister companions of the said Institute, approved by the Government. You will be able to deal with their Superioress General, Mother St. Vincent de Labastide, who remains in Agen, in the Convent of the Daughters of Mary.

You are going to have a novitiate of these Sister companions, Daughters of Mary, and you will have the assurance of having subjects always ready to replace the directress of your center. The Mistress of Novices will be a religious, with the rank of Mother in this Order, and she will be at the same time superioress of the Relief Center.

I have asked of the Honorable Prefect and I am asking you gentlemen for your protection and your intervention so as to obtain the necessary instruction in medical skills for these religious who are to care for the sick.

I shall also ask you, Gentlemen, to raise the salary of the directresses to the modest sum of two hundred francs for each one, as this seems necessary in calculating the economy of this foundation. I can promise you, Gentlemen, in the name of the entire Institute of the Daughters of Mary, and, in particular, in the name of the Superioress General, the greatest consideration and deference for the establishment that you administer with so much wisdom.

I am with respectful devotedness, Honorable President and Gentlemen, your very etc.

* * * *

845 – TO BROTHER BELLEAU

Agen, July 15, 1836

My dear son—I received your two letters, of March 25 and of last May 18. When I received the first, I was about to leave for St. Remy and, at that time, I had just talked about you with Father Chevaux and we decided between us that he would write you. It is quite possible that he did not do it, because he is always sick.

In receiving your last letter, I was surprised to learn you had left your home before your complete cure, especially during this very hot season. My dear son, what advice can I give you in your present state of health which you so freely describe to me? Six doctors, you say, think, like Brother Joly, that you haven't any hope of lasting very long as long as you lead the kind of life usually led in our houses. Your present condition and the prevision of the doctors are very sufficient reasons for you to be dispensed from your vows, especially since you made them so quickly and before the condition of your health was sufficiently

known and you are influenced by all the other circumstances that preceded or followed your religious profession. Always preserve the sentiments that animated you at that time, live religiously, occupy yourself as much as your health will permit, and always believe, my dear son, in my very tender attachment.

* * * *

Brother Claude Mouchet (1815-85), to whom the following letter is addressed, was born in Villers sous Ecot, Doubs. After having received an excellent education, as is shown by what remains of his correspondence, he entered the Society in 1832. He fulfilled the functions of linen-draper and infirmarian during his entire life, at St. Remy, at Merles, and at Luché. He was one of the most fervent religious of this generation, and Father Chevaux said the following about him: “Wise and well-balanced intelligence, sound and solid judgment, mild and affable manners, apt for all employments inside the house: linen-room, infirmary, etc.; obedient, respectful, charitable, truly humble, patient, accommodating, and disciplined; inclined to refuse to others what he believes not permitted for himself; full of faith and confidence in God; of a tender, sincere, and enlightened piety.” Father Chaminade directed him a long time, and he had the happy thought of preserving a certain number of these letters of direction, which will be reproduced in their proper place.

There were two other religious in the Society of this same name, devoted likewise to manual labor. Brother Charles Mouchet (1818-93), brother of Claude, who was employed in a great number of houses and died piously at the orphanage of Luché. Brother Nicholas Mouchet (1814-98), relative of the preceding two, who spent nearly a half-century in Paris, fulfilling the functions of cook, cellarman, and provider for Stanislas Collège and died at a good old age in the country house of Bellevue.

846 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET,

Agen, July 17, 1836

My dear son: Your short letter of last June 3 tells me that you have really understood that I am your father, because you have felt that you were really my child. I also have felt that I was your father. You are continuing to follow the counsels I gave you. Be faithful to them. Do not worry about the distractions you may experience in your meditations. Since they are not voluntary and they do not take rise in your heart, you have nothing further to do than to let them fall as soon as you notice them. The Blessed Virgin and our Lord, to whom you always keep yourself united, will supply for your weakness and for the lack of stability in your mind. You are right in believing that the good God is leaving you all these defects, to keep you humble and in perfect contempt of yourself; that, if you have some virtue and some good sentiments, you have them from the goodness and mercy of God and that by yourself you are but misery and sin.

I think that by this time you will have arranged with Brother Clouzet the matter of your requisition for military service.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

* * * *

847 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 18, 1836

At my arrival in Layrac, my dear son, I found there your letter of last May 28. It served me as a sort of compass, to direct my reflections toward its various topics. I want you to write me oftener, as I haven't received any other letter from you since the twenty-eighth . . .

Father Bardenet, according to what Brother Galliot wrote to me, complains a great deal about your lack of generosity. He will have the repairs he undertook in Marast finished, but he will have no furniture made. He will spend about ten thousand francs instead of the twenty thousand he thought everything would cost. I answered Brother Galliot that Father Bardenet had accepted responsibility for all the material, etc., and that I took upon myself

charge of the personnel, and that it was in no way suitable to ship articles of furniture from St. Remy to Marast, etc., etc. . . . I understand very well that next year you will need teachers and good ones. I shall not lose sight of you.

Father Fontaine writes to me that he is not pleased over the number of working-novices being accepted, because neither the community nor the novitiate is equipped in such a way that these young men can lead a really religious life. In this matter he comes back to the idea of the reunion of the primary and secondary boarding schools in the château and that then, all the buildings you occupy for the primary boarding school could be destined for the workers, whether religious or novices. I answered him that I was not against the idea, that I am not against considering with the Council, before speaking of anything, everything that would have to be done to realize this project without inconvenience. It could be done only after the departure of all the boarders and without talking about it in any way.

I am not against this union of the boarding schools because 1) it is high time, as I have told you, that the class of workers be given a fixed way of life, one similar for all concerned. The good God has deigned to make it known to us. I have already spoken to you about this several times. This community could do in the primary boarding school, at least temporarily, what it would have done in the winter orange-house or in the cart-shed if this had been rebuilt; 2) it doesn't seem that such a reunion would require any expenses; or if it did, they would be slight. . . .

I am afraid that, at the vacation time, you will not find your working brothers as well disposed to lead a truly religious life as they seemed to be last Lent if they don't earn what they need to live according to a given plan; if they don't support one another; if they don't of themselves earn all their expenses, even for their sick, their infirm, or their old members. If you take charge of them under these conditions, you will not have the results you expect. You will not content and satisfy them, and they will not be really religious, etc., etc.

I am now in a position to conclude matters for Layrac, and in a few days I shall be able to tell you all about it. Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

848 – TO REV. ROLAND, DIRECTOR OF THE GRAND SEMINARY OF LONS LE SAULNIER

Agen, July 23, 1836

We, the undersigned, Missionary Apostolic, Founder, and Superior General of the Society of Mary,

Considering the zeal with which Father Roland, Director of the Grand Seminary of Lons le Saulnier, seeks to extend and propagate the cult of the august Virgin Mary;

Considering the services he has already rendered, both to the Society of Mary and to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary;

Following the requests and solicitations he has made to use to affiliate him to the Society of Mary;

Especially following the letter he wrote to us on last May 10, at the time of our stay at St. Claude, where our said Father Roland renewed his requests, while expressing his ardent desire to be an affiliate, wanting, as he tells us, to be helped by the prayers of the Society; to work with a new ardor to spread the cult of Mary and to procure for her children imitators of her sublime virtues;

We have affiliated him, as we affiliate and associate him by these presents, to the Society of Mary and even to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, of which we are also the Founder. He can render to the establishments of both sexes all the services that depend upon him, as much as his position permits him and participate in the prayers and merits of all the good works that are done by both Societies.

Our said Father Roland will have to recite daily in union with us only the Memorare, *O piissima Virgo . . .*

Our Secretary General remains charged with making known this precious association and affiliation to all the establishments of the Society of Mary and to the Motherhouse of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

Given at Agen, under our seal and the counterseal of our Secretary General, July 23, 1836.

* * * *

In the meantime, new difficulties were arising in the North, distant results of the July Revolution and the trouble it had sown in minds and hearts and from the disorganization which it had introduced into the novitiate.

Brother Clerc, who had entered a short time ago, was named Director of the boarding school at Ebersmunster, by reason of his bachelor's degree, rather rare at this time. He addressed to Father Chaminade proposals whose impertinence rankled him to the point of odium. Here is the calm and measured answer of the Good Father.

849 – TO BROTHER CLERC, EBERSMUNSTER

Agen, July 29, 1836

My dear son: I could not take your letter of the twenty-first of the present month seriously. *Deus non irridetur*. Would it not be laughing at what is most sacred before God and men, to desire, after seven years of trials, to be dispensed from one's vows and promises, for the reason that "you have no relish for religious life"? This lack of taste or relish should alarm you before God, since your past conduct has allowed tastes to prevail in you which are very different from those of the spirit.

Two reasons lead me to believe that you have not spoken seriously. The first is the physical impossibility of forming in Ebersmunster two separate boarding schools while keeping the novitiate there. And the second, still more important, is the uprightness, the justice, and the refinement which have always seemed to characterize you. How would the honest people of the region understand this? You have established in the Society's name an interesting boarding school. You have known how to win the confidence of the pupils as well as of the general public. We have all done what we could to maintain and increase this confidence, and at the time when the boarding school has reached its peak, you would transfer it to a new establishment "where," you say, "I shall continue a boarding school of fifty pupils; I shall direct this boarding school with MM. Peg, Caillon, and Hector, who are not of the Society[1]; I shall choose my econome and all the employees."

Would it not be the same were a boarding school Head to come and say to us: Lend me the property where you have a boarding school. But to avoid the baneful results of my desertion and that of those I have associated to myself, we shall hold our boarding school in the same place and the Society's name will cover over whatever there is of hateful appearance in my desertion . . . In the meantime, you would be giving the Society the permission to establish another boarding school there!

My dear son, can all this really be taken seriously! I can hardly believe it can, and, to speak frankly, what would you say of me if I had fallen into the game snare? I think that you are very weary of the administration at Ebersmunster, and that, seeing there was no change, in spite of all the efforts I put into the matter, you said: "I shall take on such a nice tone that I shall oblige the Superior General to change things." Fortunately I had determined to do it before I received your letter of July 21, as you can see for yourself from the letter I wrote to Brother George Loetsch, who must surely have shown it to you.

Receive, my dear son, my usual greetings and salutations.

[1] They were only postulants.

Father Chaminade did not believe or did not seem to believe in the impertinence of Brother Clerc and his intimates. It was nonetheless real, and he had to act with energy to prevent a scandal from breaking out. By his firm and decided attitude, he succeeded in maintaining, at least momentarily, these conceited minds in the line of duty. Some days later, he recalled to Brother Clerc, with new force the rights of God upon him. (Letter 856)

* * * *

At Besançon, the little community of the Orphanage of the St. James Hospital was being tried in another manner. Its director, the excellent Brother Gobillot, named in 1835 in place of Brother Bousquet (See Letter 790), had clashed with one of his confrères, Brother Toussaint. Brother Gobillot, poor boy, had come out badly, and in his discouragement he had even thought of withdrawing to the Trappists. What complicated the situation is that the Orphanage depended upon the Hospital Sisters, whose Superioress, Mother Lamy, pretended to lord it over the Brothers. The affair had gone as far as the archbishop, to whom Father Chaminade, after being consulted, answered in these terms:

850 – TO HIS EXCELLENCY ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU,
ARCHBISHOP OF BESANÇON

Agen, July 29, 1836

Your Excellency: I received the letter Your Excellency honored me with on the eighteenth of the current month, and I bear just a trace of envy toward the respectable Mother Lamy, who is able to take so easily the counsels of your wisdom, even in the most ordinary affairs.

Mother Lamy wishes that the former Head, Brother Bosquet, whom the Administration of the Hospital rejected, come in to take Brother Gobillot's place. I answered her that there would be no slight difficulty in the matter, that Brother Bousquet is not in a condition for teaching children and that, besides, he is already designated for another occupation, which would suit him perfectly.[1]

Brother Toussaint is pious and zealous, but he has a rather hot head. He can do much good, but he has to be guided. The practices of piety which he inspired in his children were often superstitious. These difficulties were held in check by placing him under Brother Bousquet's direction. Brother Gobillot sought to check Brother Toussaint's zeal. I told him, when I left for Besançon, not to oppose Brother Toussaint anymore in the exercises of piety he held for the little ones as well as for the older ones under the name of Sodality. But, always fearing for his hotheadedness, I subjected him entirely to Father Oudet,[1] who

[1] That of Master of working novices at St. Remy.
[1] Chaplain of the Hospital, who there died as a victim of his devotedness, leaving a reputation of great sanctity.

accepted the charge with pleasure. It seems that he does not take Father Oudet's counsel either, and there are complaints, murmurs, etc. I have just received a letter from Brother Salmon[2] dated the twenty-third of the current month, which entirely justifies Brother Gobillot's conduct and confirms everything he tells me by saying it expresses the opinion of Fathers Meyer and Bardenet also.

Brother Gobillot is patiently awaiting an answer to two letters which he wrote to explain his recommendation for Grenoble. To send him elsewhere is no easy thing because of the general makeup of the man. Providence seems to have reserved him for the place he occupies, where he shows great virtue and wisdom. To send him away from the Society without sufficient reason would be, to my eyes, a plain injustice. To permit him to go to the Trappists, to practice monastic life there, would be no difficulty if he is admitted, but will he hold out under the trial? Will the Trappists want to admit him to profession? Is not all this uncertain? The letter of acceptance he has received has no other object than a retreat. Your Excellency's decision will be regarded as an order to be carried out.

I have no subject to replace him with immediately, but I shall keep my eyes open to find among the novices of Courtefontaine a subject who might be fit to direct this little establishment. Neither Brother Toussaint nor Brother Salmon are as yet qualified to be heads, nor are they fit to govern.[3] Mother Lamy wants to have someone better than Brother Gobillot, and she is right. But how often is the better not opposed to the good! Brother Gobillot's removal may cause the complete fall of this establishment called Charity, and in happier times we might be able to put it back on a solid footing. Your Excellency must have felt the importance of this project. Brother Gobillot can do what is essential, especially if he is encouraged, and if he is not made the subject of idle gossip. He is very sensitive to blame. I had subjected him to Father Cart[4] who, by his mildness and goodness, would have instructed him to take on a little direction sufficiently well. It is certain his head will turn as soon as everybody seems to disapprove of him. He has been extremely hurt over the fact that Mother Lamy intercepted the letter he received from the Trappists.

Here you have, Your Excellency, a letter much too long for you, who are so over-burdened with work. But I could hardly make it shorter if I was to have you judge these matters properly.

Be pleased to accept the assurance of the profound respect with which I am Your Excellency's most humble servant.

P. S. I hardly dare to write either to Brother Gobillot, who is presently in rather hot water, or to Brother Toussaint or Brother Salmon, who are for and against.

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[2] A religious of the same community.
[3] To do any teaching.
[4] Vicar General of Besançon and Superior of the St. James Hospital. He was named Bishop of Nîmes the following year and died there in 1855, leaving a great reputation for goodness.

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851 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, ST. REMY

Agen, July 30, 1836

My dear son—I was not able to answer your letter of last May before July 18, but I immediately knew of the concession made to you of Brother Silvain until next September, and that gave me ample time to answer.

I am answering Brother Galliot, who also speaks to me of the farms at Marast, and I am telling him that it is good that he retake them and have them developed through daily workmen. He was talking to me about transferring the working Brothers' novitiate from St. Remy to Marast. I gave him to understand the extent of the difficulties involved. Besides, after what Father Fontaine wrote to me, it would be possible, by reuniting the two boarding schools, to leave the entire primary boarding school building to the community of workers. I don't believe, my dear son, that you would ever succeed in forming true religious among the workers, without having them together in community and somewhat isolated during the time of their formation.

I have not received the letter from Father Fontaine that you mention.

By this same mail, I am answering His Excellency the Archbishop. It will be turning Brother Gobillot's head to bring his troubles before so many tribunals and especially before that of the highest authorities. I actually have no subjects to send by way of replacement. The hospital in Besançon is daily getting to be more difficult now that the superioress and Father Cart are no longer directing by themselves, but the superioress is bringing everything that bothers her before the highest court. It seems that Father Cart, superior of the hospital and local superior of the Charity, is no longer bothering about it; nor is Father Oudet, the chaplain, etc.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender friendship.

* * * *

During the month of July, the Layrac affair had evolved further. Brother Mémain, not being able to get along with Father Lalanne, had finally and definitively separated from him to take up once again the direction of the schools of Agen. (See Letter 772 and note) For his part, Father Chaminade had abandoned Layrac to Father Lalanne, who would henceforth direct the house at his own risk. The latter, furthermore, although provisionally dispensed from the obligations of his vow of poverty, remained united to the Society and felt very acutely the need for its support. It is to this situation that the following letters refer.

852 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Agen, August 2, 1836

By your letter of July 30, my dear son, you ask if I want and if I can equip the house of Layrac with subjects of the Society. Do I want to do it? Most certainly, I would want to do it, my dear son, as soon as we could be in perfect agreement and that the subjects could lead a truly religious life there. Can I do it? Frankly, I am not able to say that I can do so at the present time. You know about where we stand on the matter of subjects and the needs of the other establishments.

Will you keep the men that you have? I believe, as you do, that these men are better than others you might be able to take. Furthermore, by the note you communicated to me, you have a way of neutralizing their defects. With the exception of three or four, they will all enter and walk the straight and narrow path that leads to life everlasting. As regards the serving Brothers, you could put Brother Bidon at their head, as sub-head of Zeal. He would help you to keep this little group in religious regularity. I can tell him something about it, if you want me to, when he comes.

"In all cases," you add, "I believe that there will be more good than evil in dissuading the most influential members of the Society from the idea being given them as regards my pretended projects." I divide these influential members into two classes: the resident members of Layrac and the externs or Heads of the establishments. As regards the former, I would see only good in freely manifesting your actual dispositions to them, but without changing anything of the agreements you may have made with them. Let the short note you addressed to me stand as it is, without pressing them to enter effectively into the Society. When they will ask for the latter, if ever any of them does make this request, we will then see what ought best to be done. As regards the others, to whom, no doubt, you directed the Circular,[1] I believe that the measure would be too extensive; very few have any distinct and exact ideas as to what has actually taken place. I believe it would be better if I wrote to several, in the sense that I would consider possibly useful to them. I have spoken very little about what has taken place between us. Even Father Caillet as yet understands nothing about it. Your Circular is good and edifying, but it is nonetheless a bit too laconic. We shall always remain united as to sentiments and religious observance. The house of Layrac will follow this setup, although we may be separated as to interests—even though the house is your property and the enterprise is undertaken at your own risk.

Yesterday, I mailed your letter, addressed to Brother Clerc. I am, my dear son, redoubling our tender friendship . . .

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[1] Father Lalanne had thought of addressing a circular letter to the Society, so as to make known his situation, and he had submitted the project to Father Chaminade.

853 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Agen, August 4, 1836

I shall answer with pleasure, my dear son, the seven articles of your letter of yesterday; but to avoid repetitions and undue length, I believe it is useful first to consider your present condition. There has been no break or rupture but a serious tear. There has been an absolute separation, just as in marriage there is no divorce, but a separation of interests. Supposing that you were entering into the Society for the first time, such as you are at present, that you were admitted without the acceptance of any of your charges and that you were permitted to make your vows with the modifications, exceptions, or permissions that would be necessary for you to disengage yourself. It is from this point of view, it seems to me, that the seven articles or numbers must be answered.

1. "There is no break between us, and I shall continue to consider myself and to be considered as a member of the Society of Mary." There is no break between us, that is to say, break of the religious bonds and of the habit of life that is the result of them. You will continue to consider yourself and to be considered as a member of the Society of Mary, although separated in temporal interests, although the house at Layrac is your property and the enterprise is conducted at your own personal risk.

2. "The work which I direct, being at my own risk, is also at my discretion. I do not ask to be dispensed from obedience but the favor of a sufficiently extensive permission so that I can direct my project as I think it should be directed." Yes, my dear son, the work of Layrac is at your discretion, and it is permitted to you to direct this project as you think it should be directed.

3. "The establishment of Layrac is my property only in my quality as member of the Society of Mary. I neither want nor can I have any property by any other title except as a member of the Society of Mary, and effectively you cannot have any other. But, as regards the property of Layrac, as it has not been acquired in your quality as member of the Society of Mary, and it is there that the tear has occurred and since grown larger, you are obliged to keep it, with all its financial burdens, until finally . . .

4. "The persons that I shall gather around me to live under the religious environment I shall establish will be considered as belonging to the Society of Mary." You will establish, that is to say, you will follow and cause to be followed, the religious rule of the Society of Mary, and your subjects who have already been admitted by the Society will be regarded as belonging to it.

5. "The religious environment I shall establish will be governed by the rules which are prescribed by the Constitutions given and received until this day, with those modifications in use by the collèges. There were also modifications but abusive ones. The suppression of the abuses has edified and continues to edify.

6. “The Superior General of the Society of Mary will in no way put any obstacle to the house of Layrac’s receiving whatever help in money or subjects might be offered it, as to any house of the Society of Mary.” I understand little of what you call subjects being offered as help. As regards help in the form of money, the superior of the Society will place no obstacle to its being offered to the house of Layrac, as to any other house directed by the Society of Mary, even if this house does not belong to the superior—at least, not yet. He will always look upon these offerings as good works.

7. “As soon as the house of Layrac is free from peril and the other causes of its isolation cease, it will enter into the way of all schools.” The house of Layrac will enter into the way of all schools when the Society of Mary will judge it to be to its advantage that it be accepted.

It is said that Brother Gaussens is not as strong in the teaching of French as he seems to be. He is constantly complaining about his eyes and wants to be in a situation where he has little writing to do. I told him to wear spectacles, but he complains that they hurt him. Furthermore, I have already spoken to him about retaking his old post, where he enjoyed a certain reputation.

Yours very truly.

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The House of Layrac was thus entering into a new period of its existence, but for Father Lalanne as for Father Chaminade, it was reserving for the future many other difficulties.

854 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, ST. REMY

Agen, August 6, 1836

I have answered, my dear son, the little letter you sent me through Father Fontaine, during the first few days of June, and now I am adding a few replies to your July 25 letter. The temptations, the dryness during mental prayer, the involuntary distractions, even the involuntary sleep will in no way harm your meditations and especially their efficacy if you always unite yourself to our Lord Jesus Christ. It is He, my dear son, who prays for us and who is himself our prayer. Keep yourself always close to the Blessed Virgin in her love and confidence. All your happiness is in your union with our Lord Jesus Christ by faith and love. Do not desire consolations, nor this fervor which is so delicious. Our Lord doubtless sees that you would be proud if he gave you these, but be invariably faithful to him and remain in peace. Outside of that, follow exactly the practices which I have suggested to you. Receive Holy Communion three times a week, always after careful preparation. If some temptation

assails you, remain faithful, and may faith be the motive of your fidelity. Therein lies everything.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

* * * *

855 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, ST. REMY

Agen, August 6, 1836

I shall not let this mail depart, my dear son, without telling you that I rejoice over your recovery, first of all because of the friendship I have for you; but still more, because the Lord gives you more time to unite yourself more and more with him by the bonds of faith and love.

May all your meditations and even all your occupations be related to God by him, with him, and in him. This is a universal practice to render to God the glory we owe him, to obtain all the graces we need, and to acquire the sanctity to which we are called. This practice becomes very easy, if we habitually remain close to the Blessed Virgin.

My dear son, spare this health which is so precious to you. Above all, avoid all imprudence. Guard against all contention of mind as well as all affections of too tender a nature.

Receive my tender embraces. They are altogether fatherly.

* * * *

856 – TO BROTHER CLERC, EBERSMUNSTER

Agen, August 8, 1836

My dear son, I have just received your letter of July 29. The quality and the suddenness of your decisions and proceedings astonish and afflict me. Nevertheless, I shall make no reflection about them, as you don't seem to want it. As a result of your desertion, well decided upon although not carried out, "you ask me to dispense you from your vows or to commute them, the vow of chastity excepted, of course." I can, my dear son, neither dispense you from your vows nor commute them. They have been offered to God. They are the bonds which have attached you to his service. What authority on earth would permit itself to sever such precious bonds, unless there be reasons or motives that might be accepted by God himself? Nevertheless, I shall have the copy of your two letters sent to His Lordship of St. Claude, your bishop. In his wisdom, he will be the judge of what

is to be done. Your conduct, my dear son, irregular as it is, does not change my sentiments of friendship for you. They simply take on the aspect of a tender compassion.

* * * *

857 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Agen, August 8, 1836

In answer, my dear son, to your letter of yesterday, I shall point out to you that, if you read attentively the last letter I wrote to you, you will there see your position presented in a very clear and definite fashion. It cannot be satisfactory, but, really, whose fault is that?

I have just understood, finally, why the great library has no catalog, and why a certain number of very precious books are missing. It is evident that the case they were kept in has been lost. Is nothing else lost but this case? This library has remained three or four months in the stores at the base of the ship, and no note was taken either of the mail or of the packages taken on board and deposited in the stores. I forego all reflection. Tomorrow, the last ceremony for the religious Sisters of Auch will take place. I am embracing you . . .

* * * *

The last sentence of the preceding letter recalls the foundation of the Third Order of the Daughters of Mary. Before everything else, it was suitable to put at the head of the budding work an outstanding Sister. For this reason Father Chaminade looked to a Sister of the house at Acey, Mother Léocadia Voirin, who came to Agen in the early days of August and arrived at Auch on the tenth of the same month. In the following letter, Father Chaminade consoles Father Perrodin for her departure and encourages him to hasten his own entrance into the Society.

858 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Agen, August 10, 1836

You have accepted with regret, my respectable son, Mother Léocadia's departure. This sentiment is quite natural, as one knows what one is losing and not what one is going to have. Mother Hyacinthe, who has been sent to replace Mother Léocadia, is really more educated and better trained, but certain traces of self-love will prevent her from doing as well if she does not succeed in overcoming them. If the boarders, as well as the novices, show regret at having lost their Mother; and if Mother Gabrielle, superioress of the community, does not give her a certain latitude in the fulfillment of her functions, she will not like Acey—and this will cause Mother Léocadia's being sorely missed. Let us hope, my respectable son, that Father Bardenet will not continue to create difficulty as far as accepting the one replacing you is concerned. Keep your eyes wide open to find such. If he does not prove suitable, then a second must be found and so on down the line. While passing through Arbois, Brother Girard spoke to me about a very good subject who was to present himself after having obtained permission to do so, and I spoke of him to the

Seminary of Lons le Saulnier at the time of a short visit I paid there. You might write about him to Girard, as he also might help you in locating him.

Otherwise, do not worry about delays. Let us always be subject to the order of Providence. Lead a truly religious life, apply yourself especially to mental prayer, in the manner in which we have spoken about it. It regretted that we were not able to continue, but you must have seen what the necessary consequence would have been.

Go from time to time to Courtefontaine, and if you notice anything that should not be, notify Father Meyer about it, or write to me if the case requires it. You surely understand how important it is that this novitiate becomes better and better.

May the Lord, my respectable son, always shower abundant blessings upon you! Receive my tender embraces!

P. S. The Institute of the Daughters of Mary is in a position to extend itself greatly. The Lord has deigned to bless what I have done in Auch. Mother Léocadia has left this morning for Auch, to be mistress of the novitiate and at the same time superioress of the departmental relief center. The novitiate is very close to this house. On the first occasion, I shall explain to you in detail this extension of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. Brother Bonnefoi is very grateful and mindful of your kind remembrance.

* * * *

After the feast of the Assumption, we find Father Chaminade in Condom, where he visits the Convent of the Daughters of Mary and where he addresses the following letter to Brother David.

859 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Condom, August 18, 1836

It is in Condom, my dear son, that I received your letter of the fifteenth of the current month addressed to Agen. I shall not answer the important reflections you make, but I hope to be in Bordeaux sometime during the first two weeks in September. From Condom I shall be returning to Auch.

You arrange, my dear son, the rent for the central section of the Razac mansion at twenty-five hundred francs a year, and that for two years. I authorize you alone to deal with this affair, and I shall consider as done whatever you authorize.

Now I have only time to assure you of my inviolable friendship.

* * * *

860 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Auch, August 31, 1836

Try, my dear son, always to advance in the spirit of mental prayer, for it is the most powerful means of union with Jesus Christ. I take it for granted that you are united with the most blessed Virgin by faith, confidence, and love . . .

* * * *

861 – TO BROTHER DONZÉ, ST. REMY

Auch, August 31, 1836

Your letter, my dear son, filled me with a tender feeling of compassion. I am too busy just now to give you in detail the counsels you need. I reduce them all to one, which is to enter seriously into the purgative way, that is to say, into a real spirit of penance. May all your prayers and all your actions of the day be done in this spirit of penance.

If your health is sufficiently reestablished, you might go to the Novitiate of Courtefontaine, but only after having conferred with Father Fontaine to know if he really needs you. I am thinking of supplying him with a good supervisor. Also consult Father Chevaux and receive my tender embraces.

* * * *

At the end of August and during the first days of September, Father Chaminade finished regulating the foundation of the Third Order with the city authorities, as appears in the following documents.

862 – TO M. GABRIEL, PREFECT OF GERS

Auch, End of August, 1836

Honorable Prefect—Although I had the desire of presenting you my respects at the time of my arrival in Auch, I refrained from doing so because of your numerous occupations connected with the holding of the General Council as well as the serious disasters of August 24.

Would you kindly permit me to present to you the superioress whom the Institute of the Daughters of Mary destines for the direction of the departmental relief center?

I am with profound respect, etc.

P. S. I just learned that the Administration of the departmental relief center is being joined this afternoon to the Prefecture. I take the liberty of enclosing a copy of the title of the Superioress' nomination and of addressing to the Prefecture the letter I have just had the honor of writing to the Honorable Administrators.

Permit again, Honorable Prefect, that I place this entire matter under your benevolent protection.

* * * *

863 – TO MOTHER LÉOCADIA, AUCH

Auch, August 29, 1836

We, Missionary Apostolic and Founder of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, approved by royal Ordinance,

After mature deliberation and the unanimous vote of the General Administration of the Daughters of Mary in session at Agen, have named and do name as superioress of the departmental relief center Mother Léocadia, known in the world under the name of Mlle Voirin; and in this capacity, all the Daughters of Mary of the said house are directly under her authority . . .

The present title of superioress of the departmental relief center is given to Mother Léocadia without prejudice to any other title she might receive that is compatible with this one.

The superioress, herewith named, will not require from the Administration any personal salary and will always be in addition to the number of religious Sisters judged necessary to the said establishment.

The departmental welfare Administration will be asked to register the present nomination that it may be of value to her as well as to those who would come after.

Given at Auch, where we have come to this effect, August 29, 1836.

* * * *

864 – TO THE HONORABLE ADMINISTRATORS OF
THE DEPARTMENTAL RELIEF CENTER

Auch, End of August, 1836

HONORABLE PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN

Major disasters have recently occurred in Auch and especially in the departmental relief center. Heaven has protected the Daughters of Mary at just about the time their superioress arrived. Nothing has lessened their zeal and their devotedness to the work which is being confided to them. Your solicitude for this establishment must surely have made you all witnesses of this fact. The superioress, provided with her new title, will surely have the honor of presenting her respects and of asking you to hasten the definitive organization of this establishment.

Ten religious were mentioned as required for the service of this house and a greater number should the various needs increase. The superioress will be in addition to the number required, and no salary is asked for her.

I am with profound respect, Honorable President and Gentlemen, etc. . . .

* * * *

865 – TO CARDINAL d'ISOARD, ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH

Auch, September 1, 1836

Your Eminence: Divine Providence has deigned to bless the steps I have taken at your orders. Your Eminence has in your capital city and by extension given to the exterior works of the Daughters of Mary an approval for the direction of the departmental relief center. Furthermore, you have authorized a novitiate house which can furnish subjects for the various sections of your diocese which will ask for them. I am seeking to relieve the numerous difficulties being encountered by the establishment of Barran.[1]

I am thanking Your Eminence for having given me Father Chevallier as aid.[1] I have always looked upon him as my visible angel in everything I was able to do. Your prayers, Your Eminence, and his cooperation have just about accomplished everything. I feel more and more my insufficiency for works which require delicacy and refinement. Furthermore, have I not come to Auch only through obedience and also to ask your protection for the Convent of Condom? Because of the benevolence which Your Eminence has deigned to exercise towards me, I dare to ask you to extend this protection especially in the court of

[1] This was a foundation projected for several years and halted by the July revolution. See Letter 529.
[1] Fr. Louis Anthony Chevallier (1800-1875) professor and then superior at the Grand Seminary of Auch, and finally in 1840, vicar general of the diocese. For many long years, he was the very soul of all the good works of the countryside. Devoted friend of Fr. Chaminade, whom he esteemed greatly, he further strengthened their bonds by introducing the Sodality into the Seminary together with his confrère, Fr. Larrieu.

Rome.[2] The little act of foundation that I take the liberty of submitting for your approbation and for Your Eminence's signature if you judge it suitable, might also receive the signature of the Superioress General. Three copies could be made: one deposited in the Archbishop's palace, a second in the Administration of the Daughters of Mary, and third would remain in the Novitiate house.

I would observe with pleasure, Your Eminence, that Father de Belloc, Vicar General of the Diocese, would join the superiorship of the Novitiate to that of the relief center, and that Father Chevallier would be the sub-director. His ardent but modest zeal would be a guarantee of the progressive development of these two establishments, according to the views the Lord has inspired us with.

I shall also take the liberty, Your Excellency, of recommending to you the venerable Sodality of the Immaculate Conception, established here during the vacancy of the episcopal See. [1] It had greatly diminished and so I indicated to Father Dupin ways of revivifying it. He is suitable for this work, but a recommendation on your part would do wonders and give additional zest to his zeal. To me there is no doubt that it is the Holy Spirit that has inspired you to name him pastor of Ste. Marie.

I am etc.

* * * *

Here is the act spoken of in the preceding letter.

866 – ACT OF FOUNDATION OF THE THIRD ORDER
OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY

Auch, September 1, 1836

We, Missionary Apostolic, Founder of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and Superior General of the Society of Mary, have come to Auch upon the invitation (which we have considered an order) of His Eminence Joachim Jean Xavier d'Isoard, Cardinal-priest of the Holy Roman Church, Archbishop of Auch, etc., etc. for the purpose of incorporating into the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, under the title of Sister Companions, the actual Directresses of the departmental relief center. They will join with other young ladies who

[2] Cardinal d'Isoard had for a long time been part of the tribunal of the Rota and had even become dean of this tribunal. He had thus developed important relationships in Rome. Fr. Chaminade, in this passage of his letter, doubtless makes allusion to the project he had already conceived, of asking the Holy See for the approbation of the Constitutions of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. In fact, two years later, he had recourse to the Cardinal to support this move.

[1] This house, surrounded by large gardens, is some minutes from the relief center On the same street of the lower city but on the opposite side. It has remained the Novitiate of the Daughters of Mary, and other works were started there later on.

have manifested the desire of devoting themselves, under the protection of Mary, to the care of the sick and the education of young people of their sex, while leading an entirely religious life. With God's help, we have had the consolation of starting a novitiate, after scrutinizing the subjects carefully and finding an abundance of them. We hope, within a relatively short time, to furnish subjects for small establishments in varying locations of the Diocese. For this reason, we wish to buy a suitable house, with its gardens and outbuildings, situated in the place called Les Serres. This is very near the relief center, and we will occupy it after it is blessed.[1]

This house will always be under the General Administration of the Daughters of Mary and under the jurisdiction and protection of His Eminence and his successors, the archbishops of Auch. Such is the will, as manifested to us by His Eminence, who has deigned to sign with us the present act of foundation, to be forever effective.

Given at Auch, September 1, 1836

William Joseph Chaminade

Seen by us, Auch, September 2, 1836

J. J. X. Card. Arch. d'Auch

P. S. His Eminence takes the entire Institute of the Daughters of Mary under his special protection.

* * * *

Under the wise direction of Mother Léocadia, the Third Order developed rapidly. It spread to the dioceses of Auch, at Barran (1837); Pavie, Cozaubon (1839); Montreal, Aix (1840); Labastide, Sarrant (1841); Mas d'Avignon, Saint Antonin, Fleurance (1843); Astaffort, Pergain (1845); Castelmoron (1846); Cologne (1847); then, in the diocese of Agen, at Bon Encontre (1849) . . . Several of these houses still exist. The Founder had a special love for this last of his Institutes. Until 1842, he went each year to Auch to receive the vows of his Daughters and to give them his encouragement.

On April 4, 1821, the two branches of the Institute, upon their request, were united by the Holy See into one and the same Congregation.

* * * *

On September 5, after having completed the organization of the Third Order, Father Chaminade came back to Agen and prepared to return to Bordeaux, where he was impatiently awaited, after an absence of more than five years.

On the thirteenth, he was in Tonneins, and from here he addressed Brother Gaussens the following obedience.

867 – TO BROTHER GAUSSENS, AGEN

Tonneins, September 13, 1836

OBEDIENCE TO MY DEAR SON, BROTHER GAUSSENS, MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY, FORMER HEAD OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS OF AGEN

Not having been able, my dear son, before my departure from Agen, to send you the obedience I intended to send, I have made up for it at my arrival in Tonneins.

My intention, my dear son, is that you return to St. Remy (Haute Saône), where you were for such a long time, working under the direction and obedience of Brother Clouzet, superior of the establishment and Head of the primary boarding school.

May the Lord, my dear son, deign to continue to shower abundant blessings upon your labors!

Given at Tonneins, where we are in the course of a visit, September 13, 1836.[1]

* * * *

Father Chaminade had hardly signed this obedience when he heard that the holy Mother de Lamourous was close to death. Setting aside all other affairs, he set out for Bordeaux, where he arrived in time to witness the last breath of his first spiritual daughter, September 14 at 6 o'clock in the evening.[2]

XIX

FATHER CHAMINADE HAS RETURNED TO BORDEAUX.
DIFFICULTIES WITH BROTHER DAVID ON THE SUBJECT
OF THE PAPERS OF THE SOCIETY.
RESULT OF THE LAYRAC AFFAIR.
DIFFICULTIES IN REGARD TO THE FOUNDATIONS

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[1] Bro. Gaussens answered this obedience in the following lines, worthy of this true religious: "I have received the obedience which you have had the kindness of sending me and I am thanking you for the simplicity of its terms. How contented I shall be under the yoke of an obedience such as you prescribe it to me! I pray God to give me new strength to fulfill, more faithfully than I have done heretofore, the duties of a good religious and of a child of Mary."

[2] The date and the circumstances of Fr. Chaminade's return to Bordeaux cannot be determined with any degree of certainty.

The tradition of the Miséricorde is that Fr. Chaminade assisted Mother de Lamourous in her last moments, even though her life, written by Fr. Pouget, does not mention this presence.

Fr. Chaminade was certainly in Bordeaux on Sunday, September 18, as can be ascertained from his letter to Bro. David, dated the twenty-third of the same month.

OF SAINT CLAUDE AND MARAST.

(SEPTEMBER 1836 – APRIL 1837)

After five years of absence, Father Chaminade came back to Bordeaux and again set himself to the task of the government of the Society. A rather heavy task for his 75 years! In Bordeaux emptiness has surrounded him: no more Madeleine Sodality, no more novitiate of Saint Laurent, no more Sainte Marie Boarding School on Mirail Street – all must be restored and brought back to life.

In the rest of France, in spite of the difficulties of the times, the Society has not ceased to grow. It now numbers almost twenty houses[1] and more than 120 religious, without counting the Daughters of Mary[2] and the recently created Third Order at Auch. Relations are difficult, especially in the North, where more than ten days are needed for an exchange of letters – an inevitable cause of complications and misunderstandings in the execution of given orders.

What aggravates the situation still more are the consequences of the July Revolution which closed the novitiates, provoked desertions, troubled minds, and weakened the sense of religious life.

To face so many difficulties, Father Chaminade is alone in Bordeaux with Father Caillet, his first Assistant, more devoted than clever, and who more than once caused him new worries and embarrassments. The two other Assistants are in Layrac and Agen, and both the one and the other are going to separate themselves from him, although under very different conditions – for Father Lalanne, the firstborn son, will always remain attached to him at heart and will always end in coming back to him.

In the midst of all these difficulties, Father Chaminade always keeps his faith in God and his complete confidence in Mary. His correspondence, of which only a small part remains – and that principally business letters – is remarkable for its vigor and its precision, and not less for the invincible patience and unalterable serenity which it manifests.

* * * *

Right after his return to Bordeaux, Father Chaminade asks Brother David, former Secretary General, to give him the papers and documents of the Society, which he was

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[1] In the Midi: Bordeaux with the Madeleine and St. Laurent; Agen (1820); Villeneuve (1821); Moissac (1826); Layrac (1835); in Franche Comté: St. Remy (1823); Besançon (1827); Orgelet (1827); Courtefontaine (1827); Salins (1833); St. Claude (1835); in Alsace: Colmar (1824); St. Hippolyte (1826); Ammerschwir (1826); Sainte Marie aux Mines (1827); Ribeauvillé (1827); Ebersmunster (1833); Soultz (1835). We recall simply to mention the colleges of Gray (1826-1829) and of Villeneuve (1822-1827) and the house at Lauzerte, all of which had only a fleeting existence.

[2] With its houses at Agen (1816), Tonneins (1820), Condom (1824), Arbois (1826) and Acey (1830).

storing in his little apartment in the Razac mansion. The new Secretary General, Brother Bonnefoi, was henceforth to have charge of these and would keep them in the house occupied by Father Chaminade.

868 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, September 23, 1836

Since Sunday morning, my dear son, when I had the chance of seeing you, I have had a loss of voice and a severe cold. Nevertheless, I am again beginning to look after my affairs, which are those of the Society of Mary, and of installing the one who I had named, when last year there was question of your departure from Saint Remy.[1] For this, I need the papers of the Society which you have in your hands. Herewith, I am asking you to pass them over to me sometime during the first days of next week. As regards some papers which you might keep as mixed, that is to say belonging to you and at the same time belonging to the Society of Mary, I can give you all the guarantees you may desire. I include among the papers of the Society of Mary those of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. I include also those which are purely personal to me, these of which the number is very small.

I offer you, my dear son, the renewed token and assurance of my inviolable attachment.

P.S. I am asking you, my dear son, to have made in the part of the Razac mansion that you have rented only such repairs as are really urgent for your living quarters. I do not remember if such were even asked for.[2]

The following letters bring us back to the foundation of Marast (See Letters 257, 793, 832, 847, 851).

Father Bardenet was continuing to contribute to all the foundations of the Society in Franche Comté, but not without finding fault with many things. The outbursts of his character no longer annoyed Father Chaminade, since he knew him to be so good at heart and so devoted to the work.

[1] See Letters 796 and 805.
[2] See Letter 859.

869 – TO FATHER BARDENET, ACEY

Bordeaux, September 29, 1836

Reverend dear Father and Cooperator,

I had not yet answered the letter with which you honored me under date of last August 22, when I received in Bordeaux the letter of September 14 which was addressed to me in Agen. I had many occupations in connection with my long visits and finally, in the last one which brought me to Bordeaux, I took a breathing spell of which the results were not vexing, but which at least delayed much of my correspondence. All our affairs are everywhere taking on a favorable aspect, be it in the North or in the South. The most difficult one remaining to us, is still that of Marast.

As the result of our last interviews and agreements in Saint Remy, it was said, in a few words, that you would be in charge of all the materiel and I, of all the personnel. In this personnel, I was not including a priest, who is nevertheless indispensably necessary considering the arrangement of the grounds, which I did not know at that time, and of which no one notified me.

I did not think it proper that the superfluous beds of the secondary boarding school of Saint Remy should be transported to Marast. Why take to pieces one establishment in order to equip another? This is precisely what I have just found to be the case in Bordeaux. Without notifying me, Father Lalanne had taken from the novitiate the beds which he needed for the enlargement of the Sainte Marie Boarding School, from which arises our present embarrassment.

I am very sorry, Reverend Father, that by the same words we did not happen to understand the same thing, and that as a result some contradictions arose between us. There was not question between us in fact of furniture, but really, I meant to include that in the term, materiel.

I cannot blame Brother Galliot for having asked you for some money so as to continue the works in Marast, unless he missed or even wasted what you let him have. He is in Marast only to supervise and to replace you when you happen to be absent. Perhaps, with the two thousand francs you were kind enough to send him and the promise of equipping the sacristy and the church with all that is needed for divine service, he will be able to make ends meet. I am sure you will be very glad to see this, by the bills that he must keep in order.

By this same mail, I am writing to Brother Galliot to be satisfied, for the time being, with what is necessary and suitable for the first establishment, and little by little he will come to the point of ease and, in time, to that of perfection. I am sending him a little list of the available subjects we have, among whom is even the director of the boarding school of

Courtefontaine[1] who will be able to help Brother Galliot a great deal, not only with spiritual service, but also with teaching. If all cannot be ready for All Saints, he will delay the opening of the establishment and the sending of his prospectus.

Kindly permit, Reverend Father, in my turn, and in concluding my answer to the two letters with which you had the kindness to honor me, I make a mild complaint. Several subjects would have presented themselves to be chaplains of the Convent of Acey. You set them aside, not because they were unfitted for the functions, but because you wanted to keep Father Perrodin.[2] You are attached to him, and I really believe he merits this attachment which you have for him. But, what will result from this? Why come back on the sacrifice that you had made of him and which you surely had offered to God?

I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

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870 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, MARAST

Bordeaux, September 29, 1836

My dear son, I am answering your letter of the fourteenth almost immediately. Of the two letters which you tell me you wrote previously, I have received only the first. For the time being there cannot be question of Marast, nor of the novitiate, nor of the Community of working religious. Brother Clouzet tells me he sent you a domestic, capable of being at the head of all the farm work.

With this same mail, I am sending an answer to two letters of Father Bardenet, and you will find a copy of it at the end of this one. We must ignore all his complaints and bitter reproaches and hold to all that is just and reasonable. He tells me he is passing over to you two thousand francs more, committing himself to supply all that is necessary for divine service, be it in the sacristy or in the church, and he estimates that at four thousand francs. He further says that the two thousand francs are at your disposal. If, even with the greatest economy, these do not suffice to prepare the establishment for its opening, you will write to him about it with all honesty and respect, but you must not do any borrowing unless it be for a few trifling sums to have the job finished once and for all.

You will easily be able to arrange for the time of the publication of your prospectus.

I am sending you a short list of the subjects available for Courtefontaine. There are only two with certificates of the second degree, Brothers Perriès and Charpin. Brother

[1] Bro. Fridblatt was director of the boarding school, under the authority of Father Meyer, superior of the establishment.
[2] See Letter 858.

Perriès, as you know, was well liked in Besançon at the time he was examined. Charpin has conducted himself well since I sent him to the novitiate of Courtefontaine for a retreat. He writes me that he would have wanted to be employed in Alsace in order to have the chance of repairing the scandal he gave there. Both Brothers, with a little study, can easily look forward to the superior degree. I know little, if anything, about the strength of the others. Nevertheless, Father Meyer, as it were, regretfully tells me they would be available, and this counts for teaching as well as for the practice of virtue. You will let me know as soon as possible on whom your choice will have fallen, and if you can, have the opening of the establishment on All Saints Day, so that I can immediately give you suitable orders.

I am sure, my dear son, that you desired to go to Alsace to make a good retreat. That would also have pleased me much, but I can hardly see how this could be possible, considering the position in which you find yourself. Anyhow, since making it is just and necessary, once the establishment in Marast will have been equipped, I have reason to hope we shall be able to find a two-week period during which you could be suitably replaced, and then your mind would be at ease and Father Rothéa would himself be more available.

Courage, my dear son! With time, patience, grace, and good will, we shall succeed in everything. Do not worry yourself needlessly over the pestering on the part of Father Bardenet, for he is the best of men, even if he has a rather difficult character.

I am embracing you with great effusion of heart.

* * * *

The following letters show us with what delicacy Father Chaminade treated the questions of vocations to the ecclesiastical state.

871 – TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CAHORS

Bordeaux, October 2, 1836

Dear Reverend Father, in Auch I received the letter with which you honored me on September first. My round of visits in our establishments of the South has been much hurried, and I arrived in Bordeaux so indisposed, that it became impossible for me to answer you sooner. The Reverend Director of the Collège of Gramat also asks me for information about M. Claude.

Since his entry into the Society of Mary, this young man has preserved a reserve fund of faith and religion, and even a certain interior regularity. In certain circumstances he has even seemed very fervent. He was not made to study for the ecclesiastical state: 1. because no other signs of vocation were found in him other than the mere desire to become a priest; 2. because of his age and of some lack of intellectual power which he has

always shown in primary teaching. Even in that, there has always appeared in him much self-sufficiency, and he has always thought himself capable of the highest studies. Is there perhaps some reality in all this? The great desire he has of all this, and the good teachers that would be given him, might make of him at least an ordinary or average subject. I would think he has greater aptitude than M. de Valincourt, who, I have been told, is already in your Grand Seminary. I am, Reverend Father, with respect, etc.

P. S. I beg of you, Reverend Father, to present to his Lordship the homage and tribute of my profound respect and of my entire devotedness.

* * * *

872 – TO FATHER RICHARD, DIRECTOR OF THE COLLÈGE OF GRAMAT

Bordeaux, October 2, 1836

Reverend dear Father, you are wise not to base yourself entirely on a few certificates of good conduct, when there is question, above all, of raising a young man to the sacerdotal state. Already, in the same vein, I have been asked for confidential information about M. Claude. Here is what I was able to give.

Here follows the reproduction of the preceding letter, starting with the second paragraph.

* * * *

In the meantime, Brother David delayed giving to Father Chaminade the papers of the Society, under the pretext that, in his absence, papers had been taken from his cabinet, papers for which there was urgent need, and which he himself refused to give over. Father Chaminade addressed him a first request which was to be followed by several others, until finally, to overcome his obstinacy, after a vain intervention of ecclesiastical authority, recourse had to be made to the courts – surely a sad incident but which was, non theless, a very painful trial for the Founder and a supreme test of his patience.

* * * *

873 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, October 3, 1836

My very dear son, I am still awaiting the delivery of the papers of the Society of Mary, and that for the reasons I have already stated to you. I would be very much obliged if you would hasten this delivery and let me know in advance the day on which it is to take place. Receive, my dear son, my fatherly greetings.

* * * *

In Agen, Brother Mémain, already separated from Father Lalanne, was getting ready for his withdrawal from the Society. He was directing the paying schools, added the preceding year to the free schools (See Letters 772 and 852), but he was thinking of abandoning the latter. Father Chaminade was trying to keep him in the line of duty, whence this extract from a letter that has been preserved for us.[1]

874 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, AGEN

Bordeaux, October 3, 1836

If the good God deigns to touch your heart, I have told you that I would be all heart and soul for you in whatever manner possible for me, so as to assist you in getting out of the embarrassment in which you find yourself. If this is not the case, then you will no longer have any relation with the free schools. I shall see that they are maintained, if the faithful are willing to group together so that the teachers can live according to their state. You will keep your paying school on your own personal account. You will henceforth have no further dealings with me, nor I with you.

* * * *

At Layrac, Father Lalanne, henceforth left to himself (See Letters 852 and 853) continued his discussions with Father Chaminade.

875 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, October 5, 1836

My dear son, it has been for me, as it were, morally impossible up to the present to answer the letter your wrote to me from Toulouse on September 10. I bless the Lord and his august Mother for the lights and graces you are receiving, but if you continue to make specious arguments the lights and graces could diminish.

You have made vows; you have committed yourself; you have believed and wanted to commit yourself. Of what importance then is it, that in suppositions, you can be dispensed in the future? I do not see that in your position there is any other principle to adduce, than the very fact of the free and voluntary emission of the vows of religion. Has

[1] This extract from the letter that has been preserved for us and others that will follow are to be found quoted in a memorandum of Bro. Mémain, at the time of the suit which, after 1840, was brought against Fr. Chaminade by his former Assistants.

your conduct been contrary or conformable to these vows? That is the question, before God as well as before men . . .

My dear son, you also use too many specious arguments about obedience. Have you been able to know sufficiently the will of your superior in his orders and prohibitions, even when, as a matter of delicacy, he would have avoided the use of the expression, "in virtue of holy obedience"? I do not believe that the supposition of "preventions on the part of the superior, of his adherence to certain old ideas, and of the confidence he places in the relations with, and in the manner of seeing, certain persons, incompetent and said to be badly intentioned in your regard,"[1] I do not believe, I say, that all these suppositions can dispense from the obligation of obeying.

"You have never been able to make up your mind," you say, my dear son, "to depend *in your administration* on a superior who did not understand you and with whom you were not able to come to any agreement or mutual understanding." I think you are wrong again in making this supposition. The vows and oaths of office do not admit it. To admit such a principle – it is the one of scrupulous souls with regard to their confessors – a judgment of incapacity, rendered by a competent authority, would be necessary.

As regards the vow of poverty, it seems to me, my dear son, that you pass over it very superficially. You say, as in passing: "You have never wanted to appropriate anything for yourself." I have no intention of combating your intentions and dispositions, but I always go to acts. I shall add that the observance and accomplishment of this vow depends in great measure upon that of obedience.

When, in our last interview, you asked me what I could blame in you, and when I immediately drew your attention to the vows of obedience and poverty, as points which seemed to me more salient, I had no intention of excluding others which the intimations of grace will reveal to you.

You depicted your present situation quite well, my dear son. In financial affairs, I must, nevertheless, single out certain phrases so as to leave no likelihood of a lawsuit, such as would lead nowhere, since already we are unable to produce any reasonable account.

You say you have generously met the obligations of the boarding school. Do not believe that this act of generosity passed unnoticed by me. It will never be forgotten. Nevertheless, my dear son, you know that the property of Saint Loubes has not been sold, and that, even before selling it we have made so many other sacrifices merely to pay the old debts of the boarding school.

[1] Father Caillet.

All these sums had seemed more than sufficient for the payment of its old debts, and you know that we have never been able to produce an account of a real balancing of interests. If there is some difference to your advantage, must you not ascribe it to yourself?

Brother Auguste and Father Caillet have spoken to Father Estebenet of releasing the Society of the entire allowance which comes to it.[1] He seemed well disposed. The one and the other have reason to hope that he will not delay in doing this act of generosity.

I think that it would be imprudent, both for you and for me, that you would seem to keep some right to the furniture. I could easily make a memorandum, which certainly would not prove to be in your favor, but let there no longer be question of anything. Let us leave things such as they are.

I believe that we shall do well to burn all our letters which would not be in accord with our last adjustment. I am harboring no illusion; far from it, as regards the difficulty of your present position. If I am unable to reduce it by supplying you with the means, I shall do it at least by all the consolations of religion and friendship, as much as will lie within my power.

As regards the third part of your letter, that is to say, the part referring to the future, that which has already begun or is to begin, it concerns the personnel and the matériel.

As regards the personnel, I would like very much to have the community of which you speak to me. Still, the association of interests cannot fail to have its difficulties especially in the final end which you would be proposing to yourself.[2] You surely need to be in a hurry, without doubt, to find subjects, but do not be in a hurry to break definitively with them. We shall be able to come back on this very important subject later if you so wish.

You are right in taking time to realize your project of liquidation by means of a Society, by actions, because there will be confidence in the ten thousand francs of presumed gains, only insofar as you will be thought well equipped as regards personnel, and that, in case of death or infirmity which would prevent you from working, there would be a moral assurance that the establishment will be able to keep on functioning. We shall also be able to perfect this project, which could take place with much wisdom and precaution, and cause you no worries as regards the question of temporalities.

It will no longer by possible to defer the retreat beyond the 13 or 14 of the present month. Will the subjects of Agen still trouble us by the announcements and speculations that they have made?

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[1] The life annuity granted to Fr. Estebenet for the ceding of the boarding school on Menuts Street (Letters 120 and 128). With the consent of the superiors of the Company of Jesus, of which Fr. Estebenet then formed part, the tuition was indeed reduced from 1500 to 1000 francs.

[2] Father Lalanne had thought of creating in Layrac a sort of community among the lay professors, in attaching them to the work by an association of interests, covering a period of ten years.

Receive, my dear son, the expression of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

At Saint Hippolyte, Brother Clerc is another object of solicitude for the Founder.[1] *Lacking subjects provided with the necessary titles, Father Chaminade thought he could place at the head of the Saint Hippolyte boarding school, this insecure religious, while otherwise leaving him subject to the authority of Father Rothéa, designated as superior of the two houses of Ebersmunster and Saint Hippolyte.*

However, the anxious soul of the Founder unbosoms itself to him in pressing recommendations.

876 – TO BROTHER CLERC, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, October 6, 1836

My dear son, I have received your last letter, written from Arbois on September 20. I have also received the preceding ones, also with great pleasure and interest. It is without regret that, in spite of the serious faults you committed in Ebersmunster, I am giving you the greatest mark of confidence that I can give. I fondly hope that you will give me no cause to regret this condescension on my part, and that those who are surprised to see me go contrary to the ordinary rules of prudence will rather applaud this act of confidence because it will have obliged you to become more regular, especially since you are obliged to maintain others in regularity, and also because the interests of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster seem to call for it.

I have seen no need at all for your trips to the Jura and Haute-Saône. What need is there to have the new organization of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster approved by the Jesuits and Father Bardenet, and to have that of Courtefontaine and others blamed? Wasn't the organization of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, at the beginning, about the same as that of today? Wasn't it you yourself who, little by little, introduced Latinists in Ebersmunster? Courtefontaine is what it is, only by reason of a need that has existed since its very start. Would it not have been better, as you have indicated, to pass your vacation in Ebersmunster in order to strengthen your Brothers according to the order you received to do so, at the shrine of Notre Dame des Trois Epis? . . . It has been written to me that you had quit the cassock.[2] Take care, my dear son, so that the vanity which kills humility, may not penetrate into your heart! When we shall have emerged from our embarrassment, we shall have to correspond about this matter, which is the foundation of all Christian virtue and of

[1] Allusion is made to the difficulties created in Agen by Brother Mémain.
[2] Bro. Clerc was not yet in Holy Orders.

every meritorious work . . . I now come to the definitive organization of the two establishments.

Saint Hippolyte – Brother Clerc, Director and professor of the third and fourth . . ., Father Rothéa, with all the authority of a superior, will establish in Saint Hippolyte a real regularity which Brother Clerc will have to maintain with the help of Father Metzger, named Head of Zeal. Brother Rothéa will assure himself of a real accountability, for which Brother Clerc will also be responsible. Every month, in the letter sent to the Superior General, Brother Clerc will send a statement of his financial situation, or, still better, a detailed account of the receipts and expenses. The account of the first month, that is to say, of November, is primarily to state the provisions which exist in the establishment at the time of the coming of the boarders.

Ebersmunster – 1. Father Rothéa, Superior and master of novices; 2. Father Georges, professor and submaster of novices . . .

This organization, my dear son, is about the same as the one you yourself sent me. The slight changes that I made in it seemed essential to me and so, leave it as it is. If you happen to get new subjects, let me know. Time enough to act when that comes. We shall do better when we are able. By this organization, there are very few changes, as much in Saint Hippolyte as in Ebersmunster. At Saint Hippolyte, nevertheless, although you do not bear the title of superior, you are charged with the duties, all is subject to you, and I dare hope that you will treat everyone, down to the last employees of the house with goodness and mildness but with firmness. You will support Father Metzger in his Office of Head of Zeal. This Office, among us, extends to all the individuals of the house, even to the superior, without any lack of the regard due to him.

In my notes I had named another superior than Father Rothéa,[1] without any prejudice to the entire direction of the boarding school that I had a mind of confiding to you on the conditions about which I shall talk to you later and this, only to please you. However, when I finally took up my pen to write to you about the definitive organization of Saint Hippolyte, I saw serious drawbacks in this change, as much for you, as for the Society. In consequence, I substituted the name of Father Rothéa for the one I had named, but only on paper.

Concerning temporalities, or rather, the stewardship of the establishment, you propose to me three subjects, of whom the first two, Brothers Pelleteret and Cholet, are not available, at least, at the present time. If you knew the third one well, you would no longer think about him. Nevertheless, since we must go ahead, and you cannot possibly come to any sort of agreement with a real Head of Work—these Heads, gifted with the virtues they need, are hard to find – it is you who will have this Office and who will essentially fulfill its functions. The books are in good condition and that is already saying a great deal. You may

[1] Father Meyer, then superior of Courtefontaine.

secure help in the writings, by anyone in the House whom you judge qualified. Make only such expenses as are necessary and suitable, be it for the personnel or for the matériel, and do not let yourself be carried away by your sentiments of generosity or friendship. Follow the rules and customs. The account, for example, that you gave of the money used in Ebersmunster, was overloaded with several articles that were unsuitable. I recall the boots for two professors, the sixty francs given Brother Caillon for his vacation, etc. The professors, teachers, or intern employees, are all to follow the regulations of the religious. None are to be admitted who do not desire it. That is what I shall write to M. Pelleteret,[2] in answer to the request he has just made to me, to be employed in the Society. I shall answer MM. Caillon and Peg in the same way.

[2] M. Peter Pelleteret, who had just left the Society. See Letter 438.

It is to take away from you every cause of trouble that I am removing Brother Louis Rothéa from Saint Hippolyte, to permit him to accept Kaysersberg.[1] But, my dear son, be exact in having passed over to me one of your accounts each month, as it is said in regard to the organization of Saint Hippolyte. Although you do not depend on Brother Louis Rothéa, you will do well to invite him to come and see your books and to follow his advice in matters of economy. You will find advantage therein and there will even be edification, considering all that has happened in the past . . .

Sustain and inspire Father Metzger as necessary in the exercise of his functions of zeal, give the example of real regularity, as you know how much the example of the various Heads influences the subordinates. In going to Saint Hippolyte, Father Rothéa will have only to bless God for the happy changes that have occurred there and to sustain them by some appropriate exhortations.

I do not think that you should increase the tuition, especially at the start, but we shall discuss more about this later. I was pleased to see the arrangements that you intend to make, as much with the teacher of music, as with the Master Teacher of the city.

I am exhorting you, my dear son, to often read and cause to be read, the Extract of the general Regulations.[2] Make neither any reparation nor any purchase of new furniture without due permission. Avoid going to the city unless there is a great need, and do not easily permit it to the professors. The tuition price, not being augmented, needs no reductions for parents, unless for serious reasons. In all things, conduct yourself with great wisdom and as a true religious of Mary. When we shall be somewhat relieved of our worries, we shall be able to have a somewhat more intimate correspondence. May the Lord shower upon you his abundant blessings!

Receive my very tender embraces.

Continuation of the letter.

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[1] "One day, at the drawing of lots, the mayor of Kaysersberg was humiliated by what was met with in the Communes of Canton, namely, one or several conscripts, not knowing either to read or to write, with the exception of Ammerschwir, the school of which, run by the Brothers, had a good reputation, thanks to the zeal and devotedness of Bro. Enderlin. This good Mayor then conceived the idea of having Brothers in Kaysersberg also. But how to go about it? The law of June 28, 1831, rendered irremovable the teacher, who for the most part, was still vigorous and fairly good. He was M. Schenckbecher, one of whose sons, Joseph, later called Alexander, was to enter the Society of Mary. The obstacle was removed by means of an indemnity of four thousand francs that the Commune gave M. Schenckbecher in exchange for his resignation."

The School of Kaysersberg, a small place to the south of St. Hippolyte, of which the Annals of the Society thus recount the foundation, opened on November 1, 1836, under the direction of Bro. Louis Rothéa and lasted until the annexation of Alsace to Prussia.

[2] See Letter 759.

. . . In answer to the Rothéa brothers, I am sending Father Rothéa a copy of the letter I am writing to you. I desire, my dear son, that you hold to all its contents and I hope that you will put them all into practice. If there are reforms to be made in your costume, do not hesitate to make them. And in the same way, if in your language, in your tone of voice and your general manners, there is not the tone of gravity which the interior recollection of a religious always produces, try to correct yourself. You might be able without this to have success in Saint Hippolyte as far as good order and the progress of the classes are concerned, but you would not be having any when it comes to forming subjects, religious in the true sense of the word, and leading a truly religious life. Someone has written to me about several aspects of your trip, the ones and the others asking themselves if you were a religious, if . . .

I am very glad, my dear son, to have had the privilege of writing to you again so as to repeat the expressions of my confidence and friendship.

P.S. I desire, my dear son, that after you have taken notice of this letter, you acknowledge its reception and that you promise to conform perfectly to all it contains. This measure is necessary before beginning anything. I shall nevertheless later on receive all the various observations that you might believe it your duty to make to me about the contents of this letter, but always provisionally, if the measure in question is to be carried out in its entirety in Saint Hippolyte for what concerns this establishment, and in Ebersmunster as far as it may be concerned. I have seen with regret that, on the two organization lists you have had passed over to me, you name Father Metzger only as simple chaplain and professor of German. Father Metzger is and must be in Saint Hippolyte, a real Head of Zeal.

* * * *

877 – TO FATHER ROTHÉA, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, October 6, 1836

My dear son, I have received your letter of last September 28, as also the preceding ones, and those of Father Metzger. The general tone of your reflections, as well as those of Brothers Rothéa and Georges, was of much help to me in taking later on the resolutions that you will find in the copy of the letter that I am writing to Brother Clerc.

I chose to leave things about as they were from the beginning. The only change to be found, I think, is in yourself. Instead of living in Saint Hippolyte, you will be living in Ebersmunster, making nevertheless little trips now and then to Saint Hippolyte in order to maintain regularity there, to inspire and exhort all the subjects – be it in common or in particular, according as your prudence will advise. You will be giving me news about it each time, I hope.

As regards the classes and other affairs of the establishment, if you find there things that seem to you unsuitable, do not show any signs of regret, blame no one, but give me detailed information. If, on the contrary, you see that all is going well or is proceeding in the right direction, inspire and encourage.

Your brother Louis will be doing the same in regard to temporalities, and disapprove only insofar as he will be asked for his advice, and otherwise write to me about all that would seem to him to be a disorder.

You will communicate the letter I am writing Brother Clerc to Father Metzger, to Brother Louis and also to Brother Georges.

I shall write to Brother Peg and to Brother Caillon whom I am leaving in Ebersmunster.

Take courage, my dear son, even if I am not saying any more in this letter because of my excess of work. Through the mediation of his august Mother, the good Lord will make us triumph over all difficulties.

Receive, my dear son, my very fatherly embraces.

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878 – TO M. LAVERGNE, SON, LAUNET

Bordeaux, October 7, 1836

My dear Nephew, I have received in Auch the letter you wrote to me on August 20 in Agen. I have finally arrived in Bordeaux, without being able to answer you while I was traveling. Your marriage affair is rather delicate. Nevertheless, if the young lady being proposed to you is of good character, really Christian, and able to please and suit you, then I believe you will do well to ask for her hand, if you have not already done so. If you sold your property, you would not have the wherewith to mortgage the dowry of her whom you would marry. I suppose, my dear child, that you have already made up your mind to marry, and that your good mother is pleased with the party about whom you are speaking to me. I do not quite see how all this can be arranged before your departure for Paris. Would there be any danger in delaying this departure for Paris? Try to combine all with wisdom. It is even possible that this letter will find you already gone on your way to Paris.

My dear nephew, tell your good mother about all the interest that I am showing in all that concerns both of you. I am very sorry that she should have been thrown so blindly into the hands of M. Durand. Embrace her tenderly for me.

If you have left before this letter gets to your residence, I am asking her to send it to you in Paris. Receive, my dear nephew, the token of my sincere and tender affection.

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The following letter shows us how, in the very midst of the most burdensome occupations, Father Chaminade still found time to occupy himself with the spread of good books, as in times, already far away, when he corresponded for the same purpose with MM. La Sausse and Carron. (See W. J. Chaminade *by Father Simler, pp. 274 ff.)*

879 – TO MM. PÉRISE, BROTHERS, LYONS

Bordeaux, October 7, 1836

Gentlemen, I finally arrived in Bordeaux a few days ago. I have just verified if the *l'Homme religieux*, which you have reprinted, contained in effect the entire work of Father J. B. Saint Jure of the Company of Jesus on this particular subject. It seems evident that you have reprinted only the first two books of this interesting work, of which here is the division announced in the edition of 1673:

The first book is about the rules and vows of religious. The second, about the qualities required to live well in community, while the third is about the causes of the falls of religious. the fourth treats of the causes of the decadence of the various religions and the fifth takes in the necessary instructions for the good formation of novices and the proper setting for the actions of religious.

Might it be possible that Father Saint Jure did not have time to bring out the last three books before his death or haven't you been able to discover them? Only the first two, which you have reprinted, have come into my hands and for which I shall not delay in sending you orders for copies.

M. Jules Chaminade, settled in the Cap, has asked you for cheap wares. He has started a business house with an associate and has left to make purchases in France, leaving his associate in the Cap. My condition does not permit me to warn him: *Nemo militans Deo*, but I can say that I have never seen him do anything contrary to honesty. I have even always seen in him much refinement in business matters. I am not personally acquainted with his associate, but I have heard him very much praised in Bordeaux. The one and the other are well versed and experienced in business matters.

I am, Gentlemen, with high consideration, etc.

* * * *

The answer of MM. Périsse—the big Catholic booksellers in Lyons at this time—gives us to understand what were their relations with Father Chaminade.

Dear Sir: With this same mail, we are informing M. Jules Chaminade, your nephew, of all we have done for the carrying out of the request he made to us. The information which you have been kind enough to give us, by your honored letter dated the seventh of the present month,

has only corroborated the good opinion which we had formed about our new correspondent. Moreover, it was sufficient for us to know that you were his uncle, to give him all our confidence. All that concerns you, all that recalls to us the remembrance of you, is for us of the highest value.

Please accept our thanks for the information you give us about *l'Homme religieux* of Father Saint Jure, for it is precious to us, in spite of the fact that we have not printed this work, as we are planning an edition of the complete works of the pious and learned Jesuit, and then we shall be able to profit by all your good advice. We are already reprinting *l'Homme spirituel*. After that we shall pass on to *La Connaissance et Amour de Jesus Christ*.

As regards *l'Homme religieux*, which you are examining at this time, be kind enough to let us know of the improvements which you will judge suitable to make in it, as also to let us know about the third part of this work, which has not been printed (October 21, 1836).

* * * *

880 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 11, 1836

My dear son, it is somewhat late to be answering your letter of September 13, but I was really unable to do it sooner.

I wanted to announce to you the arrival of Brother Gaussens,[1] but, being very busy, I said he will announce himself upon arriving. I did not employ him in the South, because of the need I knew you had of a subject having a certificate of a higher degree and enjoying, besides, a certain degree of consideration.

We are going to begin the retreat and after it I shall send Brother Laugeay. Father Fontaine needs someone for supervision, especially of the larger pupils. It will be necessary to let him fulfill this function, but nothing will prevent his being given a class to teach.

I am not speaking to you about Brother Gaussens. He was found to be in Agen, such as you knew him to be in Saint Remy and as you have often depicted him to me. He withdrew, well provided and for a long time, with, as he said, the repugnance he always had of asking you for what he needed . . .

Regularize more and more the Community of Working Brothers and also the Novitiate. Come to an understanding with Father Meyer to have Brother Bousquet replaced, whom you need as much for the Novitiate as for the Community of Working Brothers. It is

[1] See Letter 867.

also suitable that he stay in Saint Remy on account of his father. Do not give him any employment which would prevent him from caring for both the postulants and the novices, and constantly encouraging the Community.

My dear son, I see only a great good in the fact that you happen to be alone in taking care of the bookkeeping for the two Houses, and that you are doing it in the very room I used to occupy. Only in certain exceptional cases when you would not be there, let Father Lalanne receive what would be given him on account, and if there were question of settling an account, he would send for you, and then, with all precautions finally taken, Father Fontaine would in no way be compromised . . .

In fact, I was in Auch at the time of the disaster. This disaster was awful and frightful. I suffered nothing personally. The losses and ravages amount to more than two million francs for the city as well as for the suburbs. I am saying nothing about the dead or about the drowned. The losses of the departmental House of Help, now directed by the Daughters of Mary, were figured at about thirty thousand francs, but will be at the expense of the Department or of the Government. Their novitiate building, which is their own, has lost only all the garden produce which was quite considerable.

The promissory note for two thousand francs was already negotiated, through extreme need, by the time I received your letter. The same as regards the one following it.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces. I am so hard-pressed for time, that I cannot give free vent to the sentiments of my heart for you.

P.S. I have not heard that you would be staying in the Château, but that you would be in the bookkeeper's room when necessary.

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The foundation of Saint Claude (See Letters 793 and 835) is still but little assured. Father Chaminade is giving the new Director, Brother Gouverd, provisional instructions relative to the circumstances.

881 – TO BROTHER GOUVERD, SAINT CLAUDE

Bordeaux, October 25, 1836

My dear son, I received your last letter from Saint Claude and, somewhat later, that of M. Montgaillard. I saw that there was not enough time, until the end of the vacation, to make a final decision on the subject of the establishment in Saint Claude and to carry it out. Continue in Saint Claude in the same way, you and your colleagues. I shall soon answer M. Montgaillard and I shall let you know what I shall tell him. Make as few expenses as possible.

In coming out of Saint Claude, you should have gone directly to Courtefontaine. At least, you should not have made the trip before having first let me know about it. How would you want me to write to you, not knowing how long your absence would last? My dear son, be truly regular, for you will find your strength in the observance of your Rule. Otherwise, you would be exposing yourself to great worries and perhaps, even to great temptations. Give greetings from me to Brother Bourgeois[1] and to Brother Pelleteret. I shall write to you in sufficient detail, so as to settle you definitely, when once you have resumed your classes in Saint Claude.

Present to His Lordship, I beg of you, my humble respects and tell him that I shall do all I can to sustain and develop the establishment which he has in his capital city. I am embracing you tenderly, my dear son, as also your two colleagues.

* * * *

Just as Father Chaminade had insinuated to Father Bardenet, he released Brother Fridblatt from Courtefontaine to send him to Marast, where he will have to fulfill the functions of Head of Zeal under Brother Galliot.

882 – TO BROTHER FRIDBLATT, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, October 25, 1836

My dear son, I received your last letter dated the seventh of the current month, as well as the two that preceded it. My silence as regards these last two has had as my only excuse a great overload of work.

When the establishment in Marast will be opened, you will leave Courtefontaine to go there. You will be much needed there, first, for all that concerns the spiritual in the establishment which is at too great a distance from the parish, so as to find there the spiritual helps you might need and, in the second place, to conduct an advanced class of French. Already some time ago, it was foreseen in Courtefontaine that you could be employed elsewhere and so, I have no reason to believe that you will be missed once you are gone. All that you tell me about Father Perrodin pleases me, and that without surprising me because he has already manifested to me his real sentiments.

I know that there is a great falling-out between Brother Galliot and Father Bardenet. I have not, as yet, been able to believe that Brother Galliot was in the wrong. Evidently, Father Bardenet is not keeping the promises he made to me or that I thought he was making. It is possible, as I have had him take notice, that by the same words we do not

[1] Bro. Peter Calixte Bourgeois, 1800-1866, from Bellefontaine, Jura, after a trial of the religious life among the Brothers of the Christian Schools, entered the society in Courtefontaine in 1832, was employed in Villeneuve, in Fribourg and especially in St. Claude. He died in Salins, leaving the memory of a man of faith, of enlightened piety and of a great respect for authority.

mean the same thing, and this happens to be extremely annoying. In this state of disagreement, Father Bardenet wrote to me that to end the affair he was going to put two thousand francs at the disposal of Brother Galliot, without prejudice to the equipment of the church and sacristy, which amounted to four thousand francs. Now, I have just learned that Father Bardenet has, in effect, sent two thousand francs to the pastor of Marast to pay various debts, and he calls this putting this sum at the disposal of Brother Galliot.

I shall make a special remembrance of your good father at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. I have been somewhat surprised at the embarrassing position of your parents. I saw your good father and your brother, the teacher, on two occasions, and there was not the least sign of it. Your father had occasion to write twice before his death, and there was never any mention of the fact. Whatever the case may be, I know that parents, in general, speak to us easily enough of their embarrassment when they know that their children are definitively committed. Nevertheless, if you are convinced of the urgency of the need for help, without their destination being known, I shall have one hundred and fifty francs reserved on the Masses which you will have said. These one hundred fifty francs will be put into your hands in two or three parts every six or four months of each year, as long as there will be need for it.

My dear son, enter into the spirit of a truly regular priest. In Marast, if, however, Brother Galliot gets to the point of opening the place, require true regularity on the part of everyone. From the Head man, you are to require it only by insinuation and exhortation, and always in private, and if, in fact, Brother Galliot does not measure up to the requirement let me know. I am stopping here, always burdened with affairs, but I am embracing you very cordially.

* * * *

883 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, October 25, 1836

My dear son, I am unable to answer your letter of the twelfth of the current month, as you would not be receiving my answer in time for the last day of the month. You tell me too few things about the majority of your postulants or novices to permit me to tell you the true nature of your problems, but there is no drawback in delaying their admission, as well as the three-day retreat you want to have them make . . .

I have reason to hope that, little by little, our establishments of the North and of the South will gradually reform themselves, remaining patient, having courage and praying . . .

Father Tamisey, the assistant pastor in Seurre, Cote d'Or, is always insisting on an establishment. I have always told him of the present impossibility of our acceding to his wishes because of our lack of trained subjects. To quiet him, I wrote to tell him to come to

an understanding with you in regard to this matter. When you come across subjects really capable, this establishment will have to be started,[1] but I have real satisfaction in the thought that you do not employ your novices before they are really trained, be it in the religious life or in the art of teaching.

Receive, my dear son, my entirely paternal embraces.

* * * *

Father Chaminade is not forgetting his new foundation in Auch. To the Superior and the Superioress, he addresses his fatherly recommendations.

884 – TO FATHER CHEVALLIER, AUCH

Bordeaux, October 26, 1836

My respected son, your letter caused me great joy, even if your almost continual and unforeseen absences sadden me. I hope that the interest and zeal you put into the work that we have undertaken will compensate in great measure for the breaches that your absences have possibly brought to it.

I shall try to write very soon to the Superioress General of the Daughters of Charity.

In a short time, I shall have someone look for a second-hand ciborium, which will probably cost only its weight.

I desire that Mother Léocadie borrow, either for repairs or for the purchase of furniture, always and only in agreement with you. I am sure that when you have judged the expenses necessary to their enterprise we shall have no further worry, we shall have no further fear tempting Providence, but we shall always have confidence that Mary, this divine Mother of the human race, will come to the assistance of children who work but for her and her greater glory.

I am offering you, my respected son, the assurance of my sincere and entire devotedness.

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[1] A school was effectively started in Seurre, but only after the death of Fr. Chaminade. However, it had but a short duration, from 1854 to 1860.

885 – TO MOTHER LÉOCADIE, AUCH

Bordeaux, October 26, 1836

My dear Daughter, I have received the letter you sent me through Father de Belloc,[1] as well as that of the twenty-first of the present month.

I am writing to Brother Chevallier: "I desire that Mother Léocadie borrow, either for repairs or for the purchase of furniture, always and only in agreement with you." In this way, my dear Daughter, you will not have to bother and worry the good Mother General. Always have an understanding with good Father Chevallier. Nevertheless, always keep the Mother General informed about your financial situation and also about all that may be of interest to your two Houses. I am blessing the Lord for having calmed all your worries. How good he is, the Master to whom we have vowed all our services! May Mary also be good to all her children! She seems to be always solicitous about them, although she inhabits a place of unalterable peace.

I am hoping that, with patience, all your former Daughters will settle down, but try to obtain from them, that they never share among themselves their temptations, that there never be among them the least murmurs, but that they mutually help one another to attain the good God. Father Chevallier will be able to help you greatly in having them feel and understand how much murmurs and complaints displease God and would be likely to draw down his maledictions upon the establishment instead of the abundant blessings he reserves for it.

May the Lord, my dear Daughter, deign to shower these abundant blessings upon you and upon them!

* * * *

New recommendations to Brother Clerc.

886 – TO BROTHER CLERC, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, October 26, 1836

My dear son, I have just received your letters of the seventeenth and eighteenth of the present month. I have also received all those that preceded it. I bless the Lord for having made you understand, during your retreat, the necessity of humility. It is upon this special point that we shall have occasion to talk in the months that are to follow. If you succeed in having yourself form a correct idea of it and if you practice it, you will have

[1] Vicar General of Auch.

advanced a great deal on the way to salvation. Humility is sometimes called the mystery of the virtues.

However, for the time being, let us occupy ourselves with the organization of the two establishments, and I am going to follow very specially the observations included in your letter of the thirteenth.

1. By true regularity I have understood, as you do, a religious regularity. I made use of the expression true regularity to say complete or entire regularity. The expressions regular and religious are synonymous. I shall settle Father Rothéa on this point, although I have reason to believe that he will have understood me.

2. I have received the letter of Brother Colin on the subject of M.G. I have received several others which speak to me of the same subject. As it seems that there is exaggeration in the matter, I think there would be more scandal in sending him to the novitiate of Ebersmunster at this time, than in leaving him at the post given him in Saint Hippolyte. It is up to him to show the lie to all the reports being spread about him, by his truly ecclesiastical and religious conduct. I am not speaking of the sentiments of penance into which he must enter and remain all his life. I shall not write to him in any other strain at this time. You may read this article to him.

3. I would be very glad, my dear son, if you were able to fill all the loopholes of employment in Saint Hippolyte with the subjects which Saint Remy could furnish you. For example: at Saint Remy a linen man is wanted who would combine in his office the two Communities and the two boarding schools. If he is to be found, and perhaps, if he is already found, you could easily take Brother Rollinet . . .

4. See that your language, your tone of voice, your manners also correspond to a well-regulated interior.

5. You are to love your soutane well enough never to wish to abandon it. Love it as the old bishop of Amiens loved it.[1] That is the proper dress of the ecclesiastical state. It is also the religious costume of the priest members of the Society of Mary.

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[1] The Prelate to whom Fr. Chaminade seems to be alluding, Bishop de Bombelles, was one of the most curious figures of the French episcopate at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Born in 1744 and brought up at the Court among the pages of the Duke of Burgundy, he soon followed a career of arms with great distinction, and at the age of 20, he obtained the rank of Camp Marshall. Ambassador of the king of France in Lisbon and Venice, he engaged himself, at the time of the Revolution, in the Army of Condé, and after his dismissal he retired to Silésia. He had married in 1779 and had six children. Having become a widower in 1800, he entered Holy Orders and, during several years, directed a modest parish in the diocese of Breslau. Named bishop of Amiens by King Louis XVIII, he took possession of his see in 1819 and governed his diocese with an admirable zeal until his last hour in 1822. He did not believe that his age dispensed him from any of the duties of his office and, according to the expression of one of his biographers, “under the mitre, was found the soldier, exact in the observance of his orders.”

6. It will be the same with regard to your appearance as with your language and manners; preserve recollection, regulate your interior and all will be well.

7. Remain quiet. I do not easily believe and accept all I am told.

8. It would be much more suitable to withdraw Brother Bernhard from Coultz, and you easily understand why I insisted that he be with Brother Colin.

9. If you are managing the economy yourself, it is yourself who are keeping your accounts, at least in a day-book, except that afterwards you have a writer to report plainly what is in the day-book, while anyone can keep the accounts plain and clear. The accounts in the day-book are everyday affairs and, so to say, of all hours. It is he who receives or who spends, who writes them in proportion as they come in. I do not believe that in this matter there is any need to consult exceptionally wise men. You would do well, in the beginning, to employ Brother Louis Rothéa, that is to say, to let him continue, since due to the lack of time and experience, you might expose yourself to give lessons that would cost you too much. To this effect, the occupation of the establishment in Kaysersberg could be retarded. Brother Louis Rothéa has, all his life, fulfilled such functions.

10. This tenth number answers what I had asked of you, that Brother Louis Rothéa often see your account-books, and you seem to regard this with pleasure, which is in itself a good sign. In needs and affairs or business, we must not examine too closely whether our characters sympathize with those others: *Alter alterius onera portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi*. Carry one another's burdens and so you shall fulfill the law of Christ.

In spite of the many expenses that have been made in Saint Hippolyte, and which could and should have been avoided, Brother Louis Rothéa has managed to have the wherewith to pay quite heavy debts. He has one of two thousand francs which falls due very shortly. He has the means to run a House and a boarding school well, and even to put money aside. Later on, at a time you prefer, with you and Brother Rothéa, I shall go into details which will give you a better idea of the correct procedure in the running of a boarding school. Father Lalanne has finally learned some of them, and I am hoping that he has been made wise, even if it has been at his own expense. He will have labors and solicitude for at least ten years, to cover the deficit he has caused in a single year. And the Society, during this long space of time, will be able to get nothing. It is even to be presumed, that it will never be able to get anything. Furthermore, Father Lalanne has come back with edification to the sentiments and principles, from which he should never have strayed . . .

I believe, my dear son, I have recalled all the observations that you were able to make about my letter, touching the organization of the two establishments. Let things go at that! You must understand me. Let us advance generously! Be always honest with the Rothéa brothers. Say nothing about them but what is good! If sometimes in the relations you may have with them, there may not always be sympathy and mutual understanding,

that must not be a reason to lose patience. I am stopping here, as I am more than usually busy. I am embracing you with tenderness and always with greater confidence.

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To Father Metzger who, the preceding year, had directed the Novitiate of Ebersmunster, and who had just been named Head of Zeal in Saint Hippolyte (Letter 876), Father Chaminade, in his turn, addresses counsels and encouragements.

887 – TO FATHER METZGER, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, October 26, 1836

Your letter of the twelfth of the current month, my respected son, was, doubtless, somewhat delayed. I received it just a few days ago, but I am answering it at my very first opportunity. I am taking a great share in the loss you have recently sustained.[1] For the time being, all I can do is to pray for the repose of this dear soul and I shall do so. You understand what must be your sentiments of faith and religion in this circumstance. I know I need not speak to you about them.

I am blessing the Lord for the interest with which He is inspiring you as regards our dear novitiate, be it for its maintenance or for its development. In actually placing you in Saint Hippolyte as Chief of Zeal, with all the authority belonging to this Office, I have not had the intention of diminishing in any way the interest you have in the novitiate. I had, as you see, to put a stop to great disorders, and that in a manner as mild as possible. I also had your health in mind. I thought I could attain this twofold end by the organization I concluded for the establishments of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster. However, I am not judging anything in advance for the future. There would have been great drawbacks in reuniting the two boarding schools in Ebersmunster and in transferring the novitiate to Saint Hippolyte. At this time I shall not go into the details, and you know that, in general, great changes must be made only when we are practically forced to make them, which was not the case here. Remain in Saint Hippolyte, as has been your custom, and encourage there the true spirit of religion. Brother Clerc seems disposed to follow the impulse of this same spirit. He needs to be sustained, but in a manner equally mild and firm. If he really makes progress in the Christian and religious virtues, we shall be much freer to change our opinion in his regard.

Take courage and do not tire of writing to me all that might interest you personally, as well as all that might interest the two establishments, especially that of Saint Hippolyte. Always be in perfect understanding with Father Rothéa in regard to the Novitiate of Ebersmunster, and you know very well how much he is interested in it himself. Console him in the affliction he experienced in all the troubles that have occurred and in which he was

[1] Doubtless, a death in the family.

seriously compromised, as well as his brothers. It is even for this that I have made all three of them figure in the present organization, while appearing to acquiesce in the views of Brother Clerc.

The jolts which the Society of Mary is receiving seem only the more to strengthen it, and the protection of the Blessed Virgin is manifesting itself in a visible manner. Pray to the Lord, that I may in no way obstruct the benevolent views of divine Providence in the work he has given me to do, in spite of all my unworthiness and my incapacity. When we shall have a little more quiet it will be good to write to me with greater effusion of heart, and, in the meantime, trying to become more and more deeply penetrated with the real spirit of the Society of Mary.

Receive, my dear son, my very fatherly embraces.

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888 – TO FATHER ROTHÉA, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, October 26, 1836

My dear son, I have received your latest letters, dated the twelfth and fifteenth of this month, and as well, all those from your brother Louis. I am touched in the depths of my heart by all the afflictions which you and your family have experienced, and as well those which perhaps you have yet to experience, from all these entanglements in which you and your brothers have been often compromised. In the compassionate protection of the most holy Virgin which guards over the Society of Mary, let us hope that the two institutions of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, which have been watered by your own tears and sweat, will become more harmonious and flourishing, yielding an abundance of life-giving fruit.

You, Louis and several others have sent me different plans for organizing Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster. The ideas, even though good in and of themselves, were often contradictory, and it was impossible to follow them all in the final organization of the two institutions. I sent you a literal copy of this plan of organization. Brother Clerc accepted purely and simply all the conditions laid down in the letter, of which you also have a copy. His letter is good and even edifying. He permitted several modifications on my part, little important in themselves though they were quite important for him. At the end of (my) letter you will find a copy of the letter which I sent to Brother Clerc and as well a copy of the one which I sent to Father Metzger. Concerning him, encourage and fortify his zeal for the novitiate of which you will be the director shortly. Be amicable, and act as if you were but to hold his position during the time Providence desires. He will help you out and, as well, you will do a great deal for his soul.

I am so overloaded with work and correspondence that I have not responded to some of the letters of your brother Louis. With the exception of (the one concerning)

Kaysersberg, he was interested in the same things as you. If you will communicate to him the content of the letters which I have written you and those that I have sent you copies of, he will have all the response that I could possibly give him. As far as Kaysersberg goes, he should carefully set up this institution, but without making any commitments, either for himself or for the others, other than the one that he has already undertaken: namely to accept the institution and to organize it as quickly as possible. There is some possibility that he will be able to place there the different types of teachers that are requested.

I suspect, my dear son, that you did not read the notes of M. Xavier that you inserted as the end of your latest letter of October 15. I will say no more concerning this; I will let these things sleep that they may never awaken.

Receive, my dear son, my tender and respectful embraces.

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889 – TO BROTHER BOULY, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, October 26, 1836

My dear son, I have just received your messages of the twentieth of the current month, and I am answering them immediately, even before having read them all.

According to your last letter and what I know of you, as well as of the position of the two establishments of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, I thought it my duty to have you replaced in Saint Hippolyte, at least temporarily. I doubted and I still doubt that you fare well in the novitiate of Ebersmunster, at least for the present.

I shall read your last letter from start to finish. I shall always be on the watch to give you what will best suit you. I shall write to you later, on what concerns your personal conduct. Furthermore, my dear son, count on having sorrows until the end of your life. Your imagination would produce them for you, if you happened to lack them outside of yourself. Taking the organization in Saint Hippolyte as it is, you will not have too much work. I foresee that you will have a certain amount of freetime that you can pass in study or in prayer, but in the meantime, always accustom yourself to be patient with yourself.

A little courage, my dear son, and have faith in the tender attachment of your Father.

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In the following letter, addressed to the Archbishop of Besançon, Father Chaminade refutes the pretexts brought forward by Father Etignard to obtain the dispensation from his vows, leaving the prelate to judge of the opportuneness of this dispensation.

890 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, October 29, 1836

Your Excellency

I would very much have desired to answer the letter of October 9 with which you honored me immediately after its reception, but the added burden of affairs and going to give the annual retreat made it impossible for me to do so.

I have carefully read the request which Father Etignard presented to you. I immediately dictated my observations on each one of the nine numbers which it includes. Although I have abridged them as much as possible, their length does not make it possible for me to insert them in the margins which he left.

I would have been very glad to find some cause of the nullity of his vows, or at least some motive sufficient for dispensation: complaints without foundation, false suppositions of changes in the Constitutions, etc., do not seem to me sufficient motives for dispensing from commitments contracted with God. Even if he would find some subjects who would have lost the graces of their vocation, hasn't he always had the liberty of being faithful? Hasn't he always been exhorted to fidelity? Hasn't he always had the means and facilities for being faithful? If he has been the witness of some scandals, he could be a witness of a greater number of conversions of subjects perhaps worse than himself.

If, nevertheless, he does not wish to correspond sincerely with his vocation, I could not, as far as I am concerned, believe myself capable of admitting the legitimacy of his withdrawal, and I would be very glad, Your Excellency, that, in your fatherly solicitude, you could find some motives for the dispensation. Would you perhaps see one in the fear of endangering his salvation? This course, it is true, is not without serious inconveniences: *Ambages ubique*. There are ambushes on all sides. Your great wisdom will know, I hope, how to avoid all perils.

It has been written to me that Your Excellency accepts the new changes that are proposed for the little establishment of Charity[1]: a simple teacher, Brother Toussaint, Head under the special direction of Brother Oudet; and, Brother Salmon, replaced by one named Martin, master-shoemaker, already known to the Sisters of the hospital. I am going to do some prodding, in case these changes have not yet been made.

I am, with profound respect, Your Excellency's most humble, etc.

[1] Of Besançon. See Letter 850.

OBSERVATIONS OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL ABOUT THE REQUEST OF FATHER ETIGNARD MADE TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF BESANÇON TO OBTAIN FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE DISPENSATION FROM HIS VOWS.

1. Father Etignard had asked in writing to make vows for one or three years.

Never, in the Society of Mary, is it permitted to make vows, unless there is a written request, with the expression of the sentiments animating the petitioner. At the end of their novitiate, the laymen ask only for temporary vows, although they have in mind making perpetual vows. The practice is slightly different for those who are in Holy Orders or who are called to the ecclesiastical state and have made their studies. Permission for making vows, even temporary ones, is given only through the Council, in which the requests are weighed, in which the conduct of the novice is thoroughly examined, in which the sentiments he expresses are considered, and in which all those who have known him are consulted.

The letter of Father Etignard, in asking for his emission of temporary vows, was read in Council. Considering his age, sentiments, studies, and his inclination toward the priesthood, and also the need for employing him, it was thought advisable to admit him to the profession of perpetual vows. One of the members of the Council was charged with passing the information on to him. He made some entreaties against the idea of a perpetual profession. There was reason to believe that this was a matter of scruples, since he had always wanted to be professed and had always thought himself called to the religious state during his entire novitiate, and the Council had judged the same about him. When there was question of relieving him of what was thought to be scruple, a matter of humility and modesty, he was, nevertheless, left his entire liberty and it is definitely positive, that nothing was ever said or done to him that could have even the slightest appearance of constraint.

Since this time, Father Etignard has, for many years, renewed these same vows. Before the annual renewal, it is usually mentioned that this ceremony is to be a very free and voluntary emission of vows, having the power of making valid whatever there might have been of nullity in the first emission. Never has it come to the knowledge of the first Superior that Father Etignard even had anxieties about the validity of his vows, outside of the times when his Superior had to hold him to order.

So much in regard to the presumptive validity of the vows of Father Etignard. Are the reasons he brings up to obtain dispensation from them strictly correct?

2. The Constitutions of the Society of Mary were completed from the time of the first emission of vows made in the Society, with the knowledge and consent of Archbishop d'Aviau, then archbishop of Bordeaux. The Constitutions are always the same: no modifications, no transformations, no new charges. It would be impossible for Father Etignard to prove what he is claiming and he is making these claims only to imitate some

recalcitrant members of the Society. Not one of them had been able to prove these suppositions. Most of them have converted.

3. When Fathers Collineau and M. Auguste left the Society, other members were given powers similar to those which these could no longer exercise. It is certain that the General Council of the Society has no longer been held periodically during my long absences from Bordeaux, but that it was held only for the regulation of important affairs, the responsibility for which I did not want to take upon myself. However, for current and ordinary matters, I used the intrinsic authority that I could and was expected to use.

What do these expressions mean: "that after the withdrawal of two influential members of the Society, the others have no longer taken part in the affairs, and these are left to the arbitrary power of the Superior General, while doing away with the other members of the Council"? When, in difficult times, a superior would suspend the ordinary exercise of certain usages, he would make up for it in the best way possible, and always conformably to the spirit of the religious Society of which he is the Superior and Founder. What does all this really have to do with the obligations of each religious? The good ones bless the Lord because He has inspired the means for remedying this difficulty, inseparable from the times.

4. How is it that the priests are submitted to the laymen in the administration of the functions of their ministry? Because these latter would ordinarily have the administration of the temporal goods of the Society? Are not the facts altogether the contrary?

5. "The Constitutions," says Father Etignard, "submitted to members of the Society are only in abridged form and lend themselves to all sorts of interpretations, odious to certain members." His Excellency of Besançon has in his hands what Father Etignard calls an abridgement of the Constitutions. His Excellency can judge if "they really lend themselves to all sorts of odious interpretations for particular members of the Society of Mary."

Father Etignard seems to give us reason (and what pitiful reasoning) that they are, so to say, not more than in tentative form, not having been approved by the Holy See, etc. Are they then only in tentative form, these Constitutions, approved or accepted by the episcopate?

They are not approved by the Holy See, since they have not been submitted to it for approval. It is true that they do not have the solemn approbation of the Holy See, because collectively they have not been submitted to it. If this submission had been made and the Holy See would not have approved, then the lack of approbation would be unfavorable to them. But this is not the case. Their general plan was presented to His Holiness from the beginning, by the Founder of the Society in his quality of Missionary Apostolic. To the request was added a recommendatory note by the Archbishop of Bordeaux, where the foundation was being made. There immediately followed a Brief on the part of His Holiness

which accorded to the new Society of Mary diverse privileges and, especially, a plenary indulgence for the first emission of vows. Since then, His Holiness has given the Society diverse proofs of the interest which he is taking in it.

6. These vague allegations of change in the Constitutions and in the Regulations signify nothing, say nothing, and prove nothing. It would be necessary to cite at least one of these pretended changes and to show that the pretended opposing interpretations come from a first authority or, at least, to have been approved by it. Until now, this has been something impossible to do. Whatever diligence some recalcitrants have put into the effort, whatever liberty has been accorded them to do research work in the diverse establishments of the Society, never have they succeeded in finding or making known any change. Whatever abuses may be found and even imitated, these in themselves prove nothing. For example, the conduct of Father Etignard, although he bears the name of religious and is a member of the Society of Mary – can his declamations, so opposed to the religious spirit which is the spirit of Christianity, I say, can his declamations prove that the religious spirit, that the spirit of Christianity has changed, be it in the Society of Mary or in the Catholic Church? Is not the opposition he has found in his superior,[1] who is at the same time general Head of Zeal, a proof that nothing has changed, although some private persons change? In fact, do all objects actually turn, because they seem to turn in a troubled head?

7. The Society of Mary is at the same time a religious and a civil society. It is approved by the Government as a civil Society, the acts and the movements of which are in correspondence with the religious spirit. As a civil society it has its Statutes, distinct from religious Regulations. Since the Government does not recognize the religious commitments, the Statutes or civil commitments are the ones signed. During a sufficiently long lapse of time, on account of illness or some other cause, the Secretary General of the Society of Mary had much neglected the taking of these signatures. I was obliged, about three years ago, to straighten out everything.[2] A formula of adhesion to the civil Statutes was presented to all the members of the Society. It was presented to Father Etignard as to the others and that is all there is to it.

8. It is true that the Superior General, being on his round of visits in Condom, summoned Father Etignard to have him declare whether or not he wished to form part of the Society. He did it with all the considerations suggested by honesty and charity. Father Etignard preferred to postpone his declarations until a little later on. The Superior General continued his visits to other cities and, in the meantime, Father Etignard presented himself in Bordeaux after a schism of two years, without any previous notice and without saying a word about my interview with him in Condom. Father Caillet showed a certain astonishment, possibly even some indecision, as to whether or not he should admit him into the Community. Some words of honesty and submission on the part of Father Etignard

[1] Fr. Caillet, Superior of the Madeleine.
[2] See Letters 711 and the following.

would have arranged everything. He preferred to make them a motive for demanding his dispensation.

9. Father Etignard does not seem to be aware that all the reasons alleged give him the appearance of treating this affair as a defamation, because he adduces no intrinsic motive for the dispensation. All he does, is to allege defects which he cannot prove and which he takes for granted, from the sayings of some other heads, proud and troubled like his own. He would slander less by adducing his other reasons, than by saying he is retaining them so as not to cast any aspersions on them.

The archbishop of Besançon consented to take Father Etignard into his diocese, as will be seen later. (Letters 906 and 913)

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891 – TO BROTHER LOUIS ROTHÉA, KAYSERSBERG

Bordeaux, October 30, 1836

My dear son, I have acknowledged to your priest brother, the reception of all your letters. Especially, have I answered what, in your letters, concerned Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, and I have asked him to pass over to you the letter I am writing to him, as well as the copy of the letters that I am writing to Brother Clerc. I profited by all your remarks as much as was in my power. You did well to write to me about all you have at heart and about all that you happen to hear and see. What is most necessary for me in the matter of direction is to know the facts. As regards reflections and plans, you know, my dear son, that each one who writes to me makes them about as he is directly or indirectly affected.

Concerning Kaysersberg, I had Brother Bonnefoi write to you to accept and to deal with it, but not for All Saints Day. And besides, how could you settle on a date, when such would depend on different approbations? When all will have been settled, I hope that, within a relatively short delay, we shall find at least what is absolutely necessary. I am saying at least, because I hope to be able to give all that will be asked for, even a teacher of Latin, at least for the beginners.

Today, you seem to dislike being Head of this establishment and nevertheless, I had told you to accept, only because, from the general tone of your letters until that time, I took it for granted that you would go willingly. However, if you really have this dislike, I shall not constrain you to act against it. You would prefer Ribeauvillé. If the thing can take place, Kaysersberg will be the gainer, insofar as it will immediately have someone with a certificate of the higher degree.[1]

[1] Bro. Louis Rothéa actually went to Kaysersberg, where he remained until 1839.

You have written to me that the establishments of Ribeauvillé and of Sainte Marie aux Mines might be able to pass over to me a few hundred francs. You would have done well to pass them over, as in fact you have done at other times. Do it again at your earliest possible moment.

Your brother Xavier talks altogether too much and, in this way, does a lot of harm to the decisions that have been taken about the *bonis* of the establishments. These decisions or settlements existed already many long years before he came to the assistance of the establishments of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster. Later on, it was understood that the *bonis* that these two establishments would be able to provide would be left to pay their debts. And finally, at the formation of the novitiate, it was decided that all the establishments formed by the new novitiate would deposit their *bonis* in the interests of the novitiate itself.

Where is then the wisdom of holding to purposes against the general dispositions of the Society, etc.? The result of all these proposals is not only to paralyze this bit of finances, both for Xavier and the Society, but, what is more annoying, to spoil the morality of the Heads. Perhaps, we shall have an earlier peace in Ebersmunster, since Xavier no longer has any relations with Father Rothéa. I do not want to say that Xavier has alone been the cause of the troubles and anxieties which brought on the storm that broke over Ebersmunster.

Brother Clerc has manifested some pleasure to me in taking your advice for economical administration, and also for keeping an exact account of the receipts and expenses. You were able to see, by the letter of organization, that previously and before the coming of the pupils a little inventory of the provisions that were in the house had to be made. Without this the account of the expenses would never represent the truth. Detailed accounts are to be sent to me very often. You will be able and you are to make your observations to me on the irregularities that you may have come up against. . . . Wisdom, moderation, and abnegation of self! I hope that, with the aid of God and the protection of our august Mother, the Blessed Virgin, all will fall regularly into line. Do not neglect yourself as regards your interior, and that in the midst of all these vicissitudes, for this ought always to be our main concern.

Believe, my dear son, in the entire devotedness that I have always had for you.

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892 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 1, 1836

This morning, my dear son, a bill was put on my desk for white bread which a baker furnished you during the year, amounting to eighty-six francs, fifteen sous and three deniers. I authorize you to pay your baker from the three months rent[1] which you have collected.

Do you not think, my dear son, that there is something of an abuse in the prolonging of your delay in going to Saint Remy? Anyhow, you had promised not to make any abuse of it.

Is there not also something of an abuse in this endless prolongation of having your meals brought to you each day instead of taking a room right here with me? I am expecting to have, in a short time, the delivery of the papers of the Society which I have lately asked of you for the third time.

I salute you paternally.

* * * *

Father Chaminade has consented to leave a certain number of Brothers in Layrac for the material needs of the House. In view of assuring their religious life, he confides them to the immediate care of Brother Bidon, one of the first members of the Society and one of his most fervent disciples. (See Letter 852)

893 – TO BROTHER BIDON, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, November 2, 1836

NOMINATION

We, Superior General of the Society of Mary, after having considered with our well beloved son, Father Lalanne, the present state of the House of Layrac called Saint Mary's School, of which he is the Superior and independent master, with his advice and consent, have named, as we name, Brother John B. Bidon, longtime member of the Society, substitute for Father Lalanne, in his capacity as Head of Zeal, in regard to all the members of the Society employed in the service and manual labors of the said House and, to this

[1] Of the Razac mansion, rented after the departure of the Sainte Marie Boarding School for Layrac.

effect, we confer on him all the authority he needs to keep them in the regularity which the Society of Mary requires of its members.

Given in our central House in Bordeaux, November 2, 1836

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894 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 3, 1836

I have just received, my dear son, your letter of last October 29 with a money order for 150 francs on Paris. . . . Be kind enough to encourage Brother Gaussens on my part, as the success of the boarding school this year depends in great measure upon him. It is not so much the number of professors as their quality that brings success. Oh, how many times have I not been witness of this! . . . All our affairs, my dear son, are taking on a favorable appearance, even if it is rather painfully. Several miracles have taken place through the protection of the Blessed Virgin to end the scandals given particularly by Brother Clerc and Father Lalanne. All has absolutely been put in order. As regards Father Lalanne, he has acknowledged all his mistakes, but I did not want to take upon myself the burden of the temporalities of the establishment of Layrac. I have taken my measures so that he remains the only one responsible, both for the payment of the house and of the immense debts he has contracted. I am concerning myself only with the personnel, so that the subjects that I am giving him may live as true religious.

I am embracing you very tenderly, my dear son, and I ardently desire that you and those of your house take on the real spirit of the religious state and become true members of the Society of Mary.

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895 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, November 4, 1836

My dear son, restore yourself ceaselessly, so as to lead a truly religious life in the midst of all your occupations. Become a true man of prayer!

I shall repeat for you the advice of Saint Bernard to Pope Eugene who had been his disciple: *Concha esto et non canalis!* Be a reservoir and not a channel! The pool gives of its abundance, while the channel gives away all it receives and always remains dry.

* * * *

896 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, AGEN

Bordeaux, November 4, 1836

When I put the establishment of Agen into your hands, I was under no illusion, both as regards the great burden of the establishment and the almost insurmountable difficulties of all kinds that you might run up against. I promised you, and I am still promising you with a good heart, to come to your assistance in every way possible, but you have surely understood that the help would not involve money.

To his fervent disciple, Claude Mouchet, Father Chaminade gives reason to hope for early admission to the profession of perpetual vows.

897 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 9, 1836

I could not answer sooner, my dear son, your little letter of last September 26, and I am still so busy that I can hardly say more than a few words to you.

You are asking me for permission to make your perpetual vows. If this permission was not accorded to you in the retreat you have just made, let me know once more your dispositions, for I am very much inclined to grant it to you. After the reception of your most recent letter, I shall write to Saint Remy, and although it is no longer a retreat time, you will be able to have the happiness of consecrating yourself entirely to the service of our Lord and of the Blessed Virgin, his august Mother.[1] Be really faithful to them, by love and by gratitude for all the graces you are receiving. Unite yourself constantly in the company of the Blessed Virgin, especially in your prayers. But this union, be it with our Lord or with the Blessed Virgin, must proceed more from the heart than from the mind. It is in this union that you are to place all your confidence against the perversity of your nature and against the temptations of the devil.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces with my fatherly blessing.

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[1] Bro. Claude Mouchet actually made his perpetual vows in Saint Remy, on the following December 8.

898 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 11, 1836

My dear son, you are requiring on my part an answer or a decision in writing about the difficulty which seems to place opposition to the delivery of the papers of the Society. I believe that it is altogether in place that you make known what this difficulty happens to be, and please be kind enough to do so without delay.

I am wishing you a good evening and a good night.

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899 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 14, 1836

By return mail, my dear son, I am answering your letter stamped in Vesoul and dated the ninth of the current month.

The greatest inconveniences will always result when each establishment Head only halfheartedly follows general directions and otherwise acts arbitrarily . . . I shall do all I can so that you may be provided the best way possible, and I have reason to hope that we shall succeed in spite of the great obstacles or contradictions we have experienced. However, let us act intelligently and all will end by falling into place and, in fact, I am being informed that this is actually happening on all sides, even if somewhat painfully.

Marast is about the only embarrassing place, because Brother Galliot did not get a sufficiently solid hold on this enterprise. I am going to write that Brother Perriès be immediately sent to Marast, if he is not already there. The health of this young man has changed, although his is an otherwise excellent constitution. He teaches with so much interest and enthusiasm that he has done himself great harm in Moissac. Brother Galliot will have to get along with him until I am able to replace him, as he has asked me to do through Brother Bertin,[1] a man with a superior degree.

The small number of pupils in the two boarding schools of Saint Remy must not surprise us much, because we had foreseen it for a long time. Do not worry. May God be well served in both places, may the pupils be well-behaved and conduct themselves in a

[1] Claude Bertin, 1808-1888, born in Flagy, Haute Saône, entered as a postulant at St. Remy in 1824 and made his profession there in 1826. Professor in St. Hippolyte and in Colmar, director and founder of schools in St. Dié (1838), Arinthod (1840), Givry (1847), Dourgne (1853), Gy (1854), he distinguished himself by a great dignity of life and a profound religious spirit. He passed the last years of his life in retirement in the collèges of St. Jean d'Angely and of La Rochelle, taking care of his health, praying and giving good example.

Christian manner, may they make progress in their respective studies and let us put our confidence in the loving Savior! Once order will have been reestablished, all will go along well and then we shall busy ourselves in drawing patronage to the boarding schools . . .

Receive, my dear son, the expression of my fatherly tenderness.

P.S. I am not writing to Brother Galliot, as this letter is about as much for him as it is for you. He must nevertheless be encouraged. He has good will, but he is not sufficiently cool and deliberate in difficult situations and affairs.

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900 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 15, 1836

Your silence, my dear son, surprises and saddens me. If, within a delay of three days, counting from today, I do not receive a satisfactory answer in regard to the delivery of the papers of the Society of Mary, I shall put the matter in the hands of a lawyer and then, beware of the consequences.

Receive, my dear son, my customary salutations!

* * * *

After three years of silence on the part of the Baillard brothers,[1] the question of Sion Vaudémont, taken up with Father Lalanne, was finally brought back for consideration, and Father Chaminade, who had never lost sight of it, gives Father Fontaine his new instructions.

Some months later, Father Chaminade will get into direct relations with the adventurous founders and this will be the subject of a close correspondence, which we shall reproduce in its proper place.

901 – TO FATHER FONTAINE, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 17, 1836

My dear son, I shall begin my answer to your letter undated but stamped in Vesoul on the sixth of the current month, with what concerns Brother Baillard whose letter you are sending to me. I have been pleased to get news finally about Brother Baillard. I am saying

[1] See Letter 713.

finally, because, since he was always thinking of the enterprise projected for Sion, how could he let so much time go by without giving me any news about it, either directly or indirectly? I have, nevertheless, never doubted that he would hold to this work, the importance of which it seemed to me he had fully grasped, if I am to judge from his correspondence with Father Lalanne, correspondence which I directed from its very beginning.

I believe that the priests or the seminarians advanced in their studies who would want to embrace the religious state in the Society of Mary should come to Bordeaux to make their novitiate under my eyes. Those who had not terminated their theological studies would continue them here and could also take Holy Orders. We would here prepare a first nucleus of subjects for the priesthood. The young man destined for primary teaching could be sent to the novitiate in Courtefontaine. There would be formed the young men or young religious who would make up the second part of the population of Sion. Some changes in subjects would be made, that is to say, we could retain some of the subjects newly arrived for some of the older ones[1] so as to render this first population of Sion more compact, more uniform, more filled with the very spirit of the Society, because we must always remember not to make two Societies of Mary.

As regards to cost of the trips, of the upkeep and costume of the laymen, we cannot take that in hand for the time being and I do not know what is to be done in the long run. It is not to be presumed that we shall be able to do it.

For what concerns tuition, the stay, be it in Courtefontaine or Bordeaux, is costing at least two hundred francs a year in Courtefontaine, or three to four hundred francs in Bordeaux. When the subjects show unmistakable signs of vocation and have the qualities that can make up for their lack of fortune, we take them at a very modest tuition rate and even without any tuition at all, for we believe to see in their vocation and their good qualities, letters of credit on the part of divine Providence, and in Sion we shall follow the same plan.

I am not explaining myself further as Brother Baillard will understand me. Furthermore, I shall always be disposed to give him all the information he might desire, as well as our Lords the bishops who approve the enterprise.

You may still say to Brother Baillard that I hope to be able to have very large sums given to Sion, which will cost me, in truth, the privation of one of our priests, but I look upon all this as a game in which he who loses, wins. The long delays that have occurred in effecting the work of Sion have prevented me, or rather have brought it about, that I could not follow up this last affair.

[1] The expression is obscure, but leaves the thought to be guessed at.

As regards the young man, sixteen years old, Brother Baillard will be the agent of Providence in his regard. He will see himself what is to make up a fair supply of clothing, and reckon about how much his uniform would cost. If he were to send a little more, we would give him an account of it, or this would serve to aid another who does not have enough. It would all be according to his good will. But, let him try to get good recruits and send them in proportion either to Courtefontaine or to Bordeaux. You will be able, my dear son, to copy this long article of this letter and send it immediately to Brother Baillard.

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902 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 18, 1836

Your letter of the third of the current month, my dear son, says very truly that if you are mortified, with the mortification mainly interior, if you are a man of prayer, and you will never be the one without the other, you will supply a remedy for all that you lack. Be then firm in your resolutions.

The distribution which you made for yourself of the different employments seems to me good enough. I regret only the two hours of class that you have to give in the other Community. See if Brother Laugeay, independently of the class he has to teach, could not take these, evidently not at the same time as his own.

As regards Brother Justin Soleil, he probably has not worked, as we had agreed he would, at the repression of his defects of character and at the addition of what was lacking in his first education. Father Fontaine should keep close watch on him on so important a point...

The mail for today is about to leave. I am embracing you very paternally.

* * * *

As Brother David continues to be obstinate in not answering the insistence of Father Chaminade for the delivering of the papers of the Society, the Founder sees himself obliged to have ecclesiastical authority intervene in his regard. However, before adopting this measure, he addresses to him, and to Father Collineau, his Director and counselor, a new entreaty.

903 – TO BROTHER DAVID, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 26, 1836

My dear son, you are creating for yourself very serious illusions. You say: “In the interests of the Society of Mary, of which I have been one of the very first and principal

members, and of which I have been the Counselor and Secretary General during such long years, I am not to obey an order of my Superior when he asks me for the delivery of the papers of the said Society. I am the support of the Society, I have an obligation of preserving for it, at least its titles, to prevent it from going to pieces. Even my Confessor reassures me in my determination." My dear son, I can no longer be the dupe of such illusions.

When there was question of your retirement in Saint Remy, and when all was granted to you by the Ordinance of October 26, 1835, I named Brother Bonnefoi (Charles François) Secretary General. He was to replace you. An honorable retirement and of your own choice in an establishment of the Society of Mary, as mentioned in the Ordinance, was to be accorded to you. You were to make the delivery of all the papers of the said Society into the hands of Father Caillet, who was to give you a receipt for them.

As you were constantly delaying both the delivery of the papers and your departure for Saint Remy, the establishment you had chosen, under the pretext that I had not sent you a special obedience, I was astonished and at the same time edified by the fact that you wanted to take this great step only through a motive of obedience. I then sent you an obedience on January 2, 1836.

You answered me, my dear son, on January 25, 1836: "Good Father, I accept the obedience of the second of this month, which destines me for Saint Remy. It accords me a discretionary delay by reason of my social position and of the circumstances in which I happen to be. I shall use with moderation this last privilege and I shall make it a point to follow the order with as much punctuality as possible, etc." In the postscript of the same letter you add: "Please excuse me, if your letter of the second has been answered only on the twenty-fifth. This was not deliberate on my part, but due to a matter of obstacles that came in the way."

How is it, my dear son, that you have thought yourself obliged to obey at the beginning of this year, and not obliged to do so at the last trimester? Is it because I arrived in Bordeaux? Is it because having written to you personally, two and three times, asking for the papers of the Society of Mary of which I have the greatest need, that you do not believe yourself obliged to obey? Have you perhaps thought that I was not giving you any order, but only a simple invitation or request? This is what determined me to write to you again and to place before you a final summons. In my last note to you, I told you that, if within a delay of three days you did not make the delivery requested, I would find myself obliged to have recourse to higher authority, either civil or ecclesiastical, and I asked you, please, to avoid the consequences. I repeat it and I beg of you to avoid the circumstances of an obstinate refusal.

Receive, my dear son, my usual greetings.

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904 – TO FATHER COLLINEAU, PASTOR OF SAINT LOUIS, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 25, 1836

The obstinacy of Brother David in not delivering the papers of the Society which with such good faith and as my representative you had put into his hand, would seem to oblige me to sue him before the courts. I am not hiding from myself the scandal which would be the result of such action. To avoid this as much as possible, I have chosen the part of attacking him as a matter of conscience and religion and, in consequence, of making a memorandum that I shall address to the capitulary Vicars General, of which I shall also send you a copy, since you are his Director and counselor, according to the admission of Brother David himself.

Brother David seems to oblige you, Reverend Father, to change the weights and measures. When you were still in the Society, you were very much afflicted over the fact that he was not delivering the said papers that you had permitted to be brought to him so as to put in them greater order. You manifested your grief over this fact with quite an amount of bitterness before him, as well as before me. Since your withdrawal from the Society, is there any reason for judging differently? Brother David has you understand it. He complains of the removal of some papers from his cabinet. Was he not the cause of it be retaining papers for which there was urgent need? Was it not at the time of great urgency and of his most obstinate refusals, that they were taken? These pretended removals will be proofs against him rather than in his favor. By that, I do not mean necessarily to approve the manner by which the needed papers may have been obtained.

You know how far his obstinacy went about the promissory note we had placed in his hand with so much confidence.[1] Three of these notes – for which he had received the cash, and of which he never gave an account to the Council register in which council minutes mention the employment of the value received from these notes, and other papers of which he is the very wrong keeper – seem to be for you only subterfuges or evasions to give to the retention of these papers an appearance of righteousness.

He seems to handle the interests of the Society by doing it the greatest harm. In representing the astonishing event of the withdrawal of two of its principal Heads, first members of the Society, the nature of the resulting shock, and the fall of two or three members already quite disreputable, he gives you a false picture of the condition of the Society. Why does he not tell you that the first vacancy was filled almost as soon as it occurred, that the shock was followed by the strengthening of the majority of the subjects, that, quite generally, each one entered into himself and said: *Qui stat, videat ne cadat!* Several asked that their engagements be made definitive. Why doesn't Brother David tell

[1] There is question of twenty promissory notes to the order of Bro. David, signed by M. Auguste and representing a loan of twenty thousand francs made by Fr. Chaminade in 1829 for the Sainte Marie Boarding School. These notes had been annulled by Fr. Chaminade, but it was feared that Bro. David would be tempted to make a wrong use of them.

you, that if the Society has been afflicted by the fall of some members, it has been consoled by the entry of a much greater number of truly religious subjects, and, in the course of the second year, by the establishment of two large Novitiates, the number of whose members is increasing every day?

If, Reverend Father, you cannot see the injustice of Brother David in not giving over the papers being asked of him, and which we are far from wanting to use against him, if the pretended interest he is putting in the support of the Society impresses you sufficiently to sustain him in his obstinacy, you must not be surprised if I first present to the clergy a Memorandum of the affair. You may perhaps be able to stifle this affair in its very beginning by dissipating his illusions and in obliging him to act justly in the matter. At least, you would avoid being mentioned in the Memorandum that will and must appear, because I think myself obliged in conscience to put an end to this trouble with Brother David.

I have offered him and I am still offering him with a good heart, an honorable retirement in the establishment of Saint Remy which he has chosen and even a room here with me, if he was afraid of the bad weather. There will never more be question of the past, unless he brings it up himself. You may think I have spoken at too great length, Reverend Father, but there would still be so many things to say! Receive, I beg of you, the token and assurance of my affectionate remembrance.

P. S. I am making a last effort with Brother David and I am sending you a copy of the final summons that I am sending to him. I shall wait three or four days before making my next move.

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To Father Chaminade, diverse counsels for the direction of souls.

905 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 26, 1836

By your letter of the seventeenth of the present month, my dear son, you give me notice of the hasty departure or rather of the withdrawal of Brother Curot and you have done well. I had heard it spoken of, but rather vaguely. You see what kind of mentality he had. My reflections here become useless.

In again employing Brother Justin Soleil in teaching the little ones or beginners, we must aim more seriously at his own education, as I think I have mentioned to Father Fontaine.

You already know that all has been arranged for Brother Mérigot. Employ Brother Athias at anything you wish, but let him be sufficiently supervised so as to permit us to see

if he is truly religious or if he is entering the Society simply for the interest he takes in just entering some state of life. Let us get rid, little by little, of all these people who do little more than impede our forward march!

It seems to me, a priest who would not want to give up giving one of his parishioners lessons in reading, writing, etc., should not be admitted to absolution. He should see this person only in the church, at most in the sacristy, the doors remaining open and for as short a time as possible. If there is repetition for a servant-maid and sensible affection in the heart, he should dismiss her, but without display and with prudence, as if she would be retiring on her own accord, and then hire another.

Continue, my dear son, your way of making mental prayer, since it is analogous to your physical and moral qualities, but always in union with our Lord Jesus Christ and with Mary: *Per ipsum, et cum ipso et in ipso, etc. Monstra te esse Matrem* (...) M.S. is wrong in some ways. He would be obliged to some restitution, rather difficult to make out as to the quota, even by himself. But M.S. is rigorously poor: *whoever cannot, cannot*. I believe you have to limit yourself to giving him some prayers or penances to perform for those who may have had to suffer from his wrongs. You will not do any harm in having him seek the presumptive quota of the restitutions, so that he may be more thoroughly convinced of his sin.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my truly fatherly attachment.

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The Archbishop of Besançon has consented to take Reverend Etignard in his diocese. Father Chaminade releases him form his engagements on the part of the Society.

906 – TO REVEREND ETIGNARD, SUB DEACON

Bordeaux, end of November, 1836

Since your appearance in Bordeaux, I have often thought of you and of the embarrassment in which you were putting your sad position. I attribute it mainly to your vow of stability. Seeking only the peace of your soul and your salvation, I consent to your withdrawal from the Society. It will no longer look upon you as one of its members.

I offer you, Reverend Sir, the assurance of my old but never ending friendship.[1]

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Father Chaminade, not receiving any answer from Brother David is obliged to have recourse to ecclesiastical authority to obtain the delivery of the papers of the Society.

907 – TO THE CAPITULARY VICARS GENERAL

Bordeaux, November 30, 1836

Reverend Gentlemen, in order to avoid calling upon the protection of the secular Courts and to prevent the scandals that might follow such action in my proceedings against Brother David Monier, the unjust retainer of the papers of the Society of Mary and even of personal papers of mine, I am having recourse to your authority. For eight years, I have been soliciting him, threatening him, even commanding him in the name of holy obedience. All the means employed until the present have been useless. Having noticed, be it in the words he addressed to me or in those addressed to others, that poorly understood principles of religion are the cause or the pretext for his obstinacy, I thought it suitable to bring this case before the ecclesiastical Tribunal of this diocese. I shall send a copy of this Memorandum also to his confessor. As in him, all indicates respect, be it for the Tribunal of penance or for ecclesiastical authority, it is to be presumed that he will submit to their decision, and by this submission on his part, we shall avoid the scandals which would accompany and follow proceedings in the secular courts, and, at least as far as I am concerned, the clergy and the faithful would learn that I have done all that was in my power to avoid these scandals.

As regards the rigorous and indispensable necessity of giving over the papers which Brother David Monier is keeping in his hands, it has appeared doubtful up to the present moment, only in his eyes. The retention on his part has caused and continues to cause very

[1] In a letter of March 26, 1878, to Fr. Lalanne, Fr. Etignard related in moving terms the last interview he had with Fr. Chaminade. “The time that I saw him,” he says, “and that I was on my knees at his feet, I felt his tears falling on my face, I would have wanted to die at his feet (…)” Such was the great affection of the Good Father even for his prodigal children who abandoned him! After leaving the Society, Fr. Etignard went back to his own diocese, was there ordained priest and exercised the parochial ministry for twenty-five years. But the thought of the Society pursued him and in 1863, he asked and obtained permission to enter it on trial. He then came back to the Madeleine, always the cradle of his vocation, and there passed several years. Then his old character regained the upper hand, and he left the Society again in 1869, and settled in Bordeaux to live there at least on his old memories. It was then in connection with Fr. Lalanne that he conceived and carried out the project of putting up a monument to the memory of his Father, Fr. Chaminade, whom he always revered. “If I have come into the world only to put up a suitable resting-place for our holy Good Father Founder, Fr. Chaminade, *sufficit*!”, he wrote to Fr. Lalanne. He died on September 25, 1878, and was buried near the Founder, in the monument he had erected to his honor. He was an original figure, surely sympathetic by reason of his attachment, in spite of all, to the memory of Fr. Chaminade who had directed his first steps in religious life.

serious harm to the Society of Mary, and I have never been able to find any reason by which I could be dispensed from claiming them by all means, possible and suitable.

The exposition of facts follows, such as they are reported in the preceding letters.

The claimant dares to admit from your zeal, for the edification of the Church of Bordeaux, your double decision on the two questions proposed to you, relative to the papers of the Society in general and more especially to the promissory notes of M. Auguste. He will not cease to invoke the Lord, so that He may always direct you with the lights of His Holy Spirit in the difficult work of the administration of the archdiocese of Bordeaux.

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907bis – TO FATHER COLLINEAU, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 1, 1836

Reverend dear Father, the obstinacy of Brother David Monier continues. He has been deaf to my last summons and I have just drawn up a little Memorandum which I am taking the liberty of addressing to the capitulatory Vicars General.

I have understood, by the answer you were kind enough to give to the letter I had the honor of writing to you, that you were the counselor of Brother David only in the tribunal of penance. This is one of his skills. He had used it another time, in the affairs of which I had charge in Saint Remy. A tribunal of penance may pronounce sentence only on what pertains to the interior of the conscience of the penitent and not to exterior matters and such as are related to third parties.[1] Brother David is wrong in his obstinacy to avail himself of this counsel, and I do not think I could in conscience fall back upon it. I have already too often come across like counsels but I have never taken them into account, and the truth, once revealed in broad daylight, always triumphed. I, nevertheless, have reason to presume that if the tribunal of penance and outside of it you yourself are convinced that Brother David Monier is really deceiving himself, and in a serious matter, you would seek to dissuade him from it and, in consequence, if you said your word against the unjust retention he is making, 1. of the papers in general of the Society you have confided to him in such good faith and of those he has since received, 2. especially of the promissory notes, agreed to at his order by M. Auguste Perrière, which have been annulled and which no longer have any purpose, you would stifle the evil in its source, and there would be no evil on the outside to spread the scandal. Anyhow, it would be true that if you did not succeed he at least would not be able to avail himself of your decision.

[1] The decision of a confessor in a matter of conscience in a matter of conscience may not be opposed to the decision of an outside tribunal or court.

Furthermore, where would the sin be on his part to hold to arrangements he has made with Father Caillet in the presence of M. Auguste, slightly more than a year ago, and which I sanctioned a short time afterwards? Where would be the sin in obeying a formal obedience, for which he asked and which he accepted, an obedience which he asked for, as the result of arrangements he had made, and also as the result of which he had received eight hundred francs?

However, would there not be scandal in the public manifestation of these facts? What titles has he to justify the retention of those papers and promissory notes? Is he the Secretary General of the Society? Well, that he is no longer! May he be forgetting that he has been replaced, and after the aforementioned arrangements? Is it through zeal for the Society, of which he claims to be an unshakeable member, zeal which makes him believe and makes him tell me that if he passed those papers over to me they would be more easily taken away from me rather than from himself? He looks upon it as one of the most enormous of crimes, the removal of some papers which some members of the Society permitted themselves to do in the secretariat – papers for which they had the most urgent need – having entered into the secretariat, which doubtless is also his private room, doubtless whilst the room was being tidied and whilst he was absent. Why were these known papers taken in his absence? Because he obstinately refused to give over the papers of which there was urgent need and for which permission had been given, in some cases papers written entirely by my own hand! To speak truly, with so many exaggerations, can anyone believe it is in good faith? It will always be annoying for him, if the affair breaks out, that he will appear to have had a personal interest of some sort in retaining those papers and then, what color will he give to his zeal for the Society of Mary?

I beg of you to believe, Reverend Father, in the sentiments of my inviolable attachment.

By an answer, dated December 15, the capitulatory Vicars declared Brother David Monier "obliged in conscience, not only by obedience, but as a matter of plain justice, to make the delivery of the said papers and notes to the Superior General of the Society of Mary."

* * * *

Other difficulties arose on the occasion of the foundation in Marast.

Besides the direction of the boarding school confided to Brother Galliot, Father Chaminade was to provide for the management of the property, and he had thought of putting it into the hands of Brother Joseph Pelleteret, under the control of Brother Galliot and indirectly of Brother Clouzet.

This was for many months a source of wrangling among these religious otherwise virtuous, but having their human weaknesses which Father Chaminade tried to put with patiently.

908 – TO BROTHER JOSEPH PELLETERET, SAINT CLAUDE

Bordeaux, December 2, 1836

I have the intention, my dear son, of making you temporarily the administrator or manager of the property of Marast and, in consequence, of having you replaced in Saint Claude.

I am not able to advance you any of the money you would need for this work, even if there is a lack of practically everything. I shall have Brother Clouzet come to your help for all that may be strictly needed for the cultivation of the property. All that Brother Clouzet would do, would be to advance some money which would have to come back to him at the time of the first revenues or harvests. It would be the same for all that you yourself could borrow, or that Brother Galliot might be able to procure for you. What do you think might be the net profits or revenue? We shall estimate later on the means for equipping, little by little, by these net revenues, the administration of this property and to make on it the repairs and improvements that we might judge suitable.

You will be submissive to Brother Galliot, Head of the establishment of Marast, in all that concerns the regular life. You will also always listen for your religious direction to the Head of Zeal, Father Fridblatt, but for what relates to the administration of the domain, you will always come to an understanding with me. You will be obliged, by this very fact, to keep a book or several books, in which all the accounts would be clearly reported, in proportion as they came in. Brothers Galliot and Clouzet could inspect your books when they would think it necessary or even suitable.

I said that I was going to name you temporarily, because, for a long time, I had other things in mind for you, although I left you in Saint Claude for teaching. As I saw the matter, this exercise was even necessary for you. However, as there will necessarily be a delay in the realization of my plans, and there is an urgency regarding the administration of the property at Marast, I made up my mind to place you there. You were already there, as Brother Galliot had brought you there and I would have left you there, but, at the time, there was too great an urgency in Saint Claude. I had as yet in no way thought of replacing you there, as Brother Galliot had too much taken it upon himself thus to dispose of you, and you also should not have left Courtefontaine where you were to pass your short vacation, without an express order from me. I understand well, that there was in you good faith of a kind that called for precious little blame on my part.

In fine, my dear son, do you think you can and, in fact, do you want to lead a truly religious life in exercising the functions of manager in Marast? In no way do I doubt that if I had sent you an obedience to this effect, you would have left immediately; but this kind of function seems to call for a certain intelligence and taste for proper fulfillment outside of obedience; and this is precisely what I thought I found in you.

As regards the religious life, you must have a pious ambition to advance in it continually. I do not know if you give to any one an account of your interior and of the progress you are making in mental prayer, but no one talks to me about it, not even Father Meyer. You will be able to profit by the occasion which you will have of writing to me so as to tell me something about it. One of the most essential obligations of religious life is that of always advancing towards perfection…Since there is urgency in Marast, as regards the labors, answer me immediately on all the points of this letter and answer them while placing yourself in the presence of God.

Believe, my dear son, in my inviolable attachment.

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909 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 3, 1836

The accounts, my dear son, of Brother Seguin at MM. Loustau[1] have been concluded but not paid. In truth they have diminished by reason of the gifts they have made to the church of the Madeleine. I have always refused to accept payment terms. Nevertheless, at the solicitation of Father Caillet, towards whom they, father and son, have always acted so honestly and generously, I am going to accept four payment terms, one every fourth month. Our situation in Bordeaux is in a rather precarious condition no matter what order we follow or what economies we practice, and I thought it my duty to forewarn you about it. On the other hand, all the affairs of the Society are improving.

We are now entirely separated from Father Lalanne, as far as common interests are concerned. The debts which he has contracted are so frightful that I thought it my duty to leave him entirely to himself. As he otherwise expresses great sentiments of repentance and of submission, we always remain united by the bonds of religion. All the debts, properly-so-called, of the Sainte Marie Boarding School of Bordeaux are well advanced as far as payment by Father Lalanne is concerned, but it is really M. Auguste who is paying them from one 4-month period to another, from the tuition money of the Bordeaux pupils which he is charged to take in.

I have begun to take Brother David in hand. It is still doubtful whether I shall succeed without any great disturbance to bring him to reason.

I am not losing sight of Marast. I have written lately to Brother Pelleteret and I am having a copy made of my letter. If his answer is such as we shall have reason to expect, I

[1] Iron merchants, M. Loustau and his sons figured among the most fervent Sodalists of the Madeleine in Bordeaux.

shall have him replaced immediately. You will do well to notify Brother Galliot, so that he may have no reason to worry.

Receive, my dear son, the token and assurance of my tender and inviolable attachment.

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910 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, December 7, 1836

It is time to purify the Society. Our Society members must life as good religious or leave the Society. If they leave it they will be apostates, because they will not have been sent away, since it depends upon themselves to live as good religious, and the Society is always on hand to furnish them the means to do so.

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911 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 10, 1836

(...) You have done well, my dear son, in presuming upon my desire to preside at the ceremony of vows on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and I authorize you to receive, henceforth, in my name, all engagements in the Society when they will have been duly decided upon. Brother Nicholas Mouchet likes to address himself to you. He has confidence in you, but he finds that you do not reprimand him severely enough for the faults of which he accuses himself. This young man is full of good will and has, in fact, more intelligence than at first appears. By this same mail, I am writing to him and I am recommending him to you.

I am also writing a short letter of response to Claude Mouchet. This young man is fully capable of going far in the spirit of the religious state. Philip Dormoy wrote to me on last April 30, to ask me for the emission of his perpetual vows in the course of the past month of May. I learned a short time after, that he was far from conducting himself as a true religious. Since then, I have no longer received any news – neither from him, nor from anyone else. What has become of him? Let him make known to me his interior sentiments and dispositions, as also his love for obedience in the conscientious fulfillment of the duties confided to him and I shall answer him. Have the kindness to read to him this little article that concerns him as my answer to his letter of last April 30.

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912 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 10, 1836

There is no longer any question, my dear son, of according you the permission of consecrating yourself entirely and definitively to the service of the Lord and of His august Mother in the Society. I had accepted the request you had made to do so, and, after the letter of Father Chevaux, the ceremony must have taken place on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the 8 of the current month. The fact is that you are more than ever, and as much as you can be, my child, the child of my heart, and that I am really your father in the order of faith and religion.

Continue, my dear son, to go forward, as we have agreed. I shall not grant you, for the time being, the increase in the penance that you ask of me. A little later on, we shall see if God asks it of you, but be really faithful, and discard all scruples. Let there be an entire fidelity.

Believe, my dear son, in my fatherly sentiments towards you.

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913 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 12, 1836

Your Excellency,

I shall never be able to express sufficiently my gratitude to you for the two letters which you had the signal kindness to write to me.

One of them relieves me of a heavy burden, in permitting me to dismiss Father Etignard from the Society of Mary. As soon as I had received the letter concerning him, I wrote him the note, of which a copy is at the end of this letter.[1] As I was not informed about the place at which he is staying, I sent it to Father Lalanne in Layrac, asking the latter to give it to him and to suggest that he send it himself to Your Excellency.

The observations which you have the kindness to make to me, after the careful and thoughtful reading of the general Regulations of the Society of Mary, seem to me full of wisdom.[2] I shall make use of them in joining this Extract of the general Regulations to a Second Extract, bearing upon the organization of the government of the said Society. I shall

[1] Letter 906.
[2] See Letter 759.

take the liberty of passing over to you this Second Extract and of asking you to let me know your observations. I have the intention of sending the entire work for the approbation of the Holy See. At the same time, I shall submit to it the Constitutions and general Regulations of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, to whom I have given a new extension before my last return to Bordeaux, upon the invitations of His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch.

I am learning with great satisfaction this His Eminence is very much pleased with the two new establishments founded in his capitol city.[1] He has had the goodness of offering me, already several times, his services in regard to the Sovereign Pontiff.

I am with a profound respect, Your Excellency's most humble, etc.

* * * *

The establishment of Saint Claude is passing through a serious crisis due to misunderstandings on the part of the Pastor and the blunderings of the Director.[2] Father Chaminade makes all known confidentially to the Vicar General of the diocese and it is for him the occasion for expressing his views on the principal mission of the Society, "to form Christians and to multiply their number by means of education."

914 – TO REVEREND DE MONTGAILLARD,
VICAR GENERAL

Bordeaux, December 12, 1836

Reverend dear Father, by your letter of last September 22, you were awaiting a definite and final answer relative to your educational establishments, and, in the meantime, things are being done in Saint Claude as if everything were absolutely settled. Our young men have had the ordinary reopening of classes.

There are two great difficulties to be overcome in an establishment like that of Saint Claude. The first, which is the greater, is to have a sufficiently large place. The second, which is the lesser, is that the religious be able to find the resources necessary for them to live honestly according to their state.

It can easily be conceived that the second could be easily overcome, if there were a suitable locality. The pupils from homes of relatively abundant means could successfully be attracted if, in a special school, entirely distinct from the free schools, they would be given a complete education. But what can be done in a house so small that one can hardly move? And Brother Gouverd has just written to me, that there were no more classes for free pupils and that they were mixed up with the others. How many parents will be dissatisfied!

[1] See Letter 865.
[2] See Letter 793, 835, 838, and 881.

They will soon see that the first education which they have tried to give their children in their respective families will be compromised in the company of children that have received none at all in their families. Brother Gouverd, who ought to have some experience, should have made these observations and written to me about them, before such a project was to be brought to the point of realization.

Are we not to have the class of indigent pupils at heart? Is it not the more numerous? And what means can we have for renovating the city, if we neglect the education of the coming generation which represents the greatest number of individuals in the city? I spoke of it to His Excellency at the time of his stop in Dôle, and he promise me that the free schools would not be neglected. I was far from imagining that the locality would not permit the receiving of only a small number of chosen and well-to-do pupils!

The Reverend Pastor says, in the notes which you had the kindness of passing over to me, that he had no other intention. He surely was the one to limit his work, if he chose to do so, but he should have let me know his views, as we would then have deliberated on what there was to be done. We would have accepted or we would have refused, and I believe that if we had accepted according to his views, we could have succeeded, but it would have been necessary to go about the work in a manner vastly different from the one we chose.

I have difficulty believing that His Excellency knew of the narrow plan of the Reverend Pastor, for then he certainly would not have so much interest in having members of the Society of Mary whose principal end is the multiplication of Christians and that, by means of education. The Reverend Pastor took it for granted that only children of families known to be Christian would be received. The work is good. It would still be good when the number of children from recognized Christian families would be restricted, but should he not always have had an understanding with those who were to carry out his project? And, in the meantime, you tell me that, on the contrary, he did not like to work in concert with me and that all he wanted me to do was to approve the establishment and to supply the men needed to run it. On account of the interest that I was told His Excellency put into the affair, I let things run their course in the conviction that, if the institution was not at first general, there would become insistence that it become such, although other circumstances had contributed not to allow the intentions and plan of Reverend Pastor to be known.

What is to be done in such a situation? Come back to the plan of the Reverend Pastor? Form in the little place an institution especially for families known to be Christian and in circumstances favorable enough to be able to pay a tuition proportionate to the expenses to be made for the maintenance of the establishment? Inconveniences are not lacking should he retrace his steps. What children will have to be sent away, even those paying high tuition, because of the presence of such whose families are far from being Christian! Whilst awaiting that the number of these be sufficient, the teachers will have to be supported. I shall say nothing about the vexing impression that this point will leave against both the teachers and the Reverend Pastor. Again, I am not saying anything about

what I shall be able to judge regarding such a determination and whether it would not be more suitable to accept some other establishment, where we could do good according to the views of the Society of Mary. How many possible establishments I am constantly refusing for want of subjects, where, apart from vast localities, sufficient salaries are offered for the teachers and in densely populated regions!

Shall we continue according to the plan of the Society of Mary?[1] But is it not more than evident that the place is just too small? Is it not also evident that in Saint Claude food is much more expensive than anywhere else? Until the present, our three religious teachers seemed to me to spend almost as much as several of our other establishments. It is possible that they did not know how to go about spending less. That would be something to look into, but it remains true that everything in Saint Claude costs more than elsewhere. The Society of Mary, for some time, cannot undertake to supply what will be lacking, whatever plan is chosen to be followed. It is already much that the Novitiate of Courtefontaine is not able to keep any part of the savings that the establishment might be able to make.

This is an enterprise that has not been planned. Its progress is being hampered on all sides. What is to be done? What attitude must be taken? I shall be very careful not to decide as it is you, and it is His Excellency, who are to decide and it is up to me humbly to receive the decision. If I were unable to make expenses for a new establishment, I would ask permission of His Excellency to abandon the small location after having sought another on all sides in Saint Claude, one sufficiently large, that I would have bought, or at least rented, solid enough for a certain number of years. I would have made the necessary adjustments to make it a special school. At the same time, I would have opened a free school, by means of the special school, and thus wait until the Commune would adopt them as its own.

Reverend Father, before ending this answer, perhaps already too long, I shall open my heart wide upon your letter of last October 22. I had the honor of answering it only as regards the measure you had taken, surely full of wisdom, in the case which presented itself. On every occasion, episcopal authority is to be respected.[2] Brother Gouverd had written to the Reverend Pastor a letter, contradictory to the announcement that he had the Bishop make, to the effect that classes would be reopened a week before All Saints Day. This is a slight fault and a thoughtless act, hard to explain. Anyhow, when all is said, Brother Gouverd is here the only one at fault, as it could not even be attributed to his collaborators, and so, he alone was to be punished and in a manner to repair the fault he had committed in compromising episcopal authority, by his request for a public announcement of the reopening of classes which he knew to be uncertain. But, that is not the only thing. Your

[1] In receiving all the poor children who will present themselves.
[2] On the occasion of the distribution of prizes, the Bishop of Saint Claude, on the request that Bro. Gouverd had made to him, had publicly announced the reopening of classes for the week preceding All Saints Day. Now, a week before All Saints Day, the imprudent Director wrote to the Pastor of the city that the reopening of the school was anything but certain.

letter indicates that the discontent which His Lordship is experiencing went so far that he was even threatening to abandon the School of Courtefontaine itself. The giving up of Courtefontaine would bring along at least the abandonment of all the establishments existing or to exist in the future in the diocese of His Lordship, and certainly, no one had suggested to Brother Gouverd the imprudence of his act in regard to His Lordship. What tranquility can I have, in sending subjects to Saint Claude and even in forming new establishments in this diocese, that no subject will commit a thoughtless act? You have side-tracked the storm as a clever administrator, but will you always and at all times do so at the side of His Lordship?

I am with a sincere and respectful devotedness, Reverend dear Vicar General, your very humble, etc.

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915 – TO BROTHER PELLETERET, MARAST

Bordeaux, December 16, 1836

(...) You will be able, my dear son, and you shall have to live as a religious in the employment which is to be confided to you. If there are precautions to be taken, steadiness to acquire, perhaps even privations to experience, contradictions to sustain, you are to look upon them as happy obligations, since they will always render you more religious. The spirit of faith, in which you are always to make progress, will be in you your regulator in all and for all. The spirit of faith is in direct opposition to the spirit of the world. It is not astonishing that the world looks upon the true religious with a sort of astonishment. For he is, as it were, a man from another world.

Courage, my dear son, fidelity and confidence in the grace of your state, which for you, is here the grace of obedience. The obedient man, says the Holy Spirit, will speak of victories (...)

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916 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 16, 1836

My dear son, when I wrote to Brother Pelleteret on the subject of the management or administration of the property of Marast. I had a copy of my letter passed over to you. I have just received an answer to it, and I am having you get an extract of it and also a copy, similarly by way of an extract, of the answer I sent him. I am saying, by way of an extract,

because all the remainder of the letters, regarded only the interior of Brother Pelleteret. I am very glad that he is taking so much interest in his sanctification as in all temporal affairs. It is a duty for every Christian and with all the more reason, for every religious, always to have his salvation advance concurrently with every other matter of interest to him.

I imagine that in the five or six thousand francs which he asks for to put the property in good order, the purchase of live stock and farm utensils is included, but might you perhaps be able to make it easier for him by lending him what you would not strictly need? See for yourself what might be done, or what measure might be taken, so that he may be able really and suitably to improve this property.

If you believe that all may be arranged, although with some difficulty, write directly to Father Meyer and have him send to Saint Claude, to replace Brother Pelleteret, the subject I have designated for him. I am going to write to Father Meyer that the subject receive no other obedience than the counsel you will be giving, and that, if you think you are not, in any way, able sufficiently to facilitate for Brother Pelleteret the management of this property, do not write to Father Meyer and then, let us leave things about as they are. I do not think it is necessary to disarrange them, simply to make a businessman of Brother Pelleteret or a confidence man of Brother Galliot.

I have noticed in Brother Pelleteret a fund of wisdom and of intelligence from which we can draw much profit, if he is well directed, but if we leave self-love develop in him, he will run great risk of being lost, especially if he is employed otherwise than in teaching. At the same time as you would write Father Meyer, you might also write to me, so that I may know promptly all that is taking place.

Always support Brother Galliot. There is in him a certain spirit of self-sufficiency which is very harmful to the General Administration. He likes to do all his business transactions in an arbitrary manner and, so to say, in a hidden way, and to speak only of those difficulties which he cannot overcome. Extremely susceptible, he finds it extremely difficult to put up with observations that are contrary to his views; nevertheless, always seeking the good, clever enough to extricate himself from all manner of difficulties, it is anyhow to be hoped that he will finally have a better view of the whole truth.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

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917 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 16, 1836

I am not surprised, my dear son, that every day you should have workmen at your door, asking to be paid for the work they have done. It is a great imprudence on the part of your predecessor to have had them work without having at least a moral assurance of being able to pay them, and that before too long a delay. You are to be praised for borrowing so as to satisfy them. As imprudence is not part of your line of conduct, I am always hoping and praying that Providence will not forget or pass you by.

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918 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, December17, 1836

In closing this letter, I shall invite you to recall often these short words of our Lord to His Apostles: *Manete in me et ego in vobis* (St. John XV).

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Father Chaminade, having received the decision of the capitulary Vicars of Bordeaux, sends a copy of it to Brother David and urges him to submit to it.

919 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 20, 1836

Some days, my dear son, after my last summons, on last November 30, seeing that you were persevering in your obstinacy, but through a bad understanding of the principles of religion, I thought it my duty to have recourse to ecclesiastical authority. I presented to the Reverend Capitulatory Vicars General the little Memorandum, of which, herewith, you have a copy.

On the fifteenth of the present month these Reverend Gentlemen made known their decision, and they placed it at the end of the Memorandum, such as you will see it at the end of this first copy (...)

Submit to a decision, my dear son, which you are to look upon as sovereign in the order of religion and conscience. You cannot refuse to submit to it but by sinning grievously and not without giving place to great scandals. Deliver to me all the papers included under the name of papers of the Society of Mary. Deliver to me all the promissory notes which you still have in hand concerning the borrowed twenty thousand francs and this, my dear son, within a delay of three days.

I believe, my dear son, that I have an obligation in conscience to recover the said papers and notes. Do not be astonished that I am taking all the means suggested by justice and suitability to obtain their delivery. If scandals should arise, I should not want that they

be attributed to me and it is with this end in view that I think it my duty to notify the clergy and through them, the faithful, of the justice of my claims. You are in a position to stop everything. I have no intention at all of making use of papers that could be unfavorable to you, as we shall completely forget the past. I shall take care of you as I would care for myself. You have seemed to desire to prepare yourself for death. Your age and infirmities warn you of its approach, so why would you want to employ this precious interval of time still remaining to you in a revolt against the Head of the Society of which you are one of the first members, and to which you have consecrated so many labors? I hope that this will not be the case but that we shall remain in the most perfect union.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my old and sincere friendship.

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With Brother Clouzet, the Founder comes back on the article, essential to the working Brothers whom he has so greatly at heart. On this occasion, he shares with him his views regarding the holding of the Councils.

920 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 26, 1836

My dear son, the beginning of your undated letter, but stamped in Vesoul on the seventeenth of the current month, has me understand that you are showing great interest, with Father Chevaux and Brother Bousquet, in forming a community of working Brothers and in procuring a good Novitiate for it. For this purpose you are lacking suitable space, and your views are always turning towards the sheds, but there are always many difficulties. The first is the enormous expense that would have to be made, and the second is that, even if we were to make it, we would be only partially attaining the end we are proposing. This community, with the number of members we can hope to have, in the first place, would be greatly hampered and secondly, it would not be sufficiently separated from the members who are running the boarding school.

You should not cease asking of God His lights to this end. Your obligation is all the greater because, up to the present, I have seen in Saint Remy only you who were of this opinion. Several are keeping silence and seem convinced by your reasons, but it is only for the purpose of not contradicting you. I myself, at the time of my last call at Saint Remy, was inclined to transform the shed into a general Novitiate for all the working Brothers of the Society, because God had not deigned to let me know His last intentions as regards this third category of the Society of Mary, that of the working religious. I manifested this to you at the time of my last stay in Saint Remy and I am always seeing the matter in the same light.

Hold some extraordinary council meetings about this important matter. Hold them in a spirit of faith and see what I want to say: “Every time,” says our Lord, “that two or three of you are assembled in My name, there am I in the midst of you.” If, to treat of this important subject and much more important than it at first appears, you come together on the word of the Lord adding genuine belief in His word, and having disposed yourself by prayer, you will treat of this matter usefully. There is no question, as yet, of having any particular manner of undertaking the work prevail, but that you, or any member of the Council, make the announcement of it in the sense that I first presented it. You are simply to offer your objections and to listen to the objections made against them. Hold the number of sessions that will be necessary, until all are convinced of the one same thing. If all the members of the Council seek only the good of religion and of souls, I cannot believe that there will not result some lights that will help us greatly in this matter. It would be well to make a written report of each session and you should send me a copy of these reports.

Three weeks ago, or almost a month ago, I was offered a young carpenter from Saint Antoine, Department of the Tarn et Garonne. I wrote to the assistant pastor to get more precise information about him than he was offering. Here is what he tells me: “The young man, in whom I have been glad to interest myself for your sake, cannot but please you, as he is solidly virtuous and that for several years. His parents are poor but very good people, he is exempt from military service, he has a very robust constitution, he feels well and knows the carpenter-trade well. His one desire is to be united to you; he will leave at any time you deem suitable, so as to submit himself completely to your will.” What do you think I should answer? Do you wish that he should go to Saint Remy?

I had written to Brother Mazières what I had written to you in regard to Brother Joncas. He writes to me, in his turn, that he had told you he was at your disposition, but that you could give him nothing for his trip. Joncas is a good worker and, at the same time, a good religious. His character is a bit rough and taciturn. He has from time to time, at long intervals, spittings of blood, and it is for this reason that his regular work was interrupted, so that he could be employed in lighter house service. Nevertheless, all last year he worked in Layrac as a tailor and his health remained good. He could easily earn two thousand francs for a year for Father Lalanne. See to it, however, that his health is cared for.

I understand that you are greatly in need of professors; well, I shall keep watch, so as to profit by circumstances. Be easy on Brother David. Brother Laugeay, having good will, would be able to study as well as to do supervision, but you would have to keep at him and so, you would succeed in having someone dependable for the post. Have him take note of his defects, of course encourage him with kindness. As regards Brother Gaussens, make all possible use of him. You know his character and there is in him a solid stock of religion. By means of friendship, of religion as well as of reason, he will still be able to be of help to you for some time. He has a certain stately appearance that you can put to good use, even if he is somewhat difficult to lead. You have done well to admit him into the Council, but follow what I am saying of him to Father Fontaine...

Brother Curot seems to be calming down somewhat. Later on, I shall tell you what will have been done, but I told him plainly that he could no longer come back to Saint Remy (...)

You are right, my dear son, in believing that I did not have the intention of putting three Heads in Marast, not even two. It is the Head alone who is finally responsible for everything, and our constitutive Regulations express it sufficiently; but it is necessary that this responsibility be adequately balanced, so as to avoid the arbitrariness a Head could inconsiderately show in the exercise of his functions. All will be arranged by an Ordinance establishing a Council in communication with Marast. There is great likelihood that you will enter this Council as a member, when there will be question of some extraordinary affairs. The establishment of Saint Remy will find itself sufficiently interested in it to be represented by one or two of its members. You yourself, my dear son, draw up the Ordinance, on the model of the one of Saint Remy. You will put into it the modifications, additions or changes that you believe necessary. Then, let me have it and I shall conform to it as much as I deem suitable. I presume that I shall have only to have it copied (...)

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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Brother Peter Joncas (1800-1870) is one of the religious who has left the most pleasant memory in the hearts of our old members.

Born in Sigoulès, Dordogne, during the last days of the Revolution, and baptized in a woods by a faithful priest, he learned the tailor's trade. Brought by his return to France to establish himself in Bordeaux, he had himself inscribed in the Sodality. Shortly after, he solicited his entry into the little Society and made his profession in Saint Laurent at the time of the retreat of 1819.

During the fifty years of his religious life, he exercised the tailor's trade in diverse houses of the Society, but especially in Bordeaux, where he was a janitor of the Novitiate of Saint Anne, and where several generations of novices were edified by his good example.

He had the spirit of prayer in an uncommon degree and willingly prayed aloud when he was alone. At whatever time and in whatever place he was met, he was seen to be praying. In his workshop, during the work, he recited the rosary several times a day with his helpers, and to count the Hail Marys, he used to say: A thousand times Hail Mary, two thousand times Hail Mary, etc. until ten thousand times Hail Mary. He was happy to speak of the Blessed Virgin, and often his eyes were wet with tears when he heard her grandeurs published. He received Holy Communion every day, something quite rare at that time, and regularly took the discipline. One time he happened to tell one of the religious in confidence, one with whom he held no secret, that he had asked and obtained the grace to suffer constantly.

With piety, charity was the characteristic trait of this religious, who, by means of virtue, had little by little transformed his character, which had been somewhat rough and taciturn. In Saint Anne, he received all arrivals with charming good grace. “You are most welcome,” he used to say to them or, “May Jesus, Mary and Joseph be with you!”, and he placed himself at their disposal for whatever service might be needed. At the time of departure he did not neglect to add to a most affectionate farewell this thoroughly Christian wish: “May you good Angel accompany you!” He never left a single occasion pass when there was an opportunity for a word of edification or of counsel to the young Brothers who surrounded him. He loved to say to them: “Remember that without the grace of God we are nothing, we can do nothing, and we are worth nothing!”

He was always pleased to recount certain traits of the life of Father Chaminade, for whom he professed the most profound veneration.

He always had a certain apprehension about the moment of death. However, God spared him its terrors, for he died peacefully, without illness and without agony on May 10, 1870, at the moment of rising, while receiving a last absolution from the priest.

One of Brother Joncas’ nieces entered the Daughters of Mary, and one of his nephews entered the Society of Mary. The latter, Brother Anthony Enjugier, initiated into religious life by his cares, has left a memory, much venerated in the Society, after having fulfilled the functions of assistant to the general Head of Instruction (1886-1896) and of Inspector of the Province of Spain (1896-1904).

* * * *

The following letter, addressed to the Master of Novices of Courtefontaine, shows us with what vigor Father Chaminade understood we should work with souls so as to bring them to the correction of their faults. It also gives us some precious words of advice about the direction of the novices.

921 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, December 27, 1836

The details, my dear son, which you give me in your letter of the ninth of the current month, have pleased me, because I happen to be interested in everything.

You tell me that you do not know how to cure Brother Oppermann. Nevertheless, you know that all his sensibilities come from a foundation of self-love which renders him very susceptible. It is evident, that to cure him this self-love must be attacked. It must be attacked down to the last traces of its roots. The first remedy is that he himself know his

trouble and how it happens to take root, even before being noticed, by the preventions which it inspires. Once he gets to know it well, he would have as second remedy to come to you to acknowledge, briefly of course, but humbly and without excuse, not only the exterior acts of his sensibilities, but even the interior acts which form these preventions in him. The third remedy, when he gets to the point of being able to take it, would be to correct him time and again, and that he permit in his interior no kind of excuses or murmurs, etc. He will never be cured without a very decided will on his part. He must then, so to say, set himself against himself, and instead of loving himself, hate himself, treating himself and despising himself as someone who has a true hatred for someone else. Is this not the Gospel? And can he be religious without entering into the spirit of the Gospel? I am not developing this further for the moment. Give me news about him from time to time. If Brother Oppermann is faithful to the spirit of his vocation, he will be able to do real good, and I shall accept with pleasure the emission of his vows, but not otherwise. Read him this little article that concerns him and explain it to him as much as you will deem it necessary.

Before continuing my observations about the details that you give me, be it about the novices or about the postulants, I shall observe to you that you would experience no delay if you sent me a copy of the proceedings of the Council where they are first presented and where they are admitted, delayed, or rejected; it is thus that you yourself have said to Father Fontaine. But in short, you could write to Father Fontaine or to Father Chevaux that M. Ravoir is admitted to temporary vows, or at least that since his entrance into Saint Remy he has suffered no loss of esteem.[1] You would do well to write a note of encouragement to M. Ravoir himself. Father Chevaux would be able to draw up a modest ceremony of profession although (for one) alone (...)

The subjects of *Particular Examen* for beginners are generally: 1) regularity according to the letter and above all according to the spirit; 2) prayer in a true spirit of faith; 3) silence, exterior and interior; 4) modesty. The subjects will not be the same for all. You have people at many degrees of advancement, but generally, for the first year, the novices will be already passably advanced if they are strong in the practice of these four articles. We will be able to return to this matter whenever you feel a need for it, for you must teach your people how to walk: they are like little children in the spiritual order, *quasi modo geniti infants*.

Here I find myself at the end of your long letter. As for yourself, anyway, you are already well grounded; listen often to the encouragement that Our Lord Jesus Christ gives to a Bishop: *Esto fidelis, et dabo tibi coronam vitae*! Be faithful and I will give you the crown of life!

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[1] M. Alexis Ravoir (12819-1899), born at Montpascal, Savoy, entered the Novitiate of Courtefontaine in 1836, was employed for some years as a cook at Courtefontaine and at Besançon, and was an infirmarian for nearly forty years at the Institute of St. Marie of Valois Street, since known as Rue de Monceau, at Paris. He ended his life in retreat at the Novitiate of Ris.

Receive, my dear son, my paternal salutations. Be so good also as to transmit them to Father Lamotte and to all our dear children of Courtefontaine. I hope also that I will be able to send you a priest very soon. I will write to you as soon as I am assured of my ability to do so.

Following this letter – of which, unfortunately, the middle pages have been lost – Father Meyer replied to Father Chaminade: "Your long letter has given us much pleasure. The novices and postulants are filled with enthusiasm for their promises. Whenever I receive one of your letters it furnishes me with material for a conference: I know no better way of transmitting the spirit which animates and guides you and which ought to animate and direct us. I am about to transcribe into a notebook all the spiritual reflections which you have had the goodness to address to me." (January 6, 1837) Thanks to the attention of Father Meyer, lacking many letters of the Founder which have not come down to us, we have been able to reproduce the precious extracts which have been cited in these volumes.

Meanwhile, Brother David opposed Father Chaminade with the force of inertia, and despite the decision of the Capitular Vicars, persisted in keeping the papers of the Society.

Father Chaminade consults his friend and advisor M. de Saget, former president of the Royal Court, on the measure to be taken to overcome this resistance.

922 – TO M. SAGET, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, December 28, 1836

The obstinacy of Brother David Monier appears to have reached its peak. After having had the honor of speaking to you, I am putting off sending to you sufficient indications for obtaining authorization to regain possession of the withheld papers: I consider it a duty to make new efforts. 1. I made a final appeal to hand over the papers without any success; 2. I wrote to the Capitular Vicars General in order to ask for their decision on the obligation in justice and conscience for Brother David to return both the papers of the Society and the business statements of his which had been annulled. There followed two statements of the facts, the one concerning the papers and the other the business statements.

The Vicars General pronounced on both questions, and at the bottom even attached a memorandum and accompanied the letter giving their judgment with a letter which itself is another decision. I sent a copy of everything to Brother David Monier and gave him three

days in which to return the papers and the business statements; the period was finished at least on the evening of the feasts: I have not received any kind of a response.

The constant obstinacy of Brother David Monier about returning the papers, of which he is evidently the unjust retainer, cannot, it seems to me, be excused as a mark of a mind weakened by age and infirmities. But must we remain always the dupes and the victims? Are we not right in invoking public force? Do we not have the right to obtain the return from his hands of the papers and titles which are our proper right and which he keeps in a place that is also my property? If Brother David Monier was cited only before the secular tribunal he would be at his own ease and soon would forever prevent the return which is demanded of him of the objects detained by a thousand chicaneries and arguments of all kinds. I rest my case on your advice, sir; all that you decide and order will be carried out completely.

Before coming here I had the idea of excluding him from the Society; and without doubt it is in order. This is surely a rebellion against his first superior.

But I believe I should reject this idea because he will undoubtedly raise objections and thus cloud the issue.

I am with respectful devotion, sir, your very humble servant.

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The following is an interesting letter on the signs of vocation to the Society of Mary.

923 – TO A NOVICE IN COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, date uncertain

I would have been very glad to know the more positive signs which have led to your admission to the Novitiate of the Society of Mary. I call more positive signs the desire to do penance, which is the ordinary fruit of an entire conversion; the desire to enter into the narrow way of the evangelical counsels, that is to say, to practice poverty, chastity, and obedience; and whether the Society of Mary is the kind of religious state to which you are called. I would have been very glad to see in you some signs of a true confidence in Mary, the Mother of Jesus and ours, and finally, some signs of a compassionate charity towards those who are still engaged in the way of the world, in order to withdraw them from it, and to preserve from it those who are not yet its slaves. This last sentiment is one of the principal signs of the vocation to the ecclesiastical state.

* * * *

Here is one of the too rare letters of spiritual direction of Father Chaminade which have been preserved for us. It is addressed to a religious, who but a short time before had left the Novitiate.

924 – TO BROTHER GENRE, COURTEFONTAINE[1]

Bordeaux, January 3, 1837

Your imagination, my dear son, is not as foolish as it might at first seem to be. The principles of the interior life are in themselves very rigorous and have a very wide application. Mortification, for example, must be universal and continual. There will be a combat, more or less great, of the spirit against the flesh, and of the flesh against the spirit. Again, for example, the religious contracts a more special obligation than the simple Christian of tending always to perfection. The imagination wearies you, especially in the application of the principles. The tending for perfection, for example, although it is to be continual is to be understood only morally speaking, and although on one occasion you have been wanting in mortification, you have surely done an act of immortification, but you have not acted directly against the obligation you have contracted of tending to perfection.

In making use of the diet accorded by the Society of Mary in your food, you do not go against the vow of poverty, 1. because your vow of poverty is made in the Society, the diet of which is already regulated and settled; 2. because this diet has been judged suitable in general for all members of the Society, by reason of their labors and so that there may be as few dispensations as possible to give. This does not prevent those who are stronger and hale and hearty from depriving and mortifying themselves, etc.

The diet of the Trappists is doubtless of greater austerity and is a practice which seems to bear closer resemblance to poverty. Nevertheless, if in the Society we wanted to follow it we would do wrong, because, in the views of the Society, it would not be sufficient, whereas, in a Society like that of the Trappists, the religious are to be rigorously detached from everything, to be perfectly content, for example, when food is lacking, or when there is no cloth wherewith to renew their habits to be satisfied to wear old ones that are patched, etc. It is also entirely conformable to poverty to ask for a change of clothing only when there is urgency in the matter of propriety, and, if there is a choice to be made, to prefer always that which is worse, etc. In a word, one must really love to be poor and to make use of nothing but by obedience, and, on the other hand, to use all that the Society wants us to use, all that it wants us to wear, etc. If we happen to find ourselves better clothed than we

[1] Bro. Honoré Genre, 1806-1883, born in Fourgs, near Pontarlier, Doubs, entered the Novitiate of Courtefontaine in 1835 and was employed in manual labor and teaching in the numerous houses of the Society. “Since he entered the Society,” Fr. Chaminade writes about him, “he has shown a great aversion for the world and has always shown himself docile and obedient.” (January 27, 1839) He passed his last years in Réalmont, taking care of flowers and devoting himself to prayer. “His life was so edifying and so holy,” noted his Director the day after his death, “that we cannot for a moment doubt the mercy of God, in his regard.”

would have been in the world, then we should feel confused and be always ready to put on rags. If we happen to be better served at table than we would have been in the world, then we must renounce all pleasures of the table while thanking God interiorly for His goodness in having us find pleasure in providing for our needs and, nevertheless, never being attached to this pleasure and raising our mind and heart to God.

When we are wanting in the practice of these virtues of poverty and mortification, we must humiliate ourselves for the fact asking pardon of God, taking the resolution of greater watchfulness over ourselves, but of not worrying and thinking we have failed against the obligation of tending towards perfection. My dear child, we must, in general, preserve a great liberty of mind and heart in the practice of the Christian and religious virtues. The laws of Jesus Christ are not laws of slavery, however strict they may be: they are laws of grace, of love. We are called, as St. Paul tells us, to the liberty of the children of God.

Obedience, my dear son, will deliver us from any interior troubles. Once a cause has been decided for you, never come back to it. You are to conduct yourself throughout your life, according to the evangelical maxims, as a little child, who willingly does without any reasoning or questioning what he is ordered to do. Obedience, practiced in a spirit of faith, attacks pride directly. You are busy, for example, with some kind of work. You are not doing it to attract to yourself the esteem of men, from the time that you do it through obedience, but to obey God Who asks it of you through your Superiors and your Heads. When the malignant thought comes to you that you are doing this or that to attract the esteem of men, when, I say, this thought comes to you, do not worry, but simply say to yourself: that is not true!

Whether you are given manual work to do or when you are employed in teaching – what difference does it make? Never have any other idea than to obey God and superlatively despise any contrary idea. Nevertheless, you ought to be very glad that you were given instead of an employment honorable according to human standards, the duty of washing the dishes or of sweeping the street gutters. We must find nothing great or small, glorious or humiliating, in all that is in the order of God. It is thus that you will always tend towards perfection, in seeking only God, in loving only God. But do not worry about the contrary sentiments of your nature. Always act with great simplicity. The groundwork will never be lacking of you, if you are always faithful in purifying your heart, in always mortifying your passions, in cutting away all attachment to self, but without trouble or anxiety.

You ought to have no worry, my dear son, if Father Meyer were to send you to teach a class. In that case you should have an understanding with this Good Father and frequently open your soul to him in all simplicity, following then with the same simplicity the counsels and orders he would give you. You would thus be making a trial which could become very useful to you. The free periods you might have you could devote to study, so as to prepare yourself for the examination of the month of March, in view of obtaining a certificate of the second degree. I am leaving Father Meyer absolutely free to send you or to send anyone

else, according to the need. Also write to me from time to time, but always with frankness and simplicity. I hope that we shall realize the accomplishment of the designs of God upon you.

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The following letter is addressed to one of the members of the community of Layrac, whose religious situation, since the establishment was in the hands of Father Lalanne, was not clearly defined.

925 – TO BROTHER DÜRR, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, January 14, 1837

I am very mindful, my dear son, of the greetings and good wishes you express to me in your letter of January 1 and I thank you sincerely for them. I understood from your letter that you felt you were not entirely free in writing to me to say whatever you wished. Nevertheless, it seems to me that you do have this liberty, and also that of living in Layrac as a true religious, without affectation, without blaming and censuring all those who would not be declared as belonging to the Society of Mary. You have already lost too much time in the views of the Society which are those of God upon you.

So as not to disturb Father Lalanne in the execution of the plan he has drawn up for himself, I wish that you would pass this entire school-year in Layrac, and that you honestly render him whatever services will depend upon you, but on condition, 1. that you will be able to perform all your religious exercises, as well as accommodating yourself to the general run of the house, not only by a concession on the part of Father Lalanne, but also by a silent toleration of all the professors and teachers involved. You understand, my dear son, that you are to put yourself above all human respect. Would a real child of Mary still fear what men might think of his entire devotedness to Jesus Christ? 2. I desire that, in the course of the year, you be able to obtain the double diploma of Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Sciences. I shall not add other degrees. You will easily recall the counsels I gave you in our last interviews. You might, nevertheless, be able to add, as the third number, the free correspondence between you and myself.

After having carefully read this letter and having well grasped its spirit, go and find Father Lalanne and speak to him in the sense of this letter, listen to his answers and pass them over to me, as literally as possible. I have reason to presume that Father Lalanne will derive pleasure from it, and will be the first to encourage you.

Receive, my dear son, the expression of my tender friendship.

P.S. After having well reflected, I am sending you this letter through Father Lalanne himself. Let me know that you have received it and carefully follow the directions it contains.

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926 – TO FATHER BARDENET, ACEY

Bordeaux, January 15, 1837

Reverend and Respectable Cooperator:

I have been informed rather imperfectly about all that has happened in Marast. The opening of the boarding school took place unknown to me, although I had not forbidden it. I have placed several subjects, whom I had left at the disposal of Brother Galliot, only ten to twelve days after the opening of the establishment about which I was ignorant. The two he still have and himself, the third, could very well look after the needs of the first establishment. At least, I shall send him in exchange for Brother Perriès, a subject having a certificate of the higher degree, and, finally, that he may be entirely free for his own work, I am sending him someone fully capable of building up the domain of Marast. He will have for himself, the high authority, or rather, the directive council that is going to be established there.[1]

I shall always have my eyes on this establishment and I hope to supply it with all the subjects it will need. My need for subjects is all the greater, since, without starting new establishments, I must furnish a greater number to most of those already existing, by reason of their constant increase and development. There are establishments, even of primary teaching, that call for nine, ten, or even eleven subjects. Almost everywhere, it became necessary to practically double the original number of teachers.

The two Novitiates of Courtefontaine and Ebersmunster are my consolation and my hope, as there is great fervor in both. The novices are not yet numerous, and it is only with great sorrow that, in my greatest needs, I must call on some whose formation is not yet complete. I thank you for the regard you have had for the Novitiate of Courtefontaine, the extreme poverty of which is well known to you. Father Meyer tells me of it each time he writes. The boarding school of Courtefontaine is also making progress, both as regards the number and the quality of the pupils. At this time, I think there are fifty, without counting the day-pupils. Forty have made their First Communion at Christmas-time, etc., etc.

I don’t see, Reverend Father, any difficulty in your purchasing the large house acquired by Reverend Pastor of Menotey and in putting it under the management of Brother

[1] According to the Ordinance of which there is question at the end of Letter 920.

Galliot and the Meyer brothers.[1] I shall say to you only that the younger Meyer has not yet made his perpetual vows, although he has very good dispositions. You will come to an understanding with Father Leo, his brother.

Brother Galliot was urging me to send this Brother Benedict to him in Marast, because he could strictly be spared in Courtefontaine and because he has all sorts of excellent talents, but I do not think I can satisfy him on this point, as the young man does not yet seem to me to be sufficiently mature, and I think he would be exposed under Brother Galliot. Furthermore, he is preparing for his examination for the bachelorship of letters. However, I think we shall be able to dispose of him for Menotey. I shall give you, for the coming All Saints Day, all the subjects I shall honestly have at my disposal. If they are not numerous, I shall add to them successively, in proportion as they can be trained and as the establishment develops. This place is well located, but the reparations and furnishings, however modest they may be, seem to me to amount to more than the price of the place itself. Anyhow, I believe great good can and will be done there, especially since the Dammartin foundation has not taken place.

I am deeply grateful for the kind remembrance that prompts you, as well as Father Perrodin, to offer me greetings and good wishes at the times of this New Year. I believe in their complete sincerity. Be pleased to accept those I am offering the Lord for you and Father Perrodin. I beg both of you to believe me your very humble and obedient servant...

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[1] Fr. Leo Meyer and his younger brother, Benedict. The foundation of Menotey, prepared for several months, never took place.

The answers to the New Year greetings and good wishes to the religious of Saint Remy follow.

927 – TO THE PROFESSORS OF SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 17, 1837

TO MY DEAR CHILDREN OF SAINT REMY, BROTHERS CLOUZET, GAUSSENS, LAUGEAY, DAVID AND HUNOLT.

I willingly consent, my dear children, still to live as long as I can be of service to you, and especially to assure your eternal happiness. By your vocation to the religious state, you have entered on the way that leads directly to eternal life. You understand well that you are to walk upon it, not to say, run, with fervor. I shall try to help you upon it as much as it will depend upon me, both by my prayers and the counsels I may be able to give you. May the Lord deign to shower upon you and all those confided to your care, the abundance of His graces from the very first day of this New Year!

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928 – TO THE WORKING BROTHERS OF SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 17, 1837

To my dear children of the Community of Working Brothers of Saint Remy, Brother Clouzet, first Head, Brothers Bousquet, Rosette, Seguin, Cretin, Claude Mouchet, Edel, Jacques, Salmon, Haas, Ravoir, Saras and all the novices and postulants.[1]

You have anticipated me, my dear children, by the greetings and good wishes you expressed to me at this renewal of the year, but I doubt very much that you have done so by the sentiments which have inspired them to you. I desire your good so much; I desire so

[1] Bro. Alexander Jacques, 1806-1840, from Esserval, Jura, was a working Brother of great devotedness and of great simplicity, holding faithfully to his religious exercises and loving the study of religion. He was always employed in St. Remy, in the work of the fields and in the care of the cattle, and died in a most edifying manner.

Bro. Jean Claude Saras, 1803-1870, from Accolans, Doubs, was first in charge of the shop of weavers in Besançon. He then filled the functions of porter in St. Remy, 1835, and in Paris, 1855, where he ended his long career. He was a man of honest and affable manners, skillful, faithful and discreet, having all the qualities needed for his work and by it, rendering the most precious services.

Bro. Cretin did not remain in the Society. The other religious mentioned at the head of this letter, have been pointed out before.

much that you prepare yourselves for heaven. You will succeed in it, if you live as true religious. Let us remain in the closest sentiments of union.

To this end, my dear children, receive my fatherly blessing.

The following letters inform us of the conclusion of the painful incident relative to the delivery of the papers of the Society. Upon the advice of M. de Saget, Father Chaminade had brought the matter before the civil Tribunal, which, by two successive Ordinances, over-ruled the pretensions of Brother David and prescribed the fixing of seals on the papers in question.

A last and affectionate instance on the part of the Founder determined Brother David to do it by himself, without the intervention of public force. Shortly after, he quitted the Razac mansion to settle down in the Madeleine, where he was to end his long career in the company of Father Chaminade, but not without again causing him embarrassment on several occasions by reason of his ugly character.

929 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 19, 1837

You see, my dear son, the sad extremity to which you have forced me, and the painful choice I had to make following the advice of my counselors, to bring to an end a condition of things that was troublesome to more than myself.

Nevertheless, there is still time. If you want it so, these rigorous measures can cease by the delivery that you would consent to make of the papers which I am forced to claim.

Believe that, in spite of all, I bear for you a sincere affection. Sacrifice the pretensions which only you regard as just, and you will instantly find me ready to prove to you, by my disposition to welcome the resolutions you would take as regards your future, the tender concern that I have for your old age, and my desire to contribute to the happiness of your remaining days on earth.

* * * *

930 – TO THE CAPITULARY VICARS GENERAL OF THE DIOCESE OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 21, 1837

VERY REVEREND DEAR FATHERS

The interest which you have deigned to take in the affair of the Society of Mary with Brother David Monier, its former Secretary General, imposes on me the duty of notifying you that it has just been happily terminated, and with practically no scandal at all.

Although the decision which you had the kindness of expressing at the end of the account of this affair which I had the honor of placing before you did not seem to overcome his obstinacy, it did not fail to shake him somewhat. It will also have increased the impression of insubordination and injustice on his part which my counselors in the civil order may have received. This impression was communicated to the President of the lower court. Brother David Monier, now greatly shaken, heard his arrest pronounced without a murmur. The judges retired, and all is being arranged amicably. Father Caillet, who will have the honor of giving you, from me, this letter of sincere thanks, will be careful to give you all the details that might be of any interest to you.

Be pleased to accept the tribute of profound respect and deep gratitude with which I am, Very Reverend Vicars General your humble and obedient servant.

* * * *

931 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 24, 1837

I have received, my dear son, with great tenderheartedness, in your letter of last December 30, the expression of your personal sentiments and those of all the members of your Community, as well as the good wishes you offer me at the beginning of this New Year. You express yourself very well when you say that I have a sort of predilection for all my children of Saint Remy, and my predilection is not blind. I desire that this establishment by its regularity and fervor be the model for all the others. I have several times been frustrated in my expectations, but never disconcerted, and now less than ever, for you all seem to me full of good will.

To place myself in a position to be of greater usefulness to you, I ask that you or Father Fontaine let me know from time to time of any obstacles that might be in the way of the progress which each of you are to make in religious life, and also the obstacles in the establishment that might be paralyzing its patronage. I have just learned that Brother Lambert,[1] whom Courtefontaine had sent to replace you in the class of the young pupils,

[1] Bro. Félix Lambert, 1810-1865, born in St. Loup, Haute-Saône, after a trial in the Grand Seminary, entered the Society of Mary, in Courtefontaine in 1835 and was employed in primary teaching. Although now knowing German, he successfully directed the Schools of Soultz, 1839, and Kaysersberg, 1842. He

had been resent to Courtefontaine. Doubtless, Saint Remy had an opinion about him contrary to that of Courtefontaine. This class, I am told, is composed of only three little children. During the time that you will still have to conduct it, do it in such a manner so as not to tire and wear yourself out. It seems to me that this ought to be easy for you.

Give Father Fontaine special greetings from me, and tell him that I have received no news at all from Brother Baillard. Are affairs to be treated in absolute silence?

Is Brother Justin Soleil making progress in religious life? Is he correcting himself of his defects? Is he becoming more civil? When answering me these three questions, tell him to answer them himself and, in the same letter that has his answers, add your own particular reflections. If he is abandoned to himself, he will never correct himself, because he will never know himself sufficiently.

I am answering young Dormoy. All the defects you reproach him with, and that he seems to admit, would not prove, it seems to me, that he is not capable of a more elevated state of mind and soul, but you have done well in putting him at the lowest step, for then it will be easier for him to correct himself. There is likelihood that he will succeed, if he is closely watched. He doesn't have great intelligence, but there are in him principles of morality from which much good can be drawn.

I shall be much obliged to you, my dear son, if you will send me the address of Brother Baillard.

I shall add here no special advice regarding your spiritual conduct. In finishing this letter, I shall repeat to you always to work at becoming an interior man, a man of faith and of mental prayer. If you take this general advice with prudence and discretion, it will in no way harm you, I hope, in the effort to regain your health.

Count, my dear son, on my tender friendship and my sincere devotedness.

* * * *

The work in Salins is in full prosperity. In order to manifest his gratitude towards the benefactors of the house – Thérèsa Reverchon, Victoire de Perrey and Jeannette Devaux – Father Chaminade affiliated them to the Society. We here reproduce one of the Diplomas of Affiliation, in which is manifested all the refinement of the sentiments of the Founder.

932 – TO SISTER THÉRÈSA REVERCHON, SALINS[1]

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was afterwards the founder of the school in Rambervillers in 1852. He died at Courtefontaine with great sentiments of resignation and abandonment to the will of God.

[1] Sister Thérèsa Reverchon was a former religious of the Convent of Ursulines, suppressed by the Revolution, in which the school confided to the Society had just been established (See Letter 527 and 705).

Bordeaux, January 26, 1837

DIPLOMAS OF AFFILIATION

You have adopted, my respectable Sister, my children of Salins as your own children. In their regard, you are conducting yourself as a real mother and that is the name being given to you in the city of Salins. I was deeply touched by that fact, in the two visits I made to their establishment in this city. It is the Holy Spirit, Spouse of the august Mary, who has inspired you with these beautiful and generous sentiments.

Following these considerations and knowing your tender devotion toward the divine Mary and your zeal in favoring and extending her cult, I thought it my duty to affiliate you, as I affiliate you by these presents, in perpetuity to the Society of Mary, and admit you to share in the prayers and good works of the said Society. And in consequence, the knowledge of your affiliation will be given to the diverse establishments of the Society of Mary.

The present Diploma will be inscribed in full in the register of the central House and in a special register of the establishment of Salins, independently of the List of Founders and Protectors of the Society of Mary.

I invite you, my respected Sister, to say devoutly everyday, in union with all of us, the short prayer of Saint Bernard. “Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, etc.,” and three Hail Marys. These three Hail Marys are in honor of the three great prerogatives of Mary.[1]

Given in Bordeaux, on January 26, 1837, under our seal and the counterseal of our private Secretary.

* * * *

The difficulties relative to the foundation of Saint Claude that Father Chaminade drew attention to in his preceding letter to Father de Montgaillard are not yet solved. Hence the following letter. It also shows us the embarrassment in which the Good Father found himself, being powerless to satisfy the demands for foundations that were coming in from all sides.

933 – TO FATHER DE MONTGAILLARD,
SAINT CLAUDE

Bordeaux, January 31, 1837

[1] Her Immaculate Conception, her Divine Maternity and her glorious Assumption.

RIGHT REVEREND VICAR GENERAL

It is very true that we must attribute to the thoughtlessness of Brother Galliot a great part of the inconveniences we are experiencing in the false position of the Schools of Saint Claude. The public, which is generally unfair, might attribute them all to him, whilst we, who know practically all that is involved, can excuse him up to a certain point. In the first place, Brother Galliot was not sent to Saint Claude to judge of the suitability of the location, but rather to decide upon the furniture of the schools. The Reverend Pastor never offered him this location, except in the supposition of the possession of the big house and its dependencies, and in some cases, only of the dependencies that could be easily acquired. Furthermore, Brother Galliot was so sure of the personal fortune and of the generosity of the Reverend Pastor, that he could never see anything but a vast and commodious establishment in what had already been made. Nevertheless, Brother Galliot realized his mistake, little by little, and easily understood he was involved in a complicated affair. In the beginning, and until my arrival in Saint Claude, I had been given to understand that the Reverend Pastor of the Cathedral was not, as it were, the helper of His Lordship, but that the establishment was really his own work.

The conclusion that you draw, Right Reverend Vicar General, from the wise reflections that you make, is that this establishment must be sustained by all kinds of efforts and even of sacrifices. The establishment will not be able to do the good we would have desired, even if it does a little. Possibly, with time and patience, Providence will open means by which to get out of the trammels in which it now finds itself, be it on the part of the city and the wise persons found in it, or on the part of the Society of Mary itself. Already, easily foreseeing the great inconveniences of a sudden abandonment of this establishment, I invited Brother Gouverd to practice the strictest economy, and not to contract any debts. You yourself have the kindness to put into it an entirely paternal interest and so, I do not doubt that you will succeed in procuring for it at least what will be essential and suitable.

You do me the honor of telling me that the Reverend Pastor is disposed to transfer to the Society of Mary the property of the house of the Schools, but, would you kindly observe that, in accepting it we are taking, at least indirectly, the obligation of maintaining the establishment. But, what need is there for hurry? If we can find another locality, one which would be suitable to the views we have concerning all the needs of the city, will it then not be time to invite the Reverend Pastor to sell the house and to apply the sale price to the transferred establishment? In the meantime, for the sake of prudence, let the Reverend Pastor issue a written note, leaving this house out of his inheritance. This note could remain in the Archbishop's secretariat.

If there were question only, Right Reverend Vicar General, of making efforts to give the Reverend Pastor of Sellières[1] the subjects he needs, I would make eager haste. However, all efforts would be vain, if, in fact, there are none available in the Society, and a part of my correspondence is employed in mournful complaints over the refusal of new establishments. I can promise only for a future on which even I cannot fix the date. My refusal to Father Saron[2] is all the more painful to me, since he makes his request through the mediation of the Bishop of Saint Claude. However, His Lordship will be able to understand that *that cannot be, cannot be.* Not even a week ago, I was obliged to refuse another establishment, for which another Bishop was to intervene, since it was to become advantageous to his diocese. One of the first letters I shall write after this one, will be a refusal to a former Rector of the Academy, today Vicar General[3] who writes to me in the name of his Archbishop for an establishment in his capital city. Public instruction has become in general so faulty and degenerate (and so rapidly) in many places in France that there is a general feeling of alarm.

Our Novitiate in Courtefontaine is doing well and has great fervor, but the number of novices is small and the resources for maintaining it are slim indeed. Brother Genre, who has replaced Brother Pelleteret in Saint Claude, is one of its first pupils.

I am with profound respect, Right Reverend Vicar General, etc.

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934 – Bordeaux, February 6, 1837

RECORD OF THE ELECTION AND INSTALLATION OF THE

SUPERIORESS OF THE MISÉRICORDE

We, the undersigned, first Superior of the Miséricorde, having transported ourselves to this establishment, have proceeded to the election and installation of the Superioress for this house to replace the first Superioress and Foundress, Mlle de Lamourous, recently deceased.

After the customary prayers, and conformably to the Constitutions of the House, the fourteen Directresses have proceeded to vote by secret ballot. The inspection of the ballot-box has to our great satisfaction shown as the unanimous choice for Superioress, Mlle Laure de Labordère, under the religious name of St. John of God.[1] We have immediately

[1] A school was opened in 1838 in Sellières, a small place in the diocese of St. Claude. It functioned until 1855.
[2] Pastor of Sellières.
[3] See Letter 943
[1] As regards Mlle Laure de Labordère, see Letter 144.

proclaimed her Superioress of the House of the Miséricorde, replacing Mlle de Lamourous, recently deceased.

We have received her promise of observing and of having observed, inviolably, the Constitutions and Regulations, be it on the part of the Directresses or on that of the penitents, and we have placed the registers in her hands. We have then gone to the Church, where all the young ladies of the Miséricorde were gathered and have again proclaimed the newly-elected Superioress.

The singing of the *Te Deum* brought the pious ceremony to a close. We were assisted in our functions by Father Georges Caillet, Father Andre Marie de Maignol, Pastor of Pian,[2] Father Marie Bernard Lansac, Honorary Canon and Chaplain of the Miséricorde, and Father François Prost, who have all signed the present record.

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[2] Regarding Father de Maignol, nephew of Mother de Lamourous, see the *Apôtre de Marie IX*, p. 121, the story of his vocation, prophesied by Father Chaminade, during the Revolution.

935 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 13, 1837

I have read, my dear son, with interest, the deliberations of the Council,[1] in which I saw the existence of a very fine spirit. I have confidence that we shall come to the point of knowing what God may be asking of us in a very precise manner. I am sending my lengthy observations to Father Fontaine, who is to communicate them to each one of the Council members before they are read in the Council itself (...)

The death of Brother J. B. Pelleteret is really striking in its causes. Father Chevaux attributed his state of languor to a kind of madness ascribed to penance. One would not think so, in reflecting on the fine sentiments that have always animated him in his last illness and until his death. Here is something extraordinary and not easily explained. I would like to have a short history of the young man, especially from the time he gave himself over to indiscreet penances and that, even against obedience. You will write up this history with Father Chevaux who was able to appreciate his interior sentiments since his arrival at Saint Remy.

Brother Joncas must have left for Saint Remy, I think, on the first of the current month. I am going to write to Saint Antonin for the young carpenter.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable attachment.

P.S. I shall shortly write to Courtefontaine to have two masons sent to you. Father Meyer had already offered me one to fix up the walls of the park. Perhaps there may be some delay, because I permitted him to have another cistern made, indispensable for the house.

The Novitiate of the workers will, really, always be in Saint Remy. I know that Father Meyer is planning an ecclesiastical Novitiate, distinct from the Novitiate of the Primary Normal School, and I am answering neither yes nor no, because the steps he is taking with this in view have only good for the Society. However, if this succeeds, it will be a long drawn-out affair.

* * * *

936 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 13, 1837

[1] See Letter 920.

Just a few words, my dear son, in answer to your letter of the third of the current month.

Your fervor will grow in proportion as you despoil yourself of yourself, to love and to seek only God. I do not place fervor in a palpable ardor, but in the practice of the unique love of God.

Always take good care of young Philippe Dormoy, as of the others, but always with discretion and prudence.

The voyage to Saint Remy[1] will have made Brother Lambert gain victories of obedience which will prove very useful to him.

Do not spare your health for yourself alone, but because God requires it of you. In His extreme goodness or rather in His extreme mercy: *Adhuc longa via restat tibi*. "There still remains to you a long way to go."[2]

I shall write to Father Meyer on the subject of Brother Bourgeois. Independently of the little class of beginners, he could be help to Brother Dumont.[3] They say he likes the study as well as the achievements of the upper levels.

You or Father Fontaine, one or the other, will have to use greater authority or severity with Brother Justin. If he remains plunged in his self-sufficiency for some time yet, you will have lost another subject.

Brother Athias has been sufficiently tried. If, to prepare his leaving, you think you should have him pass by Courtefontaine have him do so; but after notifying Father Meyer to detain him for observation for only a few days.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

Father Lalanne, left to himself, is always struggling in the midst of his financial embarrassments. The following letter makes reference to the promissory note of twenty thousand francs subscribed by a postulant of the Daughters of Mary, Mlle Aurière, in religion, Sister Hope, at the time of the acquisition of Layrac (see Letters 779 and 791), and which the latter had reclaimed when Father Lalanne took over the establishment as his own.

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[1] See Letter 931.
[2] Fr. Chaminade seems thus to have prophesied to Fr. Chevaux, the long career which awaited him. In spite of his bad health, Fr. Chevaux lived to be eighty years old and died as third Superior General of the Society.
[3] Professor of an upper class.

937 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, February 15, 1837

Mother General in a few words told me of the visit you paid to her and of the bitterness you injected into the interview you had with her. I do not think I answered her anything else than to get out of the affair of which there is question, as much as would be possible, since, really, the affair concerns Mlle Aurière and M. Ducos, her counselor and advisor.

In your letter of the tenth of the current month, you seem to want to treat fully, as we say, the affair of the promissory note for twenty thousand francs. According to you, this would no longer be a simple lack of refinement, as there would even be injustice in it. Is there no injustice, you say, in withdrawing a promise which has had a first accomplishment in the note which was made to your order and on the confidence of which you made some loans? Mlle Aurière claims, as a reason for withdrawing her written promise, that you did not fulfill the condition under which she had made the note in your name. You answer: “I have always had, and still have, the intention of working for the Society of Mary. I have sufficiently manifested my intention in the writings that can be procured.” Mlle Aurière answers: “I am able to judge the intentions in themselves only by the actions. I can judge only from the facts, but all the facts proclaim that the establishment of Layrac does not belong to the Society.”

All this may be reduced to this question: Is the condition of forming in Layrac an establishment of the Society of Mary, met by the fact that the member of the Society, always wanting to work for it, is working in such a way that the Society counts as nothing for him and that the Society disavows him? It is not suitable to me to resolve this question. I would not believe myself able to write to Mlle Aurière. Since she has withdrawn her funds from your hands, she is, nevertheless, relieved from her promise. Nor shall I write to her in a contrary sense, since my position is to remain neutral.

It is not I, my dear son, who have given the idea, directly or indirectly, to Mlle Aurière or to M. Ducos to withdraw the promissory note, but who, for a long time, have delayed the request for it. When I wanted to guard myself against certain debts of the Society which burdened the boarding school, I made a memorandum which I sent to M. Ducos. At the sight of this Memorandum, M. Ducos was much saddened, not only because of my affair with you, but especially because of the promissory note affair of which he had been counselor. He wanted to attack you immediately. I did not think it suitable to entangle affairs in this way. For the same reason, when I saw your position, I ceased to reclaim against the wrongs you were doing to the Society by the transfer of the Saint Marie Boarding School on your own responsibility, and I cannot even now quiet my conscience but by the proposal always to draw up a memorandum, in which I shall represent our respective situations and following which I shall make up my mind, according to the judgment of upright and enlightened men. Furthermore, I believe it would be advantageous for you to

have a definite settlement of our respective account. If I died before that, you might have to be very worried, but you would be sheltered from everything by a sound transaction.

I am very much pleased that your accounts are in good order and that there is real economy in your big household. Brother Auguste seemed to me to be very glad of this fact.

I am astonished at not receiving any answer from either Brother Dürr[1] or Brother Centrain. As regards Brother Chopard, I am beginning no longer to believe in his sentiments of repentance.

Receive, my dear son, the continual assurance of my tender and inviolable friendship.

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A new letter, this time from Brother Galliot, on the organization of Marast and the relations between the Director of the establishment and the Manager of the property.

938 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, MARAST

Bordeaux, February 20, 1837

It is certain, my dear son, that in every establishment there must be a first Head. It is not less certain that a large establishment must have secondary Heads, because the first Head is not able to look after everything. Independently of the institution of the boarding school, the establishment of Marast happens to be in possession of quite a large property, well able to absorb almost all the application and attention of one man. The Head cannot be this man, but this man must depend on the Head. He depends on him, not in an arbitrary manner, but, 1. for his religious conduct; 2. for the accomplishment of the duties of his charge, which here is not the general charge of the Head of work but of the manager of the property. The employment of the Head of work is necessarily divided in Marast. You are keeping the first part of it. It is the one which concerns the temporalities of the boarding school. From this short sketch, there results the necessity of two registers and of two cash boxes. One cash box can give or lend to the other cash box, in the cases of needs foreseen by the Regulations, but there is to be nothing arbitrary, for from arbitrary conduct are born anarchy and disorder.

Brother Clouzet had been charged with furnishing a loan, in goods or in money, for all that would be necessary for development of the property. He wrote to me, when Brother Pelleteret went from Saint Claude to Marast, that he would not do any lending directly, but that he would have someone lend to Brother Pelleteret.

[1] See Letter 925.

It seemed to me suitable and even necessary that Brother Clouzet be a member of the extraordinary Council of Marast, every time that there would be question of dealing with the improvement of the property, without in any way interfering with the presidency of the Council, as of the ordinary Council, which belongs to you are first Head of the establishment of Marast. It is altogether suitable that Brother Clouzet be a member of this extraordinary Council: 1. by reason of the advance payments he is able to make to the establishment; 2. because he is provided with a notarized certification in regular order to represent me in Marast; 3. I would be able to add by reason of the experience he has already acquired, and that years ago, it was under him that Brother Pelleteret was trained in agriculture. You yourself admit not to have sufficient knowledge for the management or exploitation of the grounds, and if you had it, you would not have the time to put it to good use. It will be a great help if you take a general look at things, that you may keep them all in order.

As to pecuniary means and transactions to be made, I am going to write to Brother Pelleteret, as well as to Brother Clouzet. I said that there should be two registers and two cash boxes. Each one of these registers is always to contain all the receipts and expenses. They could be called registers of the fluctuation of the cash box. They are independent of the particular registers which each one can and is to keep, to give himself an account of the different parts of his administration. If neither you nor Brother Pelleteret find yourselves sufficiently informed to open these registers, I shall charge Brother Clouzet with this task, which is so important for Marast. He will have the further duty of giving it an occasional glace. So as not to multiply trips, he will be able to do it when he goes to Marast for the extraordinary Council. I am very glad that all these things are being done before the publication of the projected Ordinance.[1] Furthermore, there will be nothing new in the Ordinance for the establishment of the Council other than what is specific and particular to Marast.

You speak to me in your letter of the confusion that there might be at my death, and it is to avoid it, my dear son, that God does me the favor of occupying myself about it every day and, so to say, continually[2] – my disorders have existed for several years already. Well, my dear son, it is for this reason that I try to apply to each establishment the order called for by our Constitutions. As regards the confusion that you hear spoken of, it has existed and made so much headway only because of unwillingness to follow the Constitutions, and because certain Heads had given themselves over to arbitrary ways of conduct. You will learn with pleasure that, at present, all is about pacified, settled, regulated, and I hope to be able to give you and to all our former Heads a consoling estimate of the position of the General Administration of the Society of Mary. What you call confusion, is already completely stopped.

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[1] See Letter 920.

[2] The thought of Fr. Chaminade seems to be the following: To avoid the confusion that there might be at my death, God does me the favor of occupying myself with my death everyday…It is seen, in fact, in the letters of this time, that Fr. Chaminade makes frequent allusion to his death.

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939 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 23, 1837

Brother Galliot, my dear son, and Brother Pelleteret have written to me at about the same time on the subject of Marast, of the visit you paid there, and of the interview you had with them in Saint Remy. I have answered Brother Galliot on all the affairs that are of interest to Marast, in particular, what concerns the property of Marast. I am having a copy of my long answer to Brother Galliot passed over to you and I am confiding to you the carrying out of the orders that I had planned on giving (...)

Brother Rollinet, whom Saint Remy ceded to Saint Hippolyte, is strongly asked for in Saint Marie aux Mines as a fourth man. He would have charge of the sacristy and would teach what is called the night class. This night class is very numerous, and it is a really good work. Our young men have undertaken it, but the work is too heavy. Brother Molinier will succumb. Father Clerc is completely willing to surrender Brother Rollinet provided young Dormoy, who is in Saint Remy, is given him. This young man does nothing of any importance in Saint Remy. If it is possible to replace him, send him to Saint Hippolyte, as he will be as well trained under his brother as he would be in Saint Remy and I shall recommend him to him. Lately, I sent you long messages which, by this time, you surely must have received.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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940 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, February 27, 1837

Your letter of the sixteenth of the present month, my dear son, whilst telling me of the delivery of the document asked for,[1] affirmatively resolves the question on which I did not think it my duty to state my opinion. I shall only admit to you, that I did not remain convinced by your method of argument.

The memorandum I am planning for the relief of my conscience is solely for me and for my conscience. If I have an obligation in conscience to place before you requests for indemnity, I hope to observe, in your regard, all the possible conventions. Should my memory lead me into error, the affection I have for you would sufficiently recall the fact to

[1] The promissory note claimed by Mlle Aurière. See letter 937.

me. In rendering your position in my regard hard and painful, you have rendered mine in your regard very said and touchy (...)

Receive, my dear son, the token of my tender and sincere devotedness.

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The long letter which follows, addressed to Mother St. Vincent, treats at first of the question of Layrac in its relation to the Daughters of Mary. It then exposes, in one page of the highest interest, the views of the Founder on the role of spiritual direction in his double religious family.

941 – TO MOTHER ST. VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, February 28, 1837

My dear child, I have somewhat delayed my answer to your letter of the twentieth of the current month because I was working the past several days for the very Institute of the Daughters of Mary.[1] However, I am setting aside this work to answer you, and also to answer the letter of Father Lalanne concerning the same affair. With this letter, you will find: 1. a copy of the one which Father Lalanne wrote to me at the same time that he wrote to you; 2. a copy of my answer to Father Lalanne; 3. the outline of the answer that you are to make to him.

Although Father Lalanne always protests his sincere attachment to the Society of Mary, and insists that his split over what is temporal in no way harms what is spiritual, considering the intentions he claims always to have had to work only in the interests of the Society, he seems to be always under an illusion. In fact, the illusion must be very great and very strong not to permit him to see that his acts are contradictorily opposed to the intentions which he declares to have had. Furthermore, of what significance are favorable intentions when his actions must be constantly disavowed by those for whose advantage they are performed, actions which do immense harm to those who really should be favored? If this were not an illusion, it would seemingly be a touch of insanity, so great would be the inconsistency present. But, my dear child, I do not want to have you discuss it with him, since you see that I am trying to avoid doing so myself. However, if M. Ducos judges it appropriate to answer him, and has not already done so, he would be able to make some similar observations to him.

Bless the Lord, my dear daughter, for having deigned to open your eyes to the truth, while entirely dissipating the serious illusions you were under.[2] It is rare that similar illusions are ever entirely set aside, other than by dint of signal graces and corresponding

[1] At the revision of the Constitutions of the Institute.
[2] Allusion to the conflict of 1832.

fidelity. It is rare to find prodigal children, who, entering into themselves, say like the one in the Gospel parable: “My father, I have sinned against Heaven” or “I have offended God;” “I have sinned against You,” or “I am inexcusable in Thy sight.” It is nevertheless true that the prodigal child could have found excuses, based on his extreme youth, his inexperience, the fickleness of his character, etc.

You ask me, my dear child, if the correspondence of Father Lalanne may not be harmful to the superioress of Arbois. It is certain that he has some bad principles, according to which he nurses his illusions, but he is not disposed to propagate these principles, if he is not put in a position to do so. Beg the superioress to have with him, only such correspondence as honesty requires, or that the literary instruction of the convent’s pupils would call for. If, in fact, he came to the point of giving her false maxims, she should pass over to you either his letter or at least an exact extract of the article containing the bad principle.

The oath which Father Lalanne takes in the letter which he writes to you is to have you believe that he has fulfilled the condition required by Sister Hope. You will recall that he expresses himself in this way: “I have said it, and I insist upon it, in the face of heaven and earth, that I belong to the Society of Mary, and all that is civilly mine belongs to it.” It appears that he reasons in this way: Since my person belongs to the Society, all that I have belongs to it also, and I want and understand it so. The promissory note has been given to me to form in Layrac an establishment of the Society. I have fulfilled the condition, I, a member of the Society, belonging to the Society, I have bought the old abbey, I have had it repaired. It is I, a member of the Society who runs the establishment. I have fulfilled the condition. The illusion of the reasoning rests upon the fact that he has acquired Layrac, to which Layrac he has made all the payments against the wish of the Society, and it is for this reason that the Society disavows the establishment, although it does not disavow his person as a religious. If he is governing the establishment of Layrac, it is not properly speaking as a superior who would have been named to this establishment, but by a personal concession, in view of the position in which he placed himself, to run it in his own name and on his own account in such a way that the Society has no other right over him than that of correcting him, if his conduct and his life were in opposition to the religious spirit of the Society. He always preserves a participation in the prayers and merits of the Society. But for that, it is not, as he says, an establishment of the Society. The Society disavows it and must disavow it, and the condition required by Sister Hope is really not fulfilled. There is no indication that Sister Hope wanted to give him a promissory note for twenty thousand francs for the purpose of forming there an establishment for the Society of Mary, whether this Society avowed or disavowed this establishment, provided that it was he, belonging spiritually to the Society, who bought it, directed it in his own name, making a complete split with everything that is temporal in the said Society.

Father Lalanne, during the last times that I was in Agen, ready to leave for Condom and Auch, felt the false position in which he had put himself. He wanted an explanation about it. I gave it to him very clearly, if briefly. He made objections to it. I answered with a

few words before getting into the carriage. These few words were none other than the announcement of my departure and of an interview we would have in Layrac at my return from Auch. At my return from Auch, all Layrac was already on vacation. Father Lalanne came to see me in Agen, from whence he was to leave for Toulouse. Before our interview, you told him the revelation made in Arbois. Our whole interview bore almost entirely upon his spiritual illness and his protestations of obedience, but, in truth, he knew the position he was in even better than I have described it. I took in all his reasons and arguments so that you would have a very clear idea of this affair and so that, in case of need, you might be able to dispel the scruples Sister Hope or any other person with interest in it, might have.

By this split, Father Lalanne does immense harm to the Society, harm which is easy to prove. To speak truly, what is for him the determining cause for the establishment of Layrac? It would not have taken place without your promise, and especially, without the promissory note of Sister Hope. I have then had reason, my dear child, to tell you that Sister Hope would meet his views and would have a determining motive in giving the same to the Society, while making up in part, for the harm she caused to the Society, although very innocently.

You tell me, in your letter, that the need of having spiritual helps is always being felt in Agen. I believe it and it has been foreseen, for this need is more or less great in all the other communities. It will be still more keenly felt in proportion as the branch planted in Auch will see greater development. It is also being felt in most of the establishments of the Society of Mary, great and small. If there were no other means of remedying the situation than what you call “spiritual helps coming from the clergy who happen to be on the spot,” we would have reason to despair, and, quite generally, all the Founders of religious orders of men and women, could have had the same fear and the same reason for despair. It is useless, at this time, my dear child, to explain to you all that happened in the different bodies, in regard to this subject. There is question of us, as there is question of you. The life of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary must be self-sufficient, and not depend on the crumbs that some might give it or even lavish upon it. The source of this life must be in the General Administration, forming secondary sources in the novitiates, and be in continual contact with all the communities. The food for this life must be in a truly spiritual direction, and this direction must be established and sufficiently developed to serve as a guide to the directresses. Real religious, well-formed and well-instructed in the principles of this life must make visitations more or less long, and give retreats according to needs in order to penetrate the religious sisters and the novices with the principles included in direction, whether in theory or in practice. In this way, the spirit of religious life would not depend essentially on the local secular priests, nor on religious in general of the Society of Mary, but on certain ones sent by its General Administration.

All that has been done up to the present time, my dear child, has been done according to this plan, but this plan has not been entirely carried out, either in theory or in practice. Not in theory, for the copy-book of direction that I gave you in the beginning, very good in itself, is not sufficient, as it presupposes in the Superioresses and in the mistresses

of notices qualities and an instruction which they can acquire only by experience, unless God gives it to them in some extraordinary manner.

Would you ask me, my dear child, why, before my death, I do not draw up the entire plan with which God has deigned to inspire me? I shall answer you: 1. that almost everyday, I am busy with it for myself and before God, and that it seems to me, not altogether uselessly; 2. that the affairs, be it of the Society or of the Institute, have until now absorbed practically all my time, either by secret incidents or formal contradictions, or again, for it must be said, by the lack of finances. I can arrange, regulate, and settle affairs only with pecuniary means, and they must be found; one hand must often wash the other, as we say. Add to these difficulties the new and almost sudden wrongs that Father Lalanne has brought upon the Society. This preoccupation and, so-to-say, this solicitude, takes from me very precious time which was to be employed in necessary writings for the benefit of the double order of Mary. I must tell you nevertheless, for your consolation, that our august Mother has deigned to protect us in such a way as to relieve the Society of more than one hundred thousand francs in debts, and if the wrongs caused by Father Lalanne are compensated by what I tell him as regards what my conscience requires of him and by the abandonment of the promises made to him by the convent, we shall begin to be able to make ends meet by ourselves without great concern, but also without the gains of the Saint Marie Boarding School of which Father Lalanne is depriving us.

But, you will ask me, will not the convent of Agen be deprived of immediate spiritual helps that it hoped to have from the establishment of Layrac? Again, a short answer. It my be deprived of them for more or less time. In the plan I am drawing up, the separation between Father Lalanne and the Society is only pertinent to temporalities. It is taken in such a manner as to have father Lalanne survive and maintain himself, if he really conducts himself with great wisdom. The religious or spiritual separation has not taken place, neither on his part nor on ours. All then depends upon an entire conversion and that is the grace you will ask, even by vow, all through the current year. If there is such an entire or complete conversion, there is a great probability that a part of the subjects, his collaborators, will also convert as sincerely, and then you will find the immediate helps for which you were hoping. However, in any case, these helps are not essential to the convent of Agen. Doubtless, we must not neglect Layrac, but let us work constantly to realize our plan, for that is what God expects of us.

In this plan, my dear child, you have prominent place, as you ought to be a model religious at the same time as being a religious seriously instructed in the true principles of the religious state in general, and of the religious state of Mary in particular, because you are not a religious in general, but a religious of Mary and Superioress General of the Daughters of Mary.

* * * *

A letter regarding hidden treasures!

942 – TO THE REVEREND GEORGES, VICAR GENERAL OF BORDEAUX[1]

RIGHT REVEREND VICAR GENERAL

I have received with respect the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on the twenty-second of the month that has just elapsed and I took note of the two letters of M. de Carrère Ventral[1] that you had the goodness of including in your envelope. You will find them in this one.

I thought the comedy finished, of which nearly two years ago, Father Rothéa had acquainted me with the first act, at the time I was still at Saint Remy, Haute Saône. Last summer during my stay at the abbey of Ebersmunster, I was ear-witness and, in part, eye-witness of the second act. It is an opinion quite spread in Alsace that the Benedictines who inhabited this old and very rich abbey had hidden in it a rich treasure and other precious objects. Four or five groups of people think they know the secret of the deposit. I thought it imprudent and dangerous to allow anyone to start searching. I even thought it my duty to have consultation made in Strasbourg on this subject. Since my departure from this old abbey, I had no longer heard talk about any proposition of searching for the treasure, though I am, nevertheless, in a very active correspondence with the heads of the establishment and I believed the comedy at an end.

M. de Carrère Ventral seems to occupy himself about it in a very serious manner. The importance which he attached to it has made me think about it again. I opened the Civil Code and I strengthened myself in the stand I had taken, that of no longer bothering about this affair. M. de Carrère Ventral will think, I believe, the same way when he has read attentively and with reflection No. 716 of the Civil Code.[2]

This old abbey used to belong to an old merchant, whose name I no longer remember right now. He was dispossessed of it and it was sold at auction. One of the members of the Society of Mary, Father Rothéa, acquired it. Then, as at present, there was talk of a hidden treasure. The merchant had had some searching done and, in spite of this rather widely-spread opinion, the place was not, for that reason, sold for a penny more.

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[1] J. B. Georges Massonais, 1805-1860, nephew of Cardinal de Cheverus and Vicar General of Bordeaux, became later on Bishop of Périgueux, (1840).
[1] M. J. de Carrère Ventral, Infantry Major in retirement, Knight of St. Louis and member of the Legion of Honor, 6, Garancière Street, Paris.
[2] "The ownership of a treasure belongs to the one who finds it on his property. If the treasure is found in the property of another, half of it belongs to the finder and half to the owner of the property. A treasure is anything hidden or buried, to the ownership of which no one can justify his claim, and which is discovered as the clear result of luck."

If it is true that there is a treasure and that God permits us to find it, we shall bless Him for it and all will be consecrated to the glory of His Name.

I am with profound respect, Right Reverend Vicar General, etc.

* * * *

On January 14, Father Chaminade had received from Father Calmels, former Rector of the Academy of Besançon and now Vicar General of Albi, the following letter:

943 – TO FATHER CALMELS, VICAR GENERAL OF ALBI

Bordeaux, March 2, 1837

RIGHT REVEREND VICAR GENERAL,

Your letter of the last January 14 recalls to me very flattering memories. I shall never lose sight of all the interest you have taken in the Society of Mary while you were rector of the Academy of Besançon. I experienced real joy when I learned that you had been named Bishop of Saint Flour, but I was filled with veneration when I knew that you had not accepted the nomination, and that such a refusal presupposes great virtue and merit!

The serious consideration that I gave the proposal of your letter, Right Reverend Vicar General, actually made me delay my answer to it, and since much more time has elapsed than I had previously figured upon to work out the difficulties. I am excusing myself to you for not having acknowledged sooner the receipt of your letter.

His Excellency, the Archbishop of Albi desires to have a normal school for day students in his capital city. The Revolution has not directly attacked our right and we continue to be authorized, but we are paralyzed by the fact itself, for the University, at great expense, is establishing normal schools in all the departments, especially where we have establishments. I do not as yet know what is happening in Albi, and since you have made known to me the intentions of His Excellency, I made a kind of search for subjects capable of meeting his requirements. I must admit to you that the Society of Mary has no subjects available at the present time. Never since its Foundation has there been such a demand for establishments, than since the University has shown such interest in primary education. In the first days that followed the Revolution of July, I thought it my duty to permit the dissolution of the novitiate we had in Bordeaux for primary education. Nearly two years ago, I made up for it by establishing two large novitiates, one in Ebersmunster, lower-Rhine, for all of Alsace, and another in Courtefontaine. Very good subjects are being trained in each, but they have not as yet the maturity needed to be employed in actual teaching. I have, nevertheless, chosen a few among them for places in new establishments where vacancies just had to be filled.

Following these reflections, I shall categorically answer the two questions of His Excellency. For the time being, I cannot send subjects to Albi for the formation of a normal school for day students. I think I can promise some for later on, without, however, fixing a

definite time, and this time will be closer, in proportion as His Excellency will send me a better grade of subjects to be formed. This will not be in Bordeaux, but in Courtefontaine, Jura.

The novitiate of Courtefontaine is really a normal school for boarding students, and it must be that the subjects sent are really called to the religious state and that they are able to form part of the Society. I shall return them to Albi or I shall exchange them, in whole or in part, for subjects of greater maturity, be it in virtue or in education. His Excellency seems to me to have no other desire than to do good. Now the good would be illusory if the subjects were neither good nor capable. Furthermore, His Excellency should not be surprised if some of the subjects he sent should fail the tests.

Although the novitiate in Courtefontaine is not yet very numerous, and has not yet other resources than those of Providence, it asks a tuition of only two hundred francs for each year passed in the novitiate, so as to facilitate the entry of young men of no means, but otherwise full of good physical, intellectual, and moral qualities. The two hundred francs tuition money does not include the cost of maintenance and traveling.

Your Reverence, I must here draw your attention to one point. His Excellency seems to want an institution in Albi similar to the one of the brother of the altogether too famous Father de Lamennais in Brittany. I would not be able to consent to it, because, from what I have heard about it from the beginning, it would in no way be suitable for us. The Brothers of Strasbourg, instituted by Father Mertian, were about the same. The latter proposed to me their union with the Society of Mary with all that this institution could possess, but under conditions about like those existing in the Brittany regime.[1] I demonstrated to Father Mertian and to the Archbishop of Strasbourg, that their manner of doing things could not be admitted without, in great measure, exposing the young religious. At the time of the offer, there were about forty fairly good subjects. Father Mertian, after four years of obstinacy, consented to a fusion, pure and simple, of the subjects of his Institute with those of the Society of Mary. When there was question of actually carrying it out, I found only three subjects out of the more than forty that I could accept. If His Excellency thinks that the Society of Mary is qualified to fulfill his views, I shall humbly ask him to permit it to act according to its forms and usages. It is quite true that the Institution of Father de Lamennais, just as that of Father Mertian, offers very appreciable advantages, that, for example, of being able to send a brother alone to a small parish, but we do not believe that this advantage can balance the inconvenience of the dangers to which this young religious is exposed, of losing the spirit of his state, and, at times, even of being perverted, etc., etc. You know the means that we had established for bringing education and Christian morality to country places by means of normal schools for day students. Today, we are furthering these to some extent by virtue of our schools giving a higher academic degree.

[1] About the same, as regards organization, to the Institution of the Brother of Brittany. See letters 238 and 318.

Pardon, Your Reverence, the length of this letter, in spite of the fact that I am trying to be brief. My great confidence in you always invites me to speak to you with an open heart.

Receive, I beg of you, the assurance of the sincere and respectful devotedness, with which I am, etc.

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In the North, some echoes of the contentions of Father Lalanne with Father Chaminade are perceived and we are alarmed! Father Chaminade puts things back in perspective and from this we draw some practical lessons.

944 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, March 8, 1837

(...) I find in one of your little letters: "Father Perrodin is somewhat shaken," and this, because he has known the affairs of Father Lalanne, of which you are entirely ignorant.[1]

It is very difficult for Father Perrodin and Father Bardenet to know these affairs just as they are, since 1. all is not exactly settled; 2. I have not as yet let anyone know the result of these affairs.

However, for your own tranquility and that of these gentlemen, here are the points definitely settled: 1. Father Lalanne, having recognized his wrongs – and God has wrought a miracle to enlighten him – continues to be one of the members of the Society of Mary, wanting to live in the spiritual order, as a true religious and under the obedience of his superior; all those who are with him and subject to him remain under the same obedience; all the others are being excluded from the Society and are as strangers or hirelings. 2. As regards temporal interests, Father Lalanne is willing to recognize neither the purchase of the old abbey of Layrac nor the very great repairs he has made. He is obliged to work on his own account in view of liquidating his debts, which is no small matter. 3. He has recognized as belonging to the Society all that he brought along from the Razac mansion and that is quite a bit; he paid back a considerable amount or rather used promissory notes that had been issued in his favor for the cost of the repairs on the abbey; 4. He paid certain remains of debts on the Sainte Marie boarding school. I said that everything had not yet been entirely settled, because I was not yet able to ask, as indemnity, the payment of some debts that will amount to twenty-five or twenty-six thousand francs. I shall give him several years to make this payment; otherwise, I would be exposing him to fail in his enterprise. His boarding school is very flourishing, as last year, it had nearly a hundred boarders. At the

[1] Fr. Perrodin was still a postulant and living with Fr. Bardenet in the abbey of Acey.

last reopening of classes this number was surpassed. This is a very heavy burden which Father Lalanne has taken upon his shoulders, but he is bearing it with patience and in a spirit of penance.

Here you have, my dear son, a brief sketch of the ensemble of all these affairs. The Blessed Virgin, our august Mother, helps us to triumph over the most difficult and the most thorny difficulties. Let us work with zeal, let us train for her subjects whom she will be able to adopt as her children...

You may send to Father Bardenet this little paragraph of this letter, either as copy or extract; for he will surely pass it over to Father Perrodin.

As regards the latter, how could he be shaken in his vocation by some scandals which have taken place or which would take place in the Society? Does he ignore the prediction of scandals: *Oportet ut eveniant scandala?* (It is inevitable that scandals come.) There were some even in the Apostolic Collège. All those which have thus far occurred in the Society of Mary have served to strengthen it and have furthered the betterment of its members.

I was this far with this letter, my dear son, when I received yours of last February 24. You did well in giving me all the details it contains.

I see nothing at all to be changed in all that I have just written to you. You tell me nothing of the intentions of Mlle Coudre. Is she satisfied with Courtefontaine? Does she go to confession to you, and has all come back to the old way? There is in her a certain weakness of mind which calls for, on your part, certain little considerations, certain little kind attentions.

Brother Bourgeois must be of very feeble character, for, if he really believes in his vocation, how has he followed his father? At his age he could legitimately resist his father. You will prudently see what might best be done to suit the circumstances.

It will be well, my dear son, not only to have your registers kept by your brother, but also to initiate him into business matters, and to let him go into them in proportion as you see he does it with greater interest and intelligence.

You tell me that Brother Lamotte told you of the defection of Father Lalanne and that this had shaken Father Perrodin. I am surprised that men as wise as they admit such serious matters on the mere rumors they hear. Why has one of them not written to me about it? He knew, you add, the stories of Alsace. Possibly he has known the first part of these stories, but does he know of their outcome? Does he know the end? They have let him know, you continue, of the desertion of Father Collineau and of Brother Auguste. But, have they also let him know of the good effect which this double desertion has produced in the Society? Because of it, the Society has been further consolidated and several subjects

have asked to make their perpetual vows. I imagine that Brother Lamotte has all his information from Father Perrodin and he, on his part, has it from Father Bardenet. How, the last; with what promptitude and severity he is inclined to judge! How often it has happened that the information he has gathered here and there has produced bad or harmful effects! It is for this reason that I blamed you in the beginning of this letter, and I shall not cease, my dear son, to invite you to reflection and prudence.

How can you join the functions of porter and wardrobian that you are assigning to Brother Brillot[1] with the course of studies in which you had placed him, as a result of the good dispositions you find in him?

Here are many writings for Courtefontaine. They had already been begun several days ago. May the Lord bestow upon them His benediction, as well as upon all those for whom they are destined, and especially upon you, my dear son, who are their mainspring, in whom I am placing so much confidence and to whom I am so truly devoted.

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945 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 15, 1837

My dear son, I received your message of the second and third of the current month. From the summary you sent me of the deliberations of the Council of Saint Remy, I conclude that it is necessary to suspend all change of house, that is to say, to leave everything *in statu quo*.[2] I have not yet received the deliberations of the Council. Perhaps they will give me new ideas to communicate to it. This delay in making known our ideas must not prevent the repairs to be made on the roof of the shed, as also of those about which Brother Clouzet speaks to me. Anyhow, only urgent repairs of preservation and maintenance are the ones to be made.

The conduct of young Baptiste Pelleteret is quite edifying. The story you relate about him does not suggest lunacy or mental alienation, as you gave me to understand the first time you spoke to me about it.[3] It would seem only that the real spiritual state of his soul was not well understood. Your illness occurred precisely at the time when he was mostly in need of direction. It is somewhat astonishing that no one suspected the need of consulting me in his regard, before my departure from Saint Remy.

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[1] Bro. Pierre Grillot, 1803-1849, from St. Bresson, Haute Saône, entered the Society in Courtefontaine in 1836 and ended his life, fulfilling the duties of wardrobian. He left the memory of a good Brother, very obliging and of great simplicity.
[2] See Letter 920.
[3] See Letter 935.

Father de Bressolles, now in Paris, is in the Marie Thérèse Infirmary,[4] but nevertheless in good health. He has definitely decided to enter the Society of Mary. He is a relatively young priest, thirty-three years old, of the diocese of Agen. By this same mail, I am going to admit him and send him preferably to Saint Remy, at least for the rest of the year, so as somewhat to relieve you, look after your little class, etc. It would not yet be suitable to give him the direction of any religious, but you will see for yourself, little by little, where he could be employed for the boarders. Father de Bressolles has had great success in his studies and has been one of the outstanding subjects in the Agen Seminary. I presume that since he is now completely cured, he will have the same facility in apprehending and learning, while, nevertheless, sparing him somewhat, especially in the beginning. I was unwilling to admit him, in spite of his good will, before having the opinion of his confessor, Father Mollevaux, one of the most remarkable Sulpicians of Paris, superior of the Solitude of Issy.[1] To keep you better informed, I am having a copy of the letter I have just received from him made for you.

You tell me nothing, my dear son, of your spiritual dispositions. Doubtless, there is nothing new to mention. Have you always the same attraction for the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus? This attraction would be very proper, if, following it, you are helped to increase in faith. You could very usefully, in the course of the day, say some of the invocations it contains.

Receive, my dear son, the new token of my inviolable attachment.

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946 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 17, 1837

I had just written to you, my dear son, when I received your letter of the ninth of the current month, which brings me your greetings and wishes for a happy feast and those of your community, with the designation of the virtues which each of you desires to obtain through the intercession of Saint Joseph. I shall put, with this great saint, all the interest that a father can in order to obtain for his children all those things for which they have a real need.

As my children of your community are generally better instructed, I shall not tell them that not only do they have to join their prayers to mine, but that they must correspond with great fidelity to the graces they will receive in succession, for thus will the habits of virtue be formed in them, and they then recognize the power of the protection of Saint Joseph.

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[4] A house of retirement for priests.
[1] Novitiate of the Priests of St. Sulpice.

I will write a few words to Brother Justin in order to prod him a little. On your part, persevere in trying to win him entirely for God and also for the Society, for what is to be done with a subject like him?

If Philippe Dormoy has not yet been replaced, do all that is necessary to be able to have him leave for Saint Hippolyte. I shall recommend him there and also write about him to his brother, who will certainly give him both good advice and good example.

Your compassion for Brother Athias is very praise-worthy. Nevertheless, it may be observed that the eight years he has passed are rather years of tolerance and of trial than years of real religious service, and that he must always have thought that the toleration would not last indefinitely. Will he perhaps come to understand that God leaves him his infirmities only because He is not satisfied with him, and that when he seems to be making some sort of effort to correct himself, it is rather to please men than through the fear and love of God.

You are, my dear son, on the road to Mount Horeb; the angelic and celestial food is altogether proper to renew your forces to walk and to run towards the holy mountain. Be faithful and persevere!

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

947 – TO BROTHER JUSTIN DUMONTET,
MOISSAC

Bordeaux, March 18, 1837

Do all that depends upon you, so that peace and union may always be preserved among you. Whatever pains we have to experience, we easily put up with, provided that all take part otherwise in fraternal union.

You are right, my dear son, in thinking that faith and faith alone, is able to prevent your Communions from being made from custom and habit. Faith will make you look upon each Communion as a very special favor.

Having but little time to prepare yourself, as would be desirable, you will join to the ordinary preparations the practice of making of all possible actions during the day a sort of preparation or thanksgiving. Faith will make the thought of Holy Communion predominate in you.

Receive, my dear son, etc.

With the following letter, we come back to Marast.

Father Chaminade exposes to Father Fridblatt, in his turn, the organization he intended to establish there, so that, on his part and in his capacity as Head of Zeal, he contributes to the reign of union and concord with Brother Galliot, head of the establishment, and Brother Pelleteret, the steward.

948 – TO FATHER FRIDBLATT, MARAST

Bordeaux, March 22, 1837

Your messages, my dear son, were arriving in Bordeaux when mine were leaving for Marast. I am very sorry that Brother Galliot understands neither his position nor what his condition as a religious and member of the Society call for. In proposing conditions to Brother Pelleteret and in making, as it were, a bargain with him, he compromises him and puts him in a false position.

Does Brother Galliot have in mind to administer the establishment of Marast arbitrarily and for his own ends, or to be the delegate of the Society of Mary and responsible to it for his management? If he is really responsible, must there not be an order or responsibility under all the relations of his administration? There is question here only of the bookkeeping.

The establishment here consists essentially of a boarding school and of the community that runs it. This establishment is endowed with a property, from which we hope to draw a very appreciable revenue. Is this revenue for the establishment? This revenue, doubtless, is to come to the help of the establishment, but with order and prudence, because it has 1. to pay the financial advances that had to be made to the domain to improve it; 2. it must also be able to pay the loans that Brother Galliot thought it necessary to make; 3. the entire establishment is accountable to the General Administration of the Society. Now, I am asking every sensible person, how without order, without well-kept accounts could there be real bookkeeping? Would there not soon be hopeless confusion? Will not Brother Galliot soon compromise his delicate position? At the same time that Brother Galliot would have the ability and the time necessary for the good management and improvement of the property, would he not be obliged to have his distinct registers and cash boxes? If the tuition of the pupils is of a rate insufficient for the maintenance of the boarding school and the community, it is quite evident that he will need help proportionate to this insufficiency, so as always to make ends meet. If the community that directs the boarding school grows in number by the addition of those charged with the improvement of the domain, it is certain that it will need much more help, but the domain itself will be discharged of just that much. From all these points of view, great precision, clearness, and exactness in all the accounts is needed.

Peace and union among all the religious are being preserved. All debts are honored. No Head is controlled by any particular interest. Only the common interest animates them. Here you have the views that I had in Article 4 of the letter that I wrote to Brother Galliot on last February 20.[1] It could happen that, in carrying out the details, some little worries make themselves felt. since Brother Galliot did not think it his duty to obey, without a clear

[1] The letter in question, No. 938, has not come down to us in its entirety. In the extract that has been preserved to us, we do not find the number 4, to which Fr. Chaminade alludes.

understanding that what was expected of him was only what was just and suitable, have the kindness to read to him and to explain, as much as will be needful, this first part of my answer to your letter. I don't think I have ordered anything other than what I believed to be of God and also to the temporal and spiritual advantage of the others, and it is for this reason that I insist very much on the execution of the decision which I have sent.

It is proposed to give Brother Pelleteret charge of the double accounts of the boarding school and of the property. It is not to be doubted that temporalities directed by one capable individual would be better. It would also be some relief for the General Administration to have dealings with only one individual. But is Brother Pelleteret sufficiently trained for such a charge? Is he sufficiently acquainted with household expenses and with such as are connected with the running of a farm? Several say that Brother Galliot is much too severe, that his economy is at the expense of the needs of the others, or, at least, that he does not sufficiently observe propriety and good manners. Others, on the contrary, say that Brother Pelleteret is too much of a spender. If it is not through humor that Brother Galliot would want to be released from the economy – I am saying from the details of the economy – if he believes, in soul and conscience, that Brother Pelleteret could alone take over all that concerns the temporal economy, and if Brother Clouzet and you are of the same persuasion, I am not opposed to it, but Brother Galliot can be released only from the work connected with the economy and not from the inspection, because all must be dependent upon one head.

Brother Galliot. having lost his sense of direction, no longer knows where he is. He can get along neither with Brother Boillon nor with Brother Mérigot. I also greatly fear that in the judgement of God he has to blame himself for the defection of Brother Poignon, not for having advised it, but for not having sufficiently supported this young man. Whatever the case may be, let Brother Galliot do things as he is told. Most certainly, the others will obey him and will also do what they are supposed to do.

It is especially for singing and for a little music that Brother Galliot has kept Brother Boillon in Marast. How is it then that they do not get along? Surely, I have never heard nor believed that Brother Boillon was really able to be master of singing and music, but it is true, that while awaiting a master properly-so-called, he could have supported the singing in church, and trained the pupils in singing, especially knowing how to accompany himself with his instrument, and all this, while waiting for something better. I thought I had found someone who would be useful to you in this matter, till something happened that came in the way to oppose it. The pupils and the parents would surely have been satisfied, provided that nothing would have been required of them as regards the singing exercises.

Brother Mérigot wrote me a very reasonable letter, but although he says nothing against Brother Galliot, it is easy to see that while waiting for the kitchen to be supplied with a head cook, Brother Galliot might have been able, with mildness and insinuation, to avail himself of the services of Brother Mérigot.

I surely have the intention of fully equipping the establishment of Marast, but I shall always find myself hampered by the fear that the subjects that I shall send become disgusted there and lose the spirit of their state. In your capacity as priest and Head of Zeal, do all you can to have the spirit of Christianity and that of the religious state reign in Marast.

Your good mother, my dear son, not having made up her mind, it is difficult to figure out to what extent we shall have to come to her aid. By your correspondence, as much with your brother as with your mother, you will easily come at least to some definite suggestion. The general tone of your brother's letter gives reason to believe, that, if some sort of help is needed, it will be little enough; but he would have been very glad, at least so it seems, to have you take a greater initiative in the matter, and that is precisely what you must not do.

As regards the list of benedictions that the Archbishop of Besançon is willing to permit you, come to an understanding with Father Chevaux so as to put yourself on a par with Saint Remy.

Your position, my dear son, does not permit you to keep from the tribunal of penance all the persons having no connection with the establishment. Receive all the German men and women who would have no other help. You may also make use of the discretionary power accorded to all Heads within the extent of their jurisdiction. Receive those whom you could not ask to go elsewhere and also some infirm ones who could not be visited by the pastor or his assistant. Without doubt, help the Reverend Pastor in some cases when there might be too much crowding, but always with great discretion. He must easily see that you are unable to lend yourself to the exterior ministry without great prejudice to the establishment. Later on, I hope, the establishment will be able to give greater spiritual help to the general public, always with the agreement of the Reverend Pastor and His Excellency, the Archbishop.

It will be good to sing a Mass each year on the feast of St. Stephen, for Father Bardenet,[1] and this you will change to an anniversary Mass after his death. You can also arrange one for the repose of the soul of M. Lieffoy[2] and his heirs.

Up to the present Father Baillard has not honored me with any of his letters, although he has spoken, at great intervals to several members of the Society who have consulted me each time, who have answered in my name; but no one has ever definitely known his final intentions.

When the Sodality of the Reverend Pastor will exist and have a certain stable organization, I shall willingly affiliate it with that of Bordeaux, if the latter comes to resume a legal and public existence. As far as you are concerned, do with simplicity what you have seen being done in Saint Remy.

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[1] Whose patron he was.
[2] The Founder of Marast.

I am going to answer Brother Pelleteret in the same way that I am answering Brother Galliot, by your intermediary at the beginning of this letter. Brother Pelleteret is a member of the Marast community. As such, he is to be fed and maintained, if he is obliged to have some confidential domestics, as seems to be the case, they will also have to be fed, and although they are not guests at the community table, it is nevertheless the same kitchen that will furnish it, and if for the sake of good order it is often necessary that Brother Pelleteret be with them, he will then take his meals with them. It is easily understood that the community kitchen will have more expenses than if it supplied food only for the boarding school. It will be very easy to see from the accounts what help will have to be given to the establishment, so that it can always make ends meet.

It is unthinkable that there could have been even the idea of bargaining and convention between Brothers Galliot and Pelleteret. Neither of them administers here only on their own account; as religious they simply could not do so. All our goods are consecrated to God, we are all but his stewards, all but economize and save in the interests of the works of God. The Superior General is the very representative of God and he must direct everything with these ends in view. It makes little difference whether the Head of the establishment receives more or less of the produce since, in the last analysis, all is reduced to equality by means of the accounts, these accounts expressing or indicating what would have been produced from the property. It is to this effect that I have made use of the expression “the one cash box may lend to the other.” It is in reality only as a loan, until there can be settlement. There is great likelihood that the cash box of the property will remain the debtor to the cash box of the community, for the first and perhaps for the second year, the latter having to face so many other needs, were it only for the needs and debts proper to the property, unless there were other ways of meeting them.

I am stopping here, my dear son, for it seems to me I have explained myself sufficiently. If other difficulties or embarrassments turn up, this must not be a reason for not going right ahead and carrying out things, according to what is prescribed.

May all anxieties and worries, my dear son, not turn you away from the real object of your solicitude or rather of your zeal – zeal 1. for your own perfection; 2. for the perfection of all those who are confided to you or who have any dealings with you. You will understand that the expression “perfection” is to be taken in a rigorous sense, only for you and for the religious of the community, without excepting the first head, who, after yourself must be the first object of your zeal, while preserving the respect and regard that you owe him under all other aspects.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

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949 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 23, 1837

I am addressing to you, my dear son, extracts from the letter that I am writing in answer to that which Father Fridblatt wrote to me in the name of Brother Galliot.

My messages were on the point of leaving for Marast, when I was given by the mail-carrier a second letter from Father Fridblatt which notified me of the new discussion of Brother Galliot with Brother Pelleteret, Brother Boillon, and Brother Mérigot. I was satisfied to add to my messages a brief letter to Brother Galliot himself. He is so prejudiced against everybody that he thinks everyone has it in for him.

There would be danger, my dear son, in not definitely setting in order the relations that should exist between Brothers Galliot and Pelleteret. If those whom I have indicated worked in harmony, they would bring peace, union, and harmony, and in time, even prosperity.

The last arrangements that Brother Galliot makes me propose through Father Fridblatt would be a source of worry, of disorder, and perhaps of ruin, as they are anti-religious.

Do what will depend upon you to have him see the truth that I am explaining in so many different ways. I hope you have received my last messages. Receive, my dear son, my renewed greetings.

* * * *

An interesting letter on the subject of the direction of novitiate

950 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, April 2, 1837

Although, my dear son, your views are concerned with the nameday wishes and greetings you address to me, I am not less mindful of them. Your interest is my own and mine is yours; interests which turn all to the glory of God and to the sanctification of those whom God has called and is calling to the Society of Mary. I have prayed especially for you all, through the intercession of St. Joseph on the day of his feast, and I shall continue to do so, for I have no doubt that you will obtain all the virtues that you ask for if you correspond to the graces you receive.

As regards the indiscretions of which you have perhaps judged yourself guilty and that you recognize, we shall no longer speak about them; for discretion and prudence will repair little by little all that can be repaired in the consequences or results that they may have had. You need the greatest discretion especially in your dealings with Father Bardenet. You must not break with him, because doubtless he can still be of use to you, but never make him your confidant, because the communications and relations sustained with him ordinarily get upset in his head. I am not saying more, and the little I am saying is for yourself alone.

If you did not send Brother Savary[1] to Orgelet, because of the lack of costume, notify Brother Olive and send him to him. I shall write to him to have him properly clothed on his arrival or if you can strictly look after this in advance, send him the bill for it, and I shall tell him to reimburse you as soon as possible.

The novices who are thus brought up in penury, are generally better than those who have been accustomed to a sort of ease and comfort, and it is quite possible that these are the views of Providence for the formation of solid and truly religious subjects in the Society of Mary.

By these reflections, my dear son, I do not mean to tell you that you must not take all suitable steps to procure for yourself whatever is really necessary, but so that you may always be quiet and better informed. Never reject any good subject for the sole reason that you no longer have anything to give him. Neither is your penury ever to lead you to do anything that would be contrary to propriety or good manners, nor to formulate complaints against those who do not observe them in your regard. To secure means for yourself, God does not need that you should humiliate others, nor that you should ever leave the paths of simplicity and modesty which are to be your lot. As regards Brother Poignon, I don't think that you are to lose sight of him. You know what St. John the Evangelist did in his old age, in regard to a young man a lot more guilty than Brother Poignon.

Without doubt, my dear son, do not give each of the novices a copy of the *Manual of the Servant of Mary*, since you can't afford the expense. Give them only the Little Office, while leaving in the library of the novices two or three copies of the *Manual*. Sometime when you can better afford it, give them each a copy. If these manuals were sold directly to my account, I would tell you to make a present of a copy to each novice from me, but I do not think I should enter into all the computations that would have to be made for so slight an article.

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[1] Bro. Alexis Savary, 1816-1886, born in Bouverans, Doubs, entered the Novitiate of Courtefontaine in 1834, where Father Meyer pointed him out in this way: "He is a second Girardet; mild, submissive, disposed for everything and anything. He already has some education having followed the courses of the Collège of Pontarlier where he was preparing for his diploma." Bro. Savary was Director of the schools of Arc et Senans, Quingey, Dourgne, and Tournus, where he remained more than twenty years, enjoying great popularity there. He spent his last years at St. Remy, where he died suddenly at the moment of rising on the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

I shall willingly employ Brother Gloux as he desires, but, beforehand, I would be very glad if he were in Courtefontaine for some experience, be it in supervision, in studies, or in the recreations. Let him be sufficiently free, even while being observed, so as to see how he manages. Meanwhile, let him examine for himself whether he is not opposing the designs of God in thus delaying his novitiate. This delay could easily be for him nothing less then the abandonment of his vocation.

If Brother Opperman is really learning the lesson which you say I gave him,[1] I shall willingly permit him to go right ahead, as I desire it perhaps even more than he does himself. Let Brother Chiffert also go right ahead with what he has in mind. He will never reach the Lord, to be all to him, without seeking him in the simplicity of his heart.

I am very glad, my dear son, that you feel the need for spiritual nourishment. I was waiting for a chance to speak to you about it, on the one hand, that you would be less embarrassed and on the other, that you would have been able to give time to the important work of direction,[2] so as better to note the scarcity of books necessary for the novitiate. Those of the boarders must, in general, be different. You will have me come back upon these views, but, in the meantime, I am advising you to procure for the novitiate several copies of *The Religious Man* by Father Saint Jure. The Périsse Brothers in Lyons have reprinted it, in only two volumes.[3] You have told me nothing about the answer of the bishop of Dijon regarding the establishment of Seurre.[4]

Father Perrodin seems to be just feeling his way altogether too much.[5] You had remarked to me that he had prepared the one replacing him and that he would leave Acey for good toward the end of winter. His position with Father Bardenet is much more troublesome for him than he thinks. If his determination to enter the Society seems to weaken and if he talks about it always with Father Bardenet, it is to be presumed that he will succumb. He doesn't know Father Bardenet sufficiently well, and again, it is dangerous to have him better informed. This must not be done in writing but in a heart-to-heart talk. Let him know the gentle firmness that must be put into the execution of the designs of God, once they are known.

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951 – TO BROTHER MEMAIN, AGEN

Bordeaux, April 12, 1837

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[1] See Letter 921.
[2] See *The Spirit of Our Foundation*, No. 862.
[3] See Letter 879.
[4] See Letter 883.
[5] See Letter 944.

My dear son, I am going to answer your letter of the ninth of the current month, and I can do it all the better because I have received all the information relative to the affair occupying us at present.

The reports that have been passed over to me about your conduct are materially calumnious. I am saying materially and not formally, because I have not had reason to believe that the reporter was a calumniator, but there is an exaggeration in the reports that completely alters the nature of the facts. I told you that, as regards him, I had my own ideas. I am sorry about the anxiety I caused you, as I had never wanted to talk to you about it. The friendship and interest I bear toward you made me decide upon this course of action.

* * * *

952 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, MARAST

Bordeaux, April 13, 1837

Your letter, my dear son, of last March 31 does not disconcert me, because, in the end, you will come to understand that I am only after order and justice, and the peace which is the result of both. You will also understand that I have in view, in all my labors and solicitudes, only the salvation of all those who are confided to me and particularly yours, because you are one of the oldest, and among those who have been most burdened with work and matters of care and worry. These last have arisen in Marast to an excessive measure, and for you, to an almost insupportable degree, only because you have too much wanted to act by yourself, to reason too much upon the impulse given to you, and through which your imagination, once excited, led you into trouble and confusion. I have had reason to believe that all is now arranged according to what Brother Clouzet wrote to me on April 2. I have never known a better friend of yours than he, for it is he who has sustained you on all the occasions in which you were blamed the most. I have never seen him doubt your good dispositions and the real interest that you were putting into the affairs confided to you.

I am also disposed, my dear son, to give you another place, one perhaps more to your satisfaction, as I am telling Father Fridblatt by this same mail, who will surely let you see the letter I am writing to him, but patience is needed and we must not let things fall apart.

Receive, etc.

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953 – TO FATHER FRIDBLATT, MARAST

Bordeaux, April 13, 1837

I hope, my dear son, after all the letters I have written, that Brother Galliot will have understood that I have never asked for anything other than order, justice, and regularity. The loans he has made, although in his private name, are naturally mortgages on the domain of Marast. If he had remembered while borrowing to be really responsible, he would have performed acts of ownership which would render him guilty before God. It is only by what we call the fiction of law that we can permit such operations. When Brother Galliot said that all the furniture of the establishment belonged to him, that must have been a moment of thoughtlessness and giddiness, but brought back to his normal self, and by all the precautions I am taking, he must have realized that he was the victim of a pitiful illusion.

Brother Clouzet wrote to me on April 2 that after the return of the pupils following the Easter vacation, he would go to Marast to put everything in the order I am asking for, even if right now I had reason to believe that everything has been arranged. You have said several times that Brother Galliot would like to be placed in another establishment, but not as superior. I am surely not against the idea, for he has long deserved by his many labors a place to his satisfaction. As soon as I have a capable subject and that Brother Galliot will have stayed long enough in Marast, so that it does not appear that it is in ill humor that he has retired or been withdrawn, I shall willingly enter into his views and I shall seriously occupy myself with the matter. At the same time, I shall occupy myself with Brothers Mérigot and Boillon.

You do well, my dear son, to talk to me about everything. It is not possible for me to arrange things satisfactorily if I am not informed about them in sufficient detail. Therefore, do not grow tired of writing to me about all that is going on through zeal for the prosperity of the Marast establishment and not through any impatience or ill-humor, nor because of the displeasure you might experience when things do not go well. I hope that with time and patience we shall succeed in everything, and that the Lord will deign to bless our labors.

Ask Brother Galliot to prepay the mailing of all the letters that will come to me from Marast, to put the cost of this on his expense accounts, as is suitable, and to defray the postage of the letters he receives. The expenses for food made for the operation of

the property must also be carried there. At least, they will be estimated when the expenses will have been made in bulk for the consumption of the provisions.

Receive, etc.

954 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 14, 1837

My dear son, I have just written to Marast to Brother Galliot, Father Fridblatt, Brothers Pelleteret, Mérigot and Boillon. I am having a copy of the letters written to Father Fridblatt and Brother Galliot passed over to you. The others are only letters of encouragement. I am going to occupy myself seriously with the change of Brother Mérigot and the release of Brother Boillon. I also think, as you do, that it will be necessary to change Brother Galliot. In the meantime, I hope that his mind will become more calm.

My dear son, it is necessary to use all just and suitable means to get rid of your debts, but is the one you propose to me, the sale of the house of the old farmer, really advisable? Sacrifices are being made to have neighbors move away whose proximity can become annoying, but do we sell, as it were, to have them at home and right in front of the enclosure? And isn't that the case here? Are you otherwise certain that we shall never have need of this house? I have not as yet even received a copy of the account in which there was to be mention of it. In truth, Father Chevaux, in waiting for Father Fontaine to send it to me, had an extract of it given to me, but this extract in no way fitted in with the observations that I had proposed to the Council. These were simply additions of figures that indicated the expenses to be made on all sides. The question treated in it is doubtless a matter of finances, but one which is merely incidental to the important project now occupying us.

It would seem that in Saint Remy, you desire the transfer of the primary boarding school to the château at the present time, yet it seems to me, no small difficulties are involved. The greatest part of these would disappear if there were but one boarding school in the château, which would have the same regimen, the same management and, nevertheless, the double teaching, primary and secondary. In a letter I received yesterday, Father Lalanne proposes to continue in Saint Remy only primary teaching, considering the small number of boarders in the other department, so that the Society can give him subjects for Layrac and form there but one community. I am not giving you this information as a matter of deliberation, but only as a piece of news. I am able to send him a memorandum in which it is proved that he cannot dispense himself from paying the Society at least twenty-five thousand francs. Father Lalanne, furthermore, seems animated with the real sentiments of the religious state in the Society of Mary.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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955 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, MARAST

Bordeaux, April 17, 1837

If you have read my letters, my dear son, if especially, you have read them without preoccupation, I am unable to understand how you could write to Brother Clouzet on the seventh of the current month the letter which he has just passed over to me.

You ask for guarantees and sure cautions on the part of the Society. Don't you have these guarantees and sure cautions? Has it any to give you more assured than the property of Marast? Don't you have it in your very hands, so to speak, as the first Superior of the establishment? And do you believe that because I am asking for order and accounts on the part of the one who is to manage affairs, I am withdrawing him from you, as it were, in the matter of guarantees and cautions? On the contrary, my dear son, I am making your caution all the more effective. All the revenues of the place are to be applied to the real needs of the establishment, especially to the debts contracted to furnish the advance payments required by the said operation, and then to the debts contracted to equip and maintain the boarding school. The debts contracted by the house for the advance payments you would have made, be it for provisions you would have furnished or for other objects, enter into the first order of debts. In this double order of debts, which is the privileged one? The answer is very clear: the debts, wherever they come from, that are the most pressing; these are the ones that are to be privileged by receiving priority of payment.

There can be peace between you and Brother Pelleteret, you add, only inasmuch as it will be possible "to conciliate your two ways of economizing. Brother Pelleteret and his companions think only of making expenses, while I think for a long time before making such as are strictly necessary." But, my dear son, Brother Pelleteret is subject to you for all the expenses that he has to make personally, no matter what kind they are. Surely you will find nothing in my letters in which there is the slightest indication of overstepping the mark, and I have no reason to believe that he would want it in any shape or form, for all in him announces the genuine desire of living religiously. As regards the expenses which he has to make for the use of the property, he may make by himself only such as are regulated and ordinary, and as regards extraordinary expenses, he may not make them without the advice and permission of the Council of which you are the president. Furthermore, at all times you have the right to inspect the books that serve as registers. If his books or several parts of his books are defective, haven't you the right and even the duty to have him know about it? If he agrees and corrects himself, all can end right there. If, on the contrary, the opposite is the case, then notify me. I don't see any need for disputes about the manner of conciliating your efforts or of "conciliating your two ways of economizing."

In all your letters, my dear son, you always seem to be totally indifferent as to whether you are Head of the Marast establishment or the contrary, and all for conscientious motives. In what way can your conscience be endangered in admitting a real

order of temporal administration? On the contrary, isn't your conscience set on not suffering or not putting up with it?

"If Brother Pelleteret and company think of nothing but making expenses," and if there is no order, how are you going to prevent it? If wise and amicable representations do not suffice to hold them back in this penchant for spending, you have the superior authority for calling a halt and establishing order, and when you have put it into action, then your conscience no longer has anything with which to reproach you. On the contrary, you will have one more reason for great peace in having accomplished your duty. From this point of view your conscience seems to be in error.

You might perhaps tell yourself that you fear only for your creditors toward whom you have obligations that bind in conscience, and that if Brother Pelleteret makes expenses that are not necessary, you will never be in a position to face the debts that you contracted. You would be right in thinking this, my dear son, if you let him have his own way. But if you are attentive, if you supervise suitably, he will never make expenses that may seriously compromise you. Have no illusions in this regard, my dear son!

You have griefs, you especially have the worry of procuring what you need for this new establishment, but aren't these griefs and this worry, as it were, inseparable from a nascent establishment, and especially from the circumstances in which you have taken it? Furthermore, are you not increasing your griefs by the line of conduct you are following? You do not find in your brothers the submission you would desire, but do you yourself give them the example? Who has asked Brother Pelleteret, Brother Boillon, Brother Mérigot, etc.?

But finally, you find the burden with which you are laden, too heavy, and you fear to succumb. As soon as I noticed it, did I not promise to relieve you of it? I observed to you only that it was necessary at least to preserve the propriety, that it should not appear that it was by necessity that you were being withdrawn, and that a substitute was being sent in your place, etc. I am willing to believe that you made no threats because you saw the difficulty connected with your replacement, and that you believed that we would have to give in and allow you to do arbitrarily whatever the first ideas coming to you might suggest. Assuredly, I gave you great freedom of action and in all confidence, because I felt you had the need of it, but was it not to have just limits? And it is only these last limits that I place in the proposed arrangement. This letter being received I counsel you to invite Brother Clouzet to arrange your books and those of Brother Pelleteret, in the order and form that I have prescribed. Keep everything in good order, in such a way that the one whom Providence will have me find to replace you will have only to follow out the course already traced out. Doubtless, you are not to seek, as is human, to be regretted when you leave, but nevertheless your conduct must be such that, in effect, you will be missed.

I stop here and embrace you. I do not attribute to your heart the sorrows that you cause me.

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956 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 17, 1837

While receiving, my dear son, your messages of April 12, I have also received separately those of Father Chevaux. As these last contain nothing very urgent, I shall answer him a little later on. However, after reading the letter that Brother Galliot wrote to you on the seventh of the current month, I believed it my duty to write to him the letter of which you will find a copy herewith enclosed.

In the meantime, I am not neglecting to occupy myself with the task of suitably replacing him. The other two also, Brothers Boillon and Mérigot, have to get out of Marast, but I desire that all be done peacefully, and especially that Brother Galliot open his eyes and get to know himself. As regards Brother Pelleteret, I presume that he will get himself in hand and that great peace and emulation will reign in Marast, and with all the more reason if we succeed, as I hope we shall, in advantageously replacing Brother Galliot.

Brother Galliot, in spite of all his boasting, is keeping up a certain confidence in you, my dear son. Make use of it in trying to have him rid himself of his miserable prejudices. How could it be that I would not be looking for the good of the Marast establishment, once I had consented to its existence, and that in spite of the fact that Father Bardenet did not keep his word and of the fact that Brother Galliot has acted much too quickly? You see that Brother Galliot is always himself, just as I had you observe when he was in Courtefontaine, in Saint Claude, and as he is today in Marast. It is said we must take persons such as they are and for what they are. I am pleased to renew, my dear son, my fatherly greetings.

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The affair of Sion Vaudémont, begun in 1833 with Father Lalanne (Letter 713), resumed in 1836 with Father Fontaine (Letter 901), finally ended with Father Chaminade himself through a letter of the Baillard brothers, dated April 11, 1837, which is going to be the point of departure of an extensive correspondence. We have already drawn attention to the first views of the Baillard brothers as regards the subject of the sanctuary of Our Lady of Sion Vaudémont. It remains to us briefly to make known the personages with whom Father Chaminade had dealings on this subject. The three Baillard brothers, Léopold (1796-1883), François (1798-1863), and Quirin (1799-1882), "were priests of the diocese of Nancy, intelligent, pious, active, enterprising, and tenacious of their undertakings in real Lorrains style[1] *which explains the favor of which they were, at first, the object on the part of*

[1] *"The Inspired Hill," a bit of history in regard to a novel* (of Maurice Barrès) by E. Mangenot (Paris, Letouzey), p. 27.

ecclesiastical authority. In 1832, Léopold was named pastor of Favières, where a short time after, his brother François came to join him as assistant pastor, while Quirin was in charge of the parish of Saulxures. The three brothers began by re-establishing, in Mattaincourt, the old Convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of St. Pierre Fourier (1833), then they undertook to re-establish the sanctuary of Our Lady of Sion Vaudémont, and making of it the center of grand and multiple works.

From there, the Prospectus, joined to their letter of April 11, in which after diverse considerations on the need of religious education at the present time, they lay open their plans about: Sion, superior primary school of arts and crafts; Sion, Normal School for teachers and religious; Sion, house of retreat for the faithful and home for aged priests.

Under the title of Sion, Normal School, the Prospectus expressed itself thus:

A well-thought-of Society, of which the rapid development proves that it has well understood the needs of the times, the Institute of Mary, founded in Bordeaux by Father Chaminade, will be in charge of the direction of Sion as a primary Normal School. There, every ecclesiastic or layman called to the difficult but important functions of teacher will be trained by capable masters in all the sciences and in all the virtues that this laborious career calls for. A varied, profound, and progressive instruction, a firm and enlightened religious spirit, complete devotedness to the duties of his ministry – here is what every young man will take away from Sion who will have come to it with a submissive will and a decided taste. The novitiate, of which the duration will be determined later on, will be made under some form of religious Rule, the surest guarantee of piety and progress, but under a wise and mild Rule, perfectly suited and adapted to the end we have in view. The Institute will not forget that there is less question of training an edifying religious than a teacher gifted with the virtues and talents proper to his state.

From this principal center, this mother-school, groups of teachers will leave at the request of cities and villages, and will go everywhere to spread the benefits of education. Each one of these groups, composed of at least two or three persons and presided over by a priest who will be the spiritual director, will found and direct a school which we call middle, where will be found, of course, the original spirit as obtained from the source of their training. These kinds of schools will be close enough to one another in Lorraine to offer to all localities the advantages of a good education. Soon we hope, the neighboring Provinces, appreciating the happy results of this institution, will also ask for groups and the establishments will thus gradually be multiplied, one after another.

Furthermore, as each Commune will not always be able to furnish the means needed for an establishment of this kind, the house of Sion will train in its bosom Brothers who, at the request of each village, will be sent, two by two, and will be able to exercise and unite the functions of primary teacher, singer, and sacristan. It is unnecessary to add that the Brother coming out of Sion, remaining always submitted to the Rule of the Institute and

subject to the admonitions and even to recall by their superior, will thus offer one more guarantee of zeal and regularity.

Unless we are much mistaken, there is in the plan just outlined, the germ of an immense future. With the help of God and of all honest people, much can be done, all can be done, even in our century. We are counting on these two helps: and the future will show whether our hopes have been in vain.

The manuscript of the Prospectus, "complete and entire adhesion" to which was asked by Father Chaminade, was followed by an approbation of Bishop Donnet, titular Bishop of Rose, Coadjutor of Nancy, who had just been designated for the archiepiscopal see of Bordeaux. In the letter of advice the pastor of Favières, speaking in the name of the three brothers, added that "the Lorrains were difficult to deal with, that they gave their esteem and entire confidence only to directors whose virtues and talents were superior to their own."

To which Father Chaminade replied.

957 – TO FATHER BAILLARD, PASTOR OF FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, April 19, 1837

DEAR REVEREND FATHER:

As you seem to desire I should do, I am immediately answering your letter of the eleventh of the current month, and I shall take the liberty of making some observations relative to the *Prospectus* which accompanies it.

I can only desire the success of the important works you wish to start in the large monastery of Sion. But the Society, as I had the honor of telling you some time ago, is lacking in subjects for the formation of new establishments. It is only with difficulty that it can maintain those already existing. Only by greatly hampering ourselves could I have sent you a novice master and possibly some aides, and this novice master would not have even been a man such as you would desire. The subjects, noted for their talents, would have taught the others and all of them would have humbly sought to form themselves to religious life. God has been pleased to call to himself the zealous and pious priest whom I thought he had sent me for the work in Sion.[1] Not having received any news from you for nearly three years, I was unable to make any decisions about this work, and you yourself did not judge it appropriate to send any subjects to be trained and be a sort of nucleus in the course of time, which could have had some importance. I believe it is impossible for Father Lalanne to leave Layrac by reason of the many engagements he has taken there.

[1] Possibly Father Danne, of whom there is question in Letters 787 and 832.

I shall admit to you, Reverend Father, without entering into a discussion of the details of the Prospectus, that even if we would have subjects of finest qualifications and in sufficient numbers, I would not consider it my duty to undertake, all at the same time, the works published in the Prospectus. An institution as vast as that envisioned by the Prospectus will, as a matter of necessity, undergo persecutions all the more dangerous in proportion as they are underhanded. The University will put up with it only insofar as it will appear little dangerous to its views. What makes me all the more sorrowful in the abandonment of this work is the reawakening of the devotion of the people in Lorraine towards the august Mary which will not take place, or will at least be retarded.

I can easily imagine that you have thought it your duty to give greater importance to this Institution, so as to more easily procure for it the immense resources it needs. I cannot blame you, but as far as I am concerned, I do not approve of such display. In the long interval that has passed since there was question of these projects, a man of Lorraine gave me hope for some help in this work to the extent of one hundred and fifty thousand francs. Other persons would also have helped, but I no longer remember for how much. Things have been at this point for eighteen months. I very much like these secret means which Providence sends for the carrying out of the works which it calls for.

I shall permit myself a final observation. The institution, established with the aid of collections although authorized by His Lordship, will no longer be private property, and if there happens to be a dissolution all will belong to the Government. The richer it seems to be, the more its dissolution will be called for.

Receive, I beg of you, the assurance of the respectful devotedness with which I am, Reverend Father, your very humble and obedient servant.

P.S. Permit, I beg of you, Reverend Father, that your reverend brothers find here a token of my respectful remembrance.

What follows will show how just and correct were these first views and this prudent reserve on the part of Father Chaminade.

* * * *

Here is to be found the case of conscience relative to Layrac to which allusion has been made several times in the preceding letters.[1] *The soul of Father Chaminade here appears in all its refinement and delicacy.*

[1] See Letters 937, 940, 954.

958 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, April 24, 1837

MEMORANDUM ON THE OCCASION OF THE TRANSLATION OF THE SAINTE MARIE BOARDING SCHOOL: CASE OF CONSCIENCE TO BE CONSULTED.

Has the Superior of the Society of Mary an obligation of conscience to require from Father Lalanne an indemnity for the losses that he is causing the Society of Mary by the forced transfer that he has made of the Sainte Marie Boarding School to Layrac? Will this obligation of conscience be satisfied by a requirement of twenty-three thousand francs, with interest paid or to be paid until the liquidation of the capital to which this interest is attached?

OBSERVATIONS

First Observation. At the end of the 1835 school year, the Sainte Marie Boarding School of Bordeaux, the Razac mansion, property of the Society of Mary, directed by Father Lalanne, first member of the said Society, and one of its principal officers, was in a flourishing condition, almost entirely free from the debts it had contracted.[1] It was, for the Society of Mary, one of the greatest resources for its existence, its development and its consolidation. By the transfer he made of it on his private authority to the old abbey of Layrac, as well as of all the furnishings of the Razac mansion – running it on his own account – Father Lalanne not only deprives the Society of the great advantages derived from it, but causes it the greatest harm. 1. The Razac mansion, which was paying out heavy interest, had been abandoned without any kind of precautions so that the Society found itself obliged to meet its obligations and still continues to do so; 2. To rent the said mansion, it was and still is necessary to make great repairs, as it was abandoned in a somewhat dilapidated condition; 3. Among the debts of the boarding school as such assets, is one of twenty thousand francs, mortgaged on the real property of the Society, other debts besides the Razac mansion and also a debt of three thousand francs with interest. The Society, to avoid any kind of crisis, until the present met these interest payments.

Second Observation. The Superior General was absent. In vain he wrote letter after letter to stop or at least to diminish these disorders. Really touched by what he had already heard, he was much more moved when, returning from his travels, he came to Layrac and

[1] Fr. Lalanne nevertheless paid some, and as he says, more later. But would not the money of the Society he made use of for Layrac, due to the boarding school, have been more than sufficient to pay these debts? (Note of Fr. Chaminade)

fully realized the loss which by this failure had come to the Society. He then decided 1. to disavow the acquisition of the old abbey of Layrac which Father Lalanne had made in his own name, as well as all the debts which Father Lalanne had contracted to begin operations; 2. to demand from Father Lalanne an acknowledgement of all the furniture of the boarding school before the transfer, and more particularly of a rich and precious library which was not at all that of the boarding school, although it was located in the Razac mansion.

Third Observation. The Superior thought it his duty to adhere to these first precautions and withdrew. That was toward the end of the year 1836. The reopening of classes in the Layrac boarding school had brought prosperity, but the financial troubles of the Society were increasing. To guard against the high interest and disbursements to be made following the loss of the Sainte Marie Boarding School, the Society thought itself obliged in conscience to ask of Father Lalanne an indemnity. If through considerations of prudence this indemnity could not be proportionate to the damages he was causing, it would at least suffice to cover the heaviest and most demanding debts he was leaving to the Society.

The Superior is so much averse to prosecuting Father Lalanne that he began to doubt that he really had an obligation of conscience to do it. To make sure of it is the object of this memorandum.

SHORT DISCUSSION OF THE CASE

The case of conscience proposed would not present any difficulty if it were isolated or if it were generalized. If someone, for example, has harmed another, is he not obliged to indemnify him as much as lies in his power? Who would not answer affirmatively?

But here, the case, considered in the one who is its author and in his intentions, and considered at the same time in the one who has suffered the damage, becomes so particular a case, that it seems that the ordinary rules of uprightness and justice cannot be applied to it.

Father Lalanne happens to be one of the first and outstanding members of the Society of Mary, one of its principal Heads. In the Council, of which he was a member, it had been deliberated whether the old abbey of Layrac should be bought, whether the Sainte Marie Boarding School of Bordeaux should be transferred there, and whether he, Father Lalanne, then director of the said boarding school, would be able to make this transfer according to the views and to the advantage of the Society of Mary. In the affirmative, there was even question of authorizing him to make a contract under his own name. Nevertheless, there was a mutual agreement between the proprietor and the Superior. The contract which Father Lalanne made with the proprietor in his own name, and

against the consent of the Superior, is burdened with a mortgage of thirty thousand francs more than the agreement which he has in his hands. Thus the contract cannot represent the agreement. To all these considerations must be joined another very strong one. Father Lalanne says, affirms, and protests always to have had the intention of working for the profit and to the advantage of the Society to which he belongs and to which he always wants to belong.

On the other hand, the Superior of the Society of Mary has a very special predilection for Father Lalanne, not only as first member of the Society and one of its chief Heads, but having practically always directed him from childhood on, through the various phases of life with the result that their mutual confidence had never been denied, although in the last seven years it has seemed somewhat altered.

Father Lalanne, fully convinced in himself of the excellence of the plans he was forming for the so-called advantage of the Society and of religion, was undertaking or wanted to undertake enterprises which his Superior did not approve. He believed himself secure in conscience in his frequent opposition to his Superior, assured as he was of having only the same general views and sentiments as his Superior. The certainty he believed to have as regards his complete success persuaded him that in the end his Superior would approve all he did. Furthermore, he pleased himself by believing that his Superior, unable to judge by himself the wisdom of his conceptions, was allowing himself to be drawn along and influenced by counsels such as were prejudiced against him and jealous of his works.

Such are, substantially, the considerations which here constitute a general case of justice and of conscience, a particular case and something for a judicial assembly.

The Superior thinks he should answer that all the consideration and attachment he has for Father Lalanne must not prevent him from fulfilling all that justice requires toward the body of the Society, which confidently puts all its interests into his keeping; that the intentions of Father Lalanne, although constantly good, cannot make the Society responsible for acts it constantly disavows and disapproves; that the transfer of the Sainte Marie Boarding School to Layrac having been made by Father Lalanne without any authorization on the part of the superior and even against his direct orders and intentions, Father Lalanne seems to him responsible for all the damage he has caused the Society. The superior cannot understand how a member of any Society can privately keep for himself a property belonging to the entire Society. If in the present case this property cannot be rendered common to the Society of which it forms a part, why should he not indemnify it for the losses of which it is the cause? Father Lalanne will say in vain, to cover all the injustice of his proceedings, that he has paid certain old debts of the boarding school, and that besides, he pays a lifetime annuity of fifteen hundred francs. It is not less true that Father Lalanne remains obliged to pay all other damages that this transfer has caused, and of which an idea has been given in the preliminary remarks.

There is no mention or question here of presumptive gains. The superior, who takes advice, thinks it his duty to make the sacrifice of them not only because of the attachment he has for Father Lalanne, whose success in all matters he earnestly desires, but by the consideration of the situation in which Father Lalanne has placed himself being truly annoying and the dangers of which he can diminish and remove only by successes obtained over a long time. It is this view that makes the superior believe that he will have satisfied his conscience and accomplished toward the Society all that justice will have required of him in the condition in which things are, by asking Father Lalanne to trouble himself only with the reimbursement of twenty-three thousand francs, with interest paid and to be paid until the disappearance of the capital.

The superior furthermore invites Father Lalanne to make a transaction or deal which will honorably end with him all that regards temporalities. Here we add, as a sort of memorandum, that it is to be presumed that Father Lalanne will not delay in being discharged from giving M. Estebenet the annuity of fifteen hundred francs.

Given in Bordeaux, April 24, 1837.[1]

* * * *

The following letter is one of the most admirable manifestations of the spirit of faith which animated the Founder in the government of the Society and which he knew how to inculcate strongly in his disciples, as is proved by what follows in the life of Father Meyer, to whom this letter is addressed.

959 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, April 28, 1837

Your letter of the eighth of the current month, my dear son, would call for a rather long answer. I shall ask you to designate at another time by numbers the articles for which you ask an answer. In that way the correspondence will be clearer and more effective. Father Chevaux must have acquainted you with Brother Athias. He must have told you that he was only passing through Courtefontaine, at most for three or four days.[2] For many years, from time to time, he has made touching promises, but until now he has not kept them. It has been only in the last extremity and in despair regarding the case that we have finally decided to have him withdraw. I understood that he was even dangerous company for the pupils. You seem to want to give him another trial. I am ready and willing to grant it, provided you take the responsibility upon yourself and use toward him that vigilance and

[1] The memorandum of April 14th had been cautiously prepared by Fr. Chaminade. A first copy of it is dated in January, a second in February. The definite text had been edited by Fr. Chaminade from the end of March as is seen from the examination of the copy-books of his correspondence.
[2] See Letters 936 and 946.

solicitude he needs. In your position with your many occupations and the periodic absences called for by your official duties, that seems difficult to me.

Brother Boillon will go to Courtefontaine with all his belongings, if you are able to carry out the arrangements for Marast of which I spoke to you in a preceding letter. It is more than evident, my dear son, that the *surplus* from thirty-six boarders and from a dozen day students cannot meet the needs of the novitiate which furthermore can always go on increasing as far as the number is concerned; and you easily understand, my dear son, that I have always looked at the matter in this way. Your resources, as much for food as for clothing, are it seems to me, immense. They are in the treasures of the paternal providence of our God, our Lord Jesus Christ. The most blessed Virgin Mary, his august Mother and ours, has them on deposit.

Why, my dear son, while often praying and recollecting yourself, do you not go to rap at the doors of those with whom are found the more or less considerable shares of the helps which Providence destines for the novitiate? Will you say that you do not know such doors? Well then, what harm would there be if you did make a mistake, or even if you were often mistaken? Your mistake, in many cases, could not be imputed to you before God, but could and should be imputed to those who are not doing what they should, or all that they could do.

Have we been mistaken in believing that the novitiate of Courtefontaine was a work that God was asking of us? Answer affirmatively or negatively. If you answer negatively, "No, God did not ask for this work," well, then, all is said. We must stop receiving novices and take the means of wisely dispersing the postulants and novices who are there. If you answer affirmatively, is God then in contradiction with himself? Is there no longer any means, in the order of his providence, to have his designs carried out? And if, in effect, there were no more, has he lost the power of working miracles? I know that we must not tempt God and ask for miracles when the common order suffices to carry out what he requires, but we must not have less confidence that he would provide them if it were useful for his glory and for the good of his creatures.

We must make use of loans but rarely, and in the meantime, or rather, while we are seeking the means destined by Providence, these helps must serve to pay the debts contracted. Never was it less necessary to use the means of loans for maintenance and for expansion than during the times of the Revolution.

Why have I counseled you to have yourself replaced as master of novices by Father Lamotte, if it were not to provide you with the time needed to make the trips that are necessary? As I think I told you once before, why do you not confer on this subject with Mlle Coudre who knows the area? Why do you not go to Dôle and confer amicably with Father

Régnier?[1] Has the establishment of Seurre been possibly delayed in the views of Providence, that the means at his disposition for the establishment of Seurre, might be employed for the novitiate? Doesn't Father Régnier know anyone in Dôle whom he can join to himself for a little or for much? etc., etc., etc. Don't you know anyone in Besançon whom you could acquaint with your difficulties and your means of solving them?

When you meet generous persons, friends of all that is good, it is very rare that they do not introduce you to others, whether of the same or of some other city. When someone in a city can supply what you need and takes to heart the interests of your work, why not give him the direct mission to do so?

It is quite possible that the first steps you take will be entirely fruitless. You may even come up against persons who will receive you badly, others who will give you the advice to wait, telling you the times are too hard for the undertaking of such works, that public distress is at its highest point, that etc., etc. It is then, my dear son, that *you* will have gained, while at the same time working for the glory of God at the work of the novitiate. It seems to me, that God is good enough to have you make sacrifices for his work and to have you draw profit from it – profit from the refusals, profit perhaps from the jokes played on you, profit in faith and confidence in God, which will increase through contradictions and griefs – profit of all kinds.

Make use of all the means that you can procure for yourself, in view of the suitable maintenance of the novitiate, be it for food or clothing. It is altogether suitable that there be a taking of the habit on the part of the postulants who are received as novices, with the blessing of the habits at the ceremony of their reception. The novices may wear their old clothes in the interior of the novitiate, but when they go out on a walk, when they attend any of the parish services, when they appear in a body or group before some distinguished visitor, they must wear their religious costume.

You must also put among the important needs of the house that of paying its urgent debts. Never have recourse to loans unless the whole work would stop functioning were you not to make use of this kind of help; and even then, let this question of a loan be considered by your house Council.

When you assemble your Council, reflect neither upon the knowledge, the wisdom, nor upon the experience of the members that compose it, but much rather upon the promise that Jesus Christ gives us in the Gospel: "When two or three are gathered together in my name, there shall I be in the midst of them."

See, my dear son, if it would not be suitable to give Brother Verrier some kind of title, for example that of *Econome*, without any prejudice to the offices he fulfills directly by

[1] Fr. Régnier, a priest from Seurre (Côte d'Or) where he prepared the foundation of a school of the Society (See Letter 883).

himself. You have to be relieved of a great number of details and to take upon yourself only a sort of supervision, more or less strict, of the finances. Brother Verrier may not have all the desired experience for general maintenance, but he is well able to acquire it. It is better to run the risk of letting him learn by experience, although we may have to pay for it, provided the price is not too great. If there is danger that it is, then he must be trained to consult before acting. He is not yet able to take charge of the bookkeeping but he will soon be able to tell whether his scribe knows how to put down the things he tells him, and I have little doubt that if he is given well-kept books, in a short time he will be able to make a report of every use and receipt of money. In spite of all the requests made to me about this young man for other communities, I have always resisted, because I felt he was needed in Courtefontaine. If I am not mistaken in the idea I have of him, tell me of it and I shall send him his nomination.

I am very much inclined to believe what I told you about Father Lamotte. Make of him a Head, a responsible Head. As assistant novice master he believes himself without any responsibility. See if Brother Perchet is still unsuited to be assistant novice master. I am saying unsuited, because of the cautions he thinks he must take for the maintenance of his health. The assistant should very specially be a model of regularity and fervor.

Your brother, in becoming director of Marast, may at first be somewhat at a loss, but if he remains submissive both toward you and toward me, and if he is otherwise filled with good will, I think he has every chance of succeeding. At his age,[1] he needs to gather experience and to mature. Later on, he might not succeed. I do not intend that he remain there a very long time, even if he should succeed perfectly. If God destines him for the priesthood, we shall replace him there, to have him make good theological studies, as I am doing for Brother Roussel. He has just submitted to a very stiff examination and obtained his degree of Bachelor of Arts. Besides, he continues to take courses from the theology faculty.

Didn't you obtain a Bachelor of Arts degree when you were in Saint Remy? It seems to me you did, if I remember correctly. You might have need of one because of your pupils in secondary education.

Before passing on to the other points in your letter, I must answer a question that you and several others could ask about the means I am counseling you for the maintenance of the novitiate. Will the novitiate of Courtefontaine ever have any other resources than such as are provided by the alms of the faithful? I answer that, in proportion as the novitiate will furnish subjects sufficiently trained to be placed, the General Administration of the Society will give help to the novitiate and there is hope, in the not too distant future, that the General Administration will be able to maintain it entirely at its own expense. There is question only of equipping it and of maintaining it temporarily.

[1] Bro. Meyer was then 22 years old.

I authorize you, my dear son, to give, on my part, an obedience to Brother Casimir Chevassu[2] to put him at the disposal of Brother Troffer in Salins. You will tell Brother Troffer to have Brother Casimir Chevassu trained in music, but in a way, so that the interior of the young man will in no way be affected . . .

You may receive M. Delatour, the older, as a novice since his younger brother is the only one in the family who has neck swellings which the doctor diagnoses as scrofula. You must take some precautions for the younger one because this malady is contagious. You will arrange with the doctor which precautions are to be taken.

You may admit M. Lambert to temporary vows as soon as you find him such as I seemed to want him to be in my letters; and if he makes real progress, I shall have no difficulty in permitting him to make his perpetual vows.

As regards M. Fossat, he must be left to terminate his temporal affairs in Moissac. Let him continue to study and, although little intelligent and far behind in education, I shall tell you what he might be good for. Consult me about him again. Continue to train him for the religious life. There will be reason for believing in the change of Brother Oppermann if it is the effect of faith and religion. Grace alone can correct defects that become a sort of second nature to him and have eventually formed his character.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

In the preceding letter there is the first mention of a personage who was to play an inauspicious role in the course of the last years of the life of the Founder.

M. Narcissus Roussel, born in 1813 in Orgelet, entered the Society of Mary in 1835 and made his novitiate at the Madeleine under the direction of Father Caillet. When Father Chaminade came back to Bordeaux in 1836, he was struck by the great intellectual resources that this young man offered, and he took it upon himself to work with him, to train him, in the thought that if he succeeded in controlling this passionate nature, he would have procured for God and the Society a valuable worker. He tried and tested him quite a long time and admitted him to perpetual vows only in 1837, and after three repeated requests.

Nevertheless, as Brother Roussel, under his direction, made substantial progress, Father Chaminade began in 1838 to make use of him as a secretary, and had him ordained priest at Christmas of the same year.

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[2] Bro. Casimir Chevassu, 1819-1842, from Leschères, Jura, entered the Society in Courtefontaine in 1836 and was employed in teaching in Salins. There he fell sick after a few years and died in Dôle. He was the younger brother of Bro. Emmanuel Chevassu, 1813-1849, who was the founder of the Institution Ste. Marie of Besançon, 1838, and of the School of Louhans (1848).

At that time, there was need of a religious having a bachelor's degree for the direction of the house of Saint Hippolyte. Father Roussel, being one of the rare subjects possessing such a degree, was put in charge there. Left to himself, he did not respond to this mark of confidence and soon had to be recalled to Bordeaux where the Founder, taking him as secretary, continued to put his intelligence and his tireless activity at the service of the Society.

At the end of 1840, surprised by the requirements of a lawsuit brought against the Society by M. Auguste, Father Chaminade found himself urgently obliged to complete his Council by the nomination of a religious to the post of Second Assistant which had become vacant by the resignation of Father Lalanne. Not having anyone ready at hand, he thought he could designate for this post, at least temporarily, Father Roussel.

The first use which the proud priest made of his title was to bring Father Chaminade to resign from his functions as Superior General, so that the Council could sustain, in his place, the court case against Brother Auguste (1841).

The sentence secured by the arbitration of M. Ravez in 1844, having sustained Father Chaminade in his rights against his assistants, Father Roussel opposed Father Chaminade in his designation of a successor. Father Chaminade had reserved to himself the right to name his successor, and called for the holding of the Chapter of 1845. Removed by the Chapter, Father Roussel did not delay in leaving the Society in 1845, leaving to all those who had known him a most painful memory.

At Saint Remy, the question of the organization and installation of the community of Working Brothers, so dear to Father Chaminade, always remained unsettled (See Letter 920).

Father Chaminade, for reasons of economy, had thought of establishing it at the orange-house of the château. The Council of the establishment was inclined to place it in the localities of the old normal school, become a primary boarding school after the Revolution and of transferring the primary boarding school to the château near the secondary boarding school. The Founder is asking for a deeper study of the question.

960 – TO FATHER FONTAINE, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 1, 1837

My dear son, I have just read rather attentively the minutes of the Council sessions of last February 22, 23, 25, and those of April 20. Here are, simply stated, the thoughts or reflections which this reading has suggested to me.

1. You all seem to be of the opinion that according to the views we have, the winter orange-house would be much more suitable than any other place in Saint Remy, even more than the primary boarding school, formerly the normal school.

2. On the other hand, you find the place of the primary boarding school completely ready for the community in question, even supposing this community to comprise a hundred persons and you find no other difficulty in this project than the noise that the boarders might make in the château. Nevertheless, last summer, the boarders and the community were far from numbering one hundred persons. Such is the case even now. All were occupied in work; but there was crowding, since, with the exception of the chapel, there was no room large enough to accommodate one hundred persons. Where then would the winter workshops be placed? In other words, where would the thirty-five farmers work, who at least during the winter, cannot do any farming? I seem to see considerable expenses to be made, perhaps not right away, because of the small number that would be thrown to the right and to the left. Then, only one drawback is seen, the noise of the boarders! However, nothing is made of the passage of outsiders to go to the château as well as to return from it, and that, perhaps still more annoying, of the curious, and of all those who would have dealings with the community. To avoid this inconvenience, we could place the entrance to the château where it was formerly. We have already figured out the expenses that would have to be made.

3. I see that we are always coming back to the lack of solidity in the walls and the sinking of the ground of the orange-house. But, during the more than fifteen months during which there has been question of this, and especially since the holding of the ad hoc Councils, how have we not been able to make sure of it, given the help of persons experienced in such matters? It is said there is no water. But formerly there was a large and superb well. What kind of assurance have we that it has dried up? I think I have been shown a place, quite close to the big building of the orange-house, where water could easily be had, but I did not examine this particularity in sufficient detail to be able to explain myself more clearly.

4. The plans and estimates received so as to lodge a hundred persons in the orangery, with all suitable conveniences, did not present the same expense by any means. In truth, there was no renting of the land for half the crops raised, but as many as forty or fifty could be transferred there for only a part of the total expense, and the second part could be waited for indefinitely and without inconvenience. Didn't all these plans and estimates mean anything? The project . . . asked for no more than to be able to transport itself there, to be able to live and work there, in spite of the unpleasantness there might be in renting on the basis of half the crops raised – at least until some better arrangement could be worked out.

5. Assuredly the first religious, the Benedictines, for example, when they were formed for the first time, were far from having the conveniences we have. It was not when they initially went to Monte Cassino and formed the first monastery of the order, that there

turned out to be greater ease and regularity. Providence, in inspiring the idea of this first community of Working Brothers in Saint Remy, seemed to give it the means and to supply the place in the beautiful and vast building of the winter orange-house, with necessary space to expand in all directions. As regards the impossibility of using it, as represented to me, I did not think it prudent to go ahead with the matter, but I would have desired, as I still desire, that an effort be made to overcome all difficulties if possible, and to see if without considerable expenses at least a beginning could not be made.

6. In the combining of the boarding schools, you seem to be looking only for a resolution to the question of money, of finances, and in fact, we must occupy ourselves with the matter, but are questions of morals and prudence to be neglected? Before the miserable and regrettable differences that arose between Father Lalanne and myself, there was only one boarding school in Saint Remy which took in the two divisions of instruction: the normal school, with the so-called community of Workers being in the actual place of the primary boarding school. During the course of these disturbances, the normal school became almost negligible. Brother Clouzet proposed to me to take the boarders of primary teaching in place of candidates and thus to equip a primary boarding school. I consented and he succeeded.

But the two boarding schools brought together at the château distinctly and separately will be in each other's way, as are two trees planted too close together. Are they not already harming one another? If it is brought to my attention that, in the beginning, they are not harmful to one another, I shall answer that a close watch be kept and that it will be seen that they are harming one another progressively, and the secondary boarding school, made up of sixty or more pupils, when a greater number was expected, could not maintain itself by other means than those Father Lalanne was employing – and even at that, how long would it have sustained itself? And in this supposition, what good would have been accomplished, both for the Christian education of youth and for a solid extended education? When Father Fontaine – I believe here I am speaking to all the members of the Council – came to take the place of Father Lalanne and actually held it, on how many boarders could he count in the middle and older divisions who were not corrupted and who had practically no fear of God? Do we conduct boarding schools for our own glory or to make money? Doubtless, we need money to maintain ourselves and to make headway, but should interest in money make us deviate from our principles? In that case, it would be better that the Society of Mary perish with its money than to exist and to follow false paths!

7. I like very much the fear and the great repugnance you all have for borrowing. Recourse to this means must be had only in forced circumstances, especially in times of Revolution, when from one moment to another we may find ourselves completely paralyzed. Nevertheless, this fear must not be excessive. It could at times even be harmful to the works of God. That would be the case if, for example, we neglected this means at a time when we had well-founded hopes of being able to pay back the money borrowed. Thus, in Marast, I permitted loans because 1. things have not been conducted as they should have been, and there would have been a kind of scandal had progress been

retarded; 2. because the revenues of the property are sufficient to assume and pay off its debts at a time more or less distant.

It is this same fear of loans that made me hold back when I was consulted about the very considerable expenses that would be needed to establish there, even at the beginning, the community of Workers. In my first ideas, I was far from suspecting it. What is to be done in such a condition of things? I don't see anything else to do for the time being other than to withhold all manner of decision: *Ambages ubique*. I understand very well, that it would have been suitable to make a decision, especially with regard to this community, as we are running the risk of losing the moments marked out by Providence. The religious who would have formed the first nucleus may lose this force for good will which they had. The postulants who arrive will not be formed as they should have been formed, and it is to be presumed that a far greater number would enter. However, as there would be some imprudence in advancing in the state of uncertainty in which you all are, I must necessarily withhold further plans.

8. Before receiving the minutes of the Council sessions, I still continued to hope, and I hoped to be able to recognize the breath of the Holy Spirit, but these minutes are not precisely in the order I was awaiting. I desired the details of the discussion, and I received only the results of it. By the observations for and against expressed in Council, I would have been able to distinguish some kind of a course to adopt. I would have had the separate opinion of each one. I like very much the holding of the Councils, following what our Lord has promised: "Whenever two or three of you are gathered in my Name, there am I in the midst of you." Since there is question here of a very important work of God, and that I have reason to think that each one of you would come together only in the name of Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ, I hoped he would hold to his promise sooner or later, and that I would have been able to assure myself of his desires.

Conclusion: Let each one of you examine seriously, before God, if the difficulties which are in the way of the transfer of the community of Workers, of its establishment and development in the winter orange-house can be overcome, since all are of the opinion that this is the place that would be most suitable.

Two more essential difficulties could, it seems to me, be resolved for or against in such a way as not to be obliged to revert to the matter at any time. The first relates to the crevices in the walls, the second to the lack of water. As regards the first, if they come from a progressive lowering of the foundations and were repaired suitably, would the walls then present sufficient solidity for the use of the edifice according to the views being entertained? In the second place, is it quite certain that the well has dried up without any remedy and that it is not possible to have any other water than that which falls from the skies? Where did the previous farmers give drink to their cattle and get the water they needed for themselves?

If there is question of transferring the primary boarding school to the château because the secondary boarding school has become insufficient to take care of its increase, and because the hope is being lost, perhaps too rapidly, it can recover its numerical strength, would it not be suitable and fitting to make but one boarding school out of the two which would have the same food, the same management, etc., although they would have the two levels of education, primary and secondary? It would then be the same as the one of which Father Lalanne has taken the direction, and in truth it would also be . . .

The copy stops at this passage.

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961 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 1, 1837

My dear son, when I received your letter of April 24, I was dictating my answer to the written Council report which Father Fontaine finally sent me. This answer is somewhat long because I imagined myself in your midst, talking to you all with my accustomed frankness and sincerity in the light of faith and religion. I am addressing myself to Father Fontaine, but what I am saying is intended for the entire Council.

In the condition of things such as they are, and not definitely settled on anything, I am not able to consent to any other expenses than those rigorously needed for the maintenance of the old shed. You yourself see how long the roof that is over the part of the shed needing repairs lasted in spite of the exposure of the roof to the wind from the south. What would have happened if the repairs had been made as soon as the large leaks were noticed? . . .

"Brother Galliot," you tell me, my dear son, "really wants what is right, but his pride was hurt by Brother Pelleteret, as well as by that miserable division of the cash boxes, with the result that today he challenges everybody." I have never doubted that Brother Galliot wants what is right, and that there are in him good principles of conduct. If I had ever doubted it, I would not have placed him in Marast, but how are we to believe in the reality of his wanting to do right when it is not at the expense of his self-love? Is there question of a real love for God when this love is subject to the love of self?

You tell me his self-love has been hurt by Brother Pelleteret, but as Superior did he not have the means and even the duty of working at the cure of the self-love of Brother Pelleteret? Because if Brother Pelleteret hurt him it must have been only by some thoughtless words or some self-conceited air . . .

You add "by this miserable division of cash boxes." In what way has the self-love of Brother Galliot, without being extreme, been hurt by this division, which is generally entirely

in order even among businessmen, and even in the King's household? Is it by distrust of some kind? No, certainly, in many big houses only as a matter of order and prudence. Is it not completely suitable that each box has its book, and that the one who has the box also has the book? Is it not a fact that, in all administrations, the cash box books are regularly inspected? What more have I ordered? I do not understand your expression or perhaps I understand it too well, in calling the division of the cash boxes silly. Even if they were not divided between two persons, would it not be suitable that they be divided in the hands of a single one? . . .

In the letters of Brother Pelleteret, I have never received anything that might be considered as contrary to what his position requires. On the contrary, all breathes and announces submission and docility, with the desire of leading a truly religious life. What he could do for poverty, for example, if he could dispose arbitrarily of his cash box.

It is annoying that Brother Galliot is challenging everybody, no doubt even his higher Superiors. From this, you must realize to what degree the evil has grown. Nevertheless, do not neglect to do that which as a friend and through genuine zeal you can do to cure him. What is more annoying is not precisely the harm he is causing the establishment of Marast, but that which he is doing to his own soul.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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962 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 2, 1837

Since your letter of April 10, my dear son, the authentic minutes of the Councils have finally arrived. They tell me little apart from the extract of them which you had sent me. I would have believed that these minutes would present the modest discussions which must have been carried on in the various sessions, because it is hardly to be presumed that all the councilors immediately agreed on all points. You will see the answer I am giving and which I am addressing to Father Fontaine. I would be led to believe that all united on one general opinion only for the good resulting from peace.

I am going to answer Brother Bressolles, but I don't know as yet what I am going to say; but you will see it in the letter which I shall leave unsealed. Treat him, without doubt, with all the consideration that the weakness of his health which you say is not yet completely re-established, and the weakness of his virtue – which surely would not stand too severe trials – may require. However, we must always aim at making him a good religious, since he believes apparently without the least shadow of doubt, that such is his vocation and that he has a sincere will of attaining its end. Vain complacency would be prejudicial even to his salvation.

Your conduct with regard to Brother Langue seems to me very wise, but you must not grow tired plucking the same strings. There is in him a foundation of good will, of faith, and of religion, but he has many prejudices. He is under many illusions, of which he will rid himself only in the long run, even while living regularly. Let him always find easy access to you and, above all, a loving heart full of feeling, etc. Recommend him to the Lord in all your prayers, so as to draw down upon him the blessings of the Lord and the light of his Holy Spirit, and as regards the rest, have no worries.

Your conduct and your little discussions with Brother Justin are not altogether satisfactory. It is not by means of the Church that God begins to make himself known, but it is by the Church that God makes known what in him is beyond the reach of reason. The principles of our faith are the strength and light which God gives to our reason to make his existence known and what is understood in the idea of a God known by reason, because God has placed in us and in our reason, proofs of his existence and of his infinite excellencies. It is thus that we must proceed in the explanation of the Creed, of our faith and of all the truths proposed by the Church – the Church being itself one of the truths of our faith. How would it be to say to someone in the first instance: Believe in the holy Church, one, Catholic, and apostolic, because the Church proposes this truth to me?

It is very true that we must not discuss matters of faith in times of temptation, but it is also very true that the motives for belief must be well presented and established. The pride of Brother Justin will find itself happily lessened in putting interest in the learning of the first principles. His ignorance is pretty great and his capacity quite limited. He can

come easily enough to the point of believing in God and in Jesus Christ his adorable Son, and by faith in God and in Jesus Christ you can correct him of all his vices and bring about his advancement in all the virtues. What must be avoided, what must be done by the one who believes in God, the one who believes in Jesus Christ? Why would you not have Brother Justin learn the *Catechism of Couturier*,[1] and, at least, the explanation of the Apostles' Creed? Require of him that he be able to answer all the questions, not necessarily verbatim, but as regards the doctrinal content. If he is docile and does not otherwise fall into serious faults, you may admit him to the reception of the Sacraments. It is to be presumed that led in this manner he will not be slow in giving you satisfaction, and after that we shall see what might be done in order to secure further development. I am going to answer his letter by some words bearing upon this idea. You may sometimes confide to others both your interviews with him and the lessons to be learned by him, but see to it that they follow the same line of thought. If he were not docile, I would have to be notified.

I have written to Father Meyer on the subject of Brother Athias to whom he seemed to give much confidence.

Your meditations, my dear son, will suffer little by being interrupted, be it by the cares required by your health, or by necessary occupations, if you look upon all matters and things only in the light of faith. While meditating, for example, upon the passion of our Lord, why do you not see all the sufferings and all the humiliations divinized, not only in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also in each one of his members? Why would you not taste of the happiness of those that suffer, the happiness of those that are humiliated, etc.?

Receive, my dear son, my fatherly greetings with my tender embraces.

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963 – TO BROTHER JUSTIN SOLEIL, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 2, 1837

Your letter of March 13, my dear son, which left Saint Remy only on April 12, quieted me somewhat in your regard. You seem to have good will, to want to correct yourself and to make progress especially in faith and humility. I shall call a truce upon all reproaches of the past. Think only of walking forward. I am writing to Father Chevaux and I am telling him what he is to do in your regard. Be docile, but docile as a good little child. I am not asking more but I shall not put up with any indocility. If difficulties sometimes arise, just let me know of them, but in the meantime always begin to do what you have been told to do and in the manner it is asked of you.

[1] This catechism in four volumes, work of the Jesuit, John Couturier, 1730-1799, published in Dijon in 1821, was in great vogue in the first part of the nineteenth century.

Believe, my dear son, in my sincere and tender attachment.[1]

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As a consequence of the insistence of the Baillard brothers, Father Chaminade lets them see the possibility of an understanding, but he begs them to send him subjects to be formed in view of the future work.

964 – TO FATHER BAILLARD, PASTOR OF FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, May 9, 1837

DEAR REVEREND PASTOR,

Your letter of last April 27, written by your Reverend brother, gives me to understand that we are not advancing according to the same views and the same plan of action.

By my letter of the nineteenth of the same month, I had no intention at all of blaming the steps you seem to be taking in view of the projected establishment in Sion. I wanted to say only that it was not the one that I thought I had Father Lalanne indicate to you when you were asking us to take charge of this work which is so important. The Society of Mary is so small, both in the number and in the merit of its members, especially in this exterior merit which at first sight imposes consideration, that, at the reading of your first messages, I said: "We are not able to enter into this plan."

Father Lalanne is no longer available, as I had the honor of telling you, since the foundation of the establishment of Layrac in the Department of the Lot et Garonne. I think, as you do, that Father Lamotte could be useful in Sion. It could even be that he could become useful in several ways. I shall speak to him of this at the time of my visit to Courtefontaine.[2]

After what you do me the honor of telling me, namely, that it will hardly be possible to inhabit the house before All Saints, 1838, we can take steps which will morally assure us the success of the work. Send to Bordeaux all subjects desirous and capable of

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[1] This letter was followed by a postscript on the part of the Secretary, Bro. Prost, which said: "I don't know if you have been told that the greatest part of the population of Bordeaux has been seriously attacked by a grippe epidemic, to the extent, that because of it terrible ravages, eighteen to twenty persons were buried in a few days. Among the inhabitants of the Madeleine, only one person was not affected, and it is our venerable Good Father whose health continues to be very good. All the others have been more or less affected.

[2] Fr. Lamotte was from Lorraine and, according to the Baillard brothers, he was supposed to have been directed by them to the Society of Mary.

cooperating in the work who believe themselves to have a religious vocation, priests or simple seminarians, but who having completed successful studies, at least as far as philosophy. We shall have them make their novitiate here, we shall here choose at the end of the novitiate those who would be capable of being teachers or of fulfilling certain offices. As regards young laymen who would have some inclination only for primary teaching, send them to Courtefontaine in the Jura. Father Lamotte is presently there. Here there is also a special novitiate for this type of young man, and also a normal school for boarding students. The priests, or those who are able to receive Holy Orders, get only one year of novitiate after which they are admitted to perpetual profession if they are judged to be in the proper frame of mind. By All Saints Day in 1838, shall we not have a strong nucleus for the establishment? The priests who have very special talents might not find in Bordeaux among those rubbing elbows with them equality and still less, superiority,[1] but they will find what they are to look for, viz., the means of developing themselves in religious life.

As regards the Prospectus to be published, we can come to some agreement about that later on. Furthermore, we could come to some agreement with our excellent archbishop, who, being in Bordeaux, will not show less interest in the diocese of Nancy which he left with so much regret. Nothing forbids you from beginning or continuing your collections even at a distance, without the publication of the Prospectus. It will not be difficult for you to give, even in writing, an instruction about what can be announced, and were there only question of re-establishing the sanctuary of the Blessed Virgin and the pilgrimage to the holy mountain of Sion you would have a sufficiently impressive and imposing motive.

I hope, Reverend Father, that you will not reject any really capable subject, anyone really called, who would not have sufficient funds to pay for his traveling expenses or for his stay in Bordeaux or Courtefontaine. The first collections could hardly be better employed.

I shall very willingly lend myself to the novitiate being made in Bordeaux. Possibly, this may be my last work, the one which shall end my life. I shall not hesitate to undertake the work in Sion in this way, because I believed it and still believe it to be the views of Our Lord that in it Mary will be glorified.

I am with profound respect, Reverend Father, your very humble servant.

P.S. If either one of your Reverend brothers had a religious vocation and came himself to the novitiate, would not the work thereby receive a ferment which would make it develop more surely and more promptly? I am leaving them this last observation as a subject for their pious consideration before God.

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[1] Allusion to the exigencies manifested by Fr. Baillard in his first letter.

The anxieties of the Founder in regard to the director of Saint Hippolyte are confirmed, whence the following serious letter.

965 – TO BROTHER CLERC, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, May 11, 1837

My dear son, I wrote to you just a few days ago and I had expected to do it again when I received a new letter from you; or furthermore if I had not received so many opinions, which compared to your letters, have led me either not to believe them or to believe them to be a false interpretation.

In my last letter I restrained myself only to express to you, 1. my surprise at not having received your accounts for the month of March. I excused the omission, imagining that you wanted to let the month of April come to an end in order to send the accounts of the two months at the beginning of May. I observed to you, 2. not to have interviews with persons of the other sex, only inasmuch as it is necessary and in every way suitable and only for the duration of the necessity or suitability, be it in the interior of the establishment or, and especially, on the outside.

I learn today, my dear son, and for a certainty, that you are out on excursions and even absent from time to time on matters which are in no way in the interests of the establishment, and that quite recently, during one of these long absences, serious scandals occurred in Saint Hippolyte. The odium of these scandals surely falls upon those who have caused them, but there is nothing to prevent it from falling upon you, who contrary to all positive and moral order, were not at your post. Does it not then extend itself over the entire Society of Mary and the General Administration of which gives you such a great latitude of confidence – in spite of the observations of wise persons?

I shall here suppress, my dear son, all other painful reflections, both for your sake and my own. I shall ask you only to answer me frankly in regard to this question: When you asked me to order your being placed in Saint Hippolyte in such a way that you could run this establishment without dependence upon any local Superior, was it in good faith and only to have complete liberty for doing good and for equipping this establishment according to the views of the great success that you manifested? Or else, with these beautiful and praiseworthy designs, was there not in you a real love of independence and of the liberty of interpreting all the laws of dependence – be it of the Society or of general order – according to what you would judge by yourself to be most suitable? Might I have believed too much in the first part of the disjunction and might you not have been under an illusion in having me understand that it was in the disposition of your heart?

You will easily understand, my dear son, that I cannot allow such a condition of things to exist any longer. You seem to me to have confounded two important things: the liberty of the functions you had to fulfill with the liberty of your person, religiously taken.

What leads me to believe in this confusion, is that in the beginning you seemed to look upon Father Metzger as the ordinary chaplain of the establishment and that I wanted that he should be as the real Head of Zeal, and you are well aware of the extent of this Office.

In spite of all the confidence I had in you and that I still have, I have never been without some fears given the fact that you have never seemed to me to understand the nature and the practice of humility. It is to this effect that I wanted to start with you a sort of controversy on this Christian virtue, one of the foundation stones of the spiritual edifice. Be it through presumption or some other cause, I have never received from you any positive answer. You have, no doubt, believed to know enough about it. If you aspire, my dear son, to the crown of immortality and especially, if you want to assure yourself of it, there will be needed another kind of work upon yourself than that which you are actually doing. I hope that, in entering into yourself, you will give me a satisfactory answer.

In the meantime, receive my fatherly embraces.

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966 – TO FATHER MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, May 17, 1837

I feel, my dear son, that it is time that your soul grows, so as not to spoil the work of God by narrow ideas and weak sentiments. The real means of success is to empty yourself of yourself, and to give yourself entirely over to the spirit of the Lord. The protection of the most Blessed Virgin will be of the greatest help to you in this twofold task.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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Father Lalanne cried out against the assertions of the memorandum of April 24. Father Chaminade is precise and insistent in the following letter.

967 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, May 26, 1837

In answer to your letter of the twenty-third of the current month, my dear son, I shall tell you that what seems to you to be an error in the facts reported in my memorandum is really no such thing. All announces, all proves, that if you seemed in the beginning to receive from the Council the idea of the possibility of the transfer of the establishment of Bordeaux to Layrac, you have acted and you have consummated this affair as a real Head. It is you, with Brother Mémain, whom you knew how to win and bring over to your views,

who as if you represented the majority of the Council, have acted arbitrarily in buying Layrac in your own name, in agreeing to put a mortgage of thirty thousand francs on the house bought in addition to the agreement I had made with M. Dardy. It is you who have willingly made the immense expenses to get the establishment started. It is you who obstinately refused to meet the obligations of the Society which the Sainte Marie Boarding School was meeting.

Furthermore, you knew very well that we were accepting the idea of transferring the boarding school only as a more powerful and efficacious means of more promptly ridding ourselves of our debts. Is it not you and your action which have brought to the Society the losses it experienced, which have exposed it to a ruin from which it will be suffering for a long time, and for which it is asking of you only a very small indemnity?

I believed you to be convinced of these facts, and in my report I took it for granted. The difficulty with my conscience did not come from the uncertainty of whether or not you were the Head of the enterprise. This is, as we say, more evident than the noonday sun. Nevertheless, you do not answer the question which forms the object of the memorandum, but you begin to raise difficulties and to become sophisticated about certain antecedents to your proceedings. The Council I had formed, and which was my natural Council composed essentially of three members, had power only in the agreement of the three and not, as you say, in its majority.[1] This majority could not be the judge in its own case.

You thought that, as an answer to the question that is the object of my memorandum, it was necessary to make another memorandum which you would be able to draw up only during the month of June. I am notifying you, my dear son, that if you are not persuaded as regards the wrongs you have caused the Society, I have no intention of waging secret war with you. If you give me no good reasons and as I am not obliged in conscience to exact the indemnity I am asking of you, then I shall consult another advisor, and if he decides that I am really obliged to, then I shall draw up another memorandum, which will not take for granted as does this one, that you are the cause of the losses which the Society has experienced and is experiencing, but which will prove that it is essentially of your own accord and a matter of your own doing: that you transferred the Bordeaux establishment to Layrac. You will answer whatever you wish and I shall reply: Now, for war, now for lawsuits!

Since I am upholding this lawsuit only as an obligation of conscience, I shall do well in saying and doing nothing but what conscience can admit or avow, and it can admit nothing that is contrary to charity, to truth, and to justice. I believe, my dear son, that even if you were to win, you would be losing incomparably more than the gain. I suppose that you could win, because all lawsuits are unpredictable. I am not telling you

[1] In his letter to Bro. Mémain, April 27, 1835, Fr. Chaminade claimed, in effect, “the entire and formal adhesion of the three principal Heads.”

this in any way to frighten you, but because I think that in the relations existing between us it is my duty to do so. Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender attachment which I fondly hope, will never be changed even if saddened.

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Blinded by self-love, the poor director of Marast is struggling against the pure and simple execution of the orders of his Superior. Hence a new fatherly counsel on the part of Father Chaminade.

968 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, MARAST

Bordeaux, June 7, 1837

I am sure, my dear son, you had no idea of disobeying in not carrying out formal orders, and you tell me by your letter of last May 28, that you are very mortified for having given me occasion to believe that you were refusing to obey, etc. I am ready to believe that, deep down in your heart, there was no pure and simple intention to disobey; but without examining the nature of the orders that were being given you, orders so just and so suitable, you create for yourself phantoms, the appearance of which has grievously wounded your self-love. And from that, trouble in your feelings and ideas; illusions causing you to take as reality what are phantoms; hence this stubborn resistance and all the evil has followed. I have deplored your illusions, but I have never believed that you ever had the intention of formally disobeying. Well, finally you are conforming to the orders that are being given you.

Brother Clouzet has remarked to me that you had admitted your mistake, that he had opened your account books and those of Brother Pelleteret without entering into any detail and especially of having done it very rapidly. I nevertheless want to know the method and whether it is conformable to the views I expressed even before the coming of Brother Pelleteret to Marast and that I have never ceased to explain over more than seven months. I desire that peace and good order reign in Marast.

You tell me that it matters little to you to experience the confusion of a forced destitution or what appears to be such. If such a sentiment is not the effect of heroic virtue, it is bad. It is up to you, my dear son, to see if your humility goes as far as heroism. I desire that you work in Marast, that you continue to direct this establishment which you started, that you take care of it with a truly paternal affection and with as much zeal as if you were never to be separated from it, so that when you are given a successor, he may find in the house a truly religious regularity and accounts in good order, be they of the boarding school or of the grounds.

Nevertheless, do not believe, my dear son, that I am not carrying out my promise, that of sending you to another establishment. I shall also grant you the means of making up your novitiate which you tell me was insufficient.

I recall very well the proposal you made to me last year. I have remembered it quite often since the opening of the Marast establishment, but you gave me reason to believe that you had entirely forgotten about it. A truly religious conduct will repair everything. Let me know about every disorder in your establishment which you would not be able to remedy by means of persuasion, mildness, firmness, with clearness, but do so without complaints and without accusations.

I am very glad that Brother Boillon has finally left for his destination. He needed it badly. As regards the tools indispensable for the Marast establishment, I shall have them brought back if necessary or we shall try to make up for the deficiency.

Receive, my dear son, my paternal embraces.

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To Father Chevaux, various counsels in regard to the direction of souls.

969 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 9, 1837

I have received, my dear son, your long and interesting letter of last May 30. I had a sort of presentiment of all that you tell me, but anyhow I was very glad to have your confirmation of the same.

Since there is so much difficulty in settling on a definite place for the community of workers such as we have in mind, we must wait and, nevertheless, receive and take good care of the young men admitted or to be admitted to the religious state. Let us hope that the Lord will remove the obstacles. His Spirit does not seem to me to have directed the deliberations in the various sessions of the Council.

Brother Bousquet told me of the death of his father, and as a result, that it was very difficult for him to work out his salvation in Saint Remy adding that for three years he has been thinking of going to the Trappists. I think this is the first time that he has talked to me about it. He seems persuaded that I would not permit him to do so. He asks me for the permission to place his good reasons before a council outside the Society. There is a special illusion in this manner of acting. What other interest can the Society have in keeping him than to have him fulfill all his duties toward God? Such ideas can have no other effect on him than to paralyze him in the accomplishment of the designs of God upon him and the zealous performance of the duties assigned to him. These are always reasons which excuse his cowardice, as he says, in the performance of penance. He does not understand that in admitting all these ideas, and, so to say, caressing them as if they were

good in themselves, he acts contrary to his vow of stability. This state is highly dangerous for his salvation. Try to have him understand this fact.

What you tell me about Brother Salmon makes me recall that I owe him an answer to his letter of last March 3. I am telling him to ask you to initiate him in the knowledge of the fundamental virtues of faith and humility, and to train him in their practice. In fact, I don't think, my dear son, that there are any better means of curing him of the evil that you see in him. These remedies act more or less slowly and that is why prudence is needed in their application.

You would have done well, my dear son, to send for Brother Justin when you saw that from the first week he did not willingly surrender himself. When ice prevents the crossing, do we not break it to facilitate the passage? Why don't you make direction somewhat agreeable to him? After all isn't it easy to speak to him of the happiness there is in believing and in learning the beautiful virtues of our faith? I have as yet received no letter from Brother Guillegoz.

If the infirmities of Brother de Bressolles are such that he cannot follow the exercises of the community, and especially if his health is not getting any better, that would be a proof that his illness, as the doctor says, is incurable. Then tell him to arrange for his return to the infirmary for priests in Paris, for there he will get treatments that would be very difficult to procure for him in Saint Remy. It is impossible to receive in the novitiate anyone whose health does not permit him to follow the exercises, even the exercises of a community, when it does not happen to be a novitiate in the strict sense of the word. You may let him know quite simply this little part of my letter, with all the considerations suggested by charity. Receive, my dear son, my fatherly embraces.

* * * *

Taking no notice of the reservations of Father Chaminade, the Baillard brothers had their Prospectus printed without making any change in it. They sent postulants to Courtefontaine whom Father Meyer received rather coldly; and, losing interest, they declared themselves unable to send any more, neither to Courtefontaine nor to Bordeaux, if the Founder did not adopt their plan in its entirety. Father Chaminade softens the wrongs blamed on Father Meyer and plainly declares to the Baillard brothers that he is no longer able to work with them.

970 – TO FATHER BAILLARD, PASTOR OF FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, June 10, 1837

Reverend Father, I have received the letter that your reverend brother did me the honor of writing to me. It was dated May 30. Three or four days later, I received your

Prospectus regarding the establishment at Sion with the historical note about the old monastery which I read with real joy.

Your reverend brother tells me that Father Meyer had the imprudence of speaking in a rather shocking way to the two young men you had sent to Courtefontaine. These two young men complained to you about it, as well as to their parents. From this follows the impossibility of any longer sending anyone either to Courtefontaine or to Bordeaux. I am far from excusing the imprudence of Father Meyer. The most I could do would be to lessen its import, for 1. Father Meyer had not been notified of the last propositions that I had the honor of making to you; I did not think it my duty to notify him of them before I had learned that they were agreeable and acceptable to you; 2. It may be that the young men did not repeat exactly what had been said to them. You do well to believe them at their word, as well as their parents, but would it not be possible that by their gestures, their tone of voice, their own choice of words, these young men actually gave cause for the answers that hurt them? Father Meyer had been somewhat warned against your enterprises by some communication of letters coming from your neighborhood. He had told me about it some time before the first letter which you wrote to me. Again, Reverend Father, I am not making these reflections to you either to excuse the imprudence of Father Meyer or to remove the obstacle that henceforth prevents the sending of anyone to Courtefontaine or to Bordeaux. I shall observe to you only what I had the honor of telling you, that the Society of Mary had very few of these capable men, especially in the sense that you believed necessary. We had no guarantee that the one we would send to Sion would not be guilty of some other kind of imprudence.

I have been surprised, Reverend Father, after the reflections I had the honor of making to you in my answer to your first letter and about the *Prospectus* in the manuscript you had sent me – I say I was surprised to see in the printed edition of the said *Prospectus*, that the Society of Mary figured, and especially after the decision made by you in the letter to which I am answering: “Our plan is settled. We are convinced that this plan well carried out will have very great results for religion and we could not confide it to the Society of Mary, unless it would be adopted in its entirety. If it were necessary, if this were called for, we would request Father Chaminade to modify his Constitutions for the house of Lorrain. This is, furthermore, what Father Lalanne promised us.” Father Lalanne has never told me he promised you the modification of the Constitutions for Lorrain, and, if he had told me so, I would very soon have given him the order to explain what he might possibly mean by the expression “modify the Constitutions.” He had meant it to apply only to a few purely regulatory articles which vary somewhat according to various countries, but even the variation of which is according to the spirit of the Constitutions, strictly speaking. I do not doubt any more than you do, Reverend Father, that your plan properly carried out assures very great results for religion. All my difficulties are centered only on the means of carrying it out.

My surprise continues, since your reverend brother adds: “If, being religious ourselves, we saw the possibility of profiting by our beautiful social position for all that we

eventually propose to do, if we saw in it the greater glory of God and a greater number of souls to be saved, we would not hesitate, but the Reverend Superior knows well that for that we have to be free. If it were possible to conciliate things by a sort of association, that would please us. I, nevertheless, ask the Father Superior to believe that our devotedness to the work of Sion and to the Society of Mary has not diminished. I merely thought it my duty to acquaint him with all that is going on."

I have no doubt, Reverend Father, that your beautiful social position does not permit you to carry out your vast plan alone, and especially since you are religious yourselves. But why have another society of religious publicly intervene to carry out a considerable part of your plan, without having made sure that the execution of the other parts would have the suitable and necessary unity? Your reverend brother seems to understand very well that "to conciliate things properly, a sort of association would be necessary." I believe this as you do, but then, is not the public affirmation of the undertaking of the normal school by the Society of Mary too premature? The association, without doubt, would be very honorable to us, and the idea had not occurred to me that you were actually religious. Furthermore, is not the last sentence of the letter an honest and well said dismissal?

I hope that the good Lord will have shown you the work of Sion, only to awaken your devotedness in the propagation of religion, under the auspices of the august Mary, whose name we have the honor to bear, and that he will deign to continue to supply us with the occasions and the means for doing so.

I beg of you to receive the assurance of the profound respect with which I am etc.

* * * *

A fine answer to a request for a trip.

971 – TO BROTHER GUILLEGOZ, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 14, 1837

In your letter of the third of the current month, my dear son, I read with pleasure the new requests you make to me for the coming vacation with the happy results of the permissions I granted you last year. Your requests are accompanied by a spirit of submission and holy indifference proper to every religious who makes similar propositions that are contrary to the general order of things.

I would be very much inclined, my dear son, to grant you the permissions you ask for, especially since you know how to surround yourself with the precautions to be taken, so that they may not be harmful to you in the spiritual order. However, you must know that others may also ask to travel and for good reasons. There may be such in Saint Remy and also in Alsace where you would be going, and, nevertheless, in conscience, I might find

myself obliged to refuse them what they are asking for. What could I say against your example? Would it be proper that I let it be known that I have greater confidence in you than in all others, that etc., etc.? Anyhow, I see one available means and it is that you reproduce for the Council of the community of Saint Remy about the same letter that you

wrote to me, that you submit to it the answer I am writing to you now and that it give me its opinion in the matter involved. I shall be delighted if the Council see no difficulty in the granting of your request.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

972 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET IN SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 15, 1837

If I had seen in it, my dear son, a very urgent need, I would have answered your letters of January 29 and of May 19 sooner. I am thanking God that he is preserving you in the straight and narrow way. Your perpetual vows are for you a fine safeguard, for in them you have the assurance of the abundance and the strength of the graces you need to persevere. There is question only of being faithful to them.

I am not surprised that you should find great help in Holy Communion and in the little practices of penance that are permitted to you. Keep on going right ahead! When you once have the assurance that God asks more of you, let me know of it. Otherwise, be very faithful to the practice of mortification and of modesty. For this you need no permission since in these practices you do nothing else than fulfill ordinary duties.

You tell me that you are continuing to make your meditations in union with our Lord and with the Blessed Virgin, and with sentiments of humility at the sight of your miseries and incapacity for doing anything good of yourself. Always continue in this way, and in the course of the day, frequently renew these acts of union and humility, so that these sentiments may become practically habitual in your soul. . . .

You always experience many distractions in your meditations. When they do not arise in your heart, they are usually only the effect of the instability of your mind. Pay no attention to them. Despise them as soon as you notice them and, while humbling yourself before God, continue to pray as if you had not been interrupted by these distractions.

My dear son, I shall always receive your letters with interest and I shall never lose sight of you. Receive the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

Pressed more and more by the needs of the Society, the Founder remembered the contract made in 1819 with M. Estebenet, in virtue of which the latter had been entitled, as the result of indiscreet solicitations, to a life annuity of fifteen hundred francs for the cession of his house on Menuts Street.

Since that time, M. Estebenet had entered the Society of Jesus and, on the preceding April 9, Father Chaminade had sent him a memorandum, recalling to him the circumstances of the contract of 1819 and asking him if he would not consider it just and fair, to reduce, if not to suppress entirely, the resultant burden upon the Society.

As M. Estebenet gave no answer, Father Chaminade made use of the passage through Bordeaux of Reverend Goudelin, also a former sodalist and also having entered the Society of Jesus, to ask him to intervene in his favor.

973 – TO REVEREND FATHER GOUDELIN, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, June 17, 1837

My respected son, although I hope to have the great satisfaction of embracing you after the retreat you are giving and before your departure, I thought it my duty to send you and to be read with attention, a copy of a memorandum which I sent to Father Estebenet on April 9.

As yet, I have made it known only to him, but, as I understood that he had no intention of giving in to the reasons I am giving him, I thought it my duty to let you know about it, and if you think that I am asking only justice on the part of Father Estebenet, I shall ask you, by means of your counsels, to have it rendered to me, but if, on the contrary, you are of the same opinion as he, or, at least, if you see great uncertainty as to my right, I shall beg of you to communicate the said memorandum to the heads of your Society.

I am very far from desiring to create any sensation, but you understand that I have an obligation in conscience to have everything come into the Society that is justly its due.

I have understood that my memorandum displeased Father Estebenet, 1. by his silence, because he did not judge it apropos to answer me, although I had expressly asked him to do so; 2. because Father Caillet brought me a letter of Father Estebenet, written to M. Agal. Receive, my respected son, the assurance of the inviolable attachment you know I have for you.

As a result of these proceedings, the life annuity of Father Estebenet was effectively reduced to one thousand francs.

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The Director of Marast and the manager of the grounds do not succeed in coming to any agreement. Without growing tired, Father Chaminade explains to them their respective and reciprocal duties.

974 – TO BROTHER PELLETERET, MARAST

Bordeaux, June 21, 1837

Your letter of the twelfth of the current month, my dear son, tells me of contradictions in the letters I have written either to you, to Brother Galliot or to Brother Clouzet. You tell me these contradictions are admitted by Brother Clouzet, and to prove it Brother Clouzet makes me say "that Brother Galliot, or the first Head, is to bear alone all the concern for the boarding school and for the property; and that, in consequence, you are always to act according to the immediate orders of this first Head; that, when I speak of two cash boxes and two registers, it is only for the sake of form; that the manager needs only one kind of daybook, in case of some notes that happen to be forgotten on the part of the Head; that, if in my letters, I have seemed to give you a certain degree of confidence and latitude, it has been only to condescend to your self-love and that, besides, I am not able to know the kind of administration that Marast requires . . ."

Surely, you have not understood the explanations and comparisons of my letters that Brother Clouzet gave you, or possibly he himself may have read them only superficially. I do not think there is any contradiction; nor, if there were any, would it have been necessary to prove it to me. Contradiction must be very rarely supposed in a first Head when he gives orders of which obedience requires the execution, or when he wants to condescend to the self-love of a subordinate Head, and still more so, when he does not know the kind of administration that Marast requires.

I have indeed said, my dear son, that the first Head of Marast, at that time Brother Galliot, has the solicitude for the boarding school and the property, but surely I have not said that he had to sustain all this solicitude alone. The pope has the solicitude of all the churches of the world, and most certainly he does not bear it all alone. The archbishop of Besançon has the care of all the churches of the two Departments and most certainly he does not bear it alone. I have the solicitude of all the establishments of the Society of Mary, and I do not bear it alone. A first Head shares his solicitudes and assures himself that each one of the subordinate Heads who share it with him fulfills exactly all the functions of his charge. You, for example, are really the head manager of the Marast property, but as secondary Head of the establishment you are subject to the first Head. He has the right to see 1. if you fulfill well the duties of your charge; consequently, to see if your books are well kept, if you carry on extraordinary affairs without the permission of the Council of which he is the President. He can see if, in the ordinary expenses, you economize as much as is possible and suitable, etc. 2. He has the right and even the duty to see if your conduct is truly regular and religious, etc., and, certainly, this general solicitude doesn't mean that you are to act only according to immediate orders of this first Head, because, otherwise, you would no longer be Head, but simply a mechanic, a private individual . . . Neither does this mean to say that there are not to be two cash boxes and two registers, not only for form's sake, but also for the background and the responsibility of the administration. The first

Head of an establishment, although really first Head, is really only the lieutenant of the general Head and always remains subject and responsible to him.

It is not just an appearance of confidence that I had a mind to give you in my letters, but a real token of confidence, because I felt I was placing it well, and that you had too many sentiments of honor and religion to abuse it; but this, nevertheless, does not prevent Brother Galliot, or any other immediate first Head of the establishment, from watching over you, as I have just said, by reason of the solicitude he has as first Head.

Although I do not know the kind of administration that Marast requires, may I not set down the principles according to which every administration of this kind is to be carried on? And, as regards the special case of Marast, may I not confide myself to you, to Brother Clouzet, to Brother Galliot, and generally to the Council of Marast of which you are a member? And have all my letters said anything else that implies or involves contradiction? The distinction of two cash boxes, as well as of the registers which show their fluctuation by means of what is owed and what is on hand, or by means of receipts and expenses, is really necessary. It would still be necessary were you the treasurer of the boarding school as you are the manager of the property. Without this distinction, you would never be able to give an account to yourself of what is happening or to anyone else who would have a right to know. I suppose I should have explained nothing, since you and the Council of which you are a member, ought to have established the same order.

You see, my dear son, that I have said nothing which could have contradicted the views you had in taking over the management of the property, that is to say, “to procure for the Society helps for the future, which certainly would give back with interest, the small expenses for improvements prudently made, according to the well-known proceedings of modern agriculture; to be, furthermore, able to strengthen you in the different branches of this agriculture, in making theory and practice go hand in hand.” However, my dear son, I have seen in you all these fine views and good sentiments, and it is for this reason that I have called you to Marast. I have, above all, understood that you would join theory and practice, and at the same time, that you would direct the workmen you would have to hire, even while working yourself according to your strength. What a difference there would be, by acting in this way, in the results of the undertaking and also for the peace of your soul!

I am not speaking to you of your interior dispositions, my dear son, and you tell me nothing about them yourself. I take it for granted that all these misunderstandings must have wearied and troubled you. But, finally, the moment of order and calm has come, and I shall not lose sight of you. If I am showing interest in the temporal matters, as I should, I am showing assurance of salvation of all those whom God has confided to my paternal solicitude.

My dear son, I am sending a copy of the letter I am writing to you to Brother Clouzet, so that he may repeat to you the same things I am telling you, or tell you that

you have misunderstood them, as may also be the case with Brother Galliot, for what I am saying in all my letters is just about what I am saying here.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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The Baillard brothers have withdrawn their requirements and Father Chaminade resumes his correspondence with them in view of the work in Sion Vaudémont. The question will be submitted to the judgment of the new archbishop of Bordeaux, the former auxiliary bishop of Nancy.[1]

975 – TO FATHER BALLARD, ASSISTANT
PASTOR IN FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, June 26, 1837

Dear Reverend Father, your letter of the fifteenth of the current month filled me with consolation. I immediately gave it to Father Caillet and to Father Lamotte who were quite satisfied with it. It was only with great regret that I gave you my answer on the tenth of the present month. We then have hope of aiding in the restoration of the august sanctuary of Sion: *De Sion exibit lex.* (From Sion the law will shine forth.) The prophecy will have a second fulfillment. The faith that has made known to us the grandeurs of Mary will spread in Lorraine and perhaps still farther.

So as not to multiply the letters of correspondence and to arrive more promptly at the end we propose, I shall shortly write a little pamphlet which will determine our relations in the enterprise and in the consummation of the work which is so precious.

Bordeaux is awaiting its worthy Head on the first of July. He knows the work better than I myself. He has your confidence and you have his. He will judge my brief note and then I shall pass it over to you.

Father Lamotte has been here since the third of the current month. He is leaving today with the title of master of novices of Courtefontaine. During this interval, he has

[1] The future Cardinal Donnet, 1795-1882, from the diocese of Lyons, Auxiliary to Bishop Forbin Janson of Nancy under the title of bishop of Rose, 1835, was preconized archbishop of Bordeaux on the 19 of May, 1837, and took possession of his see on July 2. He was to occupy it for nearly a half century, until his death which took place on December 23, 1882. Being a prelate of great activity, he distinguished himself by a singularity of life which in no way harmed his popularity. After having at first shown himself favorable to Fr. Chaminade, he took part against him, at the time of the difficulties of his last years, without ever finding out the real object of the litigation which was setting the Founder and his Assistants against one another. Better informed later on, he did not hesitate publicly to admit his error and to pay homage to the greatness of the virtues and the grandeur of the action of Father Chaminade.

edified us by his regularity. He has been thoroughly instructed in the spirit of the Society of Mary and has contracted his final engagements.

Father Lamotte is replacing Father Meyer as master of novices not because the latter was poorly fulfilling his functions, but because he was overworked. There are very few priests who know how to win youth over to virtue and to piety as well as he. He will always keep the main supervision of the novitiate, as Superior of the establishment.

I beg of you to share with the Reverend Pastor, your brother, the assurance of the profound respect with which I am, etc.

* * * *

Encouragements and admonitions to the good Father Meyer.

976 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, June 30, 1837

My dear son, I received your letter of the eighteenth of the present month and I am answering it immediately. Neither you nor M. Régnier are to abandon the establishment of Seurre, but, waiting for some opportune moments to be able to undertake it without offending the consideration due to episcopal and civil authorities, is not abandoning it. M. Régnier is not to be answered in writing. You must go to see him amicably and make him understand that you don't intend to lose sight of this establishment; but by being too blunt we could even lose the hope of ever succeeding. There are means to be taken to have the bishop of Dijon change his mind, and it seems there might also be some to win over the mayor of Seurre.

Why wouldn't M. Régnier help you in Courtefontaine with the expenses he would make, were the establishment in Seurre opened immediately? It is possible that if he relieved you of the novitiate of Courtefontaine, Providence would facilitate the undertaking of Seurre for you. M. Régnier could perhaps facilitate contact with several persons in Dôle who would also come to your help. You must speak to him with an open heart.

My dear son, as regards the needs of the novitiate of Courtefontaine, I have just received the extract of a letter which you wrote to Father Chevaux. The latter was very much moved by it and, if it had depended only upon him, he would have flown to your assistance, but you must have known of his inability to help.

My dear son, do you believe you hasten the help of Providence in a work undertaken for its glory by blaming your Superiors, in pretending that they are abandoning you entirely to yourself, charged, as you are with what is spiritual and what is temporal, etc., etc.? You foresee the closing of the novitiate, etc. This way of acting, my dear son, would also make

me fear. The good God asks for very different dispositions in the instruments he deigns to make use of in his various works.

I understand that Brother Tissot would be in his proper place at Saint Remy by taking care of the cows and pigs. However, having just made his promises of the novitiate on the twenty-first of the current month, what helps, what instruction would he have to make his novitiate? The novitiate of the workers is very little taken care of. Take this matter up with me again a little later on. I can write to Saint Remy precisely for this purpose . . .

* * * *

Nevertheless, Father Chaminade learns that at Saint Remy, this novitiate and this community of workers in which he has such great interest, are not the object of anyone's care or solicitude . . . He utters a cry of sadness, which reveals how much he has this work at heart.

977 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, July 1-3, 1837

My dear son, I have received your two letters of last June 9 and 22. I received at almost the same time as your second letter, one from Brother Bousquet dated June 23. Here is what he writes to me about the novitiate: "I do very little with the novices, things going as they do. Father Chevaux sees them for a quarter of an hour each morning and then not every day. This is about all that is done for them. Their recreations have been separated during the winter, but for a long time now everything is reunited. In everything, they are in line with the religious and the domestics; and with several outsiders the cultivation of the fields continues, etc., etc." Brother Bousquet adds that it seems to him almost impossible to form a novitiate in Saint Remy amid so much bustle and confusion, and that others think about the same as he does.

If things are like that, my dear son, why do you not first speak to me about it? Do you think that seeing the novices almost every day during only a quarter of an hour, they can be sufficiently instructed in both the Christian and religious life? Do you believe that the impressions of vice that are in them can thus be effaced? Do you believe that the prejudices against the Christian and religious virtues with which their head is filled can be removed in this way? Do you believe that they will thus assume religious habits and forms? What kinds of excuses can be found for such disorder? Is it that labors are urgent? But are they in the novitiate only to learn how to work? Thus, a novitiate becomes useless. Let them be taken in, as I notice the workmen and domestics are taken in! I easily infer that the religious are hardly better taken care of. Will it be said that there isn't enough place to distinguish the novices from the religious? Isn't there sufficient place in the buildings of the primary boarding school? Is there none in the Château? And it has been proved several times that the two boarding schools, primary and secondary, could be maintained

separately. The postulants and novices could at least retire to the Château after their supper to sleep there. Can they not have enough place during the day in the primary boarding school for the instruction and the exercises of piety they would have to make, and from there, go to or be led to work? I am not surprised that sadness and boredom have gained such a mastery over Brother Bousquet. I guess the same happened to Brother Cretin, though possibly in a different way, and there will be very few who will continue in a real spirit of faith. There would be a few who will make a virtue out of necessity, but what we call real religious, such will be very rare in Saint Remy, if there is even one. Should any be formed, they will not owe it precisely to the Society, they will owe it to their fidelity, to the interior graces they will receive, and to a special predilection on the part of God.

By this same mail, I am promising Brother Bousquet to write to you, as well as to Brother Clouzet, and if, in effect, things are not put in order, and if he is not able to follow the novices with a suitable authority, I shall place him in another establishment. And why have I so much resisted the archbishop of Besançon and the superioress general of the Sisters of Charity or Hospitallers so that Brother Bousquet would not come back to Besançon, but that he would remain in Saint Remy, being needed in the novitiate?[1]

I am not writing to Brother Clouzet, for I am somewhat brokenhearted. Have the kindness to speak to him. You may even read to him this long article from this letter. Neither he nor you must blame Brother Bousquet for having written to me. He only did it too late. Brother Clouzet would want to do everything himself and that is impossible. He may tell you that he was waiting for the community of workers to be separated, before beginning to regularize everything. Without doubt, there is a great need to separate this community from that of the teachers if we want to have real religious in this third part of the Society, and you know that I would have wanted to act in this regard, at the time of my last stay in Saint Remy. Let us not rehash this affair, since we thought it our duty to postpone it until later. But, nonetheless, let us do all we can to train the religious well and to maintain them in fervor, in spite of the lack of proper arrangements and the drawbacks of the place . . .

Altogether contrary to my views is the way in which the Baillard brothers have spoken of the Society of Mary in the Prospectus. We are in very little agreement as regards the manner of proceeding. I have postponed until later an agreement with the archbishop of Bordeaux. He is to take possession of his see tomorrow, the second of the current month.

My dear son, I shall not answer the questions you ask me about daily assistance at Mass and about the replacing of spiritual reading or of the conference during harvest time. Do the workers need these exercises in order to be maintained in the spirit of their state? If, on the whole, religious observance is well ordered, all such questions are automatically solved . . .

[1] See Letter 850.

"Brother Langue," you tell me, "acquits himself with zeal in his Office of Zeal with the children of the Château, etc." Would you want him to change suddenly? Grace realizes the work of our sanctification only little by little. It is up to us to work with grace and not otherwise. Let it appear that you are satisfied with him, let him feel free to say whatever is on his mind; all that he desires. If he places confidence in you and Father Fontaine, you will relieve him little by little, of his false prejudices. There is in him a certain strength of soul to carry out all that he believes God expects of him, or all that is included in the sacrifice that he has made of himself to God.

Why is he able to say that if he stayed in Saint Remy next year, he would want more work and that he would not want to teach? Is he lacking work in Saint Remy? Has teaching perhaps been made disagreeable to him? Everybody admits that he is able to teach. That is about what he is best able to do. But he is somewhat weak in controlling his pupils! Do you then think that he might be irremediable? Once he would understand that teaching pupils is one of our means of zeal for winning them to God and to virtue, you would then see how much his character would soften. Judge this even by the recreations which you applaud.

The subjects of meditation which you take are all very good. All consist essentially in the fact that you make such a use of faith that you enter into contact, in some way—though nonetheless really—as much with the mysteries as with the truths of faith which serve you as subjects of meditation. The faith, that will enter into your soul whether in the mysteries or the truths, will surely vanquish the cowardice of which you complain.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my very tender attachment.

P.S. With the condition of our affairs as they are with the Baillard brothers, it does not seem advisable to me that Saint Remy distribute any of the prospectuses addressed to Father Fontaine.

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The paternal heart of Father Chaminade decided with difficulty the problem of excluding offenders. Here is a new example of it.

978 – TO SISTER VIRGINIE, AUCH

Bordeaux, July 21, 1837

Sister Virginie, I didn't dare say my dear daughter, because by your conduct you are not my daughter, nor do you want to be such. I know that there are two others, older ones, who are far from conducting themselves as true Daughters of Mary, but as they sometimes give some signs of repentance, I am addressing myself only to you at this time, to you in whom the blindness of mind seems to equal the hardness of heart. Your Mother and your Sisters in the Departmental House are much humiliated in having you still in their midst.

If I have always delayed in pronouncing the sentence of exclusion from the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and from the House you inhabit, it was for the purpose of giving you time to enter into yourself; but I now see that it is in vain and so, I have made up my mind to exclude you entirely, once and for all. However, not to surprise you, and by compassion for your future lot, I wanted to notify you of the fact and to give you another two weeks, counting from the date of the reception of this letter, to enter into the ways of penance. I desire that you profit by this delay and that you will finally open your eyes.

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The Archbishop of Bordeaux read and approved the notes of Father Chaminade about the eventual participation of the Society of Mary in the work of Sion Vaudémont. The Founder immediately sends them to the Baillard brothers.

979 – TO FATHER BAILLARD, PASTOR OF FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, July 24, 1837

Dear Reverend Father, it was only the day before yesterday that His Excellency, the archbishop, was able to occupy himself seriously with the notes I had the honor of placing in his hands after his arrival in our city. It was during the pastoral retreat, given in the Major Seminary where he resides, that he told me he completely approves, without any reservation the notes I had presented to him. There was no other change to be made than the editing of No. 4. I wanted to make an extract of it for you, so as to avoid the postage charges, but I thought you would prefer to have the entire work, such as His Excellency approved it. His Excellency insisted especially on unity of direction in the work. He was even able to counsel me to withdraw if the work was not undertaken and directed by the Society of Mary.

I have learned with great satisfaction that the church in Sion was in good condition and that it was confided to a pastor at the foot of the mountain. In due time, we shall write to His Lordship, the bishop of Nancy, in regard to the service of this church and for the priests we shall appoint for it, so as to revive the pilgrimage, to hear the confessions of the pilgrims, etc. We shall also let him know of all the arrangements we have made because it is he who is to confirm them. The archbishop of Bordeaux no longer has any authority in the diocese of Nancy. All he may do is to give a verbal approval, which is, properly speaking, only a word of counsel, however serious the matter may be.

If we are in agreement, Reverend Father, and if you accept the notes in their entirety, you will be kind enough to inform me without delay. You will also be kind enough, at the same time, to present for yourself and your Reverend brothers the request

for affiliation to the Society of Mary, while giving me evidence of your entire devotedness to all its work and, in a special manner, to the work of Sion Vaudémont.

Receive, I beg of you, the assurance of the profound respect with which I am, Reverend Father, your very humble and very obedient servant.

* * * *

Here is the text of the notes announced by the preceding letter.

980 – TO FATHER BAILLARD,
PASTOR OF FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, July 24, 1837

A GLANCE AT THE PROSPECTUS THAT THE BAILLARD BROTHERS HAVE JUST ISSUED AND AT THE RELATIONS THAT THE SOCIETY OF MARY DESIRES TO HAVE WITH THESE REVERED GENTLEMEN IN THE UNDERTAKING OF THE WORK OF SION VAUDÉMONT.

OBSERVATIONS

I

This prospectus is very good, in the views which its authors must have had in evoking more energetically the liberalities of the faithful, and it is, without doubt, for the same purpose that, after the prospectus, they had printed the approbation of the Bishop of Rose, Coadjutor of Nancy and of Toul, and today Archbishop of Bordeaux. It is supposed that the former monastery of Sion, by the extent of its buildings, favors the size and the number of the works proposed by the prospectus. However, is not the idea of so vast an enterprise harmful to the enterprise itself? May it not compromise the Society of Mary which is to take part in it? And, if the one and the other were proved, should not the distribution of the prospectus be stopped? Might not even the superior general of the Society of Mary put a stop to the vexing results that this distribution of the prospectus could have?

1. The work of Sion, is regarded by the Society of Mary and even by the Baillard brothers as a work of God for the glory of Mary, not only because it is good in itself and may be offered to him, but because it is believed to be in the designs of the paternal providence of God. And so, it is not to be undertaken by the means which only the light of human reason may inspire, but by those which the illumination of faith may suggest. Now, is it with

display and by the means suggested by human reason that the kingdom of God or the Catholic Church has been established on earth? Interrogated by the Pharisees about the coming of the reign of God, Jesus Christ answered them: *Non venit regnum Dei cum observatione; neque dicent: Ecca hic, aut ecce illic* (Luke 17:20-21). (The coming of the kingdom of God does not admit of observation and there will be no one to say, 'Look here! Look there!') The work of Sion is particularly the work of God. It is his kingdom that we wish to establish and consolidate in Lorraine. It is from there, as from a center, that teachers are to come and spread out in this vast Province who will propagate faith and religion alongside of human letters.

According to these principles, the Society of Mary believes 1. that the publication of the prospectus of last April 25 about the establishment of Sion Vaudémont is at least premature and untimely.

2. In the beginning, in the vast buildings of the old monastery, there is to be only a novitiate or normal boarding school; and this novitiate is to consist of a small group of good subjects, previously tested and truly religious. At the same time, the opening of the church and of the pilgrimage can possibly be made: the sanctuary of Mary, this throne of mercy, sufficiently recommends itself by itself without the least ostentation. In proportion as capable subjects will be formed in the novitiate, the other parts of the prospectus will be realized little by little, and then perhaps, there will be no imprudence in publishing a distinct prospectus for each of these parts.

3. There is to be but one sole policy for the work, be it in its undertaking or in its progress, whatever may be in the designs of Providence, and this policy is to be essentially that of the Society of Mary.

4. Although the policy work is to be essentially determined by the Society of Mary, the intervention of the Reverend Baillard brothers will nonetheless be necessary, and they will nonetheless receive credit for the creation and maintenance of the work. The Baillard brothers will be closely affiliated to the Society of Mary and, in this way, they will use the fine reputation they have in these regions 1. to procure the material means of sustaining and extending the work; 2. to attract further subjects; 3. to be from the very start, members of the Council of Sion. The Heads of the establishments of the Society of Mary will do nothing extraordinary that is not first deliberated and decided upon in Council. The deliberations of the Councils of the establishments are often sent to the Council of the General Administration of the Society. The cases for that are foreseen. In this way, the Baillard brothers are, as it were, incorporated into the Society and there is but one direction. 4. As an effect of the act of affiliation, the property of the old monastery of Sion and its dependencies would be assured to the Society of Mary.

II

The work of Sion is, so to say, immense in its effects, and as proposed by the prospectus cannot be accomplished by the Society of Mary.

The Society of Mary is very feeble, both in the number of subjects and in their capacity. It has real strength only in the faith and confidence with which faith inspires it. From that comes the physical powerlessness in which it is to undertake the work, in the sense and manner indicated by the prospectus.

Thus it has humbly proposed to profit by the delays provided by the repairs being made upon the monastery and the church and in the formation of the first group of good subjects. The subjects who would be destined for the primary schools would be sent to Courtefontaine, where there happens to be a novitiate as well as a normal boarding School for primary teachers. The subjects destined for the priesthood would be sent to Bordeaux. When once the time has come to start, quietly as it were, subjects would be taken from the one and the other novitiate, who would be qualified to form the first nucleus of the intern normal school and to take charge of the church and the pilgrimages.

If, considering the actual state of the work, a well-trained group is not sent, but one to be formed in Sion itself, the work will be exposed to failure. The first subjects being trained would not be able to bend themselves to the spirit of the Society of Mary and would discourage those coming after them, etc.

The Society is generally very willing to send to Lorraine all the subjects it will get from there, but by that it means only those who will have taken on or who will be able to take on a real religious spirit, and even among these, those whom it would not be dangerous to send into their own country. In the absence of subjects such as these, the Society could possibly make up for the lack of choosing older religious from other provinces. What is being said of the novitiates or the normal boarding school of Bordeaux will apply also to the novitiate or the normal boarding school of Sion. If all these measures were not observed and all sorts of pretensions were listened to, we would be exposed to see, sooner or later, a schism which instead of edifying would contribute only to the ruin of the work and of the Society of Mary.

The work of Sion is a work of confidence. Those who labor in it and who direct it must be free to conduct it according to their views and experience, due consideration being given to the observations that might emanate from the Council of the establishment.

To begin the work, it is not necessary that the entire monastery of Sion be repaired. It suffices to repair the section destined for the novitiate and the church, and to furnish the one and the other with much modesty and simplicity. Only the church will be able to receive rich ornaments, according to the devotion of the faithful who frequent it. The

novitiate or normal boarding school could be assisted in its support and development by the alms of the faithful, but these are never to be used to procure more expensive or more comfortable furniture, nor nourishment different from that permitted by the Rule of the Society of Mary. The same with regard to the clothing in the matter of quality and quantity.

Although the establishment of Sion is being erected as a secondary motherhouse of the Province according to the permission granted by the Government, it will be considered only as a secondary House and, in consequence, always subject to the central House. The Heads in charge of temporalities, obliged to keep the accounts, which may always be inspected by the central House, will always remain responsible.

III

It seems evident to the Superior of the Society of Mary: 1. that the means employed by the prospectus are more according to the lights of reason than those which faith inspires for the performance of the works of God; and what danger is there, especially in the present century, of not following entirely the light of faith? 2. Isn't the Society of Mary being really compromised? Is it not being made to feel capable of great enterprises, while it is actually very small in the number and ability of its members? Should not the distribution of the prospectus be stopped?

IV

Would it not be prudent to render powerless the annoying consequences that the publication of the prospectus was able to cause? The Archbishop of Bordeaux thinks: 1. that the effect of the publication will be weakened little by little, especially in consequence of the very modest way in which the work is being undertaken; 2. that the Baillard brothers themselves can weaken and, as it were, paralyze it in explaining what they really meant by the term normal school. They have never meant to talk about anything else than an *intern* normal boarding school, instead of the expression they made use of, which gave the impression that they had in mind an *extern* boarding school.

The undersigned, Superior General of the Society of Mary, after the desire and the counsel of His Excellency, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, desires to see established between the Reverend Baillard brothers and the Society, the relations expressed in the present document.

In virtue of which, Bordeaux, July 24, 1837.

* * * *

Father Lalanne had addressed to Father Chaminade his answer to the memorandum of April 24. It was a new memorandum, very clever, but totally ignoring the main issue: the bad financial management of Father Lalanne, who had obliged Father Chaminade to abandon Layrac so as not to compromise the Society.

The answer ended by these lines heavy with threats:

In so serious a circumstance, Father Lalanne will permit himself, in his turn, to ask Father Chaminade if he believes he may pronounce and decide without the concourse of the entire Society, brought together in a General Chapter.

He addresses the same request to all and to each one of the Heads of establishments in the Society, believing it, before God, to be his duty to do so for the salvation of the work and for the greater good of all concerned.

It is then that, succumbing to an inspiration of his heart and of his faith, the Founder addresses to Father Lalanne the following letter.

981 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, July 28, 1837

Many days ago, my dear son, I don't know how many, while in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament and reflecting on the mild character of our Lord, the idea of not following out the little memorandum that I had sent you, suddenly came to me as it were, and I then took the resolution of acting upon it whatever might be your answer. The passage that made me decide was this one: *The bruised reed he shall not break and the smoking wick he shall not extinguish: till he send forth judgment unto victory* (Mt. 12:20).

I have read, my dear son, your answer to my memorandum. This very well-written answer, which may seem very strong because it proves much, even too much, did not seem very logical to me at the first and possibly too rapid reading. I shall come back to it a little later on, not to contest it but to present to you in a fatherly way, the views of truth and justice which it would seem to me you ought to adopt in their entirety. I am leaving it all to your conscience. When I say all, my dear son, I have in mind speaking of the object of the memorandum and not of the material effects which have followed you in Layrac.

I am stopping here so as not to detain Brother Bidon who has finished all the affairs he had to look after while here.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

This letter, so confiding, did not stop Father Lalanne; and from July 31, he confirmed by a new letter to Father Chaminade, his intention of making an appeal to the Society, to which Father Chaminade answered by the following declaration in which are mingled prudence, firmness, and affection.

982 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, August 4, 1837

My dear son, I am answering your letter of last July 31. You tell me that "your conscience does not permit you to refer to yourself or to me in an affair under dispute between us that concerns the major interest of a third party. The third party, 'you add,' to be consulted is the Society itself. According to its Statutes, you cannot make it lose, by your mere decision, what belongs to it by all the titles of propriety."

I answer, my dear son,

1. That the case of which there is question here is not at all foreseen by the Statutes.

2. Should it have been desired, by means of subtleties, that it would have been foreseen, there is in no way a question of a General Chapter, but only of the Council of the General of the Society.

3. The case which initially concerned my conscience has been decided before God by a more ardent ray of the light of faith. As it now stands, the case concerns only your conscience.

You say you are not making reference to it, neither to me nor to yourself. This is all right, since you and I have an interest in the decision. In any matter those who have an interest in its final decision are the ones generally challenged as judges. But you conclude from this that a third party who has major interests in this affair is to be taken as judge. Really. I fail to understand your logic.

4. Who makes up the third party you are choosing to make the decision? All the Heads of the establishments of the Society, you say. But are you keeping in mind that even if you could suppose that any one of these Heads, not even the majority, would be accessible to the illusions that personal interest ordinarily gives rise to, in propria causa, *these Heads are, in great part, only young men who are in no way prepared to give an opinion in a case of conscience of the kind of which there is question here. These young directors, furthermore, do not know the affair, and your memorandum is very far from sufficient to instruct them about it. No one, until the present, even among the principal Heads, knows the affairs that have been going on between us, unless it be by hearsay without logical connection. Some, who are better informed, do no more than sigh about it. I have always thought it my duty to spare you; and our discussions have arisen as little as possible from my side.*

What kind of judges, my dear son, are you then taking for the decision of your case of conscience? If your conscience cannot be decided by the answer I shall give to your memorandum, I counsel you to choose a third party who has no other interest than justice and truth. This third party may be a layman or an ecclesiastic, no matter, provided he is honest and informed.

If you persist in sending your memorandum to the Heads of the establishments to have their opinion, I am counseling you to send with the memorandum all the papers needed, so that they may pass judgment with full knowledge of the matter in question. If you do not refer this to my council, I shall be obliged to notify them of it, so that their lack of experience may not let them fall into some sort of absurdity. And if you send them your memorandum only to prepare them to express their decision verbally in a General Chapter, I am telling you there will be no convocation. Such a General Chapter convocation has neither a legal nor a religious motive.

My dear son, I have learned of your project of convoking a General Chapter only by the open memorandum which you had someone pass over to Father Caillet and in a more peremptory way, by the letter which I have just answered. My first answer, after the rapid

reading I made of it, would have included one more observation and would not have placed me under the obligation of telling M. Dardy several things which he should have ignored.

Nothing, my dear son, will ever weaken the tender attachment I have for you.

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983 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 7, 1837

I have received, my dear son, your last three letters of July 7 and 15 and of the second of the current month. I am beginning my answer with the last.

The knowledge you have of yourself, as well as of your state and position, seem somewhat disconcerting to you; for you attribute to yourself the lack of fervor, and even the evil that is to be found in Saint Remy. The habitual feeling you have of your powerlessness and insufficiency for good is generally an operation of the Spirit of the Lord; but if you pay close attention to it, you will also recognize at times some operations of Satan transformed into an angel of light. The sentiments of humility which the Spirit of the Lord inspires are far from diminishing our confidence in him, far from disconcerting and depressing us.

The good God properly judges to leave you a certain physical insufficiency in the fulfillment of the important duties of the position you hold. If for your sanctification he wishes to use such a means, remain in peace. You will thus easily understand that the little good you are able to do comes neither from you nor your efforts. Speak and act then, according to the needs of your condition, always with purer intentions, asking of the Lord to be himself in everything and everywhere your sufficiency – and remain quiet.

It has been said that there has been much evil and at least very little regularity among the novices and even among the professed religious. It is doubtless correct, my dear son. to take your share of it. When the prophets wanted to appease the anger of God, irritated by the crimes of the people, they used to say to God: We have sinned, etc. However, in stopping there you would not see the part the others have taken in it and then, what zeal could you have in trying to banish it from their midst?

You find yourself poor in lights and sentiments of faith in your meditations. As I am now too busy to enter into the details of this matter, I would counsel you to read a little every day, and even several times a day, the Story of the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ *by Father de Ligny. Read it with relish, as this reading is so enjoyable. In it you will find all truth.*

For the moment, I shall not answer the cases of conscience you propose to me in one of your letters, and for the reason that I don't believe they represent any actual need for you.

Brother Langue, who most certainly wants to save himself, has not yet conceived the happiness there is in remaining with Jesus Christ in one's interior—above all, the happiness of

believing in Jesus Christ, true Son of God and nevertheless crucified—and his heart has not yet entered into the beautiful ways of the cross, although he walks therein with a motive already enlightened, up to a certain point, by the lights of faith. We must condescend somewhat to his weakness but with mildness and goodness. Try to initiate him or render him capable of entering into the faith of the heart: Corde creditur ad justitiam. *I think that you will be able to allow your indulgence to go to the point of allowing him to go and spend a few days with his respected uncle, but on certain conditions: 1. that the trip be entirely at the expense of his parents; 2. that he note well that if one is sometimes permitted to amuse oneself honestly, there is never question of dissipation in any form; 3. that he will apply himself better than ever to all his exercises of religion and piety, not by necessity of the obligation he has contracted, but by filial love of the good Master to whom he has vowed all his services. You will be able to read to him all of this little article and add that I like his long letters very much because of the sincerity and candor to be found in them. However, neither you nor he are to speak of this indulgent permission because of the refusal I am obliged to give to several who would be asking for a similar one. His absence is to be motivated by a necessity, of which prudence does not permit an explanation of the cause.*

I shall see without regret and even with pleasure that Father Meyer, in spite of his many tiring occupations, goes to spend two or three days in Saint Remy with Father Fontaine's concurrence, in order to give more life and spirit to the retreat. Then neither Brother Justin nor any other would have reason to go for retreat to Courtefontaine rather than to stay in Saint Remy.

Father Baillard had not yet received my final answer. He will probably have found it on his return to his home. I shall let you know of our agreements, if these actually take place. I am going to write to Brother Bousquet.

Brother Clouzet has just written to me. I am astonished that you thought of joining the two boarding schools, and that he, on his part, spoke to this effect to the Reverend Rector without first having said a word to me. The more you and he and others will seem disconcerted at the lack of patronage for your boarding schools, the less you will get, especially if you go and make an admission of it to the Academy. This kind of desertion is, at least so it seems in great measure, a kind of chastisement on the part of God. It is annoying that this has not been better realized: and if really it has been understood, why not put up with the chastisement without losing confidence in the appeasement of the irritated heavenly Father, and then really work at the education of the small number in the real Spirit of the Society of Mary?

I am stopping here, my dear son, pressing you tenderly in my fatherly arms.

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Father Chaminade finally relieves Brother Galliot of the direction of the establishment of Marast and confides it to Father Fridblatt who was already exercising there the functions of Head of Zeal.

984 – TO BROTHER GALLIOT, MARAST

Bordeaux, August 11, 1837

OBEDIENCE

To my dear son, Brother Peter Galliot, Head of the establishment of Marast (Haute Saône).

It is high time, my dear son, that I should correspond to your desires and that I should relieve you of the heavy burden you are carrying. When Father Meyer gives this obedience over to you, you will have a substitute who will be charged with honoring the debts you have contracted for the establishment in Marast which you have directed until now.

Having given your accounts over to him, you will leave for Ebersmunster where you will be under obedience to Father Rothéa.

Receive, my dear son, my fatherly greetings[1]

* * * *

[1] To this obedience, Bro. Galliot answered: “My Good Father, I am infinitely grateful for your great kindness toward me. I am very grateful to you for having finally relieved me of the enormous weight that was crushing me. In consequence, I shall do all that will depend upon me to do good and I hope that, with the help of grace, I shall be able to prove to you that I was not such as I may have been described to you. The fact is, I think I may truly say, that for having wanted to do too well, I did wrong. The future will prove the truth of what I am saying here.” (August 19)

985 – TO FATHER FRIDBLATT, MARAST

Bordeaux, August 11, 1837

NOMINATION

You have been designated, my dear son, and I name you by this present letter, first Head of the establishment of Marast, replacing Brother Peter Galliot who is destined for another place.

This act of great confidence is due to your seniority in the Society, to your experience, and especially to your zeal for its interest both spiritual and temporal.

This letter will be given to you by Father Meyer, Superior of the establishment of Courtefontaine, and you will be kind enough to give him a receipt.

You will begin from now on, to exercise the functions of your new and honorable charge, always recalling to yourself these sacred words: Non tanquam dominantes in cleris.

* * * *

From 1835 the city of Agen had ceased to care for the free schools it had confided to the Society in 1820, and it had withdrawn the meeting places for the classes, as well as the salary from the teachers. These schools had been transferred to a new house, acquired the preceding year by Brother Mémain in view of starting a boarding school there. Schools requiring tuition had been joined to the free schools, so that by the surplus of the former, helped along by the clergy, the teachers of the free schools could be assured a living wage. (See Letters 722, 852, 874)

Now Brother Mémain announced his intention of not maintaining the paying schools and that was going to bring about, at the same time, both the loss of the free schools for the Society – deprived as they were of space and support – and his own withdrawal from the Society.

986 – TO FATHER BARET, DIRECTOR OF THE MAJOR SEMINARY OF AGEN

Bordeaux, August 17, 1837

Dear Reverend Father, a short time ago, Brother Mémain had occasion to write to me and said: "At the end of the year, I shall suppress the free schools." "I shall do, I want to, etc." seems to be his ordinary language, especially since his return from Layrac. In answering him, I asked him not to speak of suppressing the free schools without consulting the clergy of Agen and then to let me know his decision. Since then I have had no further news from him.

If the clergy were of the opinion that they should be supporting the free schools with the help of the faithful, I would do something so as to find subjects who would stay in the same house

as the schools, who would do everything themselves, and who would be entirely independent of the community already existing. I would hope that this second community would really edify the city and, at the same time, would take care of the poor.

I believed it my duty, Reverend Father, before deciding upon anything, to write these lines to you. I judge that it would not serve any purpose to let Brother Mémain know of it. If you thought it necessary you could at most, tell him that you agree with me on this matter.

I am, with respectful remembrance, Reverend Father, your very humble servant.

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987 – TO BROTHER DUMONTET, MOISSAC

Bordeaux, August 19, 1837

If you were more ingenious and more fervent, you would make of everything a means of advancing in virtue. You could even make use of the privation of certain means of advancement by making up for it in some advantageous way.

* * * *

When Father Lalanne received father Chaminade's letter dated August 4, he had already sent his memorandum to the various establishments of the Society. On August 16, he sent to the directors of the various houses a second circular ending in this way:

Be pleased to answer me, and without delay, on these two points:

1. Do you think there is reason for the convocation of a General Chapter, as much for the affair which concerns me, as for the general condition of the Society?

2. Would you come at the invitation that will be issued to you, in regular form and with all the conditions that will satisfy your conscience, in case the Superior would set himself against such a convocation?

Father Lalanne had acted unjustly and the most influential members of the Society immediately declared themselves against him. On August 19, Father Louis Rothéa wrote: “My Good Father, is it not a banner of revolt and insubordination that poor Father Lalanne wants to raise against you? He is forgetting that for twelve years the Brothers of the schools have been working only to pay his debts and to maintain him in his Collèges!”[1]

* * * *

On August 26, Father Chaminade brought things to a head by the following energetic circular.

988 – CIRCULAR TO THE DIRECTORS

Bordeaux, August 26, 1837

You have received, my dear son, or it will not be long before you receive, a memorandum from Father Lalanne entitled, “Answer to a Proposed Case of Conscience.”

This memorandum will not awe anyone who knows how to reason a little. As sole rejoinder, I wrote some lines calculated to overthrow this great scaffolding of reasonings which proves nothing. With the advice of those who surround me, I have, nevertheless, determined to make a logical refutation of this memorandum. I have just finished the first part which is the most important. I shall continue as soon as I have expedited some pressing affairs.

Each Head of an establishment is going to receive this Circular with as short a delay as possible, but as for the memorandum, it will be sent only to one establishment of each Department which will distribute copies of it. The Heads who will receive it will take it upon themselves to hasten to make a copy for their neighbors. Soon all will have received one and they will thus avoid heavy postage charges. The establishments of Alsace will find it in Ebersmunster and, to this effect, will address themselves to Father Rothéa. For the Jura, the Doubs, and the Haute Saône, some will be found in Courtefontaine and Father Meyer may be addressed. I shall also send some to Saint Remy. In the South, there will be some in Moissac and there, Brother Mazières may be addressed.

I am now coming to the principal object of this Circular. My refutation has for title, “Reply to the answer of Father Lalanne to a case of conscience which has been proposed to him by the Superior of the Society of Mary.”

Father Lalanne, in sending you his memorandum, did not pretend to have your decision as he quite ridiculously claimed to me that he had, but he first wanted you to join him in asking

[1] On his side, Fr. Meyer wrote to Fr. Chaminade: “These past days, I have received a letter from Fr. Lalanne in which he tells me of the sending of a memorandum which has for purpose the convocation of a General Chapter. I answered him immediately and I begged of him to forget about this idea of his, adding that my opinion about all his projects was that of the Superior General and that such were the dispositions of all those around me. To end this affair, we all have the intentions of starting a novena on August 15 to recommend all this to our Good Mother.” (August 11)

me to convoke a General Chapter for the affair of the Layrac establishment and for other matters of the Constitutions no less important – of discipline and general administration . . . A few days later, doubtless fearing that his project of the convocation of a General Chapter would prove abortive, he had the temerity in concert with the older Brother Mémain, to order this convocation directly and without consulting anybody. This is what has called forth this Circular.

I. A General Chapter convocation must have a motive, drawn either from the civil Statutes or from the religious Constitutions. Since in the present instance, there is no such motive for a convocation, I would evidently compromise myself with the Government, not only in ordering it, but even in permitting it, and, in consequence, I herewith forbid all and each one in particular to join Father Lalanne and the older Brother Mémain in whatever place it may be under the pretext of a convocation of a General Chapter . . . If anyone, deceiving himself, were to answer the call, I declare to him: 1. that if he is surprised by some agent of the Government, he will not be defended; 2. that he will be regarded by the Society as a rebel and will be treated as such.

II. The motives alleged by Father Lalanne not only are not found in our Constitutions neither civil nor religious, but are illusory and can give occasion to serious troubles, the very thing he seems to desire. The motives expressed are illusory. 1. The affair of the Layrac establishment. There is really no such affair, as this establishment does not belong to the Society. Father Lalanne acts in Layrac entirely on his own. 2. Points of the Constitutions, of discipline and of general administration. If there was anything to be desired in this regard, all the work is advancing and will probably be submitted to the Holy See next spring. The review of the text and the preliminary authorizations are also advancing in consequence.

III. Father Lalanne in joining to himself the older Brother Mémain in order to make the convocation directly and in his own name is raising the standard of revolt. Their titles of Assistants to the Superior General do not at all confer this authority upon them especially, being as they are, far removed from the Superior General, having with him so to say, only hostile communications and which have no relation at all with the General Administration. I am stopping here, my dear son, so that you may get this Circular sooner. You will be kind enough to let me know you received it and to express to me your sentiments in its regard.

Receive my fatherly greetings.[1]

* * * *

[1] The day before Father Chaminade issued this Circular, Father Caillet had addressed to Father Lalanne a long and vehement protest. “I consider,” he said to him, “this pretended convocation of a General Chapter of the Society made by you and Bro. Mémain contrary to civil and religious laws . . . I am making you responsible, you and Bro. Mémain, for all the baneful results that such an illegal convocation could bring along, be it on the part of the Government or on that of our Society itself . . . I recognize as the legitimate authority in our Society no other than that of its Superior General and of his Council, which he summons and presides over according to our Constitutions, approved by the Government, etc.”

On the occasion of a request for a foundation in Clairac, a little city of the diocese of Agen[1]Father Chaminade acquaints the bishop with the underhanded dealings of Father Lalanne.

989 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY, BISHOP OF AGEN

Bordeaux, September 3, 1837

Your Lordship, I have already experienced much sorrow and regret in not being able to accede to the repeated requests for a Christian school in the city of Clairac, as I had immediately seen the importance of it, and my sorrow was only increased by the reception of the letter dated last August 29 with which Your Lordship has honored me. During the past two years, there have been few weeks during which I am not heartsick in refusing such establishments because of the lack of subjects.

At the same time as I am making the greatest efforts to have new subjects formed in the novitiates of Courtefontaine (Jura) and Ebersmunster (Lower Rhine), Father Lalanne is doing all he can to disturb the Society of Mary and to detach members from it to form a particular group of his own.

He has just caused another uprising, for he has just addressed a memorandum to all the establishments of the Society. This memorandum meant only to prepare them for a letter of convocation to a General Chapter which he wrote in his own name in agreement, as he says, with Brother Mémain. I have also known that he had the intention of sending the said memorandum to Your Lordship, but I do not know if he acceded to the contrary counsels which had been given him. Whatever the case may be, in a few days I shall send to the superioress of the Daughters of Mary a copy of his memorandum, as well as a copy of the Circular that I wrote to the Heads of all of our establishments excepting that of Agen, since Brother Mémain seems to be in league with Father Lalanne. Your Lordship will be able to have someone get either document from the superioress if she has reason to fear being compromised by the excesses to which Father Lalanne is exposing himself.

I am with the most profound respect, Your Lordship's very humble and very obedient servant.

* * * *

Father Lalanne felt he had lost the game. In a letter of September 7, he offered Father Chaminade his resignation as Head of Instruction and, intending to go to Bordeaux toward the end of the month, he asked for his orders as to where to stay.

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[1]Following a Mission given in the little city of Clairac, peopled by Catholics and Protestants, a man of means, M. de Moneroc took the initiative in the foundation of a Catholic school destined to replace a mutual school in which the Catholic children were mixed with Protestant children. In fact, the work was opened shortly after and consoled Fr. Chaminade for the loss of the school in Agen. It was transformed later on into a boarding school and existed until 1903. It will be seen by later letters what interest the Founder had in it.

Hence the following answer.

990 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, September 9, 1837

In your letter of the seventh of the current month, my dear son, you tell me, "This convocation of which you seem to have an idea in your letter has never been but a project . . . In all these proceedings, Brother Mémain has had no part." My dear son, must I not have had the idea of an accomplished fact and not of a mere project when you tell me in your letter of August 14, "If I provoke a general reunion of the Society, it is not to have a decision as regards the case of conscience…I wish to take up with the Society, etc." And you write in your letter to Father Caillet of last August 16, "In concert with Brother Mémain, I am convoking a General Chapter of the Society . . . You should be summoned and I am summoning you."

I do not believe, my dear son, I need to employ any other proofs of what I have mentioned in my letter of the third of the present month than the citation of the passages of your two letters, dated last 14 and 16 of August. I am, nevertheless, very glad that you are cutting short all these affairs provided that you do not cut them so short as to cause new wounds.

You are right, my dear son, in the position in which you have placed yourself, that of offering your resignation as Head of Instruction. It is accepted.

You understand, my dear son, that I am unable to give you orders about where you are to lodge in Bordeaux toward the end of September. Because the letters of Father Caillet and the words of the assistant pastor of Layrac would have made you think that I looked upon your different proceedings as so many acts of hostility, I am not saying that the sentiments of my tender friendship for you have been weakened, still less lost. I could perhaps even truthfully say that they have become stronger by the very fact that they have been irritated. Assuredly, if for some reason or other you are to abstain from coming to sit at my table, it can in no way be from the fear that I would not see you with pleasure. But, in fact, must you really refrain from doing so?

You tell me in your letter of last August 14, "If the members of the Society tell me that they are unwilling to come to this convocation, then I would believe myself free from all manner of engagement toward it." You had already told me in the same letter already cited: "Being already engaged in the Society of Mary, although you have already several times placed me on the road to being very legitimately disengaged from it, as two of our co-founders have done, - I do not want to take new commitments with others which would be prejudicial to this Society unless it declares itself unwilling or unable to meet my needs."

My dear son, have you in effect broken with the Society? You would give me to understand by the letter of the seventh which I am answering, that you have really broken with it when you tell me: "I would not want to take the initiative in an open rupture."

The entire difficulty resolves itself in the decision of two points. The first: May I in conscience, to satisfy the sentiments of my friendship, lend myself to the idea that the break you would have secretly made should not appear and that all you have said and done should be as never having happened? The second point is still more serious as regards conscience. During your stay in Bordeaux, you will want to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice on the Mass, perhaps even to administer the sacraments. In the conviction that I have that a great number of things you have done are criminal, how could I authorize these priestly functions?

Oh, it would indeed be otherwise if, entering into yourself you would disavow your past conduct, repent sincerely before God and give unequivocal signs of your repentance! Oh, then, my dear son, what joy for me! What interest I would put in working out with you the means of extricating you little by little, from the great embarrassment wherein you have put yourself, etc., etc.! Then every difficulty would be removed, at least for our momentary co-existence, as much in the eyes of the Society as in the eyes of God.

Always receive, my dear son, the expression of my tender and sincere attachment.

* * * *

The unhappy Father Clerc, insensible to all the efforts made to sustain him[1] has made up his mind to withdraw and has informed his Superior of the fact.

Here is the sad answer of Father Chaminade.

[1] See Letters 876, 886, 965.

991 – TO FATHER CLERC, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, September 9, 1837

I have received, my dear son, the farewell letter you wrote to me from Saint Hippolyte on the third of the current month. I had already heard of your dispositions, but I did not think I should take for granted all that was being written to me. My dear son, you are asking me to commute your vows or to dispense you from them, since they are simple vows, the vow of chastity excepted which you will keep all your life.

The motives for dispensation which you allege seem very weak to me. To assure my conscience in this regard, I shall consult the bishop of the region from which you come, and I shall hold to what he will decide. It is he, rather than I, who will have decided. Let me have, if you please, the address of the place to which you will go so that I shall be able to pass on to you the said decision as soon as I shall have received it.

By this same mail, I am going to write to Brother Louis Rothéa and I shall ask him to go to Saint Hippolyte to receive the settlement of your accounts. No one seems to me more fitting for this than he, since it is from him that you yourself had received them last year.

Receive, my dear son, both my farewell and my sincere regrets.

P.S. The general tone of your writings and of your conduct, my dear son, would give the impression that you have had a very faint idea of vows and oath. These are infinitely precious bonds which bind you to the service of God. You begin by violating them, even by breaking them, before God himself has spoken! You tell me, "I have no longer any relish for this service of God which I have vowed to him on the holy Gospels and so I am withdrawing: Good-bye!"

* * * *

In precisely stating his views on the conditions under which the Society of Mary could collaborate in the work of Sion Vaudémont (Letter 980), Father Chaminade had obliged the Baillard brothers to state their own case with greater clarity.

Their answer was such that he could foresee all of the negotiations and Father Chaminade announced to them that he definitely gave up the idea of following them.

992 – TO FATHER BAILLARD, PASTOR OF FAVIÈRES

Bordeaux, September 14, 1837

Dear Reverend Father, in placing before you, by my letter of July 24, 1837, the principles of faith according to which I believe the work of Sion should be conducted, I had intended to manifest to you my own principles, rather than blame you for not following them. If I had not considered the Baillard brothers as priests worthy of all esteem, because of their zeal, their faith, and their religion, I would have been very careful about proposing to them so intimate an affiliation with the Society as that which that letter carries. It is evident that we do not draw the same practical conclusions from the same principles. This is the cause of the disagreement between us. You believe yourselves to be able, and consequently to be obliged, to face with impunity the circumstances of time, of place, and of persons; and, on my part, I cannot believe in this necessity. You say quite plainly: faith and confidence work miracles. I say rather quietly: faith and confidence work miracles only insofar as they are necessary, after the very means that faith may suggest have been employed.

It really pains me, Reverend Father, that we are unable to come to any agreement. The time may come when, although you would admit the necessity for it, the Society, already compromised, could no longer do so.

I have had the honor of placing before you our principles and our available means such as they are. I am now obliged to tell you, from my deep conviction, that I do not believe it to be my duty of departing from them whatever desire I may have of taking part in so beautiful a work as that of Sion. If you do not have confidence in the Superior of the Society, in the principles and methods that guide him, he is entirely disposed to excuse you and he knows himself quite well enough to find numerous motives for this excusing, but he will nevertheless remain convinced that this far-reaching work must have but one direction only. I am etc.

The events that followed were to justify only too well the attitude taken by Father Chaminade.

No longer being able to count on the Society of Mary, the Baillard brothers put themselves into relation with Dom Fréchaud, the venerable Founder of the Brothers of Christian Doctrine of Nancy,[1] who, from 1833, thought of restoring his Institute, dispersed by the July Revolution; and with his help they started the work of Sion Vaudémont.

Ten years later, the Brothers of Christian Doctrine were to quit Sion Vaudémont and go back to their first motherhouse in Vézelise.

As for the Baillard brothers, after a number of lamentable adventures which were ruined by their foolish expenses and brought into disrepute by their relations with Vintras and his sect of visionaries, they were condemned by ecclesiastical authority and prosecuted by civil courts. They sadly reached the end of their long lives, however, after having had the grace of being reconciled with the Church.

[1] See Letter 203.

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993 – TO BISHOP DE TRÉLISSAC OF MONTAUBAN

Bordeaux, September 17, 1837

Your Lordship, following the information that Father de Bressolles[1] gave me about his good dispositions about the religious state, especially after the attestations and guarantees on the part of the respectable Father Mollevaux, Superior of Issy and his confessor, I have admitted him as novice towards the end of the past Lent and have sent him to our establishment at Saint Remy, Haute Saône.

Father de Bressolles has conducted himself in such a way as to edify the establishment, but the regimen of the community, as well as the entire regular life, are beyond his strength. Furthermore, he is affected by certain infirmities which do not permit him to support the demands of a member of the Society of Mary. He is, nevertheless, capable of rendering some service to religion. I have heard that he had made very good studies and that he would desire to enter the diocese to which he originally belonged. I have not hesitated, at his request, to send him a letter of recommendation for Your Lordship.

I have even had the pleasure of finding this an occasion of renewing my remembrance of you and of offering Your Lordship the homage of the profound respect with which I am, etc.[2]

* * * *

994 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, September 18, 1837

I have received, my dear son, your two letters, that of last August 16 and the one of the fifth of the current month. The literal copy of the letter which Father Lalanne wrote to you on August 1, has entirely satisfied me as you may have noticed from my Circular. Father Lalanne wrote to me recently that, not seeing his project of convocation accepted by the majority, he was going to cut short all his affairs by a third Circular. He has offered me his resignation as general Head of Instruction and I have accepted it. I think you must have received my answer to his memorandum . . .

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[1] See Letters 945, 962, 969.

[2] Bishop Jean Armand de Trélissac, 1784-1847, from Périguex, contemporary and fellow countryman of Fr. Chaminade, fulfilled for many years the functions of Vicar General, first in the diocese of Montauban before and after the Revolution, then in the diocese of Bordeaux, where he followed Bishop Cheverus, 1836. He was named bishop of Montauban in 1833 and governed the diocese until 1844, the date, when as Dean of the French Episcopate, he went into retirement in the royal Chapter of St. Denis.

The times have been very hard, but if they have not been profitable to us in the order of nature, they will be—we are to expect it—in the order of salvation. It is up to us to profit by everything.

This month of August I had an alarm that I shall not describe. In a few days time I had to reimburse twenty thousand francs in mortgages. Providence had so well disposed of things that, not only was the mortgage of twenty thousand francs taken by another for five years, but I was able to reimburse ten thousand francs so as to pay off a mortgage for a like amount. I have no need of telling you that to succeed in all this I was obliged to leave no stone unturned, having no pledge or security for current expenses, and with all the more reason, as regards the high rates of interest we have to pay. Send me, in spite of our narrow circumstances, all you can without being imprudent. I hope that, with the help of grace, we shall be able to discharge all our debts.

Father Lalanne is doing us immense injury. What would have happened if, at my arrival in Layrac, I had not been able to bring about a real separation between him and us in temporal matters? He has already had debts to the amount of one hundred and fifty thousand francs.

Father de Bressolle writes to me: "I have not yet received from the Government the help I am waiting for. If some obliging person is willing to advance me some money on my check which I will give him, I shall then start out on my trip, as soon as you will have honored me with an answer." It is evident that he cannot start out without any money. For this trip, he does have to receive the hundred crowns that he gets from the Government. The competition among the coaches has brought down by half the price of the places taken, at least from here to Besançon. I don't think that he gets this sum directly from the Government. It is paid to him out of the funds which the bishop of Agen receives for the needs of his clergy. Following these considerations, if you can give him what is sufficient for his trip from Montauban, I would think it more prudent and, to him, more useful simply to get a ticket from the bishop of Agen.

I feel, my dear son, that I want to speak to you about many other things, but I am forced to stop here at least for the time being. Receive the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

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995 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, ST. REMY

Bordeaux, September 18, 1837

I have received in proper succession, my dear son, your two letters. I did not immediately acknowledge their reception, because I really could not; but you do well always to write even though you do not receive any answer.

You know the interest that I have in seeing you advance in the beautiful paths of virtue and the share that I take in the falls that may be yours. You are right, my dear son, in attributing the great number of your faults to your lack of vigilance and to your negligence. You might add – to your lack of prayer according to the counsel of the Lord: "Watch and pray!" This watchfulness over yourself consists for you, my dear son, in walking and keeping yourself in the presence of God, or again, in keeping yourself united to our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Blessed Virgin. What strength you will derive from this union! What lights also to see your defects! I could also add, what sentiments of profound humility, of self-abasement, etc.! I grant you the permission that you ask of me.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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In Marast, under the new director Father Fridblatt, who did not remain long at this post, Brother Pelleteret continues to manage the property, joining to it the stewardship of the boarding school. Father Chaminade gives him wise counsels of administration.

996 – TO BROTHER PELLETERET, MARAST

Bordeaux, September 21, 1837

I have received, my dear son, your two letters of the eleventh and thirteenth of the current month. Your accounts of the management of the Marast property seem to me to be very exact and, at the same time, make me understand that there would be very little benefit to manage it by itself. I am a little surprised that Father Fridblatt said, doubtless in a first impulse, that it would be more profitable to lease it out.

To have a thorough knowledge of this property, I wish you would inform me definitely 1. on the kind of revenues that the property can produce annually; 2. about the approximate quantity of each product in an ordinary year; 3. about the quantity of cattle that could be raised and fed; 4. about the cost of additional help, always approximately;
5. about the improvements the property is likely to require. In a word, my dear son, let me have a clear idea about the property of Marast. The first real knowledge I have had of it is that which you gave me by your letter of the thirteenth of the current month . . .

Independently of the list of annual revenues from the land I have just asked you, give me a clear idea of the financial condition of the establishment . . . It is now about a year since I have

been asking for this information. If it is not to be had, then there must necessarily be confusion and disorder in the administration . . .

I understand that you cannot go to Courtefontaine with the others for the retreat, but we shall take steps to make up for it.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my entire devotedness.

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997 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, September 22, 1837

My dear son, the expressions in your letter to Father Caillet have not been badly interpreted, but taken in their natural sense. Why not speak to Father Caillet as you speak to others? Brother Clouzet had sent me a literal copy of the circular letter that you wrote to him at the same time that you wrote Father Fontaine. All of your letters have had the same object; all are but provocations to insubordination. It is in those written to Saint Remy that the four motives for your convocation of a General Chapter are specified, etc., etc.

Many days ago, I already had received different protestations from various Heads of establishments. I did not believe it my duty to pass them over to you. From the Circular addressed to Father Rothéa, I could see that it is exactly like the one you are sending me and it is in this same copy that Father Rothéa declares his sentiments. You will find it herewith enclosed. You are very free, my dear son, from all obligation toward the Society, as regards the property of the establishment of Layrac, but you are not free from the obligation in conscience of all the indemnity you will be able to pay it, for the damages and losses that you have caused it by the forced transfer of the Saint Marie boarding school, as I observed to you, and as I have proved in the reply of your memorandum in answer to the consultation of that case of conscience. You are doing yourself immense harm, my dear son, by your writings.

My dear son, you tell me in your letter of the sixteenth of the current month and to which I am answering: "What vexations for you and for me, and how much more easily it would have been for you to avoid all this trouble! But today I can go nowhere else than where truth and justice lead me." I do not see, my dear son, how I could have avoided these vexations, and on the other hand, what warnings I gave you! Who caused the great disturbance which is becoming so harmful to the Society of which you claim to be a member? Is it in its spirit? You are going to make a little retreat, and if the Spirit of the Lord deigns to enlighten you, you will clearly see that truth and justice have not led you to all these crises.

My dear son, I do not receive your farewell, still less your farewell for always upon the earth. You will always be my son, although my antagonist, because I shall always have for you a truly paternal love. The love of David for Absolom will be a figure of it, as I wrote to you from Saint Remy on a somewhat similar occasion. There will be absolute separation only in eternity if we do not walk in the straight and narrow path into which we have had the happiness to enter.

In consequence, my dear son, receive the ordinary assurance of my tender attachment.

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The following letter, with the list joined to it (not printed in this edition), in answer to a questionnaire sent by the Minister of Public Instruction, furnishes an interesting view of the condition of the works of primary instruction of the Society at this time.

998 - TO THE MINISTER OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, PARIS

Bordeaux, September 24, 1837

Honorable Minister, I have the honor of presenting to Your Honor the established list of the primary schools held by the Society of Mary and of the novitiates which it has formed, to replace the one attached to the central House in Bordeaux. You will doubtless be surprised to see it so small.

1. The Society of Mary was supplying its novitiate with subjects from its normal schools. Of these, it had two for three Departments: Saint Remy for the Departments of the Haute Saône and of the Doubs; Courtefontaine, for the Department of the Jura. Several Departments were asking for such. Your Honor can have all the reports examined that have been made to the University on these schools by the Inspectors of the Academy of Besançon and by the General Inspectors. I have reason to believe that they are acceptable. Nevertheless, other schools have been substituted for them and usually at great expense for the cities involved.

2. The pupils of the Society were exempt from military service by reason of their commitment to serve ten years in primary teaching. No subject of our Novitiates can any longer lay any claim to exemption according to the university agreements that the Academies apply without distinction to all teachers.

I am not concealing the scantiness of this list, and I believe that it will surely not measure up to the idea which Your Honor may have had of the Society of Mary, especially after what a certain prospectus says about it, in which we were brought in without our consent.[1]

I handed over to His Excellency, the archbishop of Bordeaux, the letter of the fifteenth of the current month with which Your Honor honored me, and at the same time, I let His Excellency know the causes for the relatively slow development of the Society of Mary. He exhorted me to place them before you in all confidence. I shall do so as soon as possible in the sentiments toward Your Honor with which he inspired me.

I would seem to be complaining about the Minister – nothing could be further from my mind – if I were to enumerate for Your Honor all the obstacles that our young teachers are up against, be it on the part of the Inspectors or on the part of the mayors and prefects of the different committees under the pretext of the Common Law. The attestations of their first Superior are not sufficient for the subjects sent, as they are to supply themselves with the

[1] The prospectus of Sion Vaudémont.

attestations of the mayors of the places where they have worked. If Your Honor believes that the Society of Mary can do good in primary instruction, you will judge in your wisdom what exceptional agreements would be necessary.

I have tried, Honorable Minister, to enter into your views and those of the respectable prelate given to Bordeaux, in placing these reflections before you.

I beg of you to believe in my good intentions and in the sentiments of profound respect with which I am, of Your Honor, the very humble servant.

* * * *

On the occasion of a visit of Father Caillet to Agen, Father Chaminade makes a new effort to bring Brother Mémain back into the path of duty.

999 – TO BROTHER MÉMAIN, AGEN

Bordeaux, October 3, 1837

My dear son, Father Caillet has not yet written to me and therefore has told me nothing about you. It may be that he wanted to give you more time for reflection. There was question, between you and him or between you and myself, only of knowing if you really wanted to live as a true religious observing the vows you have made, and, in your capacity of Head, to sustain and maintain the subjects that would be confided to you in the regularity and spirit of their state, always giving them the good example. I did not believe that you could promise it without a real conversion, and I have told you at the same time that the occasion of the mission of Father Caillet to Agen was a favorable one for you, arranged by the merciful Providence of God. I have counseled you not to enter into the details of our respective complaints. There is question of taking a decisive resolution.

If the good God deigns to touch your heart, I have told you I shall be all to you, to help you in whatever manner possible to me to get out of the embarrassment you are in. If this is not the case, you will no longer have anything to do with the free schools. I shall see to their maintenance if the faithful are willing to pledge themselves in some way, so that the teachers may be able to live according to their state. You will hold to your tuition-paying school on your own responsibility. I need not tell you that you will always be obliged to lead a truly religious life, one according to the spirit of your state; but you will not have to count upon me, nor I upon you.[1] *No longer having the care of the free schools nor of the teachers employed in them, and being employed solely with your paying pupils, you will need only a small number of helpers.*

I am closing now and once more assuring you that the words attributed to me when they were reported to you are far from exact, and that you would have done well to scorn them or to seek an early explanation of them with me in a quiet, leisurely way.

[1] You will no longer have to keep any accounts. This would have been a situation similar to that of Fr. Lalanne in Layrac.

* * * *

Mlle Coudre, the foundress of Courtefontaine, kept on living there. She was inclined to meddle in the administration of the house, and Father Chaminade tactfully exhorts her to avoid all involvement in the matter.

1000 – TO MLLE COUDRE, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, October 3, 1837

By your letter of last September 27, I understand, my dear and respected daughter, that you had not yet received my answer to your first letter. I had sent it to Father Lamotte so that he could give it to you personally, as you had seemed to prefer . . .

I beg of you to reread this letter. I recall having concluded it by inviting you not to be worried in any way, if you would find that the Reverend Pastor,[2] or any other of the directors of the house, does not do things as you would have them done, or does not economize as much as you think he should, in a word, if you should notice any kind of disorder. You will be accomplishing whatever obligation you might have simply by notifying the Reverend Pastor. It is up to him to know what is to be done. The Superiors often know that it would be better to do things in another way, but prudence does not permit them to make an immediate change. Oh, my dear daughter, nothing is worth as much as peace of soul! And it is impossible for you to preserve it if you are continually looking into all that is being done in the house and judging of it favorably or the contrary. This should in no way concern you. You have fully satisfied whatever interest you are to put in the establishment of Courtefontaine when, in case you notice some disorder or something that looks like disorder, you have notified the Reverend Pastor about it.

You tell me, my dear daughter, that you have consulted Father Bardenet and that you have even given to him the letter you are writing me. Doubtless, Father Bardenet is fully worthy of all your confidence. However, in good faith, do you believe it is right to tire and worry him with all these little household matters? If he were not as wise as he is, you would be impairing the authority of the Reverend Pastor, and as a matter of fact, you do jeopardize his authority in bringing your complaints to subordinates in the establishment. It is always only to him that you must make your observations which, once made, you must no longer bother about. I see no other way, my dear daughter, of assuring to you the tranquility you need to work out your salvation at the same time that you do good to the establishment and, so to say, sacrifice yourself for it. I have furthermore informed you that it is practically impossible that a large establishment, at the beginning of its career and which is still developing, be provided with persons having all manner of capacities and who have experience in all things.

Receive, my dear daughter, the assurance of my sincere and inviolable attachment.

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[2]Fr. Leo Meyer.

In the following letters the Founder makes an effort to assure the existence of the free schools of Agen, endangered by the defection of Brother Mémain. The examples given by Father Lalanne and Brother Mémain continue to bear their fruit, further weakening the religious of Layrac and in Agen who are little attached to their vocation. Father Chaminade is obliged to defend the honor of the Society against the imputations of these deserters.

1001 – TO FATHER BARET, DIRECTOR OF THE MAJOR SEMINARY OF AGEN

Bordeaux, October 5, 1837

Dear Reverend Father, I had the honor of writing to you around the fifteenth of last August, about what I had reason to fear, that is to say, the obligation of separating entirely the free schools from those requiring tuition and called special schools.

I can in no way confide to Brother Mémain either the teachers of the free schools or even the care of those schools. It is to no purpose, Reverend Father, to tell you all that has happened between us this year, and all the attempts I have made to bring him back to the principles and sentiments proper to his state. Our separation, as far as the temporal is concerned, is settled, as Brother Mémain will take on his own account the establishment of the tuition-charging schools. He says he owes sixteen thousand francs. I don't know if he is carrying in his accounts the four or five thousand francs that the clergy have procured for this establishment. Thus his debt would be between twenty and twenty-one thousand francs.

The free schools will be suppressed only insofar as you would want to lodge the teachers of these schools and make them dependent upon Brother Mémain.

They will take care of themselves, and if you are willing to replace me in Agen as local Superior, it will be agreeable to me, and I shall have a copy of their regulations given to you, etc. But, you may say to me, what resources will they have to maintain themselves, that is to say, for their food and clothing? At first sight, here are those that come to mind, nearly all taken from the letter you honored me with by writing last August 21.

(Then follow the resources suggested by the letter of Father Baret.)

Last resource: See if it would be possible to open a subscription that would pay the difference of the modest salary necessary to nourish and maintain the Brothers. When I say last resource I am very far from limiting those which zeal and charity may inspire. It is the last one only by the sketch contained in your letter. Our young teachers will have no contact with Brother Mémain to get what he will owe you, nor to take in the subscriptions that could be opened. With the help of their modest salary all they will have to do will be to fulfill well their duties and functions.

His Lordship is fairly well acquainted with what is going on at Layrac and Agen. Father Caillet tells me he groans with him because of it and sympathizes with me with all his heart . . .

I am opening at this time a letter from Brother Pimouguet, one of the teachers who this year has taught in the schools. Here is what it contains: "Good Father, I have placed before my bishop, who is my first Superior, the state of the Society of Mary. I have let him know, with all the simplicity of which I am capable, all the motives that I had in taking the step upon which I am determining today and it is in consequence of the counsels he was kind enough in his wisdom to give me, that I come to thank you for all the goodness you have shown me and for all the favors you have granted me. I am withdrawing from the Society in body but not in spirit."

From all that has happened in Layrac and in Agen, the young man believes he sees the Society of Mary all in disorder, and from the counsels he claims to have received from his Lordship, it would seem that the bishop himself has entered upon his fears. However, it is true that these disorders are precisely provoked only because the Society of Mary wishes to maintain order and regularity and that there are some rebel subjects, among these one of the directors, who has tried to raise the standard of revolt. Happily, he has found the very great majority of the religious unshakable: Oportet ut eveniant scandala; vae autem illi per quem scandalum venit! *(It is inevitable that scandal come, but woe to him through whom scandal comes.) The Society of Mary is being purified, perfected, and strengthened by the very losses that she experiences. I shall be very much obliged to you, Reverend Father, if you would kindly communicate this letter to His Lordship while assuring him of my very respectful devotedness and of my willingness to cooperate with His Lordship on the means for reforming the free schools or, if he so desires, to agree upon their suppression. I am etc.*

To the sad examples left by these deserters, of which the painful impression remains in the correspondence of the Founder, it would be necessary if we should want to give a fair idea of the condition of the Society at this time, to oppose the great examples of virtue given by a number of religious who sustained and edified the work by their fervor and their devotedness.

If the correspondence of Father Chaminade is moderate in this regard, it is because as ordinarily happens, he was being written to, especially when difficulties arose and accumulated. Happy peoples have no history.

However, other testimonials attest to the virtue of these true sons of the Founder – official testimonials like those which the bishops will soon render on the occasion of the request for approbation of the Society in Rome,[1] testimonials more discreet but not less precious, gathered in the written memoirs of old religious, like those recalled by some of the notes contained in this collection of letters.

* * * *

1002 – TO FATHER MOURAN, VICAR GENERAL OF AGEN

Bordeaux, October 15, 1837

[1] See, for example, as a note in letter 1070, the testimonials of the archbishop of Besançon and of the bishop of Strasbourg.

Dear Reverend Father, I had the honor of writing to Father Baret on the fifth of the current month, the letter of which I am taking the liberty of sending you a copy. I would need a rather prompt answer. I have succeeded in finding three good subjects for the Catholic schools of Clairac. They are ready to leave, but it is doubtful whether the free schools of Agen will be maintained. If it is not desired that they be sustained, then I shall not require the subjects to come, since it was with much difficulty and solicitude, so to say, that we removed them from our establishments in the Jura. I shall simply send the subjects that I had chosen for Agen.

I had asked Father Baret to communicate my letter to His Lordship, because I would not want to do anything that is not agreeable to him and that he would not approve. I learn, nevertheless, that the clergy met at the house of Brother Mémain, and I have been told that a request was to be presented to the Brothers of the Christian Schools. I would have no regret at all should the Brothers of the Christian Schools take the place of the members of the Society of Mary. My desire is that such establishments be multiplied. I am perfectly content, whether they be directed by the one or the other group.[2] *Although Father Baret is the voice and deputy of the clergy of Agen for the work of the Schools, I would be very glad if the Bishop of Agen would be consulted about the suppression of a work for which he is the first teacher in France. I am speaking in relation to the Society of Mary.*

I shall be very much obliged to you, Reverend Father, if you would give to His Lordship the brief letter that I have the honor of writing to you, as well as the copy of the one that I have written to Father Baret; take his orders and transmit them to me as soon as possible.

I am with respectful devotedness, Reverend Father, your very humble and very obedient servant.

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1003 – TO FATHER MOURAN, VICAR GENERAL OF AGEN

Bordeaux, October 21, 1837

Dear Reverend Father, I have the honor of immediately transmitting to you the answer I have just received from Father Baret. I doubt that it expresses the decision of His Lordship and of his Council, for it doesn't possess the tone of wisdom which is proper to him.

The time for finding a suitable little house to lodge the three school teachers may be too short, but in this case could not someone be found, more or less removed from the school, who could temporarily provide an apartment that could be put at their disposal?

[2] In a rough draft of the preceding letter to Fr. Baret, Fr. Chaminade wrote still more energetically on the subject of his schools: "If these schools are not to be, as it were, a factory of Christians, I prefer that they do not exist!" In fact, the schools of Agen were then confided to the Brothers of the Christian Schools, who had not been able to open them in 1818.

Father Baret says that "he could never have thought that the Brothers of Mary could be as divided as they are," and I have been assured that it is he who has given Brother Mémain the advice to withdraw!

The Brothers of Mary do not abandon a work that has cost them so many steps. Father Baret has dealt with and has wanted to deal only with Brother Mémain. The latter has contracted debts to the amount of sixteen thousand francs, he says, and perhaps even twenty-one thousand francs. Furthermore, Brother Mémain, who can no longer figure in Agen as the Head of an establishment of the Society of Mary if he is replaced by another, asks me to remit to him sixteen thousand francs or that I turn over the house to him, as his name appears everywhere. I cannot spend sixteen thousand francs to replace him, and I am obliged to abandon it to him, reserving to Father Baret to call for the interest on the monies he has placed in his hands until he is reimbursed for them. But it is not for that that I am abandoning the work.

This is, doubtless, an annoying incident and even scandalous, but would the scandal cease if we allow things to continue as they have been going? The scandal in this case could no longer be attributed to a single individual, but to the entire Society.

I shall not further paraphrase Father Baret's letter. I shall even await, before answering him, the decision of His Lordship, to whom I beg you to offer the tribute of my respectful devotedness while giving to him both Father Baret's letter and this one.

I am with respectful remembrance, etc.

* * * *

Correspondence is resumed with Saint Claude, be it for the needs of the school or for the vocation of Father Perrodin, contested on various sides, as has been seen before (Letter 944) and as will further be seen in the following letters.

1004 – TO FATHER DE MONTGAILLARD, VICAR GENERAL OF SAINT CLAUDE

Bordeaux, October 22, 1837

Right Reverend Vicar General, I have placed Brother Gouverd[1] according to your views, but as he left Saint Claude before having received the letter I had written to him to prepare him for it, and since he was at the home of his parents to restore his health, I sent his obedience to Father Meyer so that he might get it in that way. In the meantime, Brother Gouverd writes to me that he is going to Saint Claude to await my orders. If at the reception of this letter he is still in Saint Claude, I would be much obliged to you to have him given the enclosed note. Father Meyer, to whom you have also written that three school teachers sufficed for you though Brother Gouverd does not form part of this number, has chosen them according to my intentions. Their

[1] Bro. Gouverd had received an obedience for Ebersmunster.

names are: Brothers Bourgeois, Houmann, and Serment.[2] *I shall not delay writing to them and to encourage them to fulfill their functions well.*

Father Perrodin, chaplain of the convent of the Daughters of Mary, told me on last September 28 of his desolation. I have not yet answered him. Before doing that I thought I should acquaint you with this letter and through you, His Lordship. I am having a copy made for you. Father Perrodin should doubtless have been able to handle the matter better, and since someone had been artful enough to have him write again to His Lordship he should doubtless have written in another tone. Finally, however, it is true that Father Perrodin has manifested his desire to enter the Society, only after long and very mature reflections, only after the consent of Father Bardenet his confessor, and with the approbation of His Lordship. I have been witness to all. If, since that time, no change has come over the sentiments of Father Perrodin, if there is no other obstacle than the attachment – no doubt well merited – of Father Bardenet for him than that which his Superiors and his relatives have for him, why then return to judgments pronounced already so long ago? On the other hand, is His Lordship in granting to the Society of Mary this subject called by God really losing him? Is not the Society entirely devoted to him? In the scarcity of subjects at present, have I, nevertheless, not sent three priests to Courtefontaine because I considered them needed there? I beg of you, Right Reverend Vicar General, to plead the cause of Father Perrodin with His Lordship for it is a good and worthy one, and as soon as you have obtained his liberty, to let Father Perrodin himself know of it directly. To console him, I shall let him know of the petition in his regard that I am taking the liberty of placing in your hands. Would it not be annoying to provoke him beyond endurance?

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[2] Bro. Benjamin Houmann, 1809-1873, born in Contrexéville (Vosges) had finished his studies in the seminary when, in 1835, he entered the novitiate in Courtefontaine which Father Chaminade had just opened. After having taught in a great number of houses, St. Claude, Strasbourg, Moissac, etc., he died piously in Givry. In his energetic years Bro. Houmann was, by his cheerful disposition, an element of wholesome joy in the communities, and always edified his Brothers by his regular and profoundly religious life. During one of the last years of his life he was stricken with painful infirmities; he made known his needs to his Superiors and ended his letter in this way: “This is what I thought it my duty to tell you. Now, do with me whatever you think best: grant or refuse, I shall go wherever obedience calls me and I shall not be less your very respectful and very devoted child.”

Bro. Peter Serment, (1819-1892) from Vieille Loye (Jura) entered the novitiate of Courtefontaine in 1837, was employed first in St. Claude, then, although a lay religious, he fulfilled in Courtefontaine for fifteen years, the functions of master of novices (1846-60), came back to St. Claude as director and ended his long career in St. Remy. “He was the type of good Brother of Mary,” the necrological register of the Society declares in his regard, “he used all his strength and influence in the training of good religious and good teachers.” He was, as one of his novices of the time notes, a contemplative and a highly-mortified man. He had taste and ability for drawing and painting and was the author of a beautiful Roll of Honor which was formerly displayed in the parlor of our schools. While master of novices, Bro. Serment brought out the first Historical Notice of the Society of Mary (1857) kept, at the present time, in the archives of the Motherhouse.

Bro. Jean Baptiste Serment (1824-1896), brother of the preceding one, spent the greatest part of his religious life as a supervisor in Stanislas Collège and died in retirement at St. Remy.

1005 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, October 29, 1837

You are not giving me any worries, my dear son, but your circumstance increases my solicitude. I am to want all the subjects that God sends me, I am to sustain them in their good sentiments, to aid them in getting out of the difficulties which prevent them from following their vocation. It is in these sentiments that I thought I should write to Father de Montgaillard what you will read in the extract of my letter herewith included.

The good God has, doubtless, permitted this mild storm, the better to test your vocation and to have you feel more and more the great favor it happens to be. Do not be disturbed! You would have succeeded more promptly if you had spoken of your design to Father Bardenet only in confession, but having done it outside the tribunal of Penance, he thought he could make use of your secret and had obstacles put in the way that he could not put there himself. Being above all your confessor, what means the neutrality that he seems to want to maintain? Well, finally, let us be patient! Continue to show spirit and resolution! Keep the one well-disposed who is to replace you! Write to me frequently about all that may happen. A mild and honest firmness, but well sustained, although always submissive and patient is of greater value in the sense and spirit of the Christian virtues than violence and precipitation. I am going to send this letter to the superioress of the convent, who will have the kindness to hand it over to you personally. I shall also console her a little, as she is sorely affected because of your departure, but she has the prudence and submission that can be expected from her high degree of virtue.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces with my paternal blessing.

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At Courtefontaine, Father Meyer and his confrères, witnesses of the difficulties created for Father Chaminade by the lack of personnel, suggested to the Founder the idea of suppressing the boarding schools of Marast and Saint Remy to sustain those of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, and to establish in Saint Remy the central novitiate of the Society. It is to this proposition that several of the following letters allude.

1006 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 31, 1837

If I have not answered, my dear son, several of your last letters, you must have been able to notice that I have always paid attention to them in the relations I had with Saint Remy.

The great affair proposed by the three priests of Courtefontaine[1] has quite naturally been treated in Saint Remy and according to little human views. At the first cursory reading we made of this proposition, we were struck by it; considering the disorders of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster as a permission on the part of God to bring back Saint Remy to its original

[1] Fathers Meyer, Lamotte, and Saussol.

purpose. I did not want to take upon myself, nor even upon the advice of those who surround me, so important a decision and of which the effect fell back especially upon all the religious who inhabit Saint Remy. It is to this end that I wrote to the Council of Saint Remy. Since there was haste, I proposed no more than some of the broad views with which we were penetrated. I have been, doubtless, too brief to be properly understood. That by which I am particularly affected is the community of workers as I have already told you several times. The time for its existence has possibly not yet come, or, may it be that it is to come only after my death? Let us adore the designs of God in everything without wanting to hurry anything.

Saint Remy, not being yet constituted as a secondary house, the admission and receptions of the subjects may not be legally inscribed. A register of them must nevertheless be kept, and each time an extract is to be given to me as well as an extract of the civil engagements to have them carried over to the register of the central house.

I have not answered Brother Cretin because of the variation in the requests and sentiments he expresses to his different Superiors. Tell him that it is not because of indifference that I have not yet answered him, that I am always disposed to remind him of all he must have proposed to himself in embracing the religious state so as to insure his salvation, that I always love him tenderly as one of my children engendered in the order of faith. Also tell Brother Ravoir that I am specially devoted to him.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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1007 – TO FATHER DE MONTGAILLARD,
VICAR GENERAL OF ST. CALUDE

Bordeaux, November 3, 1837

Right Reverend Vicar General, you are too well instructed in administration not to feel the serious inconveniences resulting from the fact that a published ordinance announced to the diverse authorities has not had its execution. This would be the case of the obedience sent to Brother Gouverd. His nomination has been announced, not only to the Superior of the establishment, but also to the parents of the pupils and, surely, at this moment, to the Reverend Rector of the Academy of Strasbourg, etc. I have no other subject at this time to replace him and so I am asking you please to let him leave and to hold, at least provisionally, to the arrangement that you have asked for. You well understood the need Brother Gouverd had, of being under the supervision of a first Head in a large establishment, and I have followed your advice to the letter . . . Furthermore, experience proves to us that the health of Brother Gouverd is too delicate to hold out in this locality. Anyone else with a diploma of the higher degree could do better than he. I am writing to the establishment in Ebersmunster that it is only by accident Brother Gouverd has not arrived on time for the reopening of classes, but that he will be there shortly.

As regards the cession to the Society of the house of the schools, at the last line of the postscript of your letter you have found the common term that removes all difficulties: "For the

rest," you say, "if the cession were made to Father Bardenet, what would you think of it?" By this cession, the Reverend Pastor would calm the public anxieties and the Society would not be contracting any commitment. It might even be that Father Bardenet would choose to provide quarters sufficing for the schools and for the lodging of the teachers. Having given up the establishment of Menotey, he could transfer to Saint Claude the means he had for Menotey.

The affair of Father Perrodin is badly out of gear. The attachment of Father Bardenet for Father Perrodin is being strengthened by the prolonged living with him and Father Perrodin is paying him back in the same coin. A filial and grateful love has even shaken his vocation for some time. I was suffering because of it, but I said nothing. God has deigned to have his voice heard in a stronger manner, by the cries of his conscience; and from there the earnest steps he has taken since last summer. I do not know if the sacrifice Father Perrodin is making is not possibly as great as that which Father Bardenet will make. I understand that His Lordship will do nothing contrary to the advice of Father Bardenet. The affair of the chaplain for the convent of Acey, is here only incidental. It presents a real difficulty only insofar as the first difficulty will subsist. I shall shortly write about it to Father Bardenet and I shall not cease exhorting Father Perrodin to patience.

I am with sincere devotedness and a profound respect, etc.

P.S. The pleasure that Brother Gouverd could have in going back to Saint Claude could well be under suspicion. He himself might well be mistaken.

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1008 – TO FATHER BARDENET, ACEY

Bordeaux, November 4, 1837

I am having recourse to you, Reverend Father, and with confidence. You know that His Lordship of Saint Claude has annulled the permission that he had given Father Perrodin to enter the Society of Mary. I have known the cause of it and my correspondence with Father de Montgaillard made the thing doubly sure. On the one hand, you have a very legitimate attachment to Father Perrodin, you fear that his successor will not have as great qualities for exercising the functions of chaplain to the convent. On the other hand, you would not want to hamper the Society of Mary. You say you wish to remain neutral in this matter. This neutrality is well understood by the bishop of Saint Claude; it is also understood by M. Genevey and other persons.

It is evident that His Lordship has changed his mind only because he knows that you have changed yours. However, what has happened in the nearly two years that this affair has been going on? Might it be that the signs of divine vocation on the part of Father Perrodin now seem doubtful to you – after having appeared certain? Is it the difficulty of finding a suitable substitute for him? Neither the one nor the other. If you could make your sacrifice, if you took an entirely different attitude with regard to His Lordship, but that he would understand that it is by

conviction and by the fear of your opposing the views of God that you are doing so, all would be quickly settled.

The final decision on this matter depends absolutely upon you, Reverend Father. If you remain neutral, you are evidently deciding against Father Perrodin.

I insist on asking for him, since God wants to give him to the Society of Mary. He has his designs, without any doubt, and I must second him with all my strength. I do not think for that reason that you believe I have no interest in the convent's having a good chaplain. I hope all from your wisdom.

I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

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Rare remnants of the correspondence of Alsace have survived destruction. We are giving a specimen here. There is question of the resources of the Alsace establishments which due to a badly understood peculiarity, the Rothéa brothers wanted to reserve for Alsace. On this occasion, Father Chaminade energetically affirms his attachment to holy poverty.

1009 – TO LOUIS ROTHÉA, KAYSERSBERG

Bordeaux, November 7, 1837

I have never doubted, my dear son, the uprightness of the sentiments of your heart, but your judgments and the actions that follow them are too precipitate; the same is true of Father Rothéa.

In your letter of last October 31, you ask me what help you have already received from the Motherhouse or the General Administration since your existence in Alsace. If a stranger to the Society asked me that question, I would be less astonished. I shall give you no account, but I shall tell you in general and rapidly for lack of time some principal facts. Do you believe that your existence even in Alsace and the existence of each establishment have been realized without expenses? The same with regard to their conservation as with the preparation and sending of the subjects? The privation of all surplus of the largest of its establishments, Saint Hippolyte, the same with that of Ebersmunster, then the abandoning of nine thousand francs made to Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster, etc., etc., - hasn't all this been done for Alsace? Taken as a whole, of how little worth are the bonuses (surplus monies, ed.) received from Alsace? Colmar is the only establishment from which some slight advantage could have been derived, but you know all the expenses that have been made there. Some could still come in, but what has effectively been received from them since Brother Coustou has replaced you is very little. I am not speaking of the wrongs or losses caused by others, so as not to compromise anyone, but I remember that on one occasion I evaluated them at about 2,400 francs. Nor am I speaking of what you and your brothers have done in allowing people to cry out against the sending of a few little bonuses to the central House. Have you not understood that when the blood no longer goes to the heart the entire body feels the result? I am speaking here of the organization of the Society in the civil and

natural order. The harm is greater in the moral and religious order since it attacks the Constitutions in one of its most important relations.

You have done well, my dear son, to begin to write to the different Heads of establishments. You, as well as your brothers, must continue to write to them and to speak to them until they understand, feel, and love their Constitutions and the organic Rules which follow from them. The Society of Mary is totally devoted to poverty, not only in its individual members, but still more in each one of its establishments. Nevertheless, it has done great work for the support of religion at the same time that it does good for civil society. All that it has and all that it may gain is to keep on advancing and ever sustaining the establishments to which it will have given existence. The Central House is equally devoted to poverty and never, in spite of the riches which Providence might send it, will it be rich – no more than any other establishment.

There is in the nature of riches something to corrupt the hearts of men. From what place came the relaxation in most of the religious orders before the first Revolution? Is it not from riches? As long as the Society exactly follows its Constitutions, as long as it preserves their spirit, it will be in the state of fervor. God will bless its labors; it will edify the world. As soon as it turns aside from the practice (of poverty), disorder will come with relaxation and its miserable consequences. You see the scandals that have been seen at about the same time in Layrac, in Agen, and in Saint Hippolyte. I prefer that establishments do not exist, rather than have them operate in contradiction to the original views of the Society.

We would have waited to equip Saint Hippolyte if Father Rothéa had not seemed to be full of zeal for the refurnishing of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster. He had a note about organization given over to me which seemed sufficient to go ahead. The second last letter he wrote to me was full of wisdom and I congratulated him for it. I then thought that wisdom was going to prevail at his new operations, but, unhappily, this spirit of wisdom did not function long. I am not saying anything more. Imagine the embarrassment I must be in . . . but let us stop here. He seemed to me, in a last letter, to have recognized his illusions in the precipitation of his ideas as well as of his operations.

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In the following letter, Father Chaminade comes back to the question of the community of workers in Saint Remy and gives his views as regards the existence of the "given ones" in the Society.

1010 – FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 20, 1837

. . . I have no recollection that, before the profession of his vows, Brother Constant had notified me that he had no intention of continuing in his trade as carpenter; and during the two stays he made in Saint Remy, if he had been permitted to make his vows conditionally, I would not have so much insisted that he keep to his trade as that he perfect himself in it by means of linear drawing and even by the drawing of the head in general, because in the perfection of his

trade, he could have to make the heads of cherubim, etc. It is not surprising that his dislike for his trade continues, for he has always opposed the will of God in his regard, and he has always opposed it by endlessly occupying himself about a change, and that, in spite of all the observations we could make to him. His thoughts and his desires have been in contradiction to what he was ordered. It is not to be doubted that he has committed many sins, more or less great. All that we desire is good, says St. Augustine, and if we desire it with certain ardor because it is good, the thing becomes holy. What examples I could cite! But we haven't the time for it.

What then is to be done in regard to Brother Constant? First, what Brother Clouzet has done or what the Council has decided. But we shall see, at a time not far distant, what can be effectively done to choose among the workers all those who will be suitable for teaching and who have lost the liking for their trade.[1] *I am saying, at a time not far distant, because if the conversion of Brother Clouzet has all the reality announced by its effects, I shall come to an agreement with him in the serious formation of the nucleus of the community of workers such as we have understood it, and I shall shortly start work on the drawing up of the plan. With Brother Clouzet helping me with certain details this will not take long, and we shall see that it is carried out, something which could not have taken place with the dispositions in which he was living. See to it that he is supported.*

There is no question, my dear son, of being religious by half, not even by three quarters. We must be such as God wants us to be and in the manner in which we have promised him, and we have certainly promised it to Him, as we believed he desired. Deus non irridetur. *(God is not to be mocked.) What you and Brother Bousquet call conversion on the part of Brother Clouzet is a great consolation for me in the midst of so many troubles, perplexities, and anxieties.*

I am going to write a short letter to Brother Edel in particular.

There has never been question, my dear son, of receiving many "given ones" and of making of them a kind of Third Order. In the larger Houses it has been possible to receive one or two persons who by their character, their habits, and their piety, gave a good enough guarantee that far from troubling the community, they could be a source of edification to it. Ordinarily, only some friends and benefactors of the Society were received as such.[2] *Otherwise, this would be attempting to put together two communities living under two different Rules.*

As a result, there will be one distinct community for all the aged and infirm members of the Society, in which the Rule will be mitigated and in which they will have all necessary helps. I am addressing this matter at the present time.

Great care must be taken not to make any kind of commitment with persons about whose character we are not sufficiently informed. The father of Brother Justin Soleil, in the almost eight years that he has been with us in Bordeaux, has greatly wearied us. Finally, a few days ago, we have freed ourselves of him. Please share these reflections with Brother Clouzet.

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[1] We see to what exceptional measures Fr. Chaminade has to resort following the suppression of the novitiates by the July Revolution.

[2]For example, M. Christen in St. Hippolyte

I am leaving you now, my dear son, at the moment when I would like to speak to you of your interior, but on the one hand you do not mention any particular difficulty you have, and on the other, the moment for the departure of the mail has come.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

1011 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 20, 1837

I cannot resist, my dear son, giving you signs of the consolations which two letters from Saint Remy have given me, since they informed me of the salutary effects which the grace of the Lord has operated in you at the end of the retreat. You were dominated by certain illusions which could have led you to a very bad end. For a long time, I had sighed over it before God. Continue to be faithful. Grace will perfect its work.

The damages and the losses that Father Lalanne has caused us always leaves me in great need as I have already given you to understand. The greatest part of the interest on the capitals mortgaged will fall due in the course of next month and the beginning of January. I don't think I have to tell you any more about it. You will square your needs with ours.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my unshakable attachment.

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The following documents relate to the foundation of Clairac, announced by letter 989.

1012 – TO BROTHER BIDON, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, November 29, 1837

TO MY DEAR SON, JEAN BAPTISTE BIDON,
MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY.

Since you are, my dear son, one of the first members of the Society of Mary and as a result of the confidence with which you have always inspired me, I have named you and I name you by this present letter, Head of the little establishment of the private Catholic school of primary education in the city of Clairac (Lot et Garonne). Brothers Célestin Poux and John B. Marchand will be subject to you, as well as all the pupils of the school.

In general you will be in charge of all the affairs of the establishment, although I have already appointed Brother Poux as teacher of the highest class and he will be responsible for all the progress that the pupils of the three classes might make. This nomination will be communicated from me to Brother Marchand and will take the place of a special obedience.

Given in Bordeaux, under our seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary, November 29, 1837.

1013 – TO BROTHER POUX, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, November 28, 1837

TO MY DEAR SON, CÉLESTIN AUGUSTE POUX,
MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY.

My dear son, I have just consented to provide a Catholic private school of primary education in Clairac (Lot et Garonne). To this effect I have designated you to teach the highest class and to direct the classes of the intermediate pupils and of the beginners. You are responsible for the progress that the pupils of the classes will make. I have full confidence that you will correspond to what is being expected of your zeal and your knowledge.

On arriving in Clairac you will give notice to the rector of the Academy of your mission in Clairac, and you will present yourself to the mayor of the city, and let him know of your obedience and of your certificate of ability of the second degree. Your obedience will of itself serve as attestation of the good life and good morals that he might desire.

Given in Bordeaux, under our seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary, November 29, 1837.

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1014 – TO M. MONEROC, CLAIRAC

Bordeaux, November 29, 1837

Dear Sir: In answering your letter of the twenty-sixth of the current month, I shall not seek to justify Brother Poux,[1] nor to tell you why we submit ourselves to certain University laws or arrangements since the July Revolution. This would be useless for the time being. It will be possible actually to begin classes on Tuesday, December 5, if you adopt the very simple mode of installation that Brother Bonnefoi will propose to you.

I understand by your new observations what the mind of the country is. To remedy every drawback for the future, a placard will be put over the entrance of the establishment bearing these words: Primary instruction. Catholic school. Linear drawing.

Should it be asked whether the children of Protestants may be admitted to this school, we answer: Yes. The teachers do for them what they do for the Catholic children, for there is no distinction. Nevertheless, according to their prudence, they may set aside momentarily such and

[1] Bro. Célestin Poux, future Head of the Academic Department of the School, on leaving for Clairac had forgotten to take along his certificate of ability, required by the new school regulation.

such an exercise for such and such an individual. If cases should arise which the Head of the establishment is unable to solve and in which he does not deem it advisable to use his discretionary power, then he states that he is going to write about them to his Superiors.

In all the classes, the teachers are never to make any distinction between the Catholics and the Protestants, since, by the very fact that they come to class, they are thought to desire to be Catholics or are such in effect. Never, outside of classes, are the Catholic children to say anything against the Protestant children and vice versa. They are not even to notice or understand that there is such a distinction.

If the school is conducted in this way, there will most certainly be no disadvantages, but there will be many advantages. Avoiding all that would indicate only what is called partisan spirit, let us be Catholics with firmness, but let us always be modest and moderate, that is to say, truly charitable toward all and with a mildness without any trace of bitterness, according to the expression of Saint Paul.

If there should occur any event, either in the establishment or outside of it, that might interest the Catholic schools, I shall be obliged to you if you let me know of it.

Receive, I beg of you, this new assurance of the respectful devotedness with which I am, dear sir, your very humble and truly devoted servant.

* * * *

1015 – TO M. LACOSTE, FORMER COUNCILOR OF THE PREFECTURE, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 18, 1837

Dear Sir, After reading the letter with which you have just honored me and that of Brother Mémain, which you had the goodness of passing over to me, and all reflections being made, I believe we must leave the matter in question, *in statu quo*. I have no intention at all of instituting proceedings against Brother Mémain. The good God will remove the impediments that stand in the way of his work when he judges it opportune. All that is left to me is to remain patient.

We have not mutually understood one another; that is evident and that is how matters stand at present. Brother Mémain knows well that it is not by reason of a debt of sixteen thousand francs – and from your letter, it seems to be today nearly twenty thousand francs – that I held back on the question of having the free schools continued. You will act prudently, dear sir, I believe, in suspending judgment about the sayings of one complaining party.

You have been very good, my dear sir, after your accusations against the administration of the Society of Mary, to give yourself the trouble of negotiating my affair with Brother Mémain and so, I beg of you to accept herewith my thanks as well as the assurance, etc.

* * * *

1016 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 23, 1837

I have received, my dear son, in their proper time, your last two letters – the one of November 21 and the other of the fifth of the current month. I did not immediately answer the article in your letter of November 21 concerning what you call *Tiers-Parti* or Third Order, because a few days before, I had answered Father Chevaux on the same subject.[1] I have been able to talk to you about a Third Order secular or even regular, but never of a Third Order regular living in community with the First Order. I founded a Third Order secular of women in Tonneins and in Agen. I founded a Third Order regular in Auch, likewise of Daughters of Mary, with a distinct novitiate. The one and the other Third Order prospered greatly and were very pleasing to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. They will soon be able to furnish subjects to found other establishments of the same kind and some have already been asked for, but I do not want a single subject to leave until he or she has been sufficiently formed . . .

The part you have taken in the retreat, my dear son, will bear more and more fruit if you generously correspond with grace. There is no question, my dear son, of entering only by halves into the spirit of the religious state; it must be entered into with heart and soul if you wish to assure your salvation, and especially if you are to be at the head of the fine community of workers, which seems to me to be so strong in the designs of God and in the primitive plan of the Society of Mary.

This winter, in all the moments I can steal, I work on a definitive organization of the Society and on putting the Rules and Constitutions in order, whether for the Society of Mary, the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, or the new Institution in Auch, into a suitable state to present them to the Holy See next spring. However, I am sensing more and more how much this community would respond to our first views and how much it would edify the Church in the unhappy century in which we are living. There is hardly any doubt that this third branch of the Society will expand and become a powerful aid in sustaining the other branches as, in their turn, the first two would admirably sustain the third . . . I shall not develop this matter further now as we can come back to it later on.

[1] See Letter 1010.

At the death of M. Bousquet, his son wrote to me and spoke about the verbal dispositions or recommendations that his father made to him in an interview that preceded his death. Granting the anxieties he then had about his vow of stability and his desire to join the Trappists,[1] the considerable time he takes in answering the letters written to him, answering only a few of the questions put to him, and finally having quieted himself by the counsels of Father Cart – named today for the bishopric of Nîmes—he wrote to me again about the dispositions of his father and of the desire he had of no longer bothering about them. I surely wish to release him of any duty of conscience, but statements must be clear, and the means of doing something about them should be on hand. According to his letters, it is practically impossible to come to any decision one way or another. Be kind enough to call upon him, listen patiently to the answers he gives to your questions and put them down in writing . . . What recommendations has the dying father made to his son? In these recommendations, what was there that can be considered definite? The son must not be prevented from adding to and interpreting the recommendations of the father, as filial piety readily and easily does this, but, in truth, only what the father has definitely determined can be considered as a matter of conscience. The interpretations of filial piety are respected according to the means a father may leave to his son . . .

You know that Brother Viguier[2] was porter in the Sainte Marie boarding school of Bordeaux and then in Layrac. I withdrew him from this last place at the time of the last retreat, having always conducted himself with a truly religious fidelity. Father Meyer had asked me for him to be porter in Courtefontaine even before I had withdrawn him from Layrac, and I would have sent him to him if I could have afforded the traveling expenses. In the meantime, Father Meyer has acquired a porter of the kind he wanted, but he does not cease asking for Brother Viguier as a good religious and tailor. He is really a tailor, not so much for cutting and sewing new clothes, but more for mending and patching during his free moments. He is in no way a talker. Do you need a strong and dependable porter? If you have such a need and can pay for the traveling expenses, I shall preferably send him to you, since you have two needs, the main one, that of a porter and that of a tailor to mend and patch. Father Meyer has only this last need. Furthermore, he intends to pay for the travel expenses. You see by this little sample in what great need the General Administration finds itself. I am hoping for some little help given to the Society.

Receive, my dear son, the renewed assurance of my inviolable attachment.

* * * *

Apart from the foundation in Clairac in the South, the foundation of Saint Dié in the North comes to console Father Chaminade for the loss of the schools in Agen. Bishop de

[1] See Letter 969.
[2] Bro. Joseph Viguier, 1793-1839, from Bordeaux and a tailor by trade, entered the Sodality of the Madeleine in 1818, where he had Father Chaminade himself as spiritual director, and passed from there in 1819 to the novitiate of the Society, where he made his profession in 1820. This good religious ended his life in the Charity Orphanage in Besançon.

Jerphanion of Saint Dié asked him for it. Somewhat later, in 1843, the bishop would be promoted to the archbishopric of Albi. There was question of the opening of a private school, although Father Chaminade would have preferred taking possession of the communal school.[1]

[1] The School of St. Dié was opened in the fall of 1838, under the direction of Bro. Bertin, who, in 1840, was succeeded by Bro. Girardet, of venerated memory. Somewhat later, a boarding school was joined to it, which kept on flourishing until the persecution of 1903. Some years after, in the buildings that had remained empty, the seminary of the diocese was established. Since the first World War, the house reverted to its original purpose.

In his memoirs, Bro. Demangeon from St. Dié, and who was one of the first pupils of the Brothers, thus tells of the beginnings of the school: "When the Brothers arrived, there was so little certainty about the attitudes of the civil authorities, that at the request of the pastor, two resolute men had the mission of going to protect the Brothers against possible vexations, and to lead them to the place reserved for them. The school was to be free. The pastor was supposed to pay the Brothers their salary, and the parents who confided their children to them were invited to leave at the parish house what they could spare for tuition money. A good number, especially at the beginning, considered it their duty to do so. The number of pupils increased and I recall that in the first years there were about 40 pupils in the first class, 80 in the second, and as many as 120 in the lowest. The impression that the Brothers made was excellent. The teacher of the second class, Bro. Mérigot, was even spoken of with enthusiasm. By his amiable manners and his talent for penmanship he gained the esteem of both parents and pupils."

1017 – TO BISHOP DE JERPHANION OF
SAINT DIÉ

Bordeaux, December 29, 1837

Your Lordship, Father Rothéa has just handed me the letter with which you have honored him on the seventeenth of the current month.

I feel very happy to be able to answer Your Lordship that I shall do all I can to realize the hope of forming in Saint Dié an establishment of primary schools, the opening of which will take place next November 1, All Saints Day. I must, nevertheless, notify Your Lordship that the mayor of Saint Dié, no doubt upon the information given him about your designs, took further information from the police commissioner of Sainte Marie aux Mines (Upper Rhine) in regard to the Brothers of Mary. We have in this city, a Catholic communal school. If the mayor of Saint Dié were well disposed, he would understand that it would be much more suitable that there were one single school run by teachers whose morality and religion would be generally acknowledged. Rivalries are dangerous in the times in which we live. The Brothers of the Christian Schools have already succumbed twice according to what I have been told.[1]

Your Lordship would seem to desire a novitiate in your episcopal city. The enterprise could be realized in time. However, I must observe to Your Lordship, that we send our young teachers only to large centers where at least three can be occupied. To remedy the inconvenience of not being able to send them into the little Communes, we train secular subjects in the Normal Schools and this is an admirable means for renewing all the institutions of one or several Departments. We are well authorized for this work, but since the July Revolution, the Ministry has instituted Normal Schools which alone are favored in all the Departments. Those we had already established, deprived of all help and protection, have fallen as a matter of course. We are making up for this by special schools of the higher degree.

Your Lordship, we shall always be at your disposal, to the extent that we have available subjects to do all we possibly can to fit in with the plans of Your Lordship.

I am with very profound respect, Your Lordship's very humble and very obedient servant.

* * * *

[1] The Brothers of the Christian Schools had in fact been obliged to quit St. Dié at two different times, the first in 1830, following the Revolution, and a second time in 1836.

At the beginning of the New Year Father Chaminade sends a promissory note, addressed to Brother David Monier, who has been reconciled to his Good Father, and is living in the story above him in the house next to the Madeleine.

1018 – TO BROTHER DAVID MONIER, BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 8, 1838

My dear son, this morning I said Mass for you, according to the intention agreed upon.

I have, as it were, determined to offer myself to you, although it may be against certain good manners to offer oneself. I also offer you my own confessor, Father Joseph Bouet. But you should always remain free to take the one you judge best suited to your needs, one well able to understand you and in no way beyond your reach. In this case, you will do me the favor of telling me whom you have chosen once your choice will have been made.

Receive, my dear son, my fatherly greetings.

* * * *

1019 – TO BROTHER JUSTIN DUMONTET, MOISSAC

Bordeaux, January 8, 1838

The combat you have to sustain will always become easier in proportion as you gain new victories, if you always know how to make use of the arm of faith. With the timely use of this weapon, we can always triumph over all the invisible enemies of our salvation.

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1020 – TO FATHER MONTGAILLARD, VICAR GENERAL OF SAINT CLAUDE

Bordeaux, January 10, 1838

Right Reverend Vicar General, permit that, at the beginning of this New Year, I begin this letter by the offering which I have the honor to make of my best wishes for your health and prosperity. It is my heart that evokes it and not custom or politeness.

Are you satisfied with our young teachers? Do they fulfill their duties well, according to your views? Father Meyer tells me of his visit to Saint Claude and in particular of the interviews he had with you, of your excellent dispositions, as well as of the great prospects

you have for the establishment of the Society of Mary in Saint Claude. He fears for Brother Gouverd, who seemed to him to have adopted the spirit of the world.[1]

I desire, Right Reverend Vicar General, that Brother Roussel be raised to the holy priesthood. His ability in theological knowledge, his virtue, and his health seem to me of a degree more than sufficient to exercise the functions of the holy ministry worthily. He had the happiness of making his profession last year on the great feast of Pentecost. Since then, he has conducted himself well, and I see with pleasure that he is making constant progress in the perfection of his state. His entry among the clergy and his gradual advancement in the Holy Orders will become a motive of emulation for even greater and more rapid progress. I beg you kindly to request His Lordship to send him all or part of the dimissory letters he will need, up to and including tonsure, and for all the various steps up to the priesthood. His baptismal record reads: Louis Aimé Narcisse Roussel, born in Orgelet (Jura), October 25, 1813.

I have had absolutely no further news about Father Perrodin, neither from him nor from anyone having dealings with him.

I think that my children who are in Saint Claude under your paternal supervision will at this New Year, have fulfilled their duty as much toward His Lordship as toward you, not only for themselves, but also for me. Nevertheless, in case they have not expressed my sentiments to His Lordship, I am writing to Brother Gouverd by this same mail, to make up for this omission as soon as possible.

I am with a very respectful devotedness, Right Reverend Vicar General, your very humble servant.

* * * *

A final effort, which had little success, to save the free schools of Agen . . .

1021 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY OF AGEN

Bordeaux, January 12, 1838

Your Lordship, I have just received an Ordinance from the king which authorizes us to accept the legacy made by M. Dalès Latour on December 8, 1823.[1] I am asking Brother Bonnefoi to present to Your Lordship the said Ordinance, with the letter of advice from the Minister of Public Instruction. The prefect of the Lot et Garonne is charged with the execution of the Ordinance.

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[1] Bro. Gouverd, in spite of the entreaties of Fr. Chaminade, had remained director of St. Claude. See Letter 1007.

[1] M. Dalès Latour had given the schools of the Society of Mary in Agen, an income of one hundred francs, which, if there were none, was to go to the minor seminary of the diocese.

Your Lordship had Father Mouran, a member of your Council, write to me that the free schools would no longer exist in Agen under the conditions that I was requiring. These conditions were of very little burden to the clergy and the faithful. I have reason to fear that the real state of the question was not well presented to him. The faithful of Agen must find themselves humiliated by the collapse of a work toward which they have already made fairly great sacrifices, and which happens only because they would be required to add some slight contributions. Whatever the case may be, Your Lordship, here is a new 1,400 francs in payment of arrears.

If Your Lordship wishes to continue the work of the free primary schools, I could not open them immediately, but could do so after not too long a delay, at Eastertime at the latest, when I would have good and capable subjects ready to take them over.

The old means adopted by your young clergy could still be of use, that of going into the house we have had built.[1] We would take upon ourselves the debts contracted for the house, but on condition that Brother Mémain leave the city of Agen, purely and simply; or better still, if he should convert, that he go into retirement at another establishment. I prefer that an establishment not exist, if it cannot be run in a regular and edifying manner. I am inclined to think, Your Lordship, that you will not interiorly disapprove of my resolution.

I am with the most profound respect and entire devotedness, of Your Lordship, the very humble and obedient servant.

* * * *

To Father Meyer the Founder recalls some of the constituent principles of the Society.

1022 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, January 13, 1838

I have not understood too well what you tell me of Brother Clouzet and of the arrangements for Saint Remy, nor what you want to say to the archbishop of Besançon. I believe that it is in regard to Saint Remy.

You need not consult him on this matter. All is settled, although all has not yet been done for the different kinds of novitiates, as well as for each of the three classes in the Society: the priests, the teaching Brothers and the working Brothers. These three classes, well distinguished in the Constitutions, are nevertheless very well united among

[1] For the boarding school. See Letter 986.

themselves and form but one and the same body called the Society of Mary.[2] There is no need to occupy yourself about it, still less to worry about it. All will be duly organized and put in harmony, even if the insubordination of some prominent subjects of the Society, their exclusions and their disorders, are causing much delay. Nevertheless, the Society is being purified and in the process is being consolidated, and we can render thanks to God that the Society of Mary is making headway, although slowly, in the vigor of its existence.

Remain devoted to the novitiate! I hope to be able before the end of winter to hand over to you a fixed plan of spiritual direction. The basis of the plan is always the same: to form men who can be called men of faith, and by faith, come to a total abnegation of self.

I have never had the idea of doing away with the novitiate of Courtefontaine, not even when there was question, last September at least, of transferring to Saint Remy those novices whose formation was most advanced, in order to free Courtefontaine; and I have never thought that you would follow this section of the novitiate to Saint Remy. Imagination works upon the least movement that takes place.

You may tell Mlle Coudre to remain perfectly at ease. When we have the means, I would like to have the main building erected at the back part of the establishment, such as was our original plan, and extend the garden somewhat in order to etc., etc. However, we have not yet reached that point. Let us remain patient! . . .

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

Here is the answer of Father Meyer to Father Chaminade.

While reading your last letters, I experienced some emotion because of the remonstrances you were kind enough to make to me, and my self-love felt somewhat wounded. However, calm soon returned and, although it seemed to me I could easily justify myself, I was nevertheless very glad that you were kind enough to tell me frankly what was displeasing to you in my conduct. This is the best proof of your goodness and charity toward me. I ask you as a favor to continue your benevolence toward me, always to tell me in your letters all my defects and to call my attention to all the blunders I am likely to make.

You can tell me that I try to force you, so to say, to follow my ideas. My Good Father, I would consider myself lacking in my duty, were I to leave you under this impression. I always recall what you told me one day during my stay in Bordeaux: Even should we be separated from one another by two hundred leagues, we must be and remain of the same mind. I would be extremely sorry were I to experience the least sentiment opposed to yours, and I would not want to take a single step or say a single word that would be displeasing to you. If this has actually taken place, I can assure you that it certainly was not my intention. It is useless to try and give you an explanation for fear that self-love might come in for its part.

[2] In a letter of the preceding 5 of October, Father Meyer recalled to Father Chaminade “his great principle: Union without confusion.”

We made our monthly retreat last Sunday and, were you not so far away from us, I would send you the written accounts which I had the novices make of their meditation, their examen, spiritual reading, studies, employment of time, and of their vocation. You would be pleased to see the operation of the Holy Spirit in the souls of all these young men. I was extraordinarily satisfied. This is what reassures me: As God nourishes them spiritually, I hope He will nourish them corporally. Nevertheless, this does not prevent us from being obliged to borrow money . . .

Two new postulants just arrived today. Neither the one nor the other can pay more than two hundred francs for their two years of novitiate. I am still awaiting several others, without speaking of our postulants in the boarding school. We are already in close quarters since class is held in the room of the master of novices. We have two study halls, but when there is question of coming together for some exercise in common, we are surely not too much at our ease. (February 2, 1838)

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With Father Lalanne, the situation always remained strained. An attempt at conciliation had been made by the intervention of the Archbishop of Bordeaux, but in vain. Nevertheless, Father Chaminade had not feared to address to the prelate the following declaration.

1023 – TO HIS EXCELLENCY,
THE ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, January 19, 1838

. . . Father Lalanne says that I always call him my son. He seemed to fear that I no longer looked upon him as my son. Well, in fact, I always have for him the same fatherly tenderness. It is now about three years since there arose in his mind an uneasiness about the matter. He seemed to fear, after the reproaches I expressed about his conduct, that I no longer looked upon him as my son. I answered him that Absolom was always dear to David, although he had dethroned him. I would be ready, it seems to me, to make all sorts of sacrifices – even to shed all my blood – to have him re-enter into the paths of salvation. And so Your Excellency may, so to say, cut and slice as it will please you just so long as success is obtained. It seems to me that simple propositions of arrangement and conciliation are very dangerous.

* * * *

1024 – TO THE COMMUNITY OF
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, January 23, 1838

To my dear children of Courtefontaine: Father Meyer, Superior; Father Fridblatt, Father Soussol; Brothers Meyer, Perchet, Œvrard, Vermot, Boillon, Pesseux, Clerc, Griset, Grépinet, Escoffier, Grenot, Saras, Blanc, Nayner, Dagneaux, Lacaille, Echenaux, Prieur, Bunel, Valet, Salomon, Oudot, Bouly, Noir, Cretin, Lambert, Berthod, Jungca, Athias, Grillot, Verrier, Ravoir, Delatour, Seiler, Girardet, Gazillot; Mlle Coudre, M. Carret and his wife,[1] Mlle Grillot and the porter, Joseph Bernhard.

The listing of your names, my dear children, to the number of forty-three, although of different classes and functions, proves to me that you all have the same sentiments in my regard, and surely toward one another, Courtefontaine is but one family, all the members of which tend toward the same end.

You all desire, my dear children, a good year and a long life. I shall still drag along with submission—and even willingly—my exile upon earth, if I can still be useful to you, because I am still very devoted to you.

I shall tell you, as if it were a little secret, that every day I think of you and I work for you. My more particular work at this time is for the novitiate. It is the direction of the novices and the Method of primary teaching.[2] Preserve, my dear children, the union of charity among yourselves. Rather make all kinds of sacrifices than alter it in any way.

Believe in my sincere attachment to you all and receive, all together, my fatherly blessing.

Among the religious, novices, or postulants, to whom the preceding letter is addressed, several have already been cited in this collection of letters. Here are some notes on other members mentioned above who died in the Society and in particular Bro. Girardet, one of the greatest figures in the second generation of the Society.

Bro. Joseph Bernhard (1811-1870), from Hindisheim (Alsace) fulfilled with devotedness the charges of janitor, baker, and mason principally in Courtefontaine and in Merles. He was remarkable mainly for his strength of character, his spirit of faith, and his constancy in the practice of virtue.

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[1] M. Gervais, Carret 1776-1852, and Mme Louise Carret, his wife, died childless and left their property to the establishment of Courtefontaine, of which during their life, they had been next to Mlle Coudre, the greatest benefactors. As a token of gratitude, Father Chaminade had affiliated them to the Society of Mary.

[2] See the *Spirit of Our Foundation II,* 862 and *III*, 255.

Bro. Théophile Bunel (1813-1893) from Moncoutant, in the Vendéen region, had been in business in the world, when, in 1837, at 24 years of age, he entered the novitiate in Courtefontaine. Gifted with a solid religious foundation, of polite and agreeable manners, of great activity and equal competence, he was the founder of the school of St. Nicholas de la Grave, then director of the boarding school in Moissac—works which he directed during long years and brought to the highest degree of prosperity. He passed his last years as économe of the Stanislas Institute in Cannes and in the Collège of St. Francis de Sales in Thonon.

Bro. François Escoffier (1821-1844) from Besançon, entered Courtefontaine in 1838 and died shortly after of a lung malady, probably consumption.

Bro. François Griset (1814-1843) from d'Esprel (Haute Saône) entered Courtefontaine in 1837 and fulfilled the duties of carpenter. He was notable as a subject of a very mild character, with favorable dispositions for virtue.

Bro. Charles Jungca (1818-1838) from Tarbes (Hautes Pyrénées) came to make his novitiate in Courtefontaine in 1836, the Bordeaux novitiate having ceased to exist after the July Revolution. After his profession, he went back to the South, to Bordeaux and there died in the arms of Father Chaminade, hardly 20 years of age.

Bro. François Gazillot (1816-1842) from Rang (Doubs) and former pupil of the normal school in Courtefontaine, was there received as a novice by Father Chaminade in 1835. After his profession, until his death, he fulfilled the functions of teacher in the communal school, giving the example of the highest virtues. "He continues to edify the community," wrote Father Meyer of him, some months later. "He has lung trouble, but has not ceased to work. He teaches his little class. He expects to die this winter and is very happy over the fact. He is leaving the world, but ripe for heaven." (August 27, 1838)

Bro. François Girardet (1818-1892), from Grand Chalème (Jura), had gone to Courtefontaine in 1834 to finish his studies there. Under the direction of Father Leo Meyer, he answered the call of God. Without going back to his family – to which he would never again return – he was there received as a novice by Father Chaminade himself on October 21, 1835. After his profession, the young religious remained in Courtefontaine, attached to the work of the postulate "astonishing everyone by his zeal, his regularity, his piety, and his honest simplicity," according to the expressions of Father Meyer himself.

In 1840, Bro. Girardet, hardly 22 years old, was named director of St. Dié, where his aptitudes in the government of men were clearly manifested.

In 1844, he was called to Ebersmunster to take on the charge of master of novices and in 1853, he took on the general direction of the establishment, which he kept until 1869. During these 25 years, he was the soul, not only of the house of formation, but of the entire Province of Alsace, to which he gave a vigorous character. At this time, he published a collection of meditations under the title of *The Art of Becoming Better*, another collection of *Meditations for the Month of Mary* and, in collaboration with Father Chevaux, *Particular Examens Destined Especially for the Novices and Young Religious of the Society of Mary*.

In 1865, Bro. Girardet played the role of pacifier in the difficulties of the Society, and given the confidence of the General Chapter he was chosen to go to Rome with Father Lalanne to ask for the withdrawal of the Animadversion which modified the character of the Society. In 1869, he was called to the General Administration of the Society as Secretary General, functions to which, from 1878 to 1886, he joined those of Assistant to the Head of Instruction. There, during another quarter of a century, he would exercise his action in a larger sphere and give his full measure.

From the physical point of view, Bro. Girardet was of medium size, well built, although quite bent. On his shoulders rested a strong head with neglected hair, firm features, good clear eyes, though ordinarily lowered and sheltered by thick eyebrows. Under this exterior was hidden a soul of incomparable uprightness and energy. Religious to a fault, enemy to all forms of compromise, working without respite, mortifying himself without pity, gifted with a clear and practical intelligence, he was a precious help to the General Council of the Administration.

Thanks to an excellent memory, he forgot nothing of the needs that a most extensive correspondence had revealed to the Superiors. He carefully followed each of the affairs, recalled those that had been completed, came back upon those that seemed forgotten, and summarized exactly all that had been done or regulated. He thought in advance of what had to be prepared and did not fail to recall it at the opportune moment, willingly repeating this saying: To govern is to foresee. In Council, he defended his opinion or point of view with a force in which the energy of his convictions was manifest. If, at times, the discussion grew warm, he remained calm and seemed to say like the Greek general: Strike but listen! His mind, moreover, was as broad as it was upright and he never found it difficult to yield to the opinions of others.

When there was question of the dismissal of a Brother, though so exacting in regard to regularity and the true religious spirit, he pleaded attenuating circumstances and almost always leaned to the side of mercy, seeking reasons to hope for amendment. Sometimes, wanting neither to condemn nor to show himself opposed to the advice of the members of the Administration, he asked that he be dispensed from giving his vote. Surely a touching example of what tenderness faith knows how to put in the most manly souls!

Bro. Girardet was always busy, and to his work as Secretary of the Society, he joined that of the composition or revision of numerous classics of the Society, and often enough a part of the night was devoted to the completion of work started during the day. Moreover, he regularly took his recreations as prescribed by the Rule, joining in the games, the conversations, and the gaiety of his Brothers, but he slipped away at the first sound of the bell, made a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and at the second sound, he was in his room, from which he came only to go to the evening exercises with the community because “free times” were unknown to him.

His piety was that of a saint. Before and after all the exercises, and every time for one reason or another he passed the chapel, he entered to pay a visit to our Eucharistic Lord. In his goings or comings he meditated or prayed, ordinarily in a low tone of voice, or he

hummed the melody of some favorite hymn if he believed he was not being heard. He was rarely preceded in the chapel for the spiritual exercises. If he was suffering or infirm, he used to leave his room a sufficiently long time in advance to be among the first before the Blessed Sacrament. On Sunday morning when he went to confession, he could be heard repeating softly with his big voice and penetrating tone, carefully articulating each syllable: *Miserere mei, Deus!* This was the word he had on his lips every time he wanted to humiliate himself still more before God, to ask pardon for others or to prevent some danger to the Society. Sometimes he passed the entire meditation time in ceaselessly repeating with compunction: O Lord, have pity upon me! *Parce Domine!*

When he had ended his career, the Superior General did not fear to praise him in these words: "Those who have lived many and long years with Bro. Girardet, those who have had the occasion to observe him at close range, and, so to say, in all the actions of the day, those realize what the Society is losing in this incomparable servant. It is with a definite purpose and with reflection that I am using this expression. I know very well, that according to the words of the Imitation*, in the present life all perfection, all virtue undergoes the admixture of some imperfection, but I believe I have never met a religious who has brought together in the same degree, the qualities and Christian virtues which form, according to the Constitutions, the real child of the Society of Mary: clear and observing mind, right judgment, happy memory, energetic will, firm and independent character in the face of duty, prodigious activity, modest humility, unfailing agnegation in all things, patience without complaint, simple and filial docility, evangelical poverty, constant and exemplary regularity. All this, like myself, you have observed and admired, all of you who have known this model of the Brothers of Mary." (Circular of February 3, 1892)*

On Bro. Girardet, see *Messenger of the Society of Mary II*, pages 121, 311, 340, 365.

* * * *

A project for a house of education for the citizens of Besançon had been conceived by a venerable priest of this city, Father Denizot, pastor of the parish of Saint Maurice. Father Chaminade welcomed the request made to him for this purpose, and this was the point of departure for one of the most important works of the Society.

1025 – TO FATHER DENIZOT, PASTOR OF
SAINT MAURICE, BESANÇON[1]
Bordeaux, January 28, 1838

Reverend and dear Father:

I bless the Lord for the good intentions with which he is inspiring you. I am not astonished that the Archbishop of Besançon, whilst approving them, has urged you to work so as to have them realized.

Brother Troffer, who gave your letter to me at his arrival, told me of the real and solid good that an establishment of primary schools in Besançon would do for the children belonging to rich and well-to-do families. I shall be glad to make a careful choice of teachers who are to run this school.

The success of the establishment depends in great measure on its location. Brother Troffer told me that he had advised you to abandon the idea of an old presbytery on which you had fixed your eyes, and that you would find a fine place in a former abbey or priory which would be up for sale. He does not think you would have any serious difficulty in buying it. He believes that some of the faithful would willingly join their means to yours, be it for the acquisition of this object or for the repairs it would need. Several purses will be opened more easily when it will be learned that His Excellency is showing special interest in it because of the good that such an establishment will be able to procure for his archepiscopal city. As regards the repairs to be made, Brother Troffer could arrange for them with you at his return from Bordeaux. He has definite ideas about all that such an establishment requires![2]

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[1] Father Charles François Denizot, 1799-1882, from Pouilley les Vignes (Doubs) was brought up by his uncle, Father Denizot, Archpriest of the Cathedral of Besançon, exercised the holy ministry as assistant pastor in 1823, then as pastor 1830, in the Church of St. Maurice and was named titular Canon of the Cathedral in 1848, a post which he occupied until his death. Of a serious and reserved exterior, of a firm and decided character of a simple and austere life, when he was relieved of the care of his parish where he had always shown himself to be a model pastor, he divided his time between prayer and study. It is to him that the Cathedral Chapter in great part owes its remarkable library, which he lovingly directed and enriched throughout the course of his long career.

After having contributed with an admirable zeal to the foundation of the Institute Ste. Marie of Besançon, Father Denizot continued to show it the most sincere attachment. “He holds to this establishment as to his very life,” wrote Bro. Clouzet later on (March 12, 1840). Thus the Society must consider him as one of its most distinguished benefactors.

[2] The Institute Ste. Marie of Besançon was opened on the Feast of All Saints of the same year 1838 in the modest suite of apartments between the ground floor and the first floor of the Hôtel Place Dauphine – today État Major Square – with Bro. Chevassu as director. Two years later, 1840, under the direction of Father Fidon, it was transferred to a building bought by the Society in the upper part of the city, St. Jean Square – today, Caston Square – which, little by little, acquired more property and new buildings.

After Fr. Fidon, the Institute Ste. Marie, had as directors Frs. Simler, Reinbold, Prudham, Bosch, Janet, and Rousseau, and was in the course of the nineteenth century one of the most important educational houses of the Society. It was there that from 1860 on, the secondary Scholasticate of the

I am with respectful devotedness, Reverend Father, your very humble, etc.

* * * *

1026 – TO THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 31, 1838

To my dear children of Saint Remy, Brother Clouzet (Superior), Brothers Gaussens, David, Langeay, Hunolt, Bousquet, and to all the religious workers and to all the novices:

Your letter of the first of the year, my dear children, filled me with consolation in showing me all of you united in attachment to your religious duties and in your submission to your old father, according to God. You have lost nothing because of my tardy answer. Your letter, almost constantly before my eyes, recalled you to my mind and ever increased the affection with which I raised my heart to God for you, asking him for the graces you need, so as to walk constantly in the straight and narrow path into which you have had the happiness to enter, this evangelical path which alone leads to life, while all others, even those which seem straight to human reason, lead only to our loss.

May the Lord, my dear children, deign to shower upon you His most abundant blessings, not only for this year which has just begun, but for all those which will follow it!

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To Father Meyer, Father Chaminade announces a postulant, who is traveling on foot from Bordeaux to Courtefontaine. He sends new encouragement in his financial distress.

1027 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 1, 1838

I am sending you, my dear son, a young postulant who seems to have all chances of good success. His name is Déjean. He left Bordeaux on foot with another religious who was to accompany him as far as Saint Vit.[1] He left here with forty-two francs which he procured with some difficulty. It seems he had more courage than strength. At some twelve leagues from Bordeaux, his companion was obliged to pay the coach fares as far as Limoges. I was not able to send any money supplement to Limoges, since I received the request for it only on the day on which it should have arrived. I have reason to believe that he will have

Society was established. With the help of the diocese, the work survived the persecution of 1903 and continued to give a good education to an ever-increasing number of boys and young men.

[1] A place in the neighborhood of Courtefontaine. The religious of whom there is question was Bro. Viguier. He is spoken of in the next letter.

resumed courage, and that he will have been able to continue the journey with his companion. He left a small package of clothes and linen in Moissac. I am going to write to Brother Mazières to put it on the ordinary merchandise coach. Disposed as he is, he usually wears all he has. However, he has good qualities and he will be able to be employed in a short time, if there is some need for money.

Brother Olive writes to me that he has sent you his nephew. I promised him to recommend him to you and that is what I am doing now, provided that after the usual tests, you should find in him all the dispositions needed to become a good subject. You have difficulties in maintaining a large novitiate, besides which quite a number pay nothing or next to nothing. Nevertheless, my dear son, 1. No subjects having sufficient good will and the ability to become a good and capable subject must be refused; 2. Your want must not be felt by privations harmful to health, to good order, or to dignified maintenance; 3. The boarders must not be aware of the use of the tuition you draw from the pupils; 4. Do not express any anxiety regarding your lack of supplies to those around you, but on the contrary, always give evidence of the confidence which you are to have in Providence and, effectively, God will not abandon you; 5. Nevertheless, do not tempt this divine Providence; sometimes see in its presence the inspirations it will give you;
6. I am taking measures to see to it that the novitiates find resources in the Society, but these measures cannot be effective so soon. We must know how to be patient.

I am stopping here. I am sending you answers to all the letters that have come to me from Courtefontaine some time ago. You will do well not to take Father Saussol as ordinary confessor, but only to have yourself reconciled when you would not easily have the "*copia confessoris*" (abundance of confessors). Father Saussol is not the man to undertake the direction of a pastor, of a master of novices, etc.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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1028 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 3, 1838

. . . Following the directions contained in your letter of last January 7, I sent someone, my dear son, to your brother,[1] who immediately gave me one hundred francs without any difficulty; and some days later, I sent him a receipt for them in your name.

I wanted to secure a place on the stagecoach for Brother Viguier, but after I had told him so, he asked me to permit him to leave on foot, and he did it with a sort of insistence because of the cold weather we were having. I granted him several days to finish some

[1] A banker in Bordeaux.

mending jobs he had begun. During this interval, I gave him a traveling companion who also wanted to go to the novitiate in Courtefontaine on foot, having as all his resources only forty-two francs. I gave Brother Viguier fifty francs to be used only as traveling expenses. Both left on the morning of January 22. Viguier was entirely ignorant of the destination we wanted to give him. He received the first notification of it with his usual and ordinary tranquility. This young man is not very quick-witted; nevertheless, his simplicity is not stupidity. His good character and virtue make him a porter precious to any establishment.

Your good will, my dear son, fills me with consolation. In no way do I doubt the prosperity of the third class or branch of the Society. If you go to the Lord with candor, the practice of mortification, well understood, will start the work perfectly, continue it, perfect it, and lead it to the happiest conclusion. It must have two essential conditions: it must be continual and universal . . .

The arrangements made with Brother Bousquet seem to me very fair and very suitable. The day after the arrival of your letter, Father Caillet was given stipends for three hundred Masses to be said for prescribed intentions by himself or anyone he might designate. He accepted them and made his arrangements accordingly. I am very glad that of the three thousand francs of which Brother Auguste is the guarantor, there are two thousand francs for the community of workers. This augurs well for the future.

The little establishment of the orphanage of Besançon is getting along fairly well, judging from what Father Meyer writes to me following a serious visit he made there recently. It is the archbishop of Besançon in person who wanted to replace Father Cart[2] as local superior.

I am writing in detail to Brother David. I am leaving the letter unsealed, so that you as well as Father Chevaux know the gist of my answer. Seal it, if you think it better to do so.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces, with the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

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In the following letter, as in the one preceding, and already in the one of January 13 to Father Meyer, it will be noted with what force Father Chaminade insists on the practice of an entire abnegation of self.

1029 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 3, 1838

[2] Vicar General of the diocese who had just been elevated to the bishopric of Nîmes.

I had the intention, my dear son, of permitting you to receive Holy Communion every Saturday according to the intentions you propose to yourself unless your confessor thinks it his duty to direct you otherwise.

You are applying yourself to mortification and you do well, but it has to be well understood. Mortification must consist essentially in not following any of the inclinations of corrupt nature. If some of these inclinations may be in the order of Providence, however, you do not follow them because they are natural, but because God orders it. Such are, for example, the inclinations to eat, to drink, to sleep, etc. These you mortify by means of privations of whatever might be excessive or ill-regulated in their regard; and, otherwise you sanctify them by means of the good sentiments and ideas with which you follow them. Well, my dear son, let us always have courage and a great confidence in the Blessed Virgin! She is really your good Mother. Be really her son, in mind and heart!

Receive my tender embraces!

* * * *

We are not well informed about the assiduous cares that Father Chaminade was bestowing on his new foundation in Auch. We see something of this concern in the following letter addressed to the Superioress of Agen.

1030 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, February 5, 1838

Your letter, my dear child, of the third of the current month affords me the occasion of answering that of last January 27.

In the first place, you complain, and somewhat bitterly, that I decide even serious matters without consulting you. You have a letter handed over to me from Father Chevallier regarding the change of habit of the Sisters in Auch, yet you in no way express your ideas about this request of his. Mother Léocardie[1] had written to you at some length on the same subject. She had a copy of what she said to you about it handed over to me. I had reason to believe that, not giving me your opinion, you would abide by what I would say in the matter.

This answer should have been sent to you by way of communication in the ordinary course of events, especially if there seemed to be some difficulty, as for example, if it derogated from the spirit of the Constitutions. This is the second point on which your bitter observations especially bear and which is the subject of your anxieties. Anyhow, I am pleased that, in the conviction that if my answer attacked the spirit of the Constitutions, you would strongly give expression to your anxiety.

[1] Superioress of the Third Order in Auch.

If your memory is good and reliable, my dear child, you will recall, and furthermore you can reread it, that the Constitutions put only two classes among the Daughters of Mary—the Mothers and the Sister Companions—and that all had the same habit. A short time after, the Mothers were distinguished by the long white mantle. Things thus arranged, the Sister Companions had to give up the religious habit when they had orders to go out, and they resumed it on their return to the house. You can also recall the serious inconveniences and interior worries that these continual changes of habit were causing. To avoid all these disagreeable things, it was arranged with Mother de Trenquelléon that the Sister Companions of service would be given a habit somewhat resembling the religious habit, but at the same time, in no way displeasing the persons seeing them on the streets. The Sister Companions who would not be destined for service outside of the house, but who might have acquaintances or the means of acquiring some, would form an intermediary order or class called Assistants. This intermediary class was to make the absolute vow of enclosure and wear the entire habit of the Institute. Later, there was even thought of giving the white mantle to some of the older ones, but short or at least not trailing. We are today at a time in which the religious habit is in no way repulsive on the streets, which was not the case at the time of the institution of the Daughters of Mary. When the foundation took place in Auch, it seemed to me suitable that some kind of semireligious habit be taken, but I had no intention at all that it should always be so. In time, I permitted a modification from which I noticed that some immediately profited. My dear child, I am only placing before you the facts such as they occurred without reasoning them out here, and without drawing from them any deductions . . .

It is certain that the novitiate needs another mistress or assistant mistress of novices. When Sister Anne of Jesus was designated to fill this post, I answered that I really believed the need to exist, and I wrote to you about it, even as regards Sister Anne of Jesus, if she were free. She is sorely needed in Arbois. Sister Dorothée[1] needs a helper 1. because every now and then she has infirmities that do not permit her to be with the novices at all times; 2. because she is not as well educated as was at first thought; 3. because most of the time Mother Léocardie is unable to replace her in the two cases just mentioned. I don't think that Mother Léocardie can be accused of not doing all she can to meet the need in question. I do not see, my dear child, that you should have any worries in the matter. Is it not a real good that this novitiate should be prospering and increasing? We should then in no way be alarmed; rather, on the contrary, we should rejoice in the need we have of a third helper. You must have understood that the Institute of Agen will furnish superioresses and mistresses to Auch only as long as this branch of the Institute will not find subjects in its own bosom capable of fulfilling the various functions.

If my shortened answer, my dear child, does not put an end to all your worries, you may write to Father Chevallier to tell him, even as far as I am concerned, to stop the implementation of anything that is in my letter. If you don't care to do so, I shall do it myself

[1] The mistress of novices in charge.

once you have told me so; and in the meantime, we shall be better able to come to some agreement as much as to what concerns the religious habit of the Institute of Auch as to the need of furnishing the subjects it needs. You readily understand that on this latest point, you are obliged to send subjects only in proportion as you have available ones. In cases of impossibility, nothing is binding. Here, moral impossibility is understood and not a rigorous one at that.

Without having reread your letters, I think I have answered all you wanted to ask about.

Receive, my dear child, the usual expression of my inviolable devotedness.

* * * *

In Layrac, Father Lalanne turns this way and that without finding means of extricating himself from the deadlock into which he has placed himself. On February 16, he wrote to Father Chaminade: "I am always disposed to abandon all to Father Chaminade if he is willing to take over. Either I shall retire or I shall take charge in his name, as long as he shall desire, with an accountant of his choice, or I shall put myself anew under his obedience. These last words do not mean that I no longer consider myself a member of the Society." And here, Father Chaminade, upon this simple manifestation of good will, opens his arms and stretches them out to him!

1031 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, February 20, 1838

My dear son, I am going to delay, at least temporarily, all the actions that were to be directed against you, as a result of the proposition you make to me. You proposed "to abandon all to me, if I want to take charge of everything." My dear son, I can answer your proposition only after you will have given me, or have someone give me, a very clear outline of your present situation. Have you perhaps made commitments to diverse persons, professors, or others? And with which ones? With debtors and creditors very exact accounts would be necessary.

In the supposition of an acceptance, it is very clear that you would have to direct the establishment at least for some time. If the acceptance is possible, I shall submit it to the representation of the Society; this will be easy for me to do.

Let us proceed, my dear son, in all frankness and simplicity before God. There is no sacrifice possible that I am not disposed to make for the blessing of peace and union and for the salvation of your soul.

Please accept, my dear son, etc.

* * * *

To Father Chevaux, Father Chaminade gives counsel for the official reception of the archbishop for Besançon. He suggests to him the answers to be given to the prelate in case the latter would wish to intervene in the affairs pending and which concern the destiny of Saint Remy.[1] He finally traces out for him the line of conduct to be followed to assure the morality of the pupils of the boarding school.

1032 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 7, 1838

I am answering, my dear son, your letter of last February 16. I know that there is a little difference between the ceremonial of the visit of an archbishop in the diocese of Besançon and in that of Bordeaux. This ceremonial, with the prayers to be said for the archbishop, is indicated in the Ritual, at least it has always been in that of Bordeaux. Hence, you must get yourself a Ritual if you don't have any as yet. If it were not in the Ritual, there is probably no pastor who would not know what is usually done on such an occasion. There is no doubt that everywhere the prelate must be received processionally at the main entrance of the establishment; and it is at the entrance that you or Father Fontaine representing you, say a few words of welcome, with simplicity and dignity.

You have invited the archbishop, my dear son, to come and reside in Saint Remy and to administer Confirmation. All is well, all is apparently suitable. But, Father Meyer announces to me the visit of the archbishop to Saint Remy in quite a different manner. "I have learned these days," he says to me, "that the archbishop of Besançon was to come to Saint Remy next month – it is Father Lamotte who writes it to me—and Father Bardenet is to be with him to treat of big affairs: I presume there is question of a novitiate."

Father Meyer had had a long conference with the Archbishop on the necessity of closing the secondary school of Saint Remy and of transferring there the novitiate which in Courtefontaine is insufficient to receive the novices who present themselves. I blamed Father Meyer for having such interviews with His Excellency, telling him that he seemed to want to force me in this way to follow his ideas and plans, as he had already done once before with the arrangements in Marast, etc.

It is doubtless because of this remonstrance, that in announcing the news of the visit to Saint Remy of the archbishop and Father Bardenet, Father Meyer bitterly complains to the Administration of the Society about the facts: that for so many long years there has been no novitiate in the Society; that the secondary boarding school of Saint Remy is near complete collapse and that it is practically impossible to restore it in spite of all the efforts that might be made; that the Society is not making the best use of the superb location of the château of Saint Remy for a novitiate.

[1] See Letters 1006 and 1022.

I shall answer Father Meyer, 1. that what torments him ought to make him rejoice. It is a good sign when the buildings reserved to a special work become too small; 2. that Saint Remy is not the only place where novices can be brought together. The archbishop of Bordeaux ardently desires the reestablishment of the novitiate in his capital city; 3. that the locality of the novitiate of Courtefontaine can easily be made larger, etc. However, you have little need of knowing what goes on between Father Meyer and myself.

I must tell you what will have to be done if the archbishop and Father Bardenet really want "to treat of big affairs," and, as a consequence, of the suppression of the secondary boarding school and of the novitiate. By the expression of "novitiate," Father Meyer means, at least, the double novitiate of the teaching Brothers and the ecclesiastics, and he has never seemed to be impaired in finding novice masters and other persons to help in the direction of the novices . . . What I shall say for His Excellency will also be said for Father Bardenet in the same case.

I suppose 1. that His Excellency says to you: "Your boarding school has greatly diminished. What then do you propose to do? It would be best to suppress it altogether." You will answer: "The boarding school, in fact, has few pupils in comparison to what it had under Father Lalanne, but this is not surprising, for Father Lalanne had equipped a boarding school in style. Provided that there was nothing striking against morals and that an individual submitted to some exterior exercises of religion, he was received. What a miserable boarding school was left to us to direct! How many young men especially of well-to-do families are corrupted in less than no time! As regards the suppression of the boarding school, our first Superior will do what he thinks best. We shall keep him exactly informed about everything, but it is not up to us to tell him: Do this or don't do that. We know that he had some desire to do it already last years at the beginning of the vacation.

2. Your Excellency: "All your efforts for ever building it up again will be useless." Answer: We desire to equip a boarding school properly, with a number of pupils suitable to the locality, but we do not desire to bring it back to what it was. We want to do a real good and not an apparent one. In the time left to us to work, we hope that the Christian families, at least those of the Province, once they are convinced of our intentions and know of our means and methods will hasten to confide their children to us.

"The château would be a fine place for a novitiate and especially for a large novitiate." But, 1. The appointments of a château would hardly be likely to inspire novices with the spirit that is to animate them; 2. It is not sufficient to have a dwelling, and a vast one, for novices, but teachers are needed to direct them and to teach them; 3. We know that propositions are being made to erect[1] a novitiate similar to the one in Courtefontaine; 4. The novitiate in Courtefontaine is likely to be made larger and the plan agreed upon with Father Chaminade has been carried out, on only a very small scale. Would it be proper for us to force our Superior to hold to the plans he has formed? It is up to us to inform him of

[1] In Bordeaux.

everything, but not to oblige him to have it done in this way or that. Does he not already experience enough opposition on all sides without having to experience still more on the part of Heads whom he knows to be only too willing to be faithful to their sacred engagements?

3. Your Excellency: “You do not understand us. Bring together all the members of the Council and we shall discuss this great affair. Surely they will be of my opinion.” Answer: By your orders, Your Excellency, the Council is going to be called together, but I doubt very much that any one of its members intends to make any determination contrary to the views that our Superior General might have. Your Excellency can give precise orders and I doubt not that our Superior will permit us to carry them out. However, it would seem better to me not to bring us together, because it would seem as if we had provoked them.

To whomever of you the archbishop or Father Bardenet speaks, be it collectively or separately you can all use about the same language, except if Father Bardenet alone proposed to hold a Council meeting. He would then be told that this would be possible only with superior orders, those, for example, from His Excellency, but then what would be answered, etc.; he could write to me and tell me all that he might want. It is to be presumed, my dear son, that the archbishop and Father Bardenet will retire from Saint Remy, edified by your discretion and docility in listening to the one whom God has given you as a leader, however bad and incapable he may otherwise be. You will perhaps tell me that the questions which you and Father Fontaine ask me are evaded and remain unanswered. In the first place, on the cessation of the secondary boarding school and the transfer of the novitiate of Courtefontaine, we cannot yet decide upon anything. It is really annoying that rumors have been spread on the outside.

It seems, my dear son, that the corruption of a certain number of the older pupils in your boarding school is twofold. There is a corruption of mind and heart and from there, the double blindness, the insensibility to remonstances, even mockeries and jeers. I can see no other remedy than to receive at first only children of ten or eleven years and even then, after examination. However, this project must not yet be spoken about. I would explain myself in greater detail if there were reason for it.

In the two cases that you propose to me, and for which you ask me what a confessor is to do, I answer: 1. that the confessor is to say or do nothing that might bring suspicion upon his penitent; 2. in the Council, where all exterior faults of this kind, such as bed talk, obscene gestures or words, signs of impiety, are brought out in the open, etc., in this Council, I say, the confessor[1] is to express himself as regards the dismissal. The other members of the Council are to side with him without further deliberation. I suppose that the fault in question is definitely certain. Nevertheless, as regards the dismissal of the

[1] By his title as doctor or consultant, giving his opinion on the question of right, after the exposition of the fact submitted to the Council, among the other members who are mostly laymen. According to the present discipline, the confessor should rather refrain from giving an opinion.

pupil, all the measures recommended by prudence and honesty must be taken. You are very late in giving me a first indication of the character and virtue of Brother Guillegoz. Better late than never. For the time being, there is nothing unusual to be done.

Father Fontaine would have done well to call the student of philosophy and to have had him explain what he found so absurd in the proposition drawn from the bishop of Lucerne of which he had given the development. The thing is serious, if the cause on the part of the philosophy student is not a matter of plain ignorance or weakness of mind.

As to yourself, my dear son, do with simplicity what you know and what you can—and don't worry. We are in a vale of tears in more ways than one.

If there happens to be anything too strong in the letter I wrote to Brother David – I don't believe there is—have him let me know about it by the citation of the very text of my letter, for I have not kept a copy of it. If he has reason to fear the violence of his Brothers, let him say nothing, let him not call for any division. He is to express himself only at the time when the division should be made, asked for, and insisted upon by his Brothers.

My dear son, take all the alleviations that your weak health requires. If it is true that the one who works in a spirit of faith, prays, then with all the more reason, the one who suffers.

You will communicate this letter, my dear son, to all the members of the Council and more particularly to Father Fontaine. I am going to write him a few words.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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The correspondence with Layrac continues and becomes more and more pressing, as can be seen from the following letters.

1033 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, March 7, 1838

By my letter of last February 20, my dear son, I told you I could not answer your proposition before you had given me an account of your affairs and a balance of debits and credits. This account was to contain especially the commitments you have contracted with diverse persons, professors, or others.

By your letter of the second of the current month, you answer me: "It is altogether natural, as you cannot act without knowing well what you are doing. Therefore, I cannot refuse you these facts; nevertheless, such is our respective positions, that I cannot furnish them to you in the way you expect."

See, in good faith, my dear son, if by your intermediate and systematic way of making your present situation known to me, I can really know what I am doing and what I can do in consequence. You tell me: “Give your confidence to a person who would also have mine, who would take notice of my affairs and would give you his opinion as to acceptance or repudiation with the promise of an inviolable secret in the case of a non-settlement.”

I answer, 1. that this systematic way does not attain the end we are proposing to ourselves and that you yourself judge necessary.

I answer, 2. that the very simple propositions that I have made to you do not have the inconveniences that you pretend to be obliged to avoid.

1. What end are we proposing to ourselves, that I can accept or repudiate according to the conditions that you would furnish? How could a third party judge if it is possible for me to accept or refuse debts however exact your accounts might be? To form a prudent judgement, this third party would also have to know, in a sufficiently developed manner, the financial situation of the Society in all of its establishments. The story of all this would be quite long and difficult to be correctly understood and retained, and even this would not be the greatest drawback. How can one find a third party who could correctly judge of the personnel, and of the personnel in the very delicate order of the religious state?

2. The drawbacks that you fear are, that in case of a nonacceptance on my part, you would find yourself to have furnished documents which, in the debates of a lawsuit, would acquire even without any desire on my part, a publicity which would be greatly prejudicial to all of your interests. Wouldn’t this drawback be easily removed by the promise of using no new document, not even any new information, in a court case that would follow? I am saying, my dear son, new documents and even new information, because you know I have many documents and I need them all, either for the attack or for the defense. However, in such a supposition, which will surely never be realized, in which one of your new documents would be useful to me should it be presented to me, the prospect would be there to render it null and void.

Every arrangement between us, my dear son, has been broken in the hands of the archbishop of Bordeaux, because, on the one hand, you are always protesting your attachment and devotedness to the Society of Mary and, on the other, you propose means of reunion that are either impractical or unacceptable. Since I desire our reunion very sincerely, not only for the blessing of peace, but above all for your salvation because you are walking in very bad ways—I immediately took into consideration the simple and precise propositions that you made to me in your letter of February 16. I was far from suspecting that you would find the means of eluding the new advances that you had made and which seemed to me to suppose a real conversion on your part without which there is no possible means of conciliation.

All that you tell me, my dear son, of Brother Etignard pleases me much. I have always been sincerely attached to him. I often recall to him this beautiful maxim from the Book of Wisdom: "*Est via quae videtur homini bona, cujus extrema ducunt ad perditionem.*" (There is a way which seems good to man, but the end of which leads to perdition. Proverbs 14:12).

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my sincere and inviolable attachment.

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1034 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, March 9, 1838

My dear son, I wrote to you the day before yesterday. It was an answer to your letter of the second of the current month.

Apparently you had written to Brother Clouzet a letter similar to the one you wrote to me on last February 16. You, no doubt, did not believe that it was advisable to send him my answer of the twentieth. If you had transmitted it to him, you would have spared him the time and trouble of writing the enclosed letter that I received today.

A few days after the reception of your letter of the sixteenth, I received a copy of the letter you had written on February 1 to Father Rothéa, to be communicated to his brother Louis. It is written in an entirely different style. You tell him that in the Society you have preached religious obedience—but never superstitious obedience—and it surely seems that you take it for granted that your conduct preaches religious obedience, as much as your words have been able to do it. You must be very much persuaded of this, since, comparing yourself to our Lord, you apply to yourself what the prophet had predicted of Him: "*Lapidem quem reprobaverunt aedificantes, hic factus est in caput anguli*." (The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.)

In spite of the apparent contrast in the disclosure of your sentiments to diverse persons, I prefer to believe of them what your letter of February 16 says, just as what Brother Clouzet believed: so little time is needed for grace to convert a heart which still has uprightness! Brother Clouzet is himself a proof of the fact, for he is an entirely new man since the last retreat.

My dear son, by your answer to my letter of the seventh of the current month, I shall understand to what I shall have to hold fast. In the spiritual and supernatural order no evil is incurable. Our Lord Jesus Christ, in giving us his precious Blood, has left us a remedy which is universal and always efficacious.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable attachment.

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1035 – TO FATHER MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, March 13, 1838

I thank you, my dear son, for making me look forward to my death which no longer can be very much delayed. Saint Paul was incomparably more necessary to the infant Church than I can ever be to the Society of Mary, and nevertheless he looked upon death as a gain. The good God has need of no one for the performance of his works when these are according to his divine Heart. This is not saying that we must not give to them our whole heart and all our strength, and that every day of our life, but without any anxiety—you on your side and I on mine. Let us not fear for the future, but let us nevertheless take the precautions for the future that God will deign to suggest to us. Let us always take them by common consent. Otherwise we would be running a risk; instead of giving this future a grand existence, we would be preparing for its principles of
death . . .

* * * *

Father Chaminade acquaints Brother Clouzet with the situation of Father Lalanne.

1036 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 13, 1838

Your letter of the second of the current month, my dear son, would have filled me with the sweetest consolation if I had not received an answer to the letter I wrote to Father Lalanne which was itself an answer to the letter of which he spoke to you. I had thought as you did. This first letter seemed to announce a return and, as it were, a conversion, and although I had many motives to doubt it, I feigned or I acted as if I did not doubt . . . No kind of conciliation is possible, even with the greatest sacrifices, if there is no conversion on his part, that is to say, repentance before God for the scandals he is giving and for the uninterrupted series of sacrileges he is committing. In his case, illusion must be or must have been of great depth to dare to justify himself to himself and to justify, in the eyes of others, his numerous errors and crying acts of injustice . . .

I am not surprised that Brother Viguier arrived very tired as the weather was horrible. His traveling companion, whom he left in Angoulême and already very tired, happily arrived in Courtefontaine, and it seems that he arrived there sooner than Brother Viguier did in Saint Remy. He arrived on February 3 and I am not told that he even seemed tired. Give pleasant greetings to Brother Viguier from me as I shall not be writing specially to him.

The confusion experienced by Brother David[1] is a new example of the precaution that must be taken in arranging temporal affairs before pronouncing vows, especially if they are perpetual. There must be a real laying aside not only of present goods, but of all those that one might hope to acquire. I have written to Father Chevaux regarding what is to be done. I shall receive, my dear son, all the details which you will give me regarding your inner self with great interest. We would be the most foolish of men to embrace religious life if we did not constantly work at the fulfillment of all its duties, and one of the principal ones is that of advancing ceaselessly in the abnegation of self and in union with Jesus Christ.

A short time ago, I wrote to Father Chevaux at some length. I think that by this time he must have shown you the letter.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

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The 17th of March had arrived. Father Lalanne, unable to hold out any longer, gave himself up without reserve and wrote to Father Chaminade the following letter, in which reappear the loyal and generous dispositions of his soul.

My venerable and very good Father, I have put off answering you, because I initially saw the better part that I was to take; but I did not immediately have the grace and the strength to commit myself to it.

I have arrived in Agen, where Father Mouran, our mutual friend, had the goodness to hear my confession. It was first necessary to ask pardon of God.

Now I am coming to you, my very good Father. It is better to say, as we read today in the Gospel: *Jam non sum dignus vocari filius tuus* (For I am not worthy to be called your son)—I am kneeling down and I am asking pardon of you.

I am at your command. You will shortly receive a statement of my condition and all the information you need. You will take it or you will not. I do not want that, in regard to or for me, you should compromise the interests of the Society.

As there could be some inconvenience, should the matter at first become public, I have communicated with no one here what I am writing to you today. In all, I shall conform myself to whatever advice you choose to give me.

Humiliated, confounded at the sight of my errors and weaknesses, I hardly know what I shall become . . . for I have deserved all the rigors of the justice of God . . . however, provided I save my soul, the rest counts for little.

[1] There is question of Bro. Stephen David, see Letters 656, 1028, 1032, and not of Bro. David Monier.

This, I believe, will reach you on your nameday. I have not done it on purpose. If I am no longer worthy enough, so that the homage of my respect may be agreeable to you, then permit me to offer you that of my repentance.

* * * *

To this touching letter, and which made reparation for many wrongs, Father Chaminade hastened to reply with the following lines.

1037 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, March 21, 1838

My dear son, since the reception of your letter of the seventeenth of the current month, on the beautiful day of the feast of Saint Joseph, I have not ceased to thank the Lord and his august Mother, our Mediatrix with him. Follow, with prudence, the entire impression of the light of grace; and should you pluck out your right eye, should you cut off your arm or your foot, do not hesitate, for it is better to enter heaven with one eye, one arm and one foot, than to go to hell with all your members. Of necessity, you will have to do violence to yourself to follow out the results of your conversion, but have no fear: *"Qui coepit opus bonum, ipse perficiet."* ("He who has begun a good work in you, will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus.")

I shall help you as much as I can. I note very great difficulties, but I have confidence in the light of God who will direct us in all that we shall have to do! Send me an account of the real state of your situation, materials as well as personnel. I shall reflect upon it before God and then tell you in all simplicity, the decisions we shall have to take. *"Quaerite primum regnum Dei, et justitiam ejus, et omnia adjicientur vobis."* ("Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice and all these things shall be added unto you.")

For the time being, I shall not enter into further details. Pray much, in spite of all the occupations you must have and remain convinced, my dear son, of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

We note that Father Chaminade is wisely not completely surrendering himself, but at least he feels reassured because the return of Father Lalanne is sincere. From this time on both work together in concert to save Layrac, if the place could yet be saved.

* * * *

Nevertheless, in Colmar difficulties were being created for the Society of Mary by the "local Committee." On March 15, addressed to Brother Coustou, director of the school, was the following summons.

Sir:

The local Committee of our city, imperiously requiring that all subjects employed as teachers in the communal schools be regularly certified and named conformably to the law of June 28, 1833, I charge you to inform your Superior that between now and the coming Easter, if he does not present to the competent authority certified teachers to replace the three individuals who are without certificates, and who at this time fulfill the functions of teachers in the Catholic communal school, I shall see myself obliged to close the respective classes—without prejudice to the judiciary action that may be directed against the individuals in question—for exercising illegally the functions of teacher.

Receive etc.

The Mayor, President of the local Committee

MOREL

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Having been informed of the affair, Father Chaminade wrote to Brother Coustou the following letter.

1038 – TO BROTHER COUSTOU, COLMAR

Bordeaux, March 23, 1838

You may answer the mayor of Colmar, my dear son, that I am very far from wanting to go to war, either with the local Committee of Colmar or with the one who is its president. There is far too little time between now and Easter to make the necessary replacements in a suitable manner and to respond to the pressing requirements of the fifteenth of the current month, consequently, I am giving you legal notice to close the three classes of the noncertified teachers at the previously mentioned time of Easter so as to avoid the Mayor's having to close them himself and order judiciary action against the three teachers who are totally innocent.

However, if the local Committee wants to let them exercise their functions until the end of the school year, I shall see to it that they are replaced for the reopening of classes. Besides, from now until that time, there is no examination for which they could present themselves to obtain the certificate in question.

Here you have, my dear son, the answer which I think I can and ought to give. I am not raising objections since, in spite of all I was previously able to write to them and to you, they don't answer otherwise than by orders and threats.

In all this, there is something underhanded which time will, no doubt, enable us to discover. I am very much astonished that the Reverend Pastor, who is a member of the local Committee, to whom I had the honor of writing and whom I had asked to intervene in this sad affair, has not deigned to answer me. I would have written to him again, but I was afraid to compromise you. I prefer to remain patient.

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1039 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 24, 1838

My dear son, I have been very mindful of the nameday greetings which you and all my children of Saint Remy offered me on the thirteenth of the current month. My fatherly devotedness toward you and them is honest and sincere. I admit that that which I have for you, who are one of my oldest children, has more vivacity and depth.

For the time being, I don't see that there is anything to be done about Brother Bousquet.[1] He allowed himself to be dominated by an illusion. The step he has taken could be very harmful to him in the very order of salvation which he seems to be seeking, for we must not do even the good whose thought is suggested to us by our enemy. We must pray much for him . . .

It seems that there is sincerity in Father Lalanne's conversion. I am sending you a copy of his letter of the seventeenth of the current month, as well as of my answer. His Excellency, the archbishop of Bordeaux is very happy about it. I shall keep you informed as to what will follow.

At this time I have learned that Father Bardenet did not want to go to Saint Remy on the twenty-first with the archbishop and that the archbishop himself did not stop there for any length of time. All he did was to pass that way.

Keep me informed about all the activities to which the fermentation of minds may give rise. If you happen to be jeopardized, my dear son, I surely hope it will not be by or on account of me. Let us work with intelligence, each one on his side, first at our sanctification, then at the work God has confided to us – then let us remain in peace. I shall nevertheless write to Father Meyer in a general way so as to temper the ardor of his mind. I shall write also to Brother Troffer and send a few words to Brother Gaussens.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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[1] He had just left to join the Trappists. See Letter 969.

Father Lalanne has furnished Father Chaminade the reports asked for regarding the situation in Layrac. Hence the following letter.

1040 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, March 29, 1838

My dear son, the reading of the outline of the condition of the Sainte Marie School which you sent me on the twenty-seventh of the current month has added much to the consolation of your letter of the seventeenth, first by its great frankness and then by the reflections to which it gave rise in my mind, reflections on the possibility of present dispositions which reestablish between us our former union, strengthen it more and more, and repair all the scandals. Let us reflect also on the possibility, more or less distant, that Layrac may belong and indeed appears to belong to the Society of Mary.

I. The various arrangements, my dear son, which you have made, as much with the bankers as with your creditors, put you in a state of peace and tranquility which permits you to follow strictly all the obligations of religious life and to exercise the zeal which is its spirit. As a consequence I invite you to follow up your conversion:

1. by the strict observance of your vows and—your position permits it to you—of the vow of poverty, running the establishment only as an économe even though exteriorly you are still and appear to be the proprietor;

2. by a retraction of your past conduct, or rather, of the illusory and false principles which have directed it; a retraction which must be accompanied by signs of a sincere repentance. This retraction may be made in two ways, either by a Circular which you will send directly to all the establishments, or by a simple letter which you will write to me asking me to give to your avowals and to the expression of your sentiments all the publicity which I shall judge suitable. This latter method seems simpler to me and gives me reason to add to the copy of what you wrote all that I shall judge most favorable to arrive at a complete forgetfulness of the past, as well as for the most intimate peace and union.

3. As to the small number of persons who surround you and who have been attached to the Society of Mary in one way or another, it seems that the evil is not at its highest point, but that it is still very great.

I believe, as you do, that Brothers Centrain, Dürr, and Rohmer could come back if they were well instructed, and if they were well sustained by the regularity of which you would give them the example. All three should begin a novitiate all over again. As regards Bro. C., I think a special miracle of grace would be necessary, because his self-love seems to have brought on him a kind of supernatural blindness. It is very rare that so excessive a self-love has not produced the vice of impurity. Nevertheless, I have had no further

information since he was sent back to Saint Remy. Besides, on the physical side, is it not to be feared that he is the victim of what is called scrofula? Let us say a word about the servant Brothers. Is not the older Soleil desperate as regards the religious state? It is now about nine years that he has never been judged fit to take perpetual vows; besides, he is very limited, and very much so in what is called education. Lacoste would seem to give greater hope, but there is still very much to be done. He seems to know precious little about what the faith that is to save us is, and what it means to be a Christian. I am saying nothing about Amand since there has never been question of admitting him as a member of the Society, because of his deformity.

We must see, my dear son, if it is in any way possible to make for you a little nucleus of a community which, without human respect, will walk regularly in the way marked out for it. We shall enlarge this nucleus as much as will be possible with good and capable subjects without prejudice to the proselytes you yourself would make and train.

As regards all the others, keep them as hirelings, provided that they conform themselves to the general laws of the establishment among which must be found, first and foremost, those of Christianity.

Give me a list of all the professors and teachers, as well as of all the employees, so that I can replace them or prepare subjects to replace them at suitable periods. All concerned are to be unaware of this little agreement between us. If the little community is composed of subjects who have made up their minds seriously and who are well sustained, it will have little to fear from the example of outsiders. It would be different if the subjects had not openly made known their decision. We are also counting very much on the blessings of the Lord.

I am now passing on to the second type of reflection.

II. It would be imprudent to determine immediately the object of the property and consequently of the results which would follow.

1. The entire Society must show a real interest in disengaging and freeing the Layrac establishment. It would be showing little interest, possibly none at all, if it saw no very pronounced change in religious conduct, and nonetheless, a concourse of heart and soul is needed to find the means of a successive liberation, be it by the economies of the religious or by other honest means which it will be possible to employ.

2. It would be of little honor to the Society to be dependent on bankers. It would be more tolerable for only one of its members to be so, in the situation in which he finds himself. Besides, at the moment the Society takes over the establishment, even if it is in its actual condition of dependence, it will at least be necessary to reimburse the nine thousand francs of promissory notes that the bankers have paid, thus realizing your exoneration.

As things stand, you have only a few means of freeing yourself. The bonuses will be rather small with such a large number of outsiders employed, the management of the expenses being hampered and, as it were, forced by the lack of resources and advance money, and in the end the bonuses being shared. It would not be the same if, once the policy were broken, the Society had the means of advancing money for provisions or for buying for cash by a really experienced and intelligent econome—the religious personnel of the establishment being increased. Then the bonuses would become considerable and, not being shared but used for the liberation, we would not suffer much longer from debts.

At the same time, we must combine the liberation of all our larger establishments, because the six or seven larger ones have more or less heavy debts. However, I don't doubt that, if we are all well united, and if we really serve the Lord, in a few years we shall be free from our pecuniary difficulties.

3. A consideration of prudence, which orders us not to be hasty before having determined all our policies, reminds us that you are bearing all the burden. Should you be stricken by some serious ailment—since you are neither invulnerable nor immortal—and you were no longer able to fulfill your functions, the boarding school could no longer be sustained if the Society were without sufficient means. What a clamor would arise or what a scandal would creditors cause who would no longer see any means for being paid! I am somewhat detailing these reasons of prudence, my dear son, which seem to make it a law for us not to be in a hurry about being or appearing to be owners of your establishment of Layrac. You yourself have foreseen it in expressing the desire that the Society be not compromised in arrangements with you. I am very determined to bring this difficult matter to a happy ending. No difficulty will repulse me, no sacrifice will stop me. As far as you are concerned, my dear son, go right ahead with courage. The grace which has enlightened you will strengthen you and will put you above all that you might fear, be it on the part of men or on the part of the demons. *Salva animam tuam!* (Save your soul!)

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces with the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

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1041 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 31, 1838

The details which you give me in your letter of the twenty-third of the current month, my dear son, regarding the visit of His Excellency to Saint Remy are useful for me to know in proportion as they become an explanation of other information I have had, both regarding this visit, that of Father Bardenet which has been canceled and that which you had previously paid to Father Meyer.

Father Lalanne has sent me an account of his present situation. It seems to be sincere. I am going to send you a copy of this account and of the answer which I have sent him. According to his reply, we shall know what to do next. If his recantation is really what it should be, I shall be with you in combining all that it will be suitable and possible to do. You might have been able to give the archbishop of Besançon the almost certain assurance that Father Lalanne was giving us of his conversion, that the archbishop of Bordeaux believed in it, judging from his letter of March seventeenth about which I informed him and over which he certainly was joyful.

You have not failed against the rules of charity in sincerely telling me of your interviews, as much with Father Bardenet as with Brother Troffer—unless you exaggerated. What would you want me to do, if I did not have an accurate knowledge of the persons with whom we have to deal? In truth, you must be very discreet in speaking of them to others besides myself.

Brother Bousquet writes to me from Courtefontaine and asks me to accept his repentance. It is on the very day of the feast of Saint Joseph that his illusion was dispelled[1] by the intercession of this powerful protector. He tells me he wrote to you to offer you his humble submission. I immediately answered him and told him to leave for Saint Remy and to take over his functions, as if nothing at all had happened.

Father Lamotte has just written to me from Marast. He tells me that he is extremely constrained as regards having the harvest put away, that he wants to have a machine made to thresh the wheat, or rather, that would take the place of the ordinary threshing and that it would cost him around four hundred francs. Since I learned that you had one that I imagine to be similar and that, nevertheless, could not be of any service to you, I have just written to him that he should consult you, adding that I would beg you to show real interest in the matter, and to take the means suitable, so as not to be obliged to have barns built. He claims that it costs two hundred francs to have the wheat threshed.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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1042 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET,
SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 31, 1838

[1] Bro. Bousquet, having arrived at the Trappist monastery, started a retreat and was not slow in recognizing his illusion. Not daring to come back to St. Remy, he went to Courtefontaine, where the letter of the Good Father reassured him. See Letter 355.

My dear son, I have received your last letter.

Be really faithful to the Lord, not as a slave through fear, but as a good son through love. Often penetrate yourself with the thought of all that he has done and suffered for you, as well as of all the graces he has accorded you. May he always reign in you! May you always love to depend entirely upon him and to do nothing except it be for him and his good pleasure. Always keep yourself in the company of the Blessed Virgin, but especially during your prayers, your meditations, and at Holy Communion. I shall also often recommend you to Saint Joseph, as we have in him a great and powerful protector.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my sincere friendship.

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Father Chaminade continues the study of the matter of Layrac with Father Lalanne.

1043 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, April 17, 1838

My dear son, I have received your letter of the ninth of the current month with the one which would be destined for a certain publicity.

In the postscript, your letter says that the one destined for publicity would be only between you and me until all is settled and concluded. I noticed this postscript only at the moment I was going to answer you. Nevertheless, I am not making any use of it and that for several considerations, but I have a certain regret that this observation comes from you. A recantation or reparation of scandal is of divine right, and may not be submitted to the conditions you allege. My letter of last March 29, nevertheless, settles and concludes the entire affair in all that concerns you.

1. As regards the personnel, your frank and sincere acceptance, with a reparation equally frank and sincere, determines the time of our settlement and conclusion of this subject. If the few subjects that we might have hoped to see return to the Society resist all the efforts of your zeal, you alone will be, though temporarily, the nucleus of a truly religious Community. The actual direction of the boarding school will not suffer because of it; quite the contrary, for all the recalcitrant subjects will be from then on considered as outsiders – only we must not precipitate matters. This will not prevent you from living religiously. You will consider yourself provisionally as sole deputy, Principal of a Collège, just as you were in Gray.

The direction of your temporal affairs is much more regulated, not to say restrained, than it was in Gray. If difficulties arise with regard to temporalities, you can always have

recourse to your Superior; and if you have neither the time nor the means for that, then use your discretionary power.

In proportion as the Society will be able to send you subjects, it will do so gradually, so as not to clash with anything until the time when there will no longer be any outsiders. How long will this take? I haven't the slightest idea, but I hope that God will bless the good will with which he inspires me and render it efficacious, more or less promptly, according to the views of his wisdom and mercy. I have no doubt, my dear son, that you have much to suffer in this order of things, but your sufferings will be gradually relieved, and the thought that God permits them for a good cause will already be for you a source of great relief.

2. As to the material and financial part: is not everything settled and concluded by my letter of last March 29 as much as it was possible to settle and conclude it? Your support, pure and simple, gave to the settlement all the force to which it was susceptible.

You send me a statement of your financial condition. While groaning over this painful and humiliating situation, I am accepting it purely and simply, not for the moment, not as a matter of fact, which would be of the highest imprudence and which you really cannot ask for under whatever pretext, but by an honest and sincere promise of making the greatest efforts and of submitting the Society to all sorts of sacrifices and supportable privations, so as to render itself able, at the earliest possible date, to carry out the promise that is being made to you. And the idea has since come to me, to engage the services of some personages of high rank who seem to interest themselves in the Society of Mary. They may be able and willing to help us.

However, all this is conditional, you will say. Its accomplishment cannot have a fixed date and might even be delayed much longer than we imagine. I answer that to draw up a deed for the transfer of property, it is not necessary that the Society be in the actual process of liquidating the establishment, but only to guard against all the debts and expenses that put you in such a rigorous dependence upon bankers and, at the same time, against the various inconveniences that can arise from one day to another.

But you may add, in the meantime all this leaves many difficulties. Yes, doubtless, there will be many difficulties and even inextricable ones. But, my dear son, will there be more of them than you have at present? By the arrangement that is proposed to you, you will acquire a very reasonable hope of seeing them resolved, even quite rapidly once the process will have begun, whereas, without the arrangement, you see the hope for liquidation only in the very distant future—on which you cannot even reasonably count.

This kind of arrangement, you say, ties your hands and arms. It is you, my dear son, who have tied them and for you the knot virtually cannot be undone by you. The arrangement undoubtedly leaves you, at least provisionally in the state in which you are. It takes nothing from the bit of liberty of hands and arms that is still yours and allows you to get a glimpse of complete liberty in the near future. I am saying that the arrangement does

not tie you more than you are tied at present for it leaves you all the authority and the power to act reasonably. In the tribunal of conscience, it deprives you only of the power of making new blunders.

As regards the intrinsic difficulties, troubles, solicitudes and anxieties that are still yours, I shall give you the same answer that I gave you when speaking of the personnel. It will be up to you to make of them a source of merit before God, and I hope that in his mercy, he will deign to ease the difficulties by the sentiments of penitence with which he will inspire you, by the unction of the grace he will pour into your heart, and by the courage with which he will animate you: *Deus totius consolationis.* ("The God of all consolation.")

Without having followed your letter point by point, my dear son, I think I have essentially answered everything.

I am sending you a copy of your letter of last March 17. I have no doubt that the enemy of salvation is seeking to shake your resolutions by new illusions. Continue to distrust your own strength and often say to the Lord: *Confirma hoc, Deus, quod operatus es in nobis!* ("Confirm, O Lord, what you have done in us.")

It is by the hands of the august Mary that you have received the grace of conversion announced in your letter mentioned above, and so do not cease to invoke her for the favor of confirming and consolidating this signal grace!

Although your letter destined for publication may be strictly sufficient as sent by me with the preambles I would send with it, I think you would do well to write another to me, somewhat more decisive—a letter which would indicate no other reason for your return than the divine light which must have set at naught your fatal illusions.

If my attachment for you, my dear son, could assimilate further growth it could well be at the present time, and so, here and now, I am begging you to accept this renewed assurance of it.

* * * *

The following letters give us the occasion to learn the happy ending of the difficulty which arose in the school of Colmar.

1044 – TO FATHER MAIMBOURG, PASTOR OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, April 26, 1838

Dear Reverend Father:

I was awaiting your answer without any anxiety. Knowing the well-merited respect that you enjoy in Colmar, as well as wherever you are known, and in no way doubtful about your zeal in sustaining the work of the schools which you have undertaken and to which I had lent myself with so much confidence, your intervention in the affair brought up by the Committee seemed to me to be destined for certain success. I thank you for the steps you have just taken. On my part, I shall see to it that you have three more subjects with the required certificates and even the very ones you seem desirous of having.

I am also thanking you, Reverend Father, for the kind information you have had the goodness of giving me concerning the conduct of Brother Coustou in this last affair. I had need of it, following the letters of correspondence I received from him since his return from the South. I have no intention at all of replacing him. All I desire is that he conduct himself according to the spirit of his state. The more his good qualities gain him public esteem, the more he would become dangerous both for his colleagues of Colmar and for those of the other establishments in Alsace. For surely, the establishment of Colmar would fall because, in conscience, I would not be able to send subjects there who, under his direction, would adopt a spirit altogether opposed to their state, without speaking of all the other evils and scandals that would follow as a matter of course. I am writing to him by this same mail that I am entirely satisfied with the explanations which you were kind enough to give me in his regard, so that we shall no more speak of this affair. I am with profound respect, etc.

P.S. Father Caillet is very mindful of your kind remembrance. Always full of confidence in you, he has here the honor of offering you the tribute of his high and respectful consideration.

* * * *

1045 – TO THE COMMUNITY OF COLMAR

Bordeaux, May 1, 1838

It is not through forgetfulness, my dear children, that I have not answered your warm letter of last March 15. I wrote later to Brother Coustou, your director, that an overload of work and also the presentiment of a certain agitation of minds that I thought to exist in the establishment had made me delay my answer.

You offer me as a sort of bouquet for my feastday your great desire that Saint Joseph consolidate the work that he is protecting, that he draw upon its Founder the abundance of divine blessings and that he shower them then with profusion on the members of the Society of Mary who have entire confidence in him. I am very mindful of the prayers you are offering for me and for the Society, and I have full confidence that they will be heard. Nevertheless, I must tell you that will happen, only inasmuch as the members of the Society will always fill themselves well with the spirit of their state. If that were not the case, hearing such prayers would mean the consolidation of an antireligious society.

Lately, I was very much pained to find myself obliged to refuse you the permission of having your frock coats cut according to the present fashion. I liked to persuade myself that you had not been instructed about the reasons I had given for a similar refusal some time ago.[1] These reasons are very serious, and if they weren't, how glad I would have been to accede to your wishes! You may very boldly ask me for anything that you believe not contrary to the spirit of the Constitutions and general Regulations of the Society of Mary. I have the confidence that your director, in giving you the example, will instill in you more and more the genuine religious spirit, be it in the conferences or in the private interviews he will have with you.

Realize that your community is, so to say, exposed to the view of all Alsace and more particularly to that of all the establishments which have been formed after yours.

Receive, my dear children, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness with my paternal blessing.

* * * *

1046 – TO BROTHER COUSTOU, COLMAR

Bordeaux, May 1, 1838

My dear son, I am answering the Reverend Pastor, and I am thanking him for the steps he was kind enough to take and for the success he was able to obtain. You have had in him an excellent defender of your conduct in this entire affair with the Committee. I believe all he has told me about it and so from now on we shall no longer come back to the

[1] Letter 834.

subject. The establishment will remain quiet until the end of the year, and at that time I shall supply three new subjects who have certificates, and I shall even do all I can to provide the ones the Reverend Pastor designates. Until now, I see no obstacle to this way of proceeding.

I am also answering the letter of the entire Community of Colmar. Since at present everything will be more tranquil, enter more profoundly into yourself. Consider your obligations seriously, both as the unpretentious religious that you are and as the Head of a religious Community. Your temporal and eternal happiness is attached to your excellent destiny and it is this twofold happiness, my dear son, that the spiritual father who has engendered you in Jesus and Mary desires and prays for without ceasing.

These last lines express the special and somewhat uneasy affection that Father Chaminade had for Brother Coustou. We might say that it forebodes the misfortune that was to come to him later, when in 1840 he was unfaithful to his vocation.

* * * *

Father Lalanne, nevertheless, was poorly adjusting to the wise delays of Father Chaminade, and to get out of trouble, he was now talking of selling the establishment of Layrac to a "new body," doubtless to a religious society capable of making it prosper. This is a project which was to have no more success than the preceding ones, but which Father Chaminade accepts without difficulty.

1047 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, May 1, 1838

My dear son, in immediately answering your letter of last April 26 as you desire, I shall tell you in the first place, that if I were to ask you for an authentic retraction which you could use, it would be only to have you fulfill a strict obligation and one of divine right, reserving to myself the manner of communication so that there might not follow the baneful effects which you foresaw, but on the contrary, so that you might enjoy the esteem and confidence of those whom we need to take up again the new policies under consideration.

You say very well, my dear son, that all the promises that I made to you, however sincere they may be, are nevertheless only conditional; but you easily understand that it is not possible to render them certain. To act thus, would be to expose ourselves to fail in everything.

To cede the establishment to a new body, to one that could easily meet all the expenses which a free taking possession and administration would require, would be an excellent means of terminating everything and I am willingly adopting it. However, in this

case, as you say, you alone are to appear as proprietor, and in the sale, the Society will not appear in any capacity whatever. I shall note only that the price must be proportionate to all the objects included in the establishment. What has been specially reserved will constitute a slight compensation for the great losses entailed by the Society.

In order to succeed, the new body will have to take two precautions which seem indispensable to me. The first is to have an approbation of the Government, that is to say, a royal Ordinance. The second is to have subjects who by their conduct and their talents will be able to command public esteem and obtain bachelor's degrees. The director, in particular, would have to be a distinguished gentleman. It is not up to me to say or to determine how they are to manage, but I thought it my duty to make these two observations to guide you.

May this new incident, my dear son, however happy it may be in its results, in no way stop or retard your interior perfection. May your sentiments of interior conversion always increase and your conduct conform itself entirely to the principles of faith! The Society of Mary will attain the end and purpose of its institution only insofar as its Superiors – at least – will conduct themselves according to the spirit of faith.

Receive, my dear son, the usual assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

* * * *

Nevertheless, in the North, a great clamor was being raised over the conversion of Father Lalanne, less a matter of joy than of edification, for it was being attributed to the desperate state of his affairs.

He thought he should protest and so he sent a circular letter to several of his Brothers. In it, he guaranteed the constant uprightness of his intentions:

Be well convinced, my very dear Brother, that never has my heart for an instant ceased to look after the interests of the Society. If I have done harm, and done harm to it, it was in believing to do it good and a great good. Between the time at which I recognized it was possible that I might be wrong and the time that I disavowed it, there was only sufficient time to come from the sacred tribunal to my pen. Here you have the truth and all my life is contained therein.

He was telling the truth, and it is for this reason that Father Chaminade who knew him well, never despaired of him and received him with kindness, but also with the reserve that the interests of the Society required, because as prompt as was his repentance, just as prompt could be a new crisis.

On May 23, 1838, Father Chaminade invites Father Lalanne not to bother himself or to worry about all these false rumors.

1048 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, May 23, 1838

My dear son, some hours before receiving your letter of the fifteenth of the current month, but stamped in Agen only on the twenty-first, I had received a letter from a certain person in the North[1] where our situation was misrepresented, just as several other important affairs of the Society have been. Until the end of time, there will be people eager for news and building new schemes on all that they can learn.

If from the beginning and after you learned the truth, you had made your retraction, what you had feared and what you now fear, would surely not have happened. *Quaerite primum regnum Dei et justitiam ejus, et omnia adjicientur vobis*. ("Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all else will be given to you.") This retraction did not require you to reveal the state of your temporal affairs. There was question only of announcing your repentance for having been the dupe of your illusions, which the grace of the Lord had deigned to dissipate, and of abjuring the false principles on which these illusions were based.

I think you would do well to notify the principal men whom you employ in Layrac before they learn of the rumors circulating in the North – this is very easy for you. When Brother Etignard wrote to me, he depicted your position as being in very good order; one might have even concluded it to be flourishing. Thus the tokens of your repentance will in no way appear suspicious. Very great faults can be committed while believing that good is being done even when this pretended good will have had some success.

Whatever difficulties present themselves, my dear son, we must save ourselves. We must serve God in the manner he asks of us. We must repair the past, repair it doubtless with prudence, but with that supernatural prudence that God continually asked of David.

I will soon go to Auch passing through Agen enroute where I shall make a short stay. When arriving in this latter town, I shall give you notice of it. I think you have written to Italy.[2] While awaiting the result of your negotiations, I am taking no steps in the area of our temporal affairs. I am placing much greater interest in what is spiritual and in the order of salvation.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my most tender and inviolable devotedness.

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[1] Fr. Bardenet.
[2] To the religious society of which there was question above. It is not known which one, as the affair was never concluded.

In Franche Comté, Father Bardenet, unwilling to permit Father Perrodin to leave, gave as pretext the severity of Father Caillet in Bordeaux and the vexing rumors to which the affairs of Father Lalanne had given rise in regard to the Society. Father Chaminade answers him with no less firmness than modesty.

1049 – TO FATHER BARDENET, ACEY

Bordeaux, May 26, 1838

Dear Reverend Father Bardenet:

I have received with thanks your letter of the eleventh of the current month, because it is for me a pledge of your zeal and of the interest you take in the existence of the Society of Mary. The details you give me concerning all that is being said and all that is happening in regard to this Society would be frightening and even quite discouraging should I cease to adore the profound judgment of God. I readily realize that you enter into these details only to have me understand my incapacity in their administration. I have no trouble at all in avowing it, and I am far more fully convinced of it than you would even dare to think. I have reason to fear before God of not having sufficiently foreseen all the disorders that have taken place and of not having acted wisely enough in checking their excesses. Thus you see how greatly I need your prayers.

Do not say, I ask you, that all these avowals signify nothing, and that I should follow the advice which you give me. It is very true, dear Reverend Father, that if you want to take my place and my responsibility before God, you will then be able to order all that you will judge suitable. I am ready to put the helm into your hands, if God approves of it. You bring together all you can see and hear, and from these unconnected sources, you form for yourself an idea of the general situation of the Society. Then you give counsels which often have the appearance of orders, but which to me are impossible of execution in their totality, although when taking them as a whole, it may be possible to draw from them some useful conclusions. Furthermore, I am always glad to receive your directives. I have no other uneasiness than to learn continually that you disapprove – and that very openly – of what I do, as well as what I do not do. What good can result from this? Contrary to your intentions and the ardent desire you have of doing good, you are spreading uneasiness in minds and sometimes a sort of contradiction between myself and the directors of the establishments which flows back even upon the individual members.

It is true that Father Caillet has a certain severity about regularity which accommodated itself very poorly to the relaxation of the inclinations of several. Should he have been able to condescend to certain caprices more than he has done? All that I was able to understand is that a small number of murmurers have been very harmful to all those under his directorship and have given him the reputation that you seem to have adopted.

Someone had already written to me that all these sayings about Father Caillet had disgusted Father Perrodin and prevented him from coming to Bordeaux. You add that all that he is learning about the affairs of the Society are shaking his vocation. Nevertheless, since he has shown me so much ardor in the matter of entering the Society, things have changed considerably. All that can be heard today is but a repetition of what has been imagined by dissenting religious. Perhaps a few good ones have had the weakness of believing them up to a certain point and even of becoming involuntary echoes of them.

I desire to have Father Perrodin only because I believe that I have found him possessed of a real vocation. I want no subjects other than those whom God wishes to send. I hope that the kind of neutrality which you thought it your duty to use in his regard may not be imputed to you before God.

I am, Reverend Father, with a respectful consideration, your etc.

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1050 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, May 31, 1838

My respected son, Father Bardenet, wrote to me on the eleventh of the current month, and this is an answer to the letter I had the honor of writing to him. He is always making excuses for the neutrality which he says he is maintaining about you. He says that it all comes from the bishop of Saint Claude's prohibition that you leave the abbey of Acey. It is your uncle, the pastor of Digna, who is said to have obtained this prohibition from His Lordship.

Father Bardenet doesn't say a word about the real cause of the opposition of His Lordship. You know what someone from the bishop's palace wrote to me at the time. Never was there question of your uncle, and it is to be presumed that he acted only upon the advice of Father Bardenet, or at least after a consent asked for, so as to permit the latter always to maintain at least the appearance of neutrality.

Father Bardenet did not answer me at the time because, as he says, his observations would have seemed useless. However, he does it today, because as he adds, you now have very little desire of becoming a religious, considering what you see happening in the majority of our Houses, that etc. . . .: all the abusive talk on the part of religious who have left the Society, or perhaps on the part of some who have lost the spirit of their state. There is some truth in these details, but it is truth greatly exaggerated. This just about represents the contents of the long letter of Father Bardenet. Toward the end of this answer, he speaks to me of the direction of Father Caillet, insisting on the fact of his

severity and the coldness that forbids access to his person. I would not say that he speaks of him in relation to you, but rather to give me advice.

I had the honor of answering Father Bardenet on the twenty-sixth of the present month, and after having thanked him for his zeal and the interest he seems to take in the existence of the Society of Mary, I called his attention to the harm he could do in retelling all these diverse pieces of information – all disconnected – and in drawing unfair consequences from them. Here is literally the last part of the letter I wrote to him.

(Here follows the text reproduced above.)

I had the intention, my respected son, of taking new steps, all very canonical, for putting an end to this affair, when I learned what I have just told you. His Lordship spent ten or twelve days in Acey. Something concerning you must have happened. I am thinking it my duty to halt all steps, at least until such time as you yourself will have notified me of what this is all about. You know the importance of the *Hodie si vocem Domini audieritis* ("Today if you hear the voice of the Lord, etc.") If you need further information about the Society of Mary, ask me. I shall give it to you in all honesty. In any case our correspondence is very limited and infrequent.

Receive, my respected son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.[1]

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1051 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, end of May, 1838

. . . In the meantime, you could have sent me their real description, to enable me to judge correctly as to whether they should be sent to make their novitiate. It is greatly to be presumed that I would have left them with you at least for some time.

You add that Father Perrodin no longer wants to go to Bordeaux, as he has been informed regarding what is going on at the Madeleine. The Madeleine is perhaps the most quiet place in the Society. It is also where there are the most edifying religious. But, you add, Father Caillet has been described to him. Who did it for him? And how honestly, charitably, and above all, how prudently have you been able to accept the portrait that you know has been made of him? I in no way doubt the purity of your intentions, my dear son. The same for your views, but are you being led by a true spirit of faith? The spirit of faith is

[1] Father Perrodin was not yet to free himself. It was only in 1840 that he was able to enter the novitiate in Courtefontaine, and even after his profession in 1841 he remained connected with the service of the Abbey of Acey alongside of Father Bardenet until the death of the latter in 1844. Finally in 1845, he settled in Courtefontaine as pastor, replacing Father Meyer himself.

none other than the Holy Spirit, who is a spirit of prudence, charity, obedience, and of distrust of one's own lights.

I am asking you, my dear son, to speak or to write to Brother Troffer,[2] as soon as possible, to stop giving advice on matters that are beyond his competence, and to stop censuring whatever he doesn't like or whatever is not according to his ideas, as for example, the Madeleine, which once received him with so much pleasure. I don't think he had any complaint to make about Father Caillet, and if he did have, why would he not have spoken to me about it? Why does he take it upon himself to speak against him, more than one hundred fifty miles away from here, to say that I am to leave for Rome[3] to form, according to his own ideas, an Administration incapable of governing during my absence – an absence prejudged by him and of which no one could speak to him positively, since I myself know nothing about it?

I have also leaned that he had written to Brother Coustou a kind of very inconsistent letter which greatly agitated him and which, through him, has also gone to the minds of the other directors of establishments. Try to make Brother Troffer understand that his zeal is neither enlightened nor moderate and that instead of doing much good, it could be found to do much harm. Tell him not to get out of the sphere of action that I traced out for him and in which wisdom demands that he stay. I would have liked to write to him, but for greater promptness I am leaving it up to you.

By the letter you wrote to me some time last September, my dear son, and which I took into consideration, you no doubt believe you have made your plans sufficiently known to me, but you are very much mistaken. Your plans were not sufficiently detailed. What you were saying was susceptible to great modifications, and I have never told you to continue to try to carry them out. I am constantly asking of the Lord, so to say, to let me know his will, either by himself directly by means of the various events taking place, or by means of the counsels of others. I am, then, always disposed and ready to receive your counsels and all that it will please God to inspire you with for my guidance. It is up to me to distinguish what may be the will of God. But you readily understand, my dear son, that if you prepare yourself to carry out the advice and the counsels that your zeal will prompt you to give me, before having received my answer and your mission, on the one hand, you will be endangering yourself and, on the other hand, you will be doing an isolated good, which most certainly will not be meritorious before God, a good which will disappoint those whom I shall have ordered or whom I shall direct, and from that there will result the *Desolabitur* of the *Regnum in se ipsum divisum*. (The desolation of the kingdom divided against itself.)

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[2] Of Salins, near Courtefontaine.

[3]The rumor had begun to get around that the Good Father was himself to take the Constitutions to Rome to solicit their authorization.

I am writing you this long letter, my dear son, in spite of the fact that my occupations do not permit it to me, so that you will confine yourself to your sphere, where you should not lack matters calling for your solicitude. I shall reread your letter to find out if I have answered . . .

XXI

THE SENDING OF THE CONSTITUTIONS TO ROME. PREPARATION FOR THE FOUNDATION IN FRIBOURG. FORMATION OF THE WORKING BROTHERS COMMUNITY IN SAINT REMY.

On several occasions we have heard Father Chaminade allude to the work of the revision of the Constitutions to which he had applied himself in spite of the many cares and anxieties brought about by the government of the Society.

At the time to which we have come, the work was finally ended and the Founder prepared himself to submit it to the Holy See, with a view toward obtaining the approbation of his double religious family. It is to this project that the following letters allude.

1052 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, June 4, 1838

Your Excellency, . . . I am about to leave for Auch to put the final touch to some Institutions which I started in this city at the request of His Eminence Cardinal Duc d'Isoard, who is its archbishop. The Lord has deigned to shower his benedictions on these establishments.

I intend to ask His Eminence to solicit from the Holy See the approbation of the Constitutions of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, of which he has declared himself the Protector, and at the same time of the Constitutions of the Society of Mary, of which Your Excellency has deigned to examine the first part under the title of General Regulations. At present, I am just about finishing the second part of this work. I mean the editing of it, as I have changed nothing in what has been prescribed from the beginning of the Society.[1] I greatly desired that my departure had not been so prompt, so that I could have placed this edition in your hands as I had intended.

My confidence in your lights and in your wisdom is frank and entire. Father Meyer is aware of this fact and it is to this effect, that in the ardor of his zeal and devotedness to the Society of Mary, he went prematurely to speak to Your Excellency about the condition of Saint Remy and Courtefontaine. His zeal, anticipating my views, brought it about that we are not entirely in agreement, and by the obstacles he is putting in the way he is retarding instead of hastening the changes or reforms that have to be made. I shall shortly have the

[1] As has been seen before in Letter 759, the first part of the Constitutions, that concerning the general duties of the religious, had been terminated and promulgated since the end of 1834. The second part, concerning the Government of the Society, had been the object of the work of the Founder in the course of the last years.

honor of presenting to you my views about Saint Remy, and if it is agreeable to you, of soliciting your protection.

I am with the most profound respect, Your Excellency's most humble, etc.

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To this letter, the Archbishop of Besançon answered with the following lines:

Reverend and very Honorable Superior: I desire that the pious design of which you have spoken to me be carried out and that the Holy Father approve the Constitutions of the order, for that is the best means of giving them authority and solidity.

As regards any other projects you may have in mind, and whatever may concern the future, my dispositions are to tell you the entire truth as I shall know it and in no way to hinder you in the exercise of your authority, but to second it within the limits of my office according to circumstances of time and place. The poor Superiors are to be pitied, without our adding to their burden by oppositions or untimely indications! I have always responded in this way to whatever has been said to me.

I am with the most respectful attachment, Reverend Superior, your devoted servant.

CÉSAIRE, Archbishop of Besançon

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1053 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 5, 1838

My dear son, I always receive all your letters with a lively interest even though I don't always answer them. All the details that you give me in them serve for my guidance. I would also like to write to you at some length on what regards your interior, but I am very busy at present. I have just completed the revision of the Constitutions, both of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and of the Society of Mary. I am now going to busy myself with the presentation of them for the approbation of the Holy See. I am also working at a *Manual of Direction*.[1] This work is difficult, at least for me, and requires a great deal of time. I wrote to Father Meyer and I expressed mild complaints regarding the last letter he wrote to you. I shall not answer Father Fontaine, but give him many assurances of my sincere attachment. Tell him, among other things, that I shall notify him in time of any change he might have to

[1] See the *Spirit of our Foundation*, 862.

make in regard to the secondary boarding school. Continue, the both of you, to walk firmly toward religious perfection.

I approve of the admission to the novitiate that the Council has granted M. Richet, M. Pirot, and M. Tisserand,[1] and the dispensation which it has accorded to M. Pirot, which was required for his admission due to his too advanced age. We must still wait in the case of Jean Rare, before admitting him to the profession of vows, so as to see what will be the outcome of his malady.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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1054 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 5, 1838

. . . I am very glad that you have terminated the penmanship affair with Brother Coustou.[2] This young man, strangely enough, causes me worry. Nevertheless, there seems to be some amendment in his conduct. The trip he took to Agen did him great harm. Your example and the correspondence you will carry on with him may slowly bring it about that the light of truth may penetrate his mind, for he has always had much confidence in you. If he is finally won over, if he truly enters into the spirit of his state, the other establishments will easily reform themselves, since all have their eyes fixed upon him, and all listen to him almost as they would listen to an oracle. You and he have almost been the two great objects of observation for all the lay members of the Society. If the conduct and words of both of you are always what they should be, we shall arrive – at least I hope so – much more easily at the reform that is so sorely needed.

There is doubtless much to be said about the composition of the personnel of Saint Hippolyte, but Father Rothéa is very little qualified either to correct or to govern it. He also always remains Superior of Ebersmunster,[3] but there is the same old lack of government. It calls for a great deal of patience. Father Rothéa is always doing either too much or too little. He grows impatient and complains that persons and things are not as he wants them. Often enough, he does not see too clearly and is slow to accept advice, and people

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[1] M. Alexander Richet (1815-1880) from Besançon, was brought up in the Charity Orphanage where he found his vocation. He was employed in the interior services of the houses of Marast and St. Remy and died in retirement in this latter Community.

M. J.B. Pirot (1801-1865), from St. Marcel (Haute Saône), had received a good education and had lived quite a long time in the world when he decided to enter religious life. He was assigned to farm work and lived and died in Courtefontaine in a holy way.

M. Jean Claude Tisserand (1815-1872) from Salans (Jura), passed his life in St. Remy, charged with the care of the stable, and left the memory of a religious of great piety.

[2] There is question of the Penmanship Method published by Bro. Coustou, Director of Colmar, which enjoyed great success at the time.

[3] See Letter 876.

become discouraged. Let us pray to the Lord to send us good directors and, in the meantime, let us do what we can to sustain and get the best out of those we have.

Courage, my dear son, and you know all that I wish to say by this one word. Thus, I am adding only the usual assurance, very sincere to be sure, of my inviolable devotedness.

* * * *

Here we are inserting two letters of affiliation to the Institute of the Daughters of Mary addressed to pious ladies of Colmar, one of whom, Mme Boileau, has been in contact with Father Chaminade since his visit to Colmar in 1835.

1055 – TO MME BOILEAU, COLMAR

Bordeaux, June 13, 1838

My respected daughter, I am finally answering your letter of last March 4. It is unnecessary to tell you in detail the causes which have delayed this answer which I should have sent you much sooner. I am sending your respected friend the Certificate of Affiliation that she is asking of me. You will see in the letter than accompanies it what you yourself have become since my visit to Colmar. I am not neglecting to send a similar Certificate, also to you, for the compete regularization of your Affiliation by having it inscribed in the registers of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Mary. This will add to your affiliation only a sort of formality which is not essential but is customary.

The Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary are going to be presented to the Holy See for approbation. I have altered them somewhat. I shall have the sample copy which is in your hands replaced by one entirely like the one I am going to give to His Eminence Cardinal Duc d'Isoard, archbishop of Auch, who has officially declared himself Protector of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. The establishments which I started in his episcopal city, on my return from my trips in the North of France, are giving much consolation to this pious prelate.

Receive, my respected daughter, the expression of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

CERTIFICATE OF AFFILIATION FOR MME BOILEAU

We, Missionary Apostolic, Founder of the Order of the Daughters of Mary, etc.

Declare to have affiliated to the Daughters of Mary, Mme Joséphine Boileau, in the most intimate manner, at the time of our visit to Colmar. This declaration is only to serve

her as a Certificate of such an affiliation, and to regularize it by having it inscribed in the Registers of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Mary in Agen.

Given at Bordeaux, under our seal and the counterseal of our private Secretary, June 3, 1838.

* * * *

1056 – TO MME RICHARD, NÉE, LICHTENBERGER
COLMAR

Bordeaux, June 13, 1838

My respected daughter, in your letter of last January 25, which has finally arrived, I heard the voice of your heart and I understood its desires. You ask for the privilege of Affiliation, not only to the prayers and merits of the Daughters of Mary, but to their very institute. You desire to live and to die as a true Daughter of Mary, by conforming in your state and condition, as much as possible, to the spirit of the Constitutions and Regulations to the letter. It is the same kind of Affiliation that Mme Boileau has. Just as she, you will always have at heart the interests of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, assisting it, through all the means in your power according to the circumstances that Providence will offer you or permit you to have. In order to enter into a more particular communion with the Daughters of Mary, I invite you to recite every day the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary.

In a few days, my respected daughter, I shall go to Agen, to the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Mary. There I shall have the Certificate of Affiliation inscribed on the list that corresponds to it, as well as this letter which accompanies it. For a long time, Mme Boileau has been meditating on the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary. She will even be in a position to explain their spirit to you, so that you can gain from your frequent interviews with her. You might even at times be able to recite the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Mary together.

Receive, my respected daughter, the expression of my tender devotedness together with my paternal benediction.

CERTIFICATE OF AFFILIATION FOR MME RICHARD

We, Missionary Apostolic, Founder of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, etc.

Following the information that has been given to us concerning the pious and edifying conduct of Mme Marie Joséphine Antoinette Richard, née Lichtenberger:

Following the oft-repeated requests she has made to us to affiliate her to the Daughters of Mary,

Desiring to grant her wishes, we affiliate her by this letter to the very Institute of the Daughters of Mary, praying her, as much as it will be possible for her, to conform her interior and exterior conduct to the spirit of the said Institute, and to direct her interests as a Daughter of Mary, in the sense of her affiliation.

This act will be inscribed, with the letter that accompanies it, in the registers of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Mary in Agen.

Given at Bordeaux, under our seal and the counterseal of our private Secretary, June 13, 1838.

* * * *

Nevertheless, Father Chaminade had set out for the Haut-pays where he proposed to visit the House of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, and to come to an understanding with the archbishop of Auch for the sending of the Constitutions to Rome.

On June 21, he arrived in Agen where he stayed until the end of the month. He passed the entire month of July in Auch. From there, he went to Condom, where he remained until August 5. Then he visited Cazaubon and other small Houses of the Third Order, and passing by Agen, he was back in Bordeaux by August 13.

A few days after his arrival in Auch, he addressed the following letter to the archbishop.

1057 – TO CARDINAL d'ISOARD,
ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH

Auch, July 8, 1838

Your Eminence, I am in no hurry to acquaint you with the good order I found, both in the House of Help and in the novitiate,[1] because I consider it a fact known to everybody. However, what I do hasten to announce to Your Eminence is that the house of the novitiate is really much too small for the number of subjects whom, following your views, we have to train there. New postulants are continually offering themselves, but in all truth, it is impossible to receive them even at the risk of great inconvenience. Lodging facilities to be sufficient ought to be double what they are now. Now expenses for that would not be considerable, according to the opinion even of the president of the Commission. Furthermore, the novitiate will soon have the benefit of new resources for its existence due to the increase in personnel at the House of Help.

To meet the expenses of the new building, I would propose, Your Eminence, the opening of a subscription campaign. Several respected ecclesiastics of your city to whom I have spoken about it would seem to be greatly in favor of it. If it would be pleasing to Your Eminence, I would draw up the lists and I would have the honor of presenting them to you. I would thus hope to find the necessary funds as much in Auch as in the better cities of the diocese.

[1] See Letter 866.

I shall always be at your orders, Your Eminence, when it comes to answering the remarks you might make about our Constitutions. I think I have foreseen one, which could have been at first brought up, and which is about the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council concerning the approbation of religious orders. (See Letter 1074)

I am, with the most profound respect, of Your Eminence, the very humble and very devoted servant.

P.S. I would be very much pleased with a verbal answer, if Your Eminence deigned to confide it to my Secretary.[1]

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At St. Remy, Father Chevaux was being tried by a crisis of spiritual desolation. Father Chaminade addresses fatherly encouragement to him.

1058 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Auch, July 24, 1838

Why, my dear son, would you fear this interior answer: *You are rejected by God*? It can come only from the devil who is essentially a spirit of falsehood. Always go to the Lord in all confidence, whatever may be the distaste or the dryness you experience in your meditation. These are only trials of your faith, and by your fidelity in uniting yourself to Jesus Christ, your faith will become more lively and strong, I would even say more meritorious. Happy those who go to God in pure faith and without consolation!

Hardly had I received your letter of June 21, when from Agen where I then was, I wrote to Father Meyer on the subject of Charles and Georges.[2] I was at that point, when I was given the answer of Father Meyer which I had not yet read. He tells me that Georges never presented himself in Courtefontaine and that Charles was sent there by Brother Toussaint with the request that he be made to make a little retreat. Father Meyer took care of that, and finding no religious disposition in him, dismissed him forthwith. You see, my dear son, that you were poorly informed about this affair.

I am stopping here, my dear son, but embracing you very tenderly

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[1] Bro. Roussel, who was accompanying the Founder on this round of visits.
[2] No doubt, two children of the Orphanage of Charity in Besançon.

Continuing the steps he had taken in view of the presentation in Rome of the Constitutions of his double religious family, the Founder, apart from the precious help of Cardinal d'Isoard, sought to secure for himself the help of the other archbishops or bishops in whose dioceses there were Houses of the Institute, and he solicited from them letters of recommendation.

1059 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Auch, July 24, 1838

Your letter of the twelfth of the present month, my dear son, led me to write sooner to the archbishop of Besançon than I would otherwise have done. You will read my letter to His Excellency and communicate it also to Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine. Then you will put it in an envelope and, if you send it by mail, you will be careful to prepay it. It would be still better if you could deliver it in person without too much trouble, for then you could possibly give the archbishop explanations on what might be too briefly said in my letter.

You would then take note of his decisions regarding the affairs that concern Saint Remy. You would also charge yourself with the short letter to the Holy Father that I have asked of him. As you must have noticed, I want him to express to His Holiness the desire he has of seeing the two Orders – the Institute of the Daughters of Mary and the Society of Mary – approved by him. Possibly His Excellency would also be kind enough to express some satisfaction concerning the establishments that are in his diocese. This letter to His Excellency will be joined to the messages of His Eminence, the cardinal archbishop of Auch, and you will see to it that there is no delay or negligence in sending it to me once you have received it.

Father Lalanne continues to give me proofs of a genuine conversion. When the affairs of the approbation of our Constitutions will be ended, I propose to speak to you of a general system of temporal administration, such as it is determined by our Constitutions. These Constitutions, however, contain nothing new for they contain only what has always been practiced, or what should have been practiced according to the spirit of the Society. Perhaps, with a certain severity of order, we might turn our eyes to Layrac. In a long interview I had in Agen with Father Lalanne, he agreed to all the real principles of education that I explained at Saint Remy in several conferences. He is trying to conform himself to them, but he is supported very little by his professors.

It is possible that His Excellency understands very little of the interest we put in the community of Working Brothers. I have not yet been able to communicate to him the second part of our Constitutions. The class of workers, especially that of the farmers, is a third branch of the Society which is very essential to it in the ends it proposes to itself.

In your correspondence with Brother Coustou, try to bring him back to the point of penetrating himself thoroughly with the spirit of his state and of practicing its various forms.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

On July 4, Father Chaminade joyfully received the eulogistic approbation given by Cardinal d'Isoard to the Constitutions of the Daughters of Mary and of the Society of Mary. These documents were legally drawn up thus:

I

We, Joachim Jean Xavier d'Isoard, Cardinal priest of the Holy Roman Church, with the title of the Most Holy Trinity of Mount Pincius, by the mercy of God and the authority of the Apostolic See, Archbishop of Auch, Primate of the Novempopulanie and of the two Navarres, etc., etc.

After having read and had seriously examined, the Constitutions of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary which have been presented to us by its venerable Founder: Considering:

1. That the ends of this Institute, namely, the personal sanctification of the members and that of the neighbor, are purely in the views of faith and of divine glory;

2. That the means, all perfectly adapted to the ends in view, bear in their admirable combination the seal of the Spirit of God;

3. That the organization, regulating as a whole the state, duties, and functions of the persons in their diverse relations, is suitable to sustain the work and to revivify it without ceasing by the most happy medium of simplicity and evangelical prudence;

4, Considering, besides, that Divine Providence, which alone has been able to inspire this work, has perfectly adapted it to the immense needs of our times, and that the experience of the great good it has already done for twenty-two years in various dioceses, and especially in ours, is one infallible guarantee of that which it will do wherever it will be developed;

On the report of our Vicars General, who have read the said Constitutions with as much care as satisfaction, and with their counsel and advice,

We have approved them in their ensemble and in each separate part. We approve and determine them by this letter and ardently wish that it will please the Holy See to confirm them by its Divine Authority for the greater glory of God.

Given in Auch, etc.

II

We, Joachim Jean Xavier d'Isoard, etc.

After having read and after having had the Constitutions of the Society of Mary seriously examined before God,

Considering: That to the merit of the Constitutions of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary by the same Founder, the Constitutions of the Society of Mary join the priceless advantage—in order to reach all classes of society—of combining the priest to regenerate it in the principal spirit of his divine mission, the man of the world to associate him in the apostolate in sanctifying him in the difficult employment of teaching, and the workman to spiritualize his work and assure his eternal salvation;

Upon the report of our Vicars General who have read the said Constitutions with as much care as satisfaction, and with their advice and counsel;

We have approved them in all their entirety as in each part. We approve them and we determine them by this present letter, and express the ardent wish that it will please the Holy See to confirm them by its divine authority.

Given at Auch, etc.

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1060 – TO HIS LORDSHIP DONNET, ARCHBISHOP OF BORDEAUX

Auch, July 26, 1838

Your Excellency, I have received with much gratitude the observations of Father de Vezins.[1] When they came to me, His Eminence, the cardinal of Auch and the bishop of Ajaccio[2] were examining them in their turn and also handed in their notes. All these observations were carefully gathered and joined to those of Bishop Vezins and those of the Archbishop of Besançon. Finally, the vicars general, charged by His Eminence to give the final judgment, agreed to do so as was proper.

Today, Your Excellency, the work is completed. His Eminence, with the advice of His Lordship, the bishop of Ajaccio and the other examiners, has just endorsed it by an Ordinance in due form. Altogether willing to use all his influence, he is kind enough to take upon himself the solicitation from the Holy See of the Canonical Institution of the Institute and of the Society of Mary. He would, however, desire that all the papers be sent to Rome and be supported by your favorable vote. In consequence, it would seem suitable to the cardinal that, in a personal letter to the Holy Father, Your Excellency would give expression to the esteem you have for the two religious bodies and to the desire you have of seeing them canonically approved by the Holy See.

I am coming, then, Your Excellency, to solicit from your inexhaustible charity this new proof of the great interest that you have in our work. Your letter, which Father Caillet will be glad to take upon himself to transmit to me, will be joined to those of His Eminence in the sending of the Constitutions.

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[1] Fr. Jean de Levezou de Vezins (1793-1867) had been married and had had five children from his marriage, when in 1830, he entered the ecclesiastical state. Ordained priest in 1836, he was named vicar general of Bordeaux by Archbishop Donnet and in 1842 was promoted to the see of Agen which he administered with great zeal until his death. The archbishop of Bordeaux had charged him with the examination of the manuscript of the Constitutions of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

[2] Bishop Toussaint Casanelli of Istria (1794-1869), from Vico in Corsica, had known Cardinal d'Isoard in Rome who chose him as his private secretary, then made him his vicar general. Promoted in 1833 to the see of Ajaccio, in the course of a long episcopate, he renewed the face of his diocese which he had found in the most lamentable state. In 1840, he called there the Daughters of Mary, who since that time successfully directed important works of education there. At this time, Bishop Casanelli was in Auch.

I am, of Your Excellency, with the most profound respect and the most lively gratitude, the most humble and most submissive servant.

* * * *

1061 – TO BISHOP JACOUPY, AGEN

Auch, July 27, 1838

Your Lordship, His Eminence, the cardinal of Auch, has been infinitely mindful of the remembrance of Your Lordship. He has received news about you with a very keen interest and has often asked me to tell you of all the solicitude he has in your regard.[1] Several times, I have been able to take notice of all the veneration which the vicars general and the respected priests who surround His Eminence have for Your Lordship, but I have been, above all, impressed as well as edified in the present circumstance. Here is the fact.

His Eminence, having deigned to take note of the Constitutions of the Institute and of the Society of Mary, that is to say, of the Sisters and of the Brothers, valued them to the point of speaking favorably of them to his vicars general and to other respected persons. The bishop of Ajaccio hastened to examine them himself and has equally approved them with high words of praise. The Reverend Vicars General examined them in their turn upon the order of His Eminence and of the zealous bishop of Ajaccio, and after a work as conscientious as deliberate, they judged them to merit fully the approbation of the cardinal. Consequently, Your Lordship, a most favorable attestation, in the form of an Ordinance, has been written following the Constitutions in the two copybooks with the expression of the ardent desire which His Eminence has, to see them canonically instituted by the Sovereign Pontiff. The bishop of Ajaccio has also been kind enough to write in his own hand and under his personal seal, in the copy itself, his sentiments of esteem and approbation. His Eminence and the bishop of Ajaccio are entirely ready and disposed to use their influence at the Court of Rome to have the Constitutions canonically approved.

However, before sending on all these papers, His Eminence and His Lordship would desire a brief letter from him whom they call the Patriarch of the Bishops of the region. You understand, Your Lordship, that this is a question of yourself. I, then, am taking the liberty of coming to ask you for this short letter to the Sovereign Pontiff in which you would express the esteem which Your Lordship has for the two orders of Mary and the desire you have of seeing the one and the other canonically instituted by the Holy Father.

I am begging Your Lordship to have your letter passed over to the convent of the Daughters of Mary. The good Mother will then see to it that it gets to me without delay.

[1] The allusion is doubtless to the infirmities of the old bishop which in 1841 obliged him to resign his post and to go into retirement in Bordeaux.

I am, of Your Lordship, with a profound respect, the most humble and most devoted servant.

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The following letter has for purpose to calm certain last-minute concerns of the Bishop of Agen.

1062 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Auch, July 29, 1838

My dear child, when I had sent to you by Brother Roussel a copy of the approbation of His Eminence and of that of His Lordship of Ajaccio, I had in mind doing it only for your own satisfaction, as I told you in no uncertain terms in my letter. It is very clear that, if I had wanted it to serve as a basis for the letter I am asking from the bishop of Agen, I would have had it checked and certified by someone qualified to do so.

I was not asking of the bishop of Agen the approbation of the Constitutions, or rather, I had no intention of presenting him this petition.[1] I was only entreating His Lordship to deign to join His Eminence of Auch in soliciting from the Holy See the canonical institution of the two religious bodies so well known to him.

The Constitutions, my dear child, are not changed. You have read them and your Council has read them. You can all guarantee them to His Lordship, even under oath if necessary. If they have been edited anew, it has only been to render them presentable to the Holy Father.

The approbation of His Eminence and that of His Lordship of Ajaccio are clothed in all the required formalities to insure the authenticity of this kind of document. They presuppose, in effect, a previous examination, and carry the seal, the seal of the prelates and the counterseal of their secretaries. They are then registered in the files of the secretariate of the archbishop.

The house of Agen is and remains always the Motherhouse or the Central House. There is no more change in this regard than in any other. The House of Help in Auch and its novitiate are centers only in relation to the Third Order which is in that city, and the Constitutions speak at length of the absolute dependence of this house on that of the convent of the Daughters of Mary in Agen. The civil Statutes have regulated it, the Constitutions suppose and even require it, and the petition to the Holy Father will certify it.

[1] The Constitutions of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary had been approved from the beginning by Bishop Jacoupy and his Council. This is why Fr. Chaminade had not believed it necessary to ask for a new approbation.

I am coming back, my dear child, upon the word of innovation of His Lordship of Agen. It is certain that there is no innovation. The Constitutions are exactly as he approved them. The editing may have somewhat changed, but the basis, the object, the means, the organization, the government—in fine everything—is essentially the same, and the bishop of Agen will assure himself of it, I hope, when he will have received a sample of the Constitutions approved by the Holy See. Receive, my dear child, the expression and assurance of my entire devotedness.

On the third of August, Bishop Jacoupy, fully reassured, wrote to his old friend Father Chaminade the following letter: "My dear Abbé, it gives me great pleasure to second the request you have addressed to me on the twenty-seventh of the past month, and to join His Eminence, the cardinal archbishop of Auch, as also His Lordship, the bishop of Ajaccio, in placing at the feet of His Holiness the expression of my sentiments of esteem, no less than my desires, in favor of your Institute . . . May the God of all mercy bless and crown a work which seems so well fitted and adapted to procure his glory and the salvation of souls!"

Then followed the very praiseworthy letter of recommendation of the Institute of which we shall quote only the following passages: "...In this city of Agen, for more than twenty years, there has been established the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Mary . . . In this same city, as in other localities of the diocese, houses of religious of the same Institute have been erected, especially with a view to the education of poor children. Now, enlightened as a result of constant experience, I am able to testify that the male religious and Sisters of this order have everywhere and always spread the fragrance of their religious life, and instructed numberless children of the two sexes in the elements of humane letters and especially in the dogmas and precepts of the Catholic religion. If at times in the past conflicts arose, the one and only cause, if I am not mistaken, is the fact that the Constitutions of the order had not been confirmed by apostolic authority. In what concerns these Constitutions, the fact that following long experience, their fruits have seemed good, it is certainly permitted to me to conclude that the tree which has borne them must also be good."

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In sending to the Founder these letters of recommendation which he had solicited, Archbishop Mathieu begged of him to state his thought precisely regarding the articles of the Constitutions which regulate the relations of the priests and laymen in the Society. Whence the following letter.

1063 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Agen, August 12, 1838

Your Excellency, I hasten to fulfill the wishes of Your Excellency as regards Article 243 of our Constitutions. I believe I had contented myself with announcing to you at some time, that I had affirmed all your observations,[1] without, however, giving you concrete proof of the fact. Thus, it is with pleasure that I am going to make this point clear to you. I would do it as freely and willingly on all the other points were it your good pleasure that I should do so.

Article 243 stated: "All the schools are usually run by lay religious. The priests are employed in the direction of the teachers and the children, as well as in other accessory works. It is they above all who are to fill themselves more and more with the general principles included in the next chapter about Christian Education."

Subscribing to the judgment which Your Excellency passed upon it, I modified it as follows: "These schools (there is question of primary schools) are run by the lay religious. The functions of the priests in the Society are defined in the second book of these Constitutions."[1] It has seemed advisable to me, Your Excellency, that the priests should not be charged with the direction of the small primary establishments. Here is the reason for the modification, such as I have the honor of placing it before you.

Now here, among the twelve articles contained between the numbers 349 and 361, is the one which will fully inform you as regards the position of the priests in the Society: Article 360: "The Superior General, the general Heads of Zeal and of Instruction, the masters of novices, the Superiors of the large establishments, and the Provincials are chosen only from among the religious priests of the Society." The other articles regulate the nature of the functions of the priests in general, namely, the work of retreats and missions, the direction of the convents of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, the direction of the principal establishments of the Society, the exercise of the ministry in the Tribunal of Penance for all the faithful, teaching . . .

Here, Your Excellency, is how I have done justice to your observation: I have tried to grasp the thought of Your Excellency and to develop it to the best of my ability in thus wording the article you noted and those which complete it with regard to the priests. I would consider myself very happy if I were able to succeed in giving them in the Society a position conformable to the general spirit of the Church. I wanted, at least, to place the lay religious in a subordinate rank than that occupied by the priests.[2] It is the privilege of Your Excellency to decide whether I have taken the proper means to attain this end.

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[1] Letters 759 and 913.

[1] Articles 349 and 361.

[2] According to the principles of Canon Law concerning the relations of clerics and laymen.

From this autographic notes of Fr. Chaminade for the editing of the Constitutions of 1839, we shall cite the following passages which precisely express his thought on this point.

"The three classes distinguished in the Society of Mary really form but one single body, such as during several centuries, were the children of the great Saint Benedict, whom the children of Mary look to look upon as specially sent by God to people in Europe with numerous colonies of real religious. . . . All in the same spirit aspired to the same end. However, considering the needs of the century and of religion, they

I thank Your Excellency for the zeal you manifest in leading our work to an ever greater good. God alone knows all that my heart owes you and gives you in the matter of gratitude and devotedness! Please accept, Your Excellency, as testimony of this, my services and those of the entire Society, which considers it a glory and a privilege to be under your orders.

I was unable to acquit myself of your honorable commission in regard to His Eminence, the cardinal of Auch and of His Lordship of Ajaccio, since the two prelates are at the Saint Sauveur baths. Their return is fixed for the second of September and it is at this time, if not sooner, that the sending of all the papers to Rome will take place.

I am, Your Excellency, with the most profound respect and the most lively gratitude, your very humble and very devoted servant.

P.S. I am finally returning to Bordeaux, from whence I shall leave for Auch during the month of September to travel with His Eminence and His Lordship of Ajaccio.

Father Chaminade has returned to Bordeaux and hastens to write to the archbishop the following letter, interesting from more than one point of view in the news it brings about Father Lalanne and in the sentiments of faith and supernatural disinterestedness of which it is the expression.

1064 – TO ARCHBISHOP DONNET OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, August 14, 1838

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journeyed toward the eternal crown on different roads, that is to say, by using different means, according to their age, condition, and talent, and all have in view, first their own salvation and then the salvation of their neighbor . . . These different classes of the Society do not form as many distinct entities, for there is question of one single body. They are all united in the same works and act in concert under the influence of a Head, just as the different members of the body obey only one soul in the various functions which they exercise. Each member of the Society must remain in peace and be content with the rank assigned to him, being persuaded that, in one body, all the members cannot occupy the same place, but that they are all equally necessary to the body, and that the excellence of each one consists in faithfully accomplishing the function confided to him on the part of God, whatever it may be.

"If by the needs of the times, circumstances, and talents, an educated lay religious were to be named Superior of an establishment, the priest, Head of Zeal of this establishment, would doubtless owe to the Superior tokens of respect and deference for the maintenance of the order of the house and of regularity, but he would not depend upon him for his functions, neither as regards the time nor the method. If the Superior found abuse or disorder in this, he would refer the matter to the Superior General."

These principles have been confirmed by the Holy See in the definitive approbation of the Constitutions. Cf. article 358 and the following.

Your Excellency, the fatigues of the painful trip of yesterday make me fear some disagreeable consequences for Your Excellency. This thought makes me send you my Secretary to offer you my greetings and to inform me somewhat on this subject.

I am also profiting by the circumstance to give to Your Excellency the letter which Father Lalanne has the honor of addressing to you. I judge from what Father Lalanne himself tells me that you will have ample reason to be satisfied with it. For myself, I have no longer any doubt as to the sincerity of his conversion.

I have learned, Your Excellency, that the Society of Mary of Lyons[1] is seeking to establish itself in Bordeaux and in the diocese. I am really delighted over the fact and at the thought that it will be realizing the good I was unable to accomplish. I have learned at the same time of the proposal to equip some boarding schools under the auspices of Your Excellency. This is again a favor on the part of Divine Providence which I applaud with all my heart. If this is the case, Your Excellency, and if the boarding school of Layrac would be suitable, we would cede it willingly, taking for granted that we are unable to maintain it. If the Mirail Hôtel were equally suitable, we would easily come to an agreement about it. The distance between the places is sufficiently great, so that the boarding school in Layrac would in no way harm that of Bordeaux.

These are projects, Your Excellency, which I am bold enough to submit to you. If you thought they could be carried out, I would be honored to come to an agreement with you after the feast of the Assumption, at an hour which Your Excellency would be pleased to assign.

I am, of Your Excellency, with a very profound respect and the most lively gratitude, the most humble and the most obedient servant.

* * * *

Here is the letter of Father Lalanne of which there has just been question and in which his soul is once more depicted.

Layrac, August 9, 1838

[1] This is the first time that there is question in the correspondence of Fr. Chaminade of the Society of Mary of Lyons or of the Marist Fathers, but the relations between the two societies and their founders were of longer duration, and there was even question, several times, it seems of uniting the two religious families. “I am unable to make the trip to Bordeaux at this time,” wrote Fr. Colin, founder of the Marist Fathers in 1832, to Fr. Champagnat, founder of the Little Brothers of Mary or Marist Brothers. “I don’t think I can make it even this year. I am asking you strongly to make it, if you can. . . . I have just received from Fr. Chaminade, Superior of the Society of Mary of Bordeaux, a letter in which he invites us and tells us he will be in Agen for some time and that we could stop there if we cared to.” The letter in question has not been preserved. See *Apôtre de Marie,* XIII, page 373.

Your Excellency: Although you have let me know that you no longer wish to intervene in my affairs with Father Chaminade, it will not be indifferent to you to know that, by the grace of God, they are happily terminated.

It is now a duty of justice that I am fulfilling in restoring with Your Excellency the reputation for prudence and cleverness of this wise old man, whom my complaints could have injured. I must admit that there is much of my doing in the reproaches addressed to the administration of Father Chaminade. If I had been more faithful to religious obedience in all its extent, others would also have been more obedient and more humble, and the Superior, meeting with less obstacles, would have brought the work more easily and more promptly to its proper ends. As soon as I recognized my wrongs, I frankly admitted them. I acceded without looking too closely, to all Father Chaminade wanted, to all that I thought he desired. I left it to Providence to lift the obstacles and remove the embarrassment that resulted to me from this abandonment, basing myself for funds and faith on this maxim of the Gospel: Quaerite primum regnum Dei. ("Seek the kingdom of God first.")

Another motive, Your Excellency, makes it a duty for me not to leave you unaware of my present disposition; it is that of gratitude. The respect I have always professed, thanks be to God, for episcopal authority has made me take under serious consideration the very wise counsels you had the kindness to give me, instead of the dispensation I was asking for. It was from that moment on that I began to fear that I was not in line with truth and justice. I made reflections, but I could not escape from the labyrinth of my reasonings. It was necessary for me to have recourse to the light of faith and to do by the spirit of sacrifice, by obedience, and by abnegation, what reason represented to me as weakness, imprudence, and error. Be kind enough, then, Your Excellency, to excuse me if I have come for a moment to distract and overtax your solicitude. My situation, which may seem very slight to your eyes, is for me of great importance, and sentiments which I should not suppress, as well as reasons of conscience, oblige me to tell you of it. For the rest, although far from the diocese which you administer and in which I was born, I beg of you to look upon me and to believe of me, Your Excellency, to be the most respectful and most devoted servant.

This letter was not to be the last token rendered to the memory of Father Chaminade on the part of the repentant Father Lalanne.

Brother Amédée André, who was économe of Stanislas Collège under the direction of Father Lalanne, made this touching declaration before the judges of the (Regular Tribunal): "Father Lalanne used to speak of Father Chaminade always with tears in his eyes. How many times I heard him tell me: Father Chaminade loved me much and pardoned me much! . . . And he used to continue to speak with complacency and admiration of his venerated spiritual Father, as he was accustomed to call him."

And still later, at the time of the translation of the remains of the Servant of God, Father Lalanne ended his discourse with this solemn affirmation: "As witness of his acts

and his words, we here affirm in the sight of Heaven—which has been a witness of them like ourselves—that never have we ever seen him spending, I am not saying a day, but a single hour of his time and of his continual work, whatever it may have been, that did not refer to God and to the conduct of souls in paths leading to God. No one will be able to produce of him a writing, a letter, a proposal, an instruction, an example, or a counsel that did not serve piety. It is not possible to define this man otherwise than to say that he was a man of God in the strictest sense of the word."

* * * *

In the following letter, Father Chaminade gives an account to Brother Clouzet of the sum total of his proceedings in view of the approbation of the Constitutions in Rome, and he informs him of a project for a foundation in Fribourg, cherished for several months, regarding which he had recently made up his mind.

This foundation, the first of the Society outside of France, was to have immediate success in its short existence (1838-1847) and was to serve Germany, Austria, and America.

1065 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 16, 1838

My dear son, I have received an answer from the archbishop of Besançon to the letter I had the honor of addressing to him. His Excellency agreed to everything as regards the arrangement for Saint Remy[1] and the Constitutions. But on this last point he desired some explanations relative to an article which seemed, in his eyes, to impair the dignity of the priests of the Society. He desires these explanations because he wishes to be basically informed concerning all phases of our work. His benevolent desires are certainly according to my heart and besides, they are expressed with too much modesty and devotedness on the part of an archbishop that I should not hasten to satisfy them. In consequence, I have just written to him and I expect shortly to receive his letter to the Sovereign Pontiff.

Our Lordships of Agen and of Montauban, and the archbishop of Bordeaux have already sent me their letters and I am well satisfied with them. From day to day, I am waiting for the one of the bishop of Lausanne and Genèva. [2] Here is the occasion on which I

[1]See the end of the letter and also Letter 1067.
[2]Bishop Pierre Tobie Yenni (1774-1845), from Morlon in the Canton of Fribourg, for thirty years occupied the see of Lausanne, to which, since 1819, had been joined that of Genèva, but during this time he had his residence in Fribourg. One of the most salient works of his episcopate was the multiplication of Catholic parishes in the Protestant part of his diocese. He had the consolation of consecrating there about fifty new churches. He was distinguished by his zeal for the instruction of youth and by his admirable charity for the poor, as well as by his exemplary prudence in deliberations, his energetic firmness in execution, and finally by his tender piety toward the Most Holy Virgin. He died on December 8, 1845, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, and was buried in Fribourg in the Church of Notre Dame.

asked it of him. For some months, the pastor of Fribourg[3] has been urging me, on the part of His Lordship, to grant to their unhappy canton, in Fribourg itself, an establishment of our Brothers, so as to render ineffectual the impious efforts of the propaganda working so powerfully throughout Switzerland. After allowing myself to pray so as to gain time and to consult God leisurely, seeing all the good that could be done by us in this country, I finally gave my word and, in answering the holy bishop who had written to me himself, I told him how our affairs stand, along with the desire I had of being sustained in the Court of Rome by his powerful influence. The good prelate accepted with eagerness and I shall soon receive his letter to the Holy Father.

The establishment planned for Fribourg is to open its schools about All Saints Day. The teaching personnel has to be carefully chosen. There is question of equipping a primary school in conjunction with a superior primary school, directed by a former pupil of the polytechnic school.[1]. . . For this, there is question of obtaining the necessary certificates, in Fribourg itself, by means of an examination before the Council of Education. Three teachers will suffice in the beginning.

I have cast my eyes on young Meyer and on Brother Laugeay.[2] The third has not yet been decided upon. Young Meyer, because of his talents and conduct, seems to me suitable as Head, although he hasn't the experience and levelheadedness of Brother Laugeay. In the last analysis, the real Head of the establishment will properly be the pastor of Fribourg, under the authority of the bishop himself. There is every reason that this should be undertaken because of the great difficulties that will have to be overcome, and this is another reason that makes me think young Meyer may be suitable. See for yourself what subjects might be fitting for this establishment, which is likely to become very important from every point of view. In Fribourg, someone from the Society is being asked to come to an understanding with the Reverend pastor about the materiel of the establishment. I see no one more suitable than you to carry out the views of His Lordship and mine. You will look after not only the materiel of the school, but also and above all, the obstacles that the establishment will encounter in the public mind, in the Government, and in the municipality. You will skillfully note all desirable information.

If I were not supposing that this trip is practically impossible for you before the distribution of prizes, I would ask you to undertake it immediately, but since this would

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[3]Fr. Jean Pierre Æby (1795-1868), from Fribourg, was named pastor of this city in 1823 by the assembly of the citizens as was then the custom. During his long career he fought with intrepid courage for the defense of the rights of the Church and the interests of the Catholic faith in the Canton of Fribourg. One of his most beautiful accomplishments was the creation of the Catholic schools of Fribourg confided by him to the Society of Mary. Exiled at the time of the defeat of the Sonderbund, which suppressed these schools, he came back to Fribourg several years later and died there as Provost of the Chapter of the Collégiate Church of St. Nicholas. "In all regards, I prefer your Congregation," wrote Fr. Æby to Fr. Rothéa, "because it is placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Patroness of our diocese."

[1] Doubtless, of Zurich.

[2] Fr. Chaminade adds in a note: "I was forgetting that Bro. Laugeay is not available . . ."

even slightly impair you, postpone it until later, but postpone it as little as possible, and then let me know about it immediately.

You know that I have promised the archbishop of Besançon some details about the plan for the boarding school such as we are contemplating for Saint Remy. The principal idea is to make of the two boarding schools one homogenous and compact whole.[3] The lessons and the courses will have to be graded according to the capacity of the children. There will be no other exterior distinction among the pupils than that of the degree of their instruction and their goodness . . . As this is the method used to introduce the French schools into the best run collèges today, the projected fusion will be easier.

You will be kind enough to come to an agreement with Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine, so as to draw up together your plan of studies, suitably developed. I shall then submit it to His Excellency.

It is useless, my dear son, to recommend discretion to you about your trip to Fribourg and the subjects chosen. Speak of it only to Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

P.S. Before leaving for Fribourg, you will write to the Reverend pastor to inform him that I am sending you to him, according to the desire he expressed to me. His address is Father Æby, Canon, Pastor of Fribourg, Switzerland. You will also give me information about your departure, so you can do the errands I have for you.

* * * *

New encouragements for Father Chevaux in his interior troubles.

1066 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 24, 1838

It seems evident to me, my dear son, that Divine Goodness is trying you. Its friendly hand, although somewhat rough, is striking in order to cure you. In a spirit of faith and sacrifice, submit yourself to what it will be pleased to operate in you. What difference does it make, my dear son, how you happen to be, provided you are honoring God? It is sufficient for you to be such as he wants you to be, in joy or in sorrow, in light or darkness. Always remain in peace then, and protest to the Lord, with the apostle, that neither hunger nor thirst, neither nakedness nor abandonment . . . that nothing will ever separate you from his love.

[3] See Letter 960.

If you are careful to act as you should in the state you are in, you will profit much. Oh, my dear son, how happy is a soul, when it proves to her God, by her fidelity in the most terrible helplessness and abandonment, that she seeks no one but him and that, provided she possesses Him, she regards all the rest as nothing! Possess your God in faith, since he abides in you, and enjoy this precious treasure, although he hides himself from your eyes. Address yourself also to Mary and ask her to be herself a Mother to you, in showing you her son. Guard against giving way to disgust, for then the devil would congratulate himself, to the shame of Heaven and of your faith . . . Cast your eyes on Saint Theresa, who passed ten years in a much more terrible state than yours, and try to imitate her. This strong soul did not shorten by a minute the hours which she had heretofore consecrated to the most sublime contemplation in spite of the fact that to pray was for her an awful torture. . . . On the other hand, you know what singular favors were the fruit of such a long perseverance and of such a painful martyrdom.

Continue to give all your care to the primary boarding school and to the community of Working Brothers. Do your part and leave to God the care of all the rest. In all things, act in such a way that, as far as you are concerned, no blame can be placed at your door.

Goodbye, my dear son, do not be afflicted beyond measure because of your position, for in the eyes of faith it has nothing but what is a source of consolation. Be watchful over yourself, be faithful and take reasonable care of your health. As regards the restitution about which you speak to me, you will do well to say the Masses to make it. It is a good work in which I am also willing to do my share.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender attachment.

P.S. When you have not been able to put in the full time prescribed for meditation, I do not permit you to make up for it at night, as the few hours given to your rest are already short enough.

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1067 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 25, 1838

I have received, my dear son, your messages of the sixteenth of the current month, as well as the letters of Brother David[1] and Father Chevaux, dated last July 20.

Brother David requests to be placed far away from his parents. What is he teaching in your boarding school? I shall see if I can replace him. . . . I am answering Father Chevaux.

[1] Stephen David.

I wrote to you lately, my dear son, to tell you about a trip you should make to Fribourg so as to get information on the following points: 1. the locality; 2. the furniture of the schools and teachers; 3. the salaries which have already been determined: six hundred francs are assigned for each Head and all the expenses for the first establishment are already agreed upon. I understood this to include the trip of the teachers to Fribourg.

This information, which would suffice for an ordinary establishment, cannot be sufficient for me on this one. The reading of two notes which the Reverend pastor passed over to me, besides the report made to me about some Swiss papers, and also even the *Friend of Religion*, enable me to understand the great difficulty which French religious have in getting permission to teach in Switzerland. The ecclesiastical authority which is calling us cannot hide these obstacles, no more than the teachers themselves can hide the fact that they are religious of Mary. Foreseeing these difficulties, I lately sent to the Reverend pastor the royal Ordinance that authorizes us, along with the civil Statutes of the Society . . . The Diète is assembled, but there is no appearance that we shall be able to formulate the request for an authorization, even among the Catholics, because of the spirit that reigns in Switzerland.

Here you have the great question that must be taken up, not only with the Reverend pastor, but also with the bishop who resides in Fribourg. It is the one of Lausanne and Geneve. I am very willing, by all sorts of efforts and precautions, to enter into the views of the clergy and Catholics of this Canton, but we must avoid endangering them and ourselves with them, because with the young religious endangered, the Society would also be endangered by the very fact. There is a very active correspondence going on between French propaganda and the majority of the Swiss authorities. Might not the time have arrived to come to the help of the Catholics of this Canton? Anyhow, we could remain on the alert to seize the first favorable occasion. Here is what you will have to treat very specially. Upon your arrival in Fribourg, go straight to see the Reverend pastor Æby.

I think that the route to be followed passes through Colmar. You will do well to pass by there and to have a few serious but friendly interviews with Brother Coustou. This interesting individual is following a way of perdition 1. by his vanity and by the luxury in his clothes and the objects he has for his private use; 2. by his visits and the company he keeps. You could consult Father Laurent, the pastor of Colmar, about him and he would give you sufficient directions as to what could be done.

The bishop of Lausanne and Geneve has just sent me a letter destined for the Sovereign Pontiff asking him for the canonical institution of the Society of Mary. You will not fail to thank His Lordship.

You will have understood, my dear son, that in bringing together the two boarding schools to the Château, I meant to relieve the place of the primary boarding school and to leave it entirely to the use of the community of workers. If, as a result, we could equip a Normal School, we would see what decision to take. This matter is of the highest

importance for religion and so we must give it the greatest care and solicitude. I shall come back to it later on and speak to you about it in greater detail.

The archbishop of Besançon answered the letter you gave him from me and said he was approving the entire arrangement of Saint Remy and Courtefontaine, as also the continuation of the novitiate in the latter village in spite of all the observations of Father Meyer. These are his own words. You will have him as protector for the boarding school. I am saying now of the boarding school because there should now be question of only one boarding school, in which the teaching will include all the materials of primary and secondary instruction. In this regard, I am awaiting all the observations you will make to me in connection with Fathers Chevaux and Fontaine. I am inclined to believe that nothing should be said at this year's end at the meeting projected and agreed upon. It would be early enough to do it during the course of the vacation by a new Prospectus for the boarding school of Saint Remy. You might draw up a plan for this Prospectus—you understand that when I say you, I am speaking to all the members of the Council—and you will see to it that it is passed over to me as soon as possible.

Marast is to receive some Latinists next year, but only in the first classes. May there be a noble and religious emulation between Marast and Saint Remy! Only good can result from it. The two schools are at a sufficient distance form each other so as not to annoy each other. Furthermore, both belonging to the same Society, what one would seem to lose, would be a benefit to the other without in any way harming the Society itself. The difference that there will be between the two establishments will be that Saint Remy will have the more complete courses.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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To Father Chevaux, Father Chaminade tells of a vocation of a singular character which was to have a happy ending.

1068 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, August 27, 1838

I hasten, my dear son, to announce to you the early arrival in Saint Remy of an ecclesiastic already of a certain age, who came all the way to Bordeaux to present himself for entrance into the Society. A former Jesuit, with twenty-six (?) years of profession, he left the Society of Jesus for the Glorious Days[1] or perhaps at the time of its dissolution in France by the Ordinances of June, 1828, and he has since exercised the holy ministry in Saint Vit, near Courtefontaine, for nearly eight years as assistant pastor, He is provided

[1] The name given the three days of the July Revolution of 1830.

with a highly favorable recommendation given a short time ago by the archbishop. His name is Glussot.[2] As he revealed himself but little in spite of his frank and honest appearance, and as I saw him, according to our Constitutions, the victim of two major irregularities by reason of his former state and of his age, I thought it my duty to refuse him admission. The good man experienced a sorrow that did not permit him to insist, and so he left for Solesmes. Having arrived in Angoulême, a certain something, as he says, induced him to write to me, to express his sorrow and disappointment and to ask me once more to permit him to enter at Courtefontaine.

Touched by his perseverance, I thought it my duty to answer him immediately at the address he indicated, and I permitted him to go, not to Courtefontaine, but to Saint Remy. This subject has talent for philosophy, as he taught it among the Jesuits for eight years before leaving them. I am unaware of the motive for this leaving. I think it is due to some sort of quarrel. You will see, if he presents himself, but he could be of great help to the establishment.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

P.S. As soon as he has arrived, if that really takes place, you will tell him to let me know of it by direct correspondence with me, according to the offer I have already made to him orally, at the time of his departure from Bordeaux. During the vacation, you will occupy him as you will judge suitable.

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Everything being ready for the sending of the Constitutions to Rome, the Founder officially informs the Society of the fact and prescribes prayers for this intention.

In the same Circular, he gives his children directions for the good employment of time during the vacation.

1069 – CIRCULAR TO THE ENTIRE SOCIETY

Bordeaux, August 29, 1838

For some days now, my dear children, I have been proposing to myself to talk with you about the great things that are being accomplished in favor of the Society, but the

[2] Fr. J. B. Glussot, 1788-1848, from Desnes (Jura), entered the Society of Jesus at the time of its restoration in France and left it at his own request, not on the occasion of the "Glorious Days" or Ordinances, but on the occasion of the deep troubles caused in the Society of Jesus by the doctrine of de Lamennais on the bases of certitude or the philosophy of common sense. His case was not unique. Admitted into the Society of Mary after a long trial, he lived in it holily, giving the example of the most perfect religious obedience, and then died suddenly in Marast on February 5, 1848, as he descended the altar.

occupations to which these gave rise did not allow me to follow this wish of my heart any sooner. Finally, by the grace of God, I have put the final touch to our Constitutions. I have done more. I went to Auch to submit them to His Eminence Cardinal d'Isoard, and the pious prelate was kind enough, after a most careful and conscientious examination, to approve them in the most flattering and authentic manner. The bishop of Ajaccio hastened to do as much. There now remains only the sending of all to Rome to obtain the canonical institutions so much desired and, in fact, so very desirable.

Now I have the happiness of announcing to you that all is ready. Our Lords, the bishops, in whose dioceses the Society and the Institute have spread, join us in special letters to the Sovereign Pontiff to solicit this favor. His Eminence and His Lordship of Ajaccio have taken it upon themselves to present them to the Holy See. In consequence, a director of the Seminary of Auch, a priest no less distinguished by his virtues than by his talents, Father Chevallier, is to leave for Rome toward the end of the coming September, charged with this important affair. I am confident that all will have a happy ending.

Let us pray to the Lord, my well-beloved children, be it to thank him for what he has already done, or to beg him to complete his work. Let us pray to Mary to be mindful of us in this beautiful circumstance, and let us tell her with love to show herself to be our Mother, today as always.

Now let us say a word or two about the coming vacation. Do you not admire how well it coincides with our grand project? What a powerful incentive for us to pass it in a holy manner! In truth, we would be rendering ourselves very unworthy of the favor we are soliciting from heaven if we were not to live as true religious, especially at the time of our dealings with the court of Rome.

My dear children, before regulating the vacation timetable, I have consulted God in prayer, and I have asked him how a religious of the Society of Mary is to conduct himself during this time. Here is, then, what it seems to me to be the expression of the will of God.

The vacation is a time of rest for the soul, a time of rest for the body, and a time of preparation for the following year.

I am saying, first, a time of rest for the soul.

Oh, my dear children, how true it is to say that your souls are in need of rest, after an entire year of fatigues, agitation, and sufferings! Ceaselessly occupied with exterior things, ceaselessly drawn away from their God by the exterior functions of teaching, is it not to be feared that your souls have grown accustomed to dissipation and that they experience that uneasiness, that vague anxiety of which the heart of the guilty Augustine was the sad theatre?

But where will you look for this delicious rest of the soul and where will you find it? Your experience, like that of St. Augustine, would suffice to let you know, even if the Holy Scriptures did not tell you in the plainest terms. “My heart,” says the holy Bishop of Hippo, “did not know the sweetness of rest, as long as it sought it outside of you.” “Seek,” says faith to you, “seek the Lord and you shall find rest for your souls.” It is then in the Lord, my dear children, that is to say in the exact and faithful observance of your rules, of your vows, and of your exercises of piety, that you will look for and find this rest. Exclusively occupied with God and with yourselves, so to say, you will consecrate to this care—the only care necessary here below—all the prescribed and available time. The exercises of piety will then be made in community with exactitude and edification. On no pretext whatever will there be any dispensation unless it be a case of real impossibility. The conferences will be more frequent. I desire that there be set each day a definite time for prayer in common for the purpose of obtaining the success of our proceedings at the court of Rome. At the end, the hymn *Veni Creator*, the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, and the *Memorare* will be said, beginning with the day on which this Circular will be received.

I have said, in the second place, that vacation is a time of rest for the body.

It is certain, my dear children, that you need rest from the physical as well as from the moral point of view. The bow that is constantly stretched ends by losing its elasticity. It is permitted to the tired traveler to stop on the road from time to time to regain his breath in anticipation of the rest to be had once the journey is ended. Rest is then necessary, because you have worked hard and long. You need it and it is with happiness that I see Heaven granting it to you.

Profit, then, by the time that is offered you and know how to make the best use of it. The suspension of classes, the recreations, the longer and more frequent walks—here you have, my dear children, the means to satisfy your need to the last degree. Only be careful to conform yourselves to the teachings of reason and of faith on this point. Reason tells you to profit from your walks in the matter of education, as you do from your studies. May all that you see and all that you say, may every step you take and all your proceedings have real utility. Faith, my dear children, is not less exacting. Listen to what it tells you by the mouth of Saint Paul: “Whether you walk or whether you take nourishment or rest . . . do it all for God and with God!”; consequently, do it in the order of obedience and of divine wisdom. In conversations, do not lose sight of the fact that he who is listening to you will one day require of you an accounting of useless words. Banish from your conversations all that may wound charity or justice. May all that you do be directed toward heaven!

I willingly permit that, from time to time, excursions be made in the neighborhood. However, no stop is to be made anywhere to take nourishment. In case of need, care will be taken that light provisions are taken along. Staying out all night is never to be done.

Finally, my dear children, the vacation is a time of preparation, be it for the retreat which ends it or for the school year that follows it.

You will prepare yourself for the retreat by the exercise of prayer, as has been said above. You will also prepare for it in granting yourselves rest according to the views of faith.

As regards your duties, it is by study that you will prepare yourselves to resume them with fruit. To perfect oneself in matters of teaching which are already familiar, to learn the others, as well as to apply oneself in all of them–here we have, in three phrases all the intellectual work of the vacation time.

Thus, my dear children, your vacation will be taken up by three diverse occupations: *prayer, recreation,* and *study*. In the relative importance of these three matters, you will know that prayer, placed in the first rank, is not to be neglected. Circumstances will possibly sometimes prolong study to the prejudice of the recreations and reciprocally, but never to the prejudice of prayer or the exercises of piety.

I give over to the wisdom of the Heads the care of drawing up the vacation regulations according to the plan which I have just traced out.

Order requires that the Rule once determined upon and settled be punctually observed; otherwise, the vacation time will be harmful, and the religious of Mary will fall short of what is expected of them from their profession.

As you plainly see, my dear children, I take it for granted that each one of you will spend the vacation time in your respective establishments. We shall assemble for the retreat and I shall be careful to determine the time for it.

Receive, my dear children, the renewed assurance of my tender attachment, with my paternal blessing.

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Among the letters of recommendation received by the Founder, we shall cite the one from the bishop of Strasbourg in whose diocese were to be found the greatest number of the houses of the Society.

I have learned with genuine satisfaction that His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch, has formally approved the Constitutions of the Society of Mary and those of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. This is a matter of primary justice rendered to this work in which you have been working for a long time with so much constancy and which has already rendered so many services in several dioceses, particularly in mine. The cities which have your establishments do not cease to praise the manner in which these good Brothers form the minds and hearts of the children. Knowing how to attract them, and almost without punishment and constraint, they lead them to study and remain in the path of duty. It would be desirable that still more consideration could be given to their Society,

so as to induce young men to enter it, so that it would be further able, in time, to give establishments to the numerous localities which desire them. Without doubt, the best means to attain this end and to give to the Society of Mary and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary the renown and universal recommendation they merit, would be to obtain from the Holy See their canonical institution, and I can assure you that no one desires this more than I. I would consider myself happy to be able to contribute to this project, persuaded as I am of the need which our youth have of pious teachers and of virtuous women to give them a solid education and to form their hearts to virtue, because this is the double and precious advantage which your Brothers and your Daughters of Mary procure for the children who are confided to them.
(August 17, 1838).

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1070 – ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, August 31, 1838

Your Excellency, I learn with as much pleasure as gratitude, that you wish to ordain to the subdioconate during the coming September, Brother Anthony Fidon, a member both of your diocese and of the Society of Mary. After his ordination, he himself will have the honor of offering to Your Excellency the assurance of his deep gratitude with the usual declaration of discharge which I am hastening to get to him.

So as not to antedate this act of discharge, I left the place for the date blank, telling him to fill it in on the day of his ordination before putting the declaration into your hands. If you think, Your Excellency, that this manner of proceeding is not sufficiently legal, I am eager to give you complete satisfaction.

I have the honor of announcing to Your Excellency that our Lords, the Bishops of Agen, Bordeaux, Saint Claude, Strasbourg, and Montauban have already granted my request. Their letters to the Holy Father, which I have here with me, are written in Latin and adorned with the seal of their respective coats-of-arms. I am confident that you are not forgetting the one Your Excellency promised me with so much goodness. Since these letters will leave for their destination only toward the middle of next month, I shall be very glad to be able to bring your letter to Auch myself along with the others. I hope, then, that Your Excellency will deign to send it to me soon, in case it is not already on the way.[1] I am,

[1] On September 7, the Archbishop sent his letter of recommendation in the flattering terms that follow:
"For many years now a devout brotherhood, which calls itself by the name of Mary, has beneficially served God and neighbor in this diocese. The brotherhood has a mixed composition consisting not only of laymen but also of clerics. They instruct boys in the primary levels and also in the more advanced humanities; they cultivate the fields around their establishment and everywhere and to everyone they offer an example of religious charity, humility, and edification. Yet the final form of this

with the most profound respect and the most lively gratitude, Your Excellency's very humble, very affectionate, and very devoted servant.

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Father Antoine Fidon (1806-1874) is one of the most outstanding religious of the second generation of the Society. Born in Charmoille, near Vesoul, he first attended the seminary of Besançon; then, like Father Chevaux before him, frightened at the thought of the responsibilities of the priesthood which the Superiors of that time imbued with exaggerated Jansenist principles, he returned to his family and devoted his time and talents to business. However, with the attraction to the more perfect life continually haunting him, he entered the Society at Saint Remy where he made his first vows in 1834. Employed successively in Saint Hippolyte, Bordeaux, Courtefontaine, Marast, and Ebersmunster, he assumed in 1840 the direction of the new institution of Sainte Marie in Besançon, a work he carried out for twenty years. Then, in 1860, he was named Provincial of Franche Comté, a function which he fulfilled until his death. His body rests in the cemetery of Courtefontaine alongside of that of Father Lalanne.

In a circular written on the day after his death, Good Father Chevaux retraced, in terms which we are reproducing almost verbatim, the life and virtues of this religious:

"In 1838, Father Fidon made his perpetual vows in Courtefontaine. Here is what he wrote on this occasion to Good Father Chaminade: 'I abandon myself entirely to you, so that you may dispose of me as it will seem good to you, persuaded that you will always know how to suit the burden to my weakness which is great from all points of view. . . . I desire some words on your part about the obligation of the vows and the matter of assuming obligations with God Himself, both which I assume for my entire life. I must have the very precise will of fulfilling them in all their integrity, in such a manner as to be at peace on the great day. . . .' The words, *on the great day*, are underlined in the letter and they were never effaced from the mind of Father Fidon. What led him to the holy rigors of austerity was, and he often repeated it, the fear of being condemned *on the great day*, either because of himself or because of those for whom he had been responsible.

"About the same time, he was advanced to Holy Orders and he again wrote to Good Father Chaminade: 'It would be far better to remain all my life just as I am, rather than to think of this divine ministry if I were not to be eager to acquire the virtues it calls for. In this state of mind, may I dare to recommend myself to your good prayers so that I may obtain from the Lord that he himself some day prepare me to become a worthy minister of the altar?'

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institute is still uncertain; indeed it is lacking that its Rule which was submitted to the high judgment of your Holiness be confirmed by your Apostolic sanction. Having reflected on this in prayer I gladly declare my assent to the present Rule. There is nothing on my part which could stand in the way of this great good."

"In Besançon he joined and included at the same time functions which would have been irreconcilable for anyone else. Thanks to his tireless activity he lent himself to the slightest details, he responded to all calls, and was always present when there was question of service. We have seen what he thought of the obligations of the priest and of the religious. Here is how he understood his duties as director. 'Thrown into this career,' he says in a letter to his Superiors, 'I have done what I could to fulfill what I thought to be my duty. I made efforts to inspire in the pupils piety and devotion toward the Most Holy Virgin; in the religious, regularity, be it for the spiritual exercises or for silence . . . ; I have lived in poverty and I have tried to have it observed by my subordinates.'

"God destined Father Fidon for the greatest trials by sending him corporal sufferings which were no longer to leave him a single day of rest. He had not yet reached an advanced age when already the labors and infirmities of which we speak had diminished his strength and weakened his courage. Although reduced to a visible state of exhaustion in his travels and visits, as well as in the place of his residence, he always refused the reliefs that charity made it a duty for us to offer him. With nothing short of heroic perseverance, he never ceased to struggle against the complaint that was to bring about his end. It can be said that he died with his boots on, because until Saturday, May 2, when he was to undergo a painful operation, he looked after his affairs and followed the rule of the community in all its details. On Sunday, May 3, the progress of the illness caused all hopes entertained on the day before to vanish. He himself no longer wished a cure to be spoken about. He had made the sacrifice of his life to God and from then on devoted his moments to prayer, to short exhortations to his visitors, to acts of patience, of resignation, and of conformity to the holy will of God. 'Pray! Pray for the pupils who are confided to you! Make your meditations well! Be full of charity toward one another! Above all, be humble and obedient!' . . . such were the recommendations which he addressed to those who during this day came to be edified at his side. This day was for him the beginning of *the great day*, that is to say, of the happy eternity.

"Man of faith and of prayer, man of the rule and of penance, Father Fidon bore these marks in his exterior, in his words, and in his conduct.

"*Justus ex fide vivit* ("The just man lives by faith"). Such was the almost invariable theme of the instructions which he gave to the pupils, as well as to the religious, and in truth, faith inspired his resolutions and directed all he did and accomplished.

"Prayer was his favorite occupation and relaxation, since all the time not claimed by the duties of his charge or the demands of nature was invariably consecrated to prayer, in particular to ejaculatory prayers and the recitation of the rosary.

"For him, the Rule came before everything. It was the most serious guarantee against the efforts of the enemy and the most certain pledge of perseverance for the young religious.

"Finally, it is known that by his love for penance and mortification, he ceaselessly strove to come close to the austerities of the ancient Fathers of the Desert whose lives he loved to read in preference to any other subject."

About Father Fidon, see, besides the Circular of May 26, 1874, the *Apôtre de Marie*, II, page 138, and the "*Notice on Father Demangeon,*" p. 25.

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The following letter brings us back to the foundation of Fribourg.

1071 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, September 3, 1838

My dear son, I have just received a letter from Fribourg, the contents of which make me write to you without delay to urge you not to delay your trip to that city. Arrange your affairs in such a way so as to be able to leave right after the distribution of prizes, if this has not yet taken place; and if it has, then make arrangements to leave at the earliest possible date.

It is believed that the more surely to remove all the difficulties, the presence of the religious would be necessary—and they are being asked for—also is a detailed account of the materiel of the establishment . . . To gain time I am going to answer by the same mail that I do not consider the trip of the religious opportune before having the assurance that the local and cantonal authority will not bother them, and that according to the desire of the Reverend pastor, I have engaged one of our Heads to go to Fribourg shortly to come to an understanding on all these matters.

It seems that the examination material for the obtaining of the necessary certificates is not too difficult. What perplexes me is that it seems necessary that a teacher teach the different subjects in German and pass his own examination in that language. It is probable that he must know the German script, but this peculiar difficulty may still be obviated.

The most prominent parents of the Catholic youth have already addressed the request for the authorization necessary for the new school to the Council of Education . . . The form in which they have drawn up their wish seems ingenious to me, for they greatly bestir themselves, and claim to be hoping with great confidence for the realization of their project.

Go, see, weigh, and take all possible information on the spot. I do not think it would be prudent for us to send them teachers before they have secured the solicited authorization. I asked Father Æby to send me a sample copy of each textbook, such as the

cantonal and national history, geography, bookkeeping. . . . but he answered that it would be both difficult and expensive to satisfy me on this point. . . . See if you cannot take care of this matter. At the same time, you could secure copies of the laws relative to teaching, the examination programs and all similar documents.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

P.S. At your return to France, you will hasten to send me a detailed report of everything. If you do not happen to stop in Alsace, send it to me when you get to Saint Remy.

Be sure to write to Reverend Father Æby at the time of your departure to inform him of your coming.

Pay a visit representing me to M. De Nicolay[1] and to the Right Reverend Bishop.

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Father Chaminade consults with Father Perrodin about the vocation of Father Glussot, informs him of the negotiations relative to the sending of the Constitutions to Rome, and speaks to him again about his own vocation.

1072 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, September 10, 1838

My dear and respected son, a priest, employed as assistant in Saint Vit, has lately come to present himself to me asking for admission into the Society of Mary. His name is Glussot. He was dismissed[1] from the Society of Jesus in 1828, after 26 (?) years of membership for, as he says, philosophical opinions indifferent to the faith. Since 1830, he has exercised the holy ministry in Saint Vit, where he won the finest testimonials from the archbishop of Besançon.

Since he presented himself without having been announced after leaving the Benedictines of Solesmes, and as he did not disclose himself as is desirable in the postulant stage, considering his age and his former religious profession which constitute in his case two major irregularities, considering also the justly questionable motive with which he colors his leaving the Jesuits, I thought it my duty to have him understand that he would not be suitable for us. Anyhow, promising not to lose sight of him, I am proposing that he enter into correspondence with me.

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[1] The Marquis of Nicolay, former Peer of France, with whom Fr. Chaminade had had a close relationship before 1830 (Letter 505) and who had taken refuge in Fribourg at the time of the July Revolution.
[1]Fr. Glussot had not been dismissed, but had asked for and received dispensation from his vows. See Letter 1068.

Father Glussot, greatly disheartened at my decision, left without making any observation. I was no longer thinking of the matter, when having arrived in Angoulême, he wrote to me to relieve his heart of the burden that oppressed it. In this letter, rather long, and written with much abandon, he told me he had presented himself only after your counsels and those of Father Bardenet. He indicated that you had given him, so to say, the assurance of his admission and that you had strongly urged him to renounce his project with the Benedictines of Solesmes . . . that he had come only with this hope, and that he felt cruelly mistaken. . . . He adds that "a certain I-don't-know-what" forces him once again to solicit the favor that has been refused to him, and that he is ready to go wherever we may choose to send him. Then, he makes sure that it is in no way sadness or distress that is urging him, but solely the desire to finish in the religious state a life that was consecrated to it long ago.

I reflected, since his departure, that his leaving the Jesuits might well have been the result of a quarrel in the heat of a discussion about his philosophical ideas. What he tells me of your counsels and even of your solicitations to make up his mind to come to us, the testimonial of the archbishop, and his renewed insistence and request made with a great manifestation of sentiments, made me decide to assign him at least temporarily to Saint Remy until further information is received. He answered me in an evident tone of joy that he was satisfied and would leave immediately for his destination.

I would be very glad to know directly from you and Father Bardenet what you know about this person. You must know to what point he has come and why he left the Society of Jesus.

The affairs of the Society continue to improve at a rapid pace. Our Lords the bishops, to whom I have written to invite them to join His Eminence in the request that is to be presented to the Holy See for the canonical institution of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, have already sent me their letters intended for the Holy Father. I shall soon leave for Auch and I shall put these letters in the hands of His Eminence who will send them with the Constitutions to the Sovereign Pontiff as part of his official mail. It is a director of the Auch seminary who is charged with the task of bringing all to Rome and of representing me there. He is to leave toward the end of the month. I have been particularly satisfied with the letter to the Holy Father of His Lordship, the Bishop of Saint Claude, as well as with his letter to me.[1] I shall send both to the Court of Rome. I know I

[1] The letter of recommendation of the bishop of St. Claude pointed out the good accomplished in his diocese by the houses of the Society of Mary, especially by the Normal School of Courtefontaine and by the houses of the Daughters of Mary: "Of what utility are these schools, with what success they are frequented by the youth of both sexes, what discipline, what piety, what zeal animate them—all is proved by the amendment of morals, by the increase of religion, and in the very transformation of the parishes."

And in the personal letter addressed to Fr. Chaminade, the bishop adds these encouraging words: "In the course of my two official visits, I had, Your Reverence, the satisfaction of visiting your two houses of Acey and Arbois. I could not have been more pleased with the condition of these two convents, where I found a good number of boarding students. I also visited the school in Salins, which is very well organized

have no need, my dear and respected son, of recommending this undertaking to your fervent prayers. In writing to Father de Montgaillard and to His Lordship, I had occasion of speaking to them about you. Here you have what the Reverend Vicar General answers me: "As regards Father Perrodin, I think he must still be left with Father Bardenet who has chosen him as his heir. After the death of this good old man, things will easily take another course, and your Congregations will lose nothing by the fact." In finishing his letter, the Vicar General adds: "His Lordship will receive my letter to his address only at his return to Saint Claude," adds Father de Montgaillard in conclusion.

He also tells me about Father Bardenet: "Father Bardenet took part in the retreat of the priests of the diocese. I had all the time I wanted to speak to him of our poor establishment of Saint Claude. A plan has been drawn up, and if, as I expect and hope, no further obstacle is encountered, we shall soon have the entire Jannin house as well adapted for numerous classes as for the conditions needed in a boarding school. The matter is being taken care of at the present time, and in less than a month I shall be able to give you positive news."

Receive, my dear and respected son, renewed assurance of my perfect devotedness.

My respectful regards to Father Bardenet, I beg of you, and also to the community of Acey. Write to me about Father Glussot as soon as possible and tell me frankly what you and Father Bardenet know of him.

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All being ready for the sending of the constitutions to Rome, Father Chaminade wrote his requests and then went to Auch where he was to put the bundle of papers into the hands of Cardinal d'Isoard.

1073 – TO CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI, ROME

Bordeaux, September 16, 1838

Your Eminence, I had the honor of conversing with you in Paris, at the time of your memorable Nunciature in France,[1] about the Society of Mary and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. You have had the time, no doubt, to lose sight of me in the midst of the great affairs with which you have been charged in Rome since that time. Then you deigned to manifest so great an interest in the two nascent orders that you had the charity of offering me your powerful mediation for obtaining from the Holy See their canonical

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and with which I have been perfectly satisfied. Next Saturday, I shall visit that of Orgelet. I know that the entire city is fully satisfied with the good services of your dear Brothers. The School of St. Claude is getting along equally well."

[1] From 1827 to 1830.

institution.[2] If I did not make use of so advantageous an offer, the fact is that the moment ordained by divine Providence did not seem to me to have come as yet. The fact is that I also had the confidence that you would not refuse me your influential protection when this would be needed.

Today, Your Eminence, my advanced age, the ardent wishes of the Society and of the Institute and of our friends, and especially the immense needs of the Church of France, all seem to prove to me that that time has come. In consequence, the remembrance of your many kindnesses, forever engraved upon my soul, brings me to the feet of Your Eminence, to beg of you to lend your support to the works which were formerly so close to your heart, and which, since that time, have only consolidated the more and spread in the midst of the storms and tempests which are afflicting and laying waste our unfortunate country.

Today, Your Eminence, these same Constitutions of the Society of Mary and those of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, which Your Eminence was kind enough to offer to present to the Holy See for approbation, have now had ten more years of experience and success. They have merited the most praiseworthy approbation of His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, Archbishop of Auch, and that, after the most serious examination on his own part and that of his Vicars General. The Archbishops of Bordeaux and Besançon and the Bishops of Ajaccio, of Agen, Saint Claude, Saint Dié, Lausanne and Genève, of Strasbourg and Montauban, unite with His Eminence, and place with him humble supplications at the feet of the pontifical throne, to beg of Saint Peter to grant canonical institution to the two orders of Mary. This is saying, Your Eminence, that all the bishops in whose dioceses we are established have but one voice to attract and call down upon us the blessings of the Holy See.

Shall I dare, Your Eminence, to implore you to endorse the request being made to the Holy Father in the sacred interests of the divine glory and the salvation of souls? Shall I dare to recall to your honorable memory both your generous offers and your infinite kindnesses to me?

The messages, the sending of which his Eminence Cardinal d'Isoard is kind enough to take upon himself, contain, with the two Constitutions, the letters of recommendation of the archbishops and bishops who deign to interest themselves actively for us, and the humble requests that I thought it my duty to address to the Holy Father, one for the Society and the other for the Institute. They are followed by an outline of the designs with which Divine Providence inspired me in the foundation of these two orders.

This letter, Your Eminence, which I have the honor of addressing to you, contains in the same folder, a third request to His Holiness. If Your Eminence does not find it too ambitious in regard to favors of the Roman Church, I dare to ask you to present it yourself at an opportune moment to the Holy Father, and to support it according to the needs of the

[2] See Letters 440, 616, 811.

occasion. I would not want to harm by any indiscretion on my part the other two requests, the purpose of which is so serious.

I was hoping again to invoke your protection at the Holy See, Your Eminence, in favor of a third institution, which although separated from the two others by its special object, admirably contributes to sustain their work by the miracles of Providence, since the end of the last century and which is located in the great city of Bordeaux.[1] But it has been impossible for me to work at the Constitutions which the venerable Foundress, Mlle de Lamourous, has left. I am thinking of occupying myself with it shortly, and if this is not displeasing to Your Eminence, I shall have the honor of submitting my work to your approval. There will not be question, as there is today, of a canonical institution,[2] but of the simple authorization of the religious association and of the approbation of its Rules.

I have confidence, Your Eminence, that the circumstance which makes me importune you at this moment will have, in the enlightened eyes of Your Eminence, a degree of interest which will incline you to excuse the liberty I have taken and to urge with all your power, the happy conclusion to this affair. Your name, already so dear to the Church, will now be such under a new title in the heart of your happy protégés of the Institute and of the Society of Mary, who will bless you before God from age to age as one of their most outstanding benefactors.

It is with happiness that their Superior General comes to place this sacred engagement at the feet of Your Eminence. Deign, Your Eminence, to be pleased to accept it. I have the honor of being, with the most profound respect and the most heartfelt gratitude, Your Eminence's very humble and very obedient servant.

Joseph Chaminade, Honorary Canon.

Founder and Superior General of the Society and of the Institute of Mary.

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1074 – TO POPE GREGORY XVI, ROME

Bordeaux, September 16, 1838

Most Holy Father, the last of your children, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, in profound realization of his extreme unworthiness, but with the most tender and most respectful filial love, has the honor of placing there, with the constitutions of the Society of Mary of which he is the Founder, a brief outline of the designs with which divine

[1] The work of the Miséricorde.
[2] Fr. Chaminade hoped to have the Society of Mary and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary recognized as religious orders, in the canonical sense of the word.

Providence has inspired him in the foundation of this order, the ardent wishes of His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, archbishop of Auch, and the humble requests of several venerable prelates, archbishops, and bishops, who have been kind enough to join his Eminence in soliciting its canonical institution from the Holy See.

The great Pontiff, Most Holy Father, who has so well governed the Church during the evil days of the French Revolution, Pius VII, of happy memory, did not disdain to cast a favorable look on the cradle of the Society of Mary and to enrich it with the most copious blessings by a special Brief, dated May 25, 1819. It is to Your Holiness that the Divine Goodness wants to make us indebted for the consummation of a work begun under such favorable auspices, protected, even propagated, by worthy bishops, and already so rich in fruits of salvation.

The Constitutions, Most Holy Father, placed at the foot of the pontifical throne, so that it may please Your Holiness to approve them, if they are deserving of it, have been tried with success for more than twenty years in several sections of France. They express, in the briefest way possible, the ends, the means, the organization, and the government of the Society.

Conformably to the holy canons of the Fourth Lateran Council,[1] they have been edited in the spirit of the Rule of Saint Benedict, canonically approved by the Church, but with the modification that the times, places, and particular ends of the work have rendered indispensable.

In treating of the great principles of Christian and religious perfection, I thought it my duty, Most Holy Father, to enter into some details, and to remove all possibilities for natural interpretations, as well as to settle minds for all time. I wished to abandon all to the infallible judgment of Your Holiness.

Submissive in mind and heart, according to the precept of my faith, to the successor of Peter to whom alone Jesus Christ has confided the care of feeding his Church, shepherds and flocks, I believe what he believes, I condemn what he condemns, and I adhere immutably to his immutable teaching.

It is in these sentiments, Most Holy Father, that, daring to raise my eyes and voice to your pontifical throne, I implore of Your Holiness, the Apostolic Blessing for the Society of

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[1] The Fourth Lateran Council held in 1215 under Innocent III had voted the following declaration: *"In order that an excessive diversity of religious orders may not cause severe confusion in the Church of God, we firmly forbid anyone to set up a new one. However, anyone who would desire to enter religious life, should take up one of those institutions already approved. Similarly, whoever wishes to found a completely new religious house, shall choose among the Rules and Institutions already authorized."* At the time, this decision was being interpreted to the effect that each new foundation of a religious congregation had to have some connection with one of the religious Rules already approved.

Mary, of which I am by order of Divine Providence, the very unworthy Founder and, as regards myself, the smallest and the most useless of your children, Most Holy Father.

William Joseph Chaminade, Founder and Superior General of the Society of Mary.

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The request relative to the Daughters of Mary is identical, word for word, to the one we have just read, except for the substitutions of the names.

Here is the third request announced.

1075 – TO POPE GREGORY XVI, ROME

Bordeaux, September 16, 1838

Most Holy Father, the Founder and Superior General of the Society of Mary, Missionary Apostolic, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, has the honor of imploring you to open the treasures of the Church in favor of his order, for the greater glory of God and the happy success of his labors, and to accord him the following favors:

I. For his successors, the title and quality of Missionary Apostolic with which he himself has the honor of being invested;

II. For all the priests of the Society of Mary:

1. The power to organize everywhere Sodalities of the Immaculate Conception, to affiliate them with the application of the same indulgences to that of Bordeaux, which has the advantage of being affiliated to the Roman Sodality since July 4, 1819, and where there is no priest of the Society, to name, in case of need, secular priests as directors to sustain and develop them, all under the authority of the Ordinaries;

2. The power to erect the Stations of the Way of the Cross and to bless crosses with the application of the same indulgences;

3. The power to bless the crosses, crucifixes, medals, and rosaries, with the application of all the indulgences accorded by His Holiness in his *Elenchus*, printed in Rome in 1831, and also the indulgences named after Saint Bridget;

4. The faculty of enjoying for themselves and those who assist at their Masses the benefits of privileged altars;

III. *For all the religious of the Society of Mary, priests and laymen*, a plenary indulgence and the Apostolic blessing on the day of their profession and on the day of the annual renewal of their vows.

He now expresses the most ardent wishes for the preservation of the days that are so precious to Your Holiness. He and all his dear children consider themselves happy to be able to place at your feet the tribute and homage of their submission, of their love, of their feeble services, and of their lives, calling with all their strength upon your divine but painful ministry, the consolation and the dew of heaven.

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Then followed an interesting sketch of the work of the Founder.

1076 – TO POPE GREGORY XVI, ROME

Bordeaux, September 16, 1838

SHORT SKETCH OF THE PLAN WHICH THE AUTHOR OF THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF MARY AND OF THOSE OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY HAD IN FOUNDING THE TWO ORDERS.

MOST HOLY FATHER:

If it had been permitted to me to come in person to cast myself humbly at the feet of Your Holiness, I would have revealed to you the most intimate sentiments of my heart. I would have said, with an entirely filial simplicity, how great has been my sorrow for such a long time at the sight of the incredible efforts of impiety, and of modern rationalism and Protestantism, sworn to the ruin of the beautiful edifice of revelation. To erect a powerful dam to withhold the torrent of evil, Heaven has inspired me to solicit from the Holy See at the beginning of this century the letters patent, giving me the title of Missionary Apostolic so as to revive or to reenkindle everywhere the divine torch of faith, while presenting to the astonished world on all sides, imposing masses of Catholic Christians of every age, sex, and condition, who, reunited in special associations, practice our holy religion with neither vanity nor human respect, in all the purity of its dogmas and morals. Filled with this thought and furthermore, urged by worthy prelates, I poured out my entire soul in a humble supplication at the feet of our Holy Father Pious VII, who deigning to listen favorably to my prayer, accorded me most ample powers by a Decree of March 28, 1801. From that time, Most Holy Father, fervent Sodalities—some of men and others of women—were organized in several cities in France. Religion had the happiness of counting a large number of adherents in a relatively short time, and much good was accomplished.

But, Most Holy Father, this means, however excellent it may be when it is wisely used, is not sufficient. Philosophy and Protestantism, favored in France by the ruling power,

have taken hold of public opinion and of the schools, attempting to spread in all minds, especially during childhood and youth, this libertinism of thought, still more baneful than that of the heart from which it is inseparable. Moreover, who could even conceive of all the resulting evils?

I have believed before God, Most Holy Father, that is was necessary to found two new orders, the one of virgins and the other of young men, who would provide to the world by the fact of their good example that Christianity is not an outmoded institution. They would show that the Gospel is as practicable today as it was 1800 years ago; they would challenge the propaganda hidden under a thousand and one disguises; and, they would take over the battleground of the schools by opening classes of all levels and subjects, especially for those classes of people most numerous and most abandoned.

Here you have, Most Holy Father, the design with which Divine Providence has inspired me in the foundation of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary more than twenty years ago.

The Society of Mary began under the auspices of the holy archbishop of Bordeaux, Archbishop d'Aviou, in the capital city of his diocese. Until the death of this venerable prelate, it was the work of his heart. It includes three classes: 1. that of the educated laymen whose principal mission is the spread of the knowledge, love, and practice of our holy religion by the means of teaching; 2. that of the members devoted to manual labor, which has for its object the opening of schools of the arts and crafts for young men of the ordinary classes, to defend or dissuade them from the contagion of the world, and to teach them to sanctify their labors by the practice of the Christian virtues; and, finally, 3. that of the priests, which is the soul and the salt of the two others. When this last class will be sufficiently numerous, it will devote itself in the world to the exercise of all the functions of the holy ministry. It is charged with the direction of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary.

The Order of Virgins, Most Holy Father, which has taken the name of Institute of the Daughters of Mary, was founded in 1816 in the city of Agen, under the protection of the venerable bishop of that diocese, who is kind enough today to beg Your Holiness to grant it canonical institution. With the means at its command, it works toward the same ends as the Society of Mary. Consequently, it occupies itself with the work of teaching, with works proper to persons of their sex, with Sodalities, and with works of charity. Thanks to the cooperation of His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, it can henceforth render to religion the greatest services.

The Constitutions of the Society of Mary, Most Holy Father, and that of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, develop the ends, the means, the personal organization, and government of the two orders according to the spirit of Saint Benedict, adapted, as much as possible, to the immense needs of the present century.

These two orders have taken as their distinctive name that of the august Mary. May they make it known, loved, and cherished in all the earth! For I am intimately convinced that Our Lord has reserved to His holy Mother the glory of being the particular support of the Church in these latter days.

Do not consider, Most Holy Father, the personal unworthiness of the one who has dared to steal from Your Holiness, in his own favor, some precious moments in order to stammer at your feet a few words about the works of which he is but the wretched instrument. However, Most Holy Father, consider the holy Name of Mary under the auspices of which he presents himself before your throne and which constitutes all his glory and all his strength!

William Joseph Chaminade,
Superior General of the Society of Mary

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1077 – TO CARDINAL d'ISOARD, ARCHBISHOP OF AUCH

Auch, September 25, 1838

Your Excellency, with affairs as serious as they are urgent forcibly recalling me to Bordeaux next Saturday at the latest, I am taking the liberty of asking Your Eminence to deign to put the finishing touches on your messages to Rome.

What a happiness and consolation it would be for me, Your Eminence, if I were able to see with my own eyes, next Thursday,[1] the day on which I must leave Auch, the two letters of Your Eminence: that for the Sovereign Pontiff and that for Archbishop Lambruschini, his Secretary of State! Thus the purpose of my journey would be happily accomplished and there would then remain for me only to call down, with all my strength, the blessings of Heaven upon the wishes of Your Eminence, upon those of our Lords, the archbishops and bishops who are kind enough to interest themselves in us, upon those of my heart, as upon those of all my children, and finally upon the steps of the pilgrim of Mary[2] charged with depositing them at the feet of the pontifical throne.

I would have come, Your Eminence, to present my humble petition in person if the fear of importuning you and if the infirmity with which the good God is afflicting my ears[3] had not made it a duty for me to refuse myself the honor and the pleasure of dealing directly with you.

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[1] September 27.
[2] Fr. Chevallier.
[3] Perhaps Fr. Chaminade was already beginning to suffer from the deafness which was to increase with his last years, but which partly disappeared in the summer of 1849 as the result of medical treatment.

May Your Eminence deign to accept my deep regret, as well as the token of the profound respect and the lively gratitude with which I have the honor of being, of Your Eminence, the most humble and most obedient servant.

Father Chevallier himself could not go to Rome as had been agreed upon and settled, but he offered to see to it that what Father Chaminade was sending would safely reach one of the Roman acquaintances of Cardinal d'Isoard, Canon Valentini, a Roman, of the Chapter of the Basilica of St. Lawrence in Damaso.

New circumstances again prevented the execution of this project and the various papers, brought together in Auch, came back to Bordeaux, from whence they left for Rome at the end of December, carried by a businessman of this city, as we shall see in what follows in this correspondence.

Finally, on January 24, 1839, Canon Valentini was able to acknowledge their reception to Father Chaminade.

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Correspondence is resumed on the subject of the foundation in Fribourg.

Brother Clouzet went there as he had been ordered to do, and he made his report on the projected work. Father Chaminade answers him even from Auch where he had just arrived. In this same letter, he recalls to him the principles of religious poverty, especially in what concerns the furnishings of the houses of the Society.

1078 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Auch, September 21, 1838

The details which you give me in your letter of the tenth of the current month, my dear son, about your interviews with the Reverend pastor of Fribourg, joined to those which you have sent me from Fribourg itself, have informed me sufficiently. I shall send three subjects, but it will mean a great deal if they can be there before All Saints Day. For the two French schools, I am assigning Brothers Benedict Meyer and David. They will easily be able to come together and leave, following the same route you have followed. I shall not delay in sending them their obediences. For a long time I have been uncertain about the choice of the teacher of German, but I am thinking of deciding upon Brother Benedict Enderlin. He would be leaving alone from the place in which he would happen to be once he has received his obedience. I would desire that all three leave only after their respective retreats. The retreat in Alsace will take place only toward the end of October, just as in Saint Remy, but it will be earlier in Courtefontaine. Brother David would then be able to attend this latter one. I shall write to the Reverend pastor of Fribourg.

It is annoying, my dear son, that my letters do not get to you on time. You might be able to say a word about it to the postal authorities of Vesoul. Might a better address be used than the one we have been using thus far?

I had foreseen the difficulty of the fusion of the two boarding schools.[1] This fusion will be sufficient so that the two works will form but one boarding school, in spite of the separations indicated by the Academy, so that we may be able to profit by the exemption from the university fees.[2] It is very easy to separate the pupils in class, in the study room, and in the dormitory, and to give to each division of the boarding school two directors, one having a certificate and the other having a diploma. Many things, especially penmanship and linear drawing . . . are common to the pupils of both divisions, and in consequence, may be taught in such a way that there will be but one class for all and but one teacher for each subject. Several advantages will result: the number of teachers will be lessened, the pupils will be better acquainted with one another, and all manner of distinctions will disappear. At Saint Hippolyte, the Academy pays practically no other attention than to the diplomas and certificates. The recreations are in common, just as are the refectory service, the walks, attendance at church, etc. There is no other distinction there than that established for the sake of order. Nevertheless, be severe as regards the separations in class, in the study room, and in the dormitory when being questioned, especially in the beginning.

It is not permitted to receive as presents fancy goods, more costly than such allowed by the Regulations, whether in the furniture or in the clothing. With all the more reason would such articles as would come from one's family or that would be brought along on entering the Society, such as gold watches, personal and private umbrellas, overcoats, boots, etc., be forbidden. The Heads and the Superiors who need a private room, as is generally necessary for the priests, may admit only the necessary articles of furniture, preferably such as are simple and poor. This is according to the spirit of our Rules. Strictly speaking, some framed pictures could be introduced, not precisely for decoration, but for piety. Fancy frames, charming pictures, however estimable elsewhere are there forbidden. There should be no idea of establishing picture galleries.

So as not to wound the delicacy or hurt the feelings of his pupils and their parents, Brother Coustou could have moved the chest of drawers and the chairs to the parlor. It is to be presumed that he would no longer have been given such presents.[1] As for yourself, my dear son, you would do well to place in the chapel, the two pictures of which you speak, just as you have done with that of the beautiful virgin.

My dear son, let us not be religious halves for such religious end by not being religious at all, even if they were three-fourths religious. Such can hardly hope for heaven,

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[1] See Letters 960 and 1065.
[2] Collected from the pupils of secondary education.
[1] Similar presents on the occasion of his feastday.

because only the just enter there, and the word “just” is synonymous with that of saint. I am stopping here and embracing you tenderly.

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1079 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 7, 1838

I am satisfied, my dear son, with the manner you looked after my commissions in Fribourg. The Reverend pastor being absent and you having been able to see him but for a few hours, it was not easy for you to go deeply into questions of policy, the knowledge of which, nevertheless, could be of great use to us. Anyhow, I have found this respected pastor to have a very fine character, one worthy of all confidence. However, today when there are real threats of war and the advance of French troops against Switzerland and Genève as objective, and Genève itself wisely making its preparations for resistance, would it be prudent for our young religious to enter Switzerland and to present themselves in Fribourg?[1]

I have definitely named Brothers Meyer, David, and Benedict Enderlin. I told Father Meyer that you would take care of the traveling expenses of the first two. If there is no inconvenience, they can leave together from Besançon, following the same route that you took. Brother Benedict, who I am joining to them as teacher of German, will leave alone from Ebersmunster at the end of the retreat, since it is quite close to Switzerland and even to Fribourg.

I do not believe that France is seriously considering war against Switzerland, but nevertheless, if these appearances should cause dangers in communications, the departure of our young men would have to be postponed. You might write about it to Brother Benedict, addressing your letter to Father Rothéa so as to have him give it to him immediately. You, better than anyone else, will know what had best be done under the circumstances. Some troops are leaving Besançon by the orders of General Jeannin. Without doubt, there must be no cowardice on your part, but neither must there be rashness.

[1] In fact, there were rumors and threats of war between France and Switzerland. The future Emperor of the French, then Prince Louis Napoléon, was sojourning in Arenenberg in Thurgovie, in the castle of Queen Hortense his mother, and was plotting. France called for the expulsion of the seditious; but Switzerland refused the banishment of any subject, because the Prince had himself naturalized as a Thurgovian citizen. The French Ambassador was recalled from Berne and a division of twenty-five thousand men was concentrated in Lyon. On October 14, Prince Louis Napoléon left Switzerland and calm was reestablished.

I have not written to the Reverend pastor of Fribourg, but you can write to him immediately that following the report you have given me of your trip to Fribourg, I have not delayed in sending obediences to our three young religious whom I thought the best fitted to meet the views of His Lordship and his own. They are:

Brother Benedict Meyer, brother of Father Leo Meyer, master of novices in Courtefontaine. This young man has conducted all his classes well and has considerable teaching experience. Last year, he was director of the large boarding school of Courtefontaine. He has great love for instrumental music, in which he has a certain skill, but he may be employed in teaching music only to a very moderate degree, owing to the weakness of his lungs. He also has taste and talent for drawing, etc. He is an Alsatian by birth. I have reason to believe that he knows five languages: Latin, Greek, French, German, and Italian. I have appointed him Head, although he is younger than his two confrères.

The second is Brother Benedict Enderlin, Alsatian by birth, all of whose education has been received in this country. He has been teaching in Alsace for many long years. He is qualified to teach German and also the ordinary school subjects in German. He has always been remarkable among the teachers in the Department, as much in the eyes of the Academy of Strasbourg as among the assistant prefects and other civil authorities. His knowledge of primary teaching is also quite varied. . . .

The third is Brother David. You will add here his baptismal name and the modest talents he has in primary teaching, although he has successfully made all his studies. I am taking all necessary measures so that they may be at their post by All Saints Day. . . .

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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1080 – TO BROTHER ENDERLIN,
EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, October 10, 1838

My dear son, by this time you must have received my letter of obedience for Fribourg. Here I am adding this note only for a few slight observations.

1. If the rumors of war between France and Switzerland should become more serious, Brother Clouzet will write to you about it. Until the present, it does not seem that these rumors will harm, in any way, either the opening of classes or the relations of the one country with the other.

2. Brother Meyer has received his obedience with submission.[1] He has but one regret—and I am very glad that this is a regret—that of being named Head. He is, as you may know, the youngest of the three. I knew it well, but I have reasons which made me overlook this consideration. No matter. To console him, I shall write to him that you will be his necessary counselor, since you are older and have greater experience. In this way, all will work out well and to the satisfaction of everybody concerned.

Try, my dear son, to make a good retreat and may you accomplish your mission as a true religious, as a true child of Mary.

Receive my fatherly greetings.

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1081 – TO BROTHER ENDERLIN, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, October 18, 1838

My dear son, I have read with great interest your letter of the eleventh of the current month. Your dispositions and the observations it contains are all equally satisfactory to me.

You understand the importance of the mission which is being confided to you, and you find yourself lacking in the sentiments that ought to animate you in the face of such an enterprise. Without here examining to what degree the remains of the old man are still in you, nor what the weakness of your virtues happens to be, work seriously from this moment on at the purification of your heart from all remains of self-love, vanity, the search for glory, and the esteem of men. Attach yourself, more and more, by a lively faith to Jesus Christ—humble, poor, and carrying his cross. Be truly religious. Only zeal for the glory of the Lord and of his august Mother will animate whatever you do or undertake. Before leaving, you might wait for what Brother Clouzet may have to tell you. I shall give him your Ebersmunster address. In the meantime, work at the proper regulation of your inner self. You might also study your German grammar. The examination you will have to pass will, I hope, not amount to much, but you will have to be of service to your Brothers in several matters, for

[1] Here is how, in a few words, Bro. Benedict Meyer acknowledged reception of his obedience: “My Good Father, if I had listened to the first sentiments that I felt at the reception of the letter with which you have honored me, I would have spoken to you at length of the fears I experienced in seeing on the one hand, my incapacity which is vastly greater than you seem to believe, and on the other, the importance of the post that you desire to confide to me. However, remembering that you have cast your eyes upon me only after mature reflection and after having consulted God, I have the firm confidence that the expression of your will is that of God. What better can I desire in this world than in all things to accomplish the divine Will? Thus, my Good Father, in this thought and conviction nothing frightens me. Should you send me to the most distant countries, your order that I should obey would suffice, possibly not without difficulty and some sacrifices, but at least without hesitation. In this way, my good Father, be assured that I am ready to bring all the necessary sacrifices as well as to do my very best for the success of the new establishment.” (October 1, 1838).

example, in penmanship. You will distribute all the teaching subjects among the three of you.

As regards Ammerschwir, you must know that I have named Brother Fischer to replace you. I have also named Brother Stinzi for the little class.[1] Brother Fischer will examine him seriously and have him work, for it is finally necessary that it be determined whether this subject is fit or unfit for the work of teaching.

I am including here the nomination of Brother Hoffman as director of Ribeauvillé. You will tell him from me, as you give it to him, to write to me a few days after he has taken over his functions, about 1. all that may be of interest to his interior life; and, 2. all that may concern the establishment of Ribeauvillé.

In writing to Father Rothéa, I made a strong plea that he receive gratis the young postulant whom you have prepared for the novitiate. He will surely receive him.

May the Lord shower upon you, my dear son, abundant blessings. Receive my tender embraces.

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1082 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 18, 1838

My dear son, I am still awaiting news from you regarding the departure of our three young men for Fribourg. I take it for granted that you have announced them to the Reverend pastor, but would it not be advisable for you to write again to tell him that their departure is being delayed only by the movement of troops and of their arrival at the frontier? At the same time, you could ask the Reverend pastor if there would not be another motive for delaying this departure because of the irritation which the Swiss authorities might feel

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[1] Bro. James Stinzi (1808-1851), from Sainte Croix en Plaine (Alsace), entered the Society in St. Remy in 1831, and was employed as professor in various schools, in particular those of Ribeauvillé and Sainte Marie aux Mines, where he died. Bro. Hoffmann, director of Ribeauvillé, pointed him out as “docile, full of good will, a model of virtue and of application. If he did not succeed as might have been expected,” he explains, “it is because he was badly directed.” (Letter of October 16.)

His cousin, John B. Stinzi (1821-1900), following his example, entered the Society in 1837, after having taught for some years in the schools of Alsace. He left for America after Fr. Leo Meyer in 1849, and there successfully directed schools in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dayton, and Rochester for nearly twenty years, and fulfilled the functions of Inspector of the Province. He died there piously in a happy old age, leaving the memory of one of the most virtuous religious of this epoch. (About Bro. John B. Stinzi, see *Messenger de la Societe*, II, page 438.)

A third religious of this name, Bro. Andrew Stinzi (1838-1902), also from Sainte Croix en Plaine and possibly a relative of the first two, spent the greater part of his life in the houses of formation as professor of the postulate of Ebersmunster, then, for thirty years, as Assistant to the master of novices of Austria in Graz where he died. He was an excellent religious, remarkable for his piety and mildness.

toward the French even at the time when there might be some thought of conciliation. Beg him to inform you as definitely as possible, and tell him that I am going to profit by these delays, so that the professors may exercise themselves more and more in the virtues of their state and render themselves useful in their respective establishments until the moment when the time of their departure will be announced to them. I have just written to Brother Enderlin not to leave before he has received a letter from you addressed to Ebersmunster. I shall write the same to Brother Meyer. You will hold back Brother David and let him keep busy preparing himself. We must not be sending half-religious to Fribourg for so important a mission. My dear son, place in this correspondence all suitable honesty, exactitude, and prudence . . .

How many miles is it from Besançon to Fribourg? Is the trip easily made and at low cost?

In the arrangements which Father Fontaine has proposed for the school year 1839 in Saint Remy, you answered that you would stay with the community—I imagine, it is that of the Working Brothers—that it was advisable that Father Fontaine take charge of the entire direction of the boarding school, and that you would take charge of all the registers and of the financial matters. I would be well pleased, my dear son, with this arrangement provided you remain with the community of Working Brothers to reform it completely, so as to imbue it with the spirit of our Constitutions, that finally, this third part of the Society will respond to the ends we have proposed to ourselves. I spoke to you somewhat about this at the time of my stay in Saint Remy. You understand that if there is still something to be reformed in you, there would be the obligation of working at it constantly; and what a happy obligation this would be to place yourself entirely in the hands of our Lord Jesus Christ in order to form for him true disciples! You could train Rosette, if he is capable of it, to replace you when you would be absent, because I foresee that you will have to be absent for some time, more or less long.[1] While waiting so that you can have a complete copy of the Constitutions, I shall have an extract made for you of what more particularly concerns the class of the Working Brothers.

Since we have entered, my dear son, upon the way that leads directly to heaven, let us walk upon it with giant steps!

I have received, one after the other, my dear son, the letters of Father Chevaux and those of Father Fontaine. I shall shortly answer them all. Share with them my tender embraces.

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[1] Fr. Chaminade was thinking at that time of confiding to Bro. Clouzet the post of Head of Temporalities, made vacant by the withdrawal of Bro. Mémain on November 11, 1837.

By this same mail, Father Chaminade gives Father Fontaine precise directions on various points of religious poverty and various questions relative to the interests of the Society in Franche Comté.

1083 – TO FATHER FONTAINE, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 20, 1838

My dear son, what pleasure your letter of the twelfth of the current month caused me! It is for me a matter of real consolation.

The five weeks of absence which you have just spent in giving retreats have been well employed, but it must be admitted that our religious Sisters of Acey and Arbois have been too little attentive in the matter of respecting your time.

A few days ago Brother Clouzet notified me of the complaints of the archbishop on the subject of poverty of your chapel. He had already had a new altar made. Among other decorations, he had the intention of having paintings made that would cost in the neighborhood of four thousand francs. I am very glad that it is to be put in really decent shape, but not just now, to run up a bill of four thousand francs for paintings, considering the condition of real want in which we happen to be. If the Archbishop of Besançon really knew our situation, far from ordering expenses, he would forbid them.

I am going to give an answer, my dear son, to your various difficulties:

1. The entreaties which Father Bardenet[1] could have made to you to eat meat, whether at dinner or at supper, could easily have been matters of mere courtesy. Anyhow, they will cease on his part as soon as you speak to him of your Rule, and he will surely be edified as a result.

2. To accept coffee or liquors, whatever be the occasion, means exposing oneself to many requests and solicitations. It is far better to utter a categorical refusal, such as: I never take any.[2]

3. You have done well in accepting to dine at the house of Mme d'Oussières[3] on the representations of the Mother Superior.

4. Nor have you done wrong in not accepting to dine in the house of the Reverend pastor of Mesnay.[4]

5. The same as regards the dinner with the pastor of Arbois, considering the circumstances in which you happened to be.

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[1] At the time of the stay of Father Fontaine in Acey for the retreat of the Daughters of Mary.
[2] Faithful to this recommendation of the Founder, Father Fontaine could write to him the following year: I have been very much urged and even importuned to take liquors, but knowing your mind in the matter, I absolutely abstained, October 17, 1839.
[3] Foundress and benefactress of the house of the Daughters of Mary in Arbois.
[4] A place close to Arbois where Father Bardenet had been pastor before the Revolution.

I now come, my dear son, to the second series of your just observations.

1. I shall try not to lose sight of the older Brother Chevassu in Besançon, nor of Saint Remy, on the subject of secondary as well as of primary teaching, but in the meantime, do as you have done in the past: make the best of the situation.

2. The reproach of the Archbishop on the subject of the costume is but too well founded. The example of the lay directors in Saint Remy caused me much sorrow on this matter in several establishments. I am hoping that little by little the reform will be complete.

3. A visit of the superioress general to the Convents of Acey and Arbois would really be useful; but her absence would have still greater drawbacks; then there is her health, the expenses and also Father Bardenet who has made himself to be feared. . . .

4. I greatly desire that Father Chevaux have absolutely nothing to teach. I recently said as much to Father Glussot so that he himself would supply for the needs that might arise as a result.

I wrote to Brother Clouzet by yesterday's mail that the resolutions you tell me you have taken pleased me much. I made it a point to give him the reason, namely, that you really wanted to make the Working Brothers a real religious community. He was to place himself at its head, to make a complete job of the reform, etc., etc.

There is no question of Father Fridblatt for Saint Remy, and if there should happen to be, it would be for the exercise of zeal and to serve as chaplain for the community of Working Brothers.

Fathers Perrodin and Bardenet have just given me excellent reports about Father Glussot. You will consult with him. If he can really be admitted, then he must not be kept waiting. I shall say a word about it when answering Father Chevaux. A little later, I shall speak to you about M. Dumont and M. Guillegoz.

You see, my dear son, by all these observations, that it is necessary that you still stay in Saint Remy, although I would be very happy to be able to withdraw you from the place. I have some intention of calling you to Bordeaux to be with me; but we must let this project follow its normal course.[1] Bring yourself, as much as possible, entirely up to date on all that refers to instruction, education, and teaching.

[1] Fr. Chaminade was thinking, without doubt, of confiding to Fr. Fontaine the post of Head of Instruction, vacant since the preceding September 9, by the resignation of Fr. Lalanne. The need of leaving this religious at the head of the St. Remy boarding school prevented this project from being realized.

You have done well, my dear son, to write to me about all your ideas with the greatest candor and simplicity. Let us seek only God in the entire abnegation of ourselves. Such must be our slogan.

Receive my tender fatherly embraces.

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1084 – TO BROTHER MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 20, 1838

My dear son, I have much delayed my answer to your letter of last June 9, but you have lost nothing thereby since I have had your letter constantly before me on my desk. Thus I got to thinking of you almost every day, without counting the time I allot to prayer for all my children.

For some time, I have had in mind a project for you, but this is not yet the opportune time to talk to you about it. Always keep advancing in the love of God and in the hatred of yourself, that is to say, of the child of Adam, because the love of God will bring it about that you will love yourself as his child, so as to render yourself worthy of him, while uniting yourself more and more to Jesus and to Mary and endeavoring to imitate them.

You ask me, my dear son, in what fidelity consists for you. It consists 1. in obeying exactly all that is prescribed for you by the general Regulations of the Society, by the particular counsels I have given you, and by those which the present director of your conscience may give you; 2. it would consist also in a general correspondence, not only to grace or to all the graces you receive, but to grace as a whole, or to all that is included in the graces that are granted to you. It is under this last point that you will always be able to grow in fidelity.

It is only now, my dear son, that I notice that at the time of your letter you were suffering from pains in the pit of the stomach that were quite considerable. Not having received any answer to your letter, you should have written to me again about this ailment. Are you now entirely cured? Or has the malady grown worse? Has it perhaps only diminished? If it still exists, speak of it to Brother Clouzet, at my request, and he will have the kindness to speak to me of it himself. There is no question, my dear son, of increasing your penances, until I have learned that you are no longer ill, that you are feeling really well and that you have fully regained your former strength.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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1085 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 21, 1838

Father Glussot, in fact, wrote to me, my dear son, as soon as he arrived in Saint Remy. His letter announced a certain agitation in his soul. In my answer I forewarned him of the temptations he would have to encounter, especially in the beginning. I recalled to him the evangelical maxim: *Nisi efficiamini sicut parvuli*. (Unless you become like little children, etc.) I told him always to open his soul completely to you, and to give you the permission of telling me all that you would judge necessary for me to know, and that furthermore, all would soon be favorably decided.

I wrote to Fathers Perrodin and Bardenet about him. Both praise him highly. His leaving the Jesuits seems to have been decided upon, only after a quarrel of self-love, following some discussion. I had not noticed his extreme slowness in eating and he had not spoken to me of any kind of infirmity. He must be shown confidence for he was warmly approved in the diocese of Besançon. The archbishop gave him a praiseworthy certificate at his departure from Saint Vit. You may permit him to hear the confessions of the boarders. On the other hand, you will get to know him better by observing him at work. Weigh and observe all with Father Fontaine and write to me.

Upon the advice of the council, I am willing to admit Brother Xavier Wodling[1] to perpetual profession. The same, as regards temporary vows for M. Rare.

The disappearance or withdrawal of M.S. in the manner of which you speak to me, would be a serious kind of apostasy, and if he comes back, he would have to expiate his fault by penance. At this time, I recall that he wrote to ask me for permission to delay his entrance until the cure of his malady, but he was not complaining. He must have my answer in hand. I should have had news of his leaving.

I shall try to follow up the affair of Brother Salmon. I have already written about it to Father Meyer.

Tell Ravoir to write to tell me all that has happened to him since he came to Saint Remy and also to tell me about his present dispositions. Someone will be kind enough to serve him as secretary. I shall answer him.

Yes, my dear son, I pray and always express wishes for your spiritual advancement. Have confidence in the Lord and his holy Mother. Renew yourself in courage. *Qui coepit opus bonum, ipse perficiet*. (He who has begun the good work, will bring it to perfection.)

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[1] Bro. Xavier Wodling (1811-1863) from Elsenheim (Alsace), entered the Society in St. Remy in 1834 and spent his life at St. Remy, and at Ebersmunster, occupied with garden work. Fr. Chevaux regarded him as "faithful, obedient and laborious, gifted with a fine simplicity, sufficient religious instruction and with a tender and candid piety."

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

P. S. I have been my own secretary so that I could send Brother Bonnefoi to an exercise of the retreat. I have just read your letter of April 5. I forgot to tell Brother Clouzet that at the coming of the pupils of the primary school, and often after that, it will be satisfactory for them to go to the château until they are well accustomed to it and their parents are well satisfied with the change. He should act with them as Father Fontaine acted with the parents and pupils of the secondary school. You are to come to an understanding and aid one another so that all may work out as smoothly as possible.

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1086 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, October 22, 1838

Father Caillet brought me two letters, one from Mother Chantal and one from Mother Gonzaga. Both are good and so I shall try to profit by them so as to do them a little good. The latter has well grasped what does so much harm to Mother Chantal in her manner of teaching. Mother Chantal has done harm to Sister Mary Sophie[1] and, doubtless, to several others. Mother Gonzaga will be able to talk to you about it.

Do not worry about Sister Mary Sophie. Do not seem to notice what is going on in her inner self. If you do make any remarks or reproaches to her, do so moderately. Do not blame Mother Chantal with her or before her. Be especially kind to her but without affection. It is to be presumed that, little by little, her soul will resume its usual calm, and then you will be able to begin to deal with her, etc. Generally, before all treatment of a spiritual malady, act so as to win the esteem and confidence of the patients as much as possible. It will perhaps be good to have Sister Mary Sophie tell all that she has at heart and all she should want to report of Mother Chantal, good and bad, but only between the two of you. Share her griefs all you can.

Father Caillet really needed the fifteen hundred francs that I was carrying so that he himself could make payments. He told me that you had received one thousand francs which you destined for me or which were destined for me, it doesn't matter which. Have them sent over to me as soon as possible, but in a way that is absolutely secure. The machine for autography and lithography[2] has just come from Bordeaux with all its attachments. It has to be paid for on delivery.

[1] The future Mother Mary Sophie Baud, fourth superioress general of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, 1874-1888.
[2] Destined for the printing of the Constitutions. See Letter 1088.

There are two verbal accounts of the Councils held in Auch: that which concerns the taking of the habit presents no particular difficulty and you did well to approve it. That which concerns the three establishments will suffer very little from this approval. 1. All is being prepared for Barran as regards materiel and personnel; 2. I have lately indicated the repairs that are to be made for Cazaubon, and I have said that M. Laborde Lauran, better than anyone else, could start making them. As regards the personnel, Mlle Laborde Lauran is to be superioress; Mlle Barthe, second in command. It will be necessary to add two others to these. Sister Mary Theresa has the qualities and the virtues of a superioress. On the other hand, we shall always be able to change her if we believe it necessary. I think she would be prepared for such a move; 3. There seems to be no difficulty at all for the third establishment in Labastide Savès, if the materiel is ready.

I am stopping here, my dear child, and you know very well that work here is never lacking, but let us take care not to preoccupy ourselves. Let us always be indifferent toward work, and may all our ardor be concentrated in our heart which must seek only to please God in all things.

Receive this new assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

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The designation of Brother Benedict Meyer for Fribourg had caused anxiety in the community of Courtefontaine where this young religious, under the control of his brother, Superior of the establishment, was directing the primary boarding school with success. From there, touching letters were sent to Father Chaminade by Father Leo Meyer and by other religious, requesting that Brother Benedict Meyer not be sent to Fribourg, although he had already been announced for that place. There remains only a fragment of the answer of the Founder to the community.

1087 – TO THE COUMMUNITY
OF COURTEFONTAINE

End of October, 1838

. . . the Catholics of this important city. This promise has been made by Brother Clouzet who was sent to weigh and examine the project in all its phases.

Consider, my dear children, if there would not be an injustice in standing back. As soon as the promise was made, the Catholics bought a large house and furnished it as the first establishment, and if the project meets with success they have promised to buy a still larger one.

Consider, my dear children, whether it be proper, not only to compromise the Society of Mary by embarrassing its major Superior, but also the first heads of the Catholic Canton of Fribourg, of whom one is a Deputy in the Federal Diète of the nation.

Consider above all, the importance of the mission, not only for Fribourg itself, but for the entire Canton or the State of which this city is the capital . . . You understand that here I cannot explain myself too much.

What is to be done in a circumstance so provoking for you, for the Reverend pastor,[1] and for me?

My dear children, we all have the same end in view, the same prospect, the same interest—that of working with all our strength at the support and propagation of the faith, each one in the post assigned to him for this purpose. We have the greatest need to remain always perfectly united. The divergence of ideas and feelings could kill the Society, and it is necessary that there be but one sole Head in the Society, just as there is but one sole Head in the Catholic Church. All the subordinate authorities, at whatever level of elevation they may be placed, are always to submit their ideas and their sentiments to this major Superior.

I am very sorry, my dear children, not to be able to do at this time all that you would have desired, but I fondly hope that your zeal and your devotedness will help you to make up for it.

Receive here, the expression of my inviolable devotedness.

* * * *

The answer of Father Chaminade to Father Leo Meyer has not come down to us, but it was severe, as is indicated by the following letter to Brother Clouzet, to the point that the good religious felt the need of excusing himself with the Founder, and he did it in these touching terms:

You desire that I explain myself about the principles which direct me in the pretended struggle that I am obliged to carry on against you. Oh, my Good Father, if you could read in the depths of my heart, or if at least I could, by means of some expression give an adequate idea of the pain and sorrow I am experiencing! I do not know how you could have imagined that I should want to provoke a quarrel with authority, or to state it better, a quarrel of one authority with another—I, who desire from the bottom of my heart only the smallest post of which you judge me capable! . . . (October 25)

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[1] Father Leo Meyer, pastor of Courtefontaine.

Father Chaminade keeps Brother Clouzet informed about his difficulties.

1087bis – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, October 24, 1838

I have just received, my dear son, your letter of the eighteenth of the current month, and, by the same mail, that of Father Æby, pastor of Fribourg, also dated the eighteenth. I am going to quote the most important passages to you.

"Now that everything is very calm hereabouts, our request is going to be addressed to the State Council. This Council, I hope, or the Supreme Council, will subscribe to it, but the matter will drag along until after All Saints Day . . . Good Brother Clouzet must have written to you that I was able to see him for only a very short time. I had been absent for a week and his letter, telling of his coming, had come to Fribourg only after my departure. I regret that this excellent religious left so soon after my arrival and that his stay in Fribourg was not made more agreeable. The repairs of the house, which Brother Clouzet saw only started, are now finished and the house now looks entirely different.

"As soon as I receive a favorable answer, I shall let you know of it. In the meantime we are working and praying."

I wrote to Father Meyer and I am speaking to him with a firmness, which seems to me proper, about the almost odious manner in which he receives the orders that are being sent to him. I told him he may retain his brother, as well as Brother David, until a new order is issued, and I asked him to prepare them well, by penetrating them thoroughly with the religious spirit, so as to fulfill worthily a mission which is likely to become so important for religion.

I rejoice, my dear son, that, as far as exterior things are concerned, you are cutting down matters to what is absolutely necessary, conformably to our state. This is proof to me that what is interior is falling more and more into line. You may make use of your old cloak on your trips by removing from it whatever might still suggest a certain ostentation, if anything of the kind should still exist.

I understand that you cannot retreat from the enterprise you have entered into for the decoration of the chapel since the work is already quite advanced.[1] It would seem from your second last letter that the painting was to cost up to four thousand francs and that, from the one to which I am now answering, it would seem that the entire decoration, the altar, and the large painting of the Virgin . . . etc., would be included in this sum. It is quite surprising that you have agreed so quickly to so expensive an enterprise, knowing our

[1] See Letter 1083.

extreme want. Well, the thing is done and since there were good intentions and a certain amount of good faith, let us talk no more about it. Be kind enough to do all you can to make sure that all turns out well.

Father Fontaine was able to understand from my last letter that he is charged with the direction of the two boarding schools—without my having told him so in so many words—and I have in mind confirming the fact by the present letter, but you will go quite frequently, especially during the first weeks and months, to the primary boarding school, so that the pupils may more easily get accustomed to it, that the parents may see no change . . . that . . . etc.

Receive, my dear son, the token of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

* * * *

If Father Leo Meyer insisted on retaining his brother, it was because the situation in Courtefontaine was really difficult.

The work was developing and the personnel was lacking. Even the formation of the subjects in the novitiate left much to be desired. The poor Superior was overloaded with work and weighed down with cares and worries. He could no longer hold out and was complaining bitterly.

Father Chaminade had already become aware of this situation by the correspondence of Father Meyer. His attention had been drawn to it even more strongly by a letter from Father Sausol, a good and simple priest who was living with Father Meyer.

He then chose the expedient of sending Father Meyer to Saint Remy for some days, replacing him in Courtefontaine by Father Fontaine.

In a retreat under the direction of Father Chevaux, he would rest in body and soul, and on that occasion, the Founder would be able to give him the counsels he needed to face the difficulties of the work in question.

It is to these measures that allusion is made in the following correspondence.

* * * *

In Saint Remy, where the fusion of the two boarding schools had taken place at the last reopening of classes, the community of Working Brothers, so ardently desired by Father Chaminade, could finally be organized in a regular manner.

In a letter to Brother Clouzet, dated earlier on April 7, the Founder had included these lines: "I believe I have received this morning from the Lord the idea of final arrangements for Saint Remy. When I shall have been able to draw up a little plan, I shall pass it on to you."

On November 14, after having spoken to him of the foundation in Fribourg, he gave him the following directions in the matter.

1088 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 14, 1838

My very dear son, I have received your letter, stamped in Besançon on the seventh of the present month, and I am answering it almost immediately. You must have received another of my letters a few days ago.

There is no doubt, my dear son, that you could use Brother David, but do so only in a way in which he could easily be replaced; and let there be little evidence of his being needed, if he is obliged to leave for Fribourg, as there is reason to believe will be the case. According to a letter you had written to Brother Enderlin, he left immediately as has been remarked to me. He hastened his departure all the more because Father Meyer wrote to Father Rothéa that he had to be retained on the pretext of war rumors. Father Meyer also wrote to the pastor of Fribourg that the young teachers were being retained for the same cause: these rumors of war. The presumption of an order of departure on the part of Brother Meyer seems really to have turned the head of Father Meyer, his brother. My last letter to Father Fontaine and also to you came out of that perspective. It may be possible to remedy the harm by treating it immediately.

If all those taking part in the education of pupils in Saint Remy get along well together, if there really is wisdom in the sharing of the work, I think that with the small number of teachers that are there, all will be well, and with all the more reason because there still seem to be, as Father Fontaine writes to me, very few pupils.

What must have embarrassed Father Fontaine at the time of his departure for Courtefontaine is the presence in Saint Remy of a student of philosophy and another of rhetoric. As regards the one of philosophy, I imagine he will not have been too embarrassed, as all he had to do was to give him to Father Glussot who has taught philosophy for years. All these observations, my dear son, have not for object the saying that we should not have to try to strengthen Saint Remy with some good professors, as soon as we shall be able to find them. Brother Galliot writes to me that in Marast, thirty-six boarders have come in and that twenty more are inscribed. They are now being expected any time. I don't think that Marast will hamper Saint Remy in any way. It may even be useful to it in sending it boarders such as have made their first Latin studies in Marast, or should any present themselves who are already able to do good work in the second-year Latin class. We shall succeed I hope in coming to an understanding.

At almost the same time, I wanted to have some extracts of the Constitutions made for you. I had in mind to have them all autographed. For this purpose, I had a machine made in Paris and tried out by Brother Bonnefoi. It succeeded fairly well on a small scale. There is greater difficulty when there is question of a bigger job, but it seems to me that even this can be overcome. We are beginning with the Constitutions of the Institute of the

Daughters of Mary. If it succeeds, work with the Constitutions of the Society will follow immediately.

However, my dear son, you have no real need of them at the present time. The community of Working Brothers is subject to the general plan of the Society and especially to its general Regulations. All the difference that there is lies in the fact that it can more easily enter into the spirit of the Rule of Saint Benedict which the entire Society intends to follow. Religious workers can more easily do the penance imposed on Adam and all of his posterity. "You will eat your bread in the sweat of your brow," says the Book of Genesis. They can live in greater recollection, in greater silence, in greater poverty, in greater union and fraternal charity. Their life is almost entirely solitary. They must find in the regard of their day's work the wherewith to supply all the needs of life and even the wherewith to give alms by means of bonuses as is indicated in the Constitutions. Their food must be sufficiently abundant to maintain their strength in painful labors, but otherwise common and, so to say, even coarse, as would be expected in the case of manual laborers.

To get an idea of the accounts of their community, the only thing to do is to estimate the days of the one and the other at a common rate, such as would be done in the case of the simplest workman employed all year, including his meals or excluding them. The expenses to be made for the needs of these days would be taken from the revenues of the property and from money received from things made by the workers in the shops. All the expenses made by the farmers or other workers for new tools or for the repair of old ones would be charged to the case account of the workers. It is supposed that all the expenses have been made at the time the establishment was started.

I am not saying more about this, my dear son, at the present time. Begin by leading your little world in the spirit of penance, poverty, union and fraternal charity, humility, devotion to the most holy Virgin and of true devotedness to the Society of Mary . . .

Make all your calculations in detail. I imagine that you will eventually find what you are expecting. At all times, every worker has found in his days the means of procuring the wherewith to meet the real needs of daily life.

The clothing of the religious must be poor but decent. It must be uniform during the work periods, uniform also on Sundays, feast days, and in certain ceremonies. Before deciding upon anything, let me know all your ideas on these various points.

It will be well, my dear son, to train some subject who would be able to take your place during your absences, which may be more or less long. There remains such work for us to do, but the Lord is with us and for us. Enter more and more into the beautiful ways of the perfect love of God by an entire abnegation of yourself. May you become a supple and faithful instrument in the hands of God, for the works which he ordains for the glory of the Word Incarnate and of his august Mother!

For some time, Father Fridblatt has tended to a life of penance and solitude. I was proposing to myself to speak to him of the community of Working Brothers and of placing him there as Head of Zeal. You would then be all set, at least for the time being . . .

You are very correct, my dear son, in attributing to your position the miseries you have discovered in yourself at the time of the retreat. Whatever the difficulties may be that administration places before you, whatever distractions it seems to bring along, if you succeed in acting in all things in a spirit of faith and according to faith, in a word, as a true religious, these miseries will always be on the decrease. At least they will always be less voluntary and serve only to humiliate you. However, you have great need of prayer and watchfulness over yourself, so as to form these precious habits, to maintain them, and have them develop.

There is no reason, my dear son, for changing our customs relative to the ordinary emission of vows, and for not having it coincide with the renewal of vows that the religious make at the close of the annual retreat. The main thing is that care be taken that the Council hold its session at a sufficient time before the retreat, that I may have a verbal account of it, and the time necessary to hand in my answer before the opening of the retreat. This would, nevertheless, not prevent, in the course of the year, holding some ceremony of this kind in the novitiate. In fact, it is only there that it could take place, since the postulants and novices are not all of the same date. All these ceremonies are to be preceded by a retreat of three days, directed by the novice master or the one who is Head of Zeal of the new members.

Father Fontaine has just given to me the list of admissions made by the Council. He desires my adherence to the feast of the Immaculate Conception. I am giving it very willingly, by reason of the confidence I have in all the members of the Council, but this time we are going contrary to our customs. My adherence should be well reasoned and it can be such only insofar as I have at least an extract of the Council deliberations; otherwise the need for my consent would be illusory. I am not repeating here the names of those who have been admitted. They are to be found in the Council register.

I have just received the messages of Brother Coustou. Among other things, he tells me that the trip he made with you prepared him for the retreat. He blesses this annual retreat very much, during which the illusion he was harboring within himself has been dissipated. He asks my pardon for the great number of faults that it had caused him to commit. He says he is not giving me details about everything. He adds that the more his burden of work will be lightened, the happier he will be. I do not know if he is making allusion to the trip to Paris. I am leaving all to your prudence, but without neglecting yourself, my dear son, do not lose sight of this young religious. He always likes to recall that you were his novice master and that, even in his bad conduct, he always preserved toward you sentiments of great confidence.

All these ideas lead me to advice you, as I finish this letter, to have read in your community the lives of the Desert Fathers, etc., which are in Saint Remy. This reading is suited to prepare your people for the reform you have undertaken. You could first get for yourself from Lyons a sample copy of *The Religious Man*, in two volumes. The price of the two bound volumes is ten francs. I do not know the price of the paperbound volumes. Here is the exact title: *The Religious Man* by Father J.B. Saint Jure, of the Society of Jesus. New edition, reviewed and corrected by a priest of the diocese of Lyons. In Lyons, at the Périsse Bros.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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1088bis – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 17, 1838

My dear son, I am answering your letter of the tenth of the current month almost immediately. Herewith enclosed is a letter to Father Glussot which I am leaving unsealed, but which you may yourself seal before handing it to him. I am leaving that to your prudence.

From the letter I received from Father Fontaine, I easily understand that the one I had just written to him might embarrass him. It is for this reason that I wrote almost immediately to Brother Clouzet, inviting him to favor, as soon as possible, the departure of Father Fontaine for Courtefontaine. I did not give you this mission, by reason of the feebleness of your health, but it is quite possible, if the treatment of the sick one[1] were to last a considerable time, you would replace Father Fontaine.

If Father Meyer comes to you to make this retreat, Father Fontaine will send you at the same time another letter that I wrote to him in Courtefontaine and that Father Saussol must have handed to him at the time of his arrival in this establishment. Let us bless the Lord, my dear son, for all the tribulations which he judges proper to send us! This affair is serious or it may become such. Keep me continually informed about all that will happen on this matter.

In your letter, there was also a short one enclosed from August P. It astonished me. You had sent him back with his young companion. Father Meyer seemed to have received them in Courtefontaine. You complained about them. I wrote. They were sent away and I have no longer heard anything more said about them. August P. tells me about his relapses

[1] Fr. Meyer, whom Fr. Chaminade thought to be more seriously ill than he was in reality.

into his old habit and of his determination to leave Saint Remy. He begs me to answer him. What is all this about?

What you tell me about the good effects of the retreat in every one concerned, but especially in Brother Clouzet, consoles me much. I noticed it myself from the tone he assumed in his last letters, but I am now very happy to be assured of it. I shall quiet him in the first letter that I shall be writing to him. The retreat in Alsace has also done a great deal of good.

I wrote to Father Lamotte on the subject of Brother Dagneaux. I also answered Brother Dagneaux on the subject of the refusal he had experienced in Saint Remy. He seems to have taken it as a trial.

I have not doubted, my dear son, about your numerous occupations, nor about those of Father Fontaine, as well as about those of the other members of your little Community, but it seems urgent and regardless of the price, to cure the mind of our good Father Meyer. In any way possible, we must avoid any kind of shock that would render the ailment overly difficult to cure. A little rest, your moderation, prayer, the good advice and wise counsels you will give him, and possibly our correspondence, will end by putting everything in its proper state.

Father Glussot seems to me to have always lived in a thoroughly Christian manner and never to have loved the world as such, but it seems to me, one does not see in him the energy which gives the truly religious spirit or rather, the entirely religious spirit. Do not consider as lost some quarters of an hour which you would devote to him to converse freely with him and to open his soul in confidence.

Receive, my dear son, the token of my sincere and inviolable devotedness.

P.S. The health of young Claude Mouchet seems to be getting worse right along, although he does not complain and would be glad even to die. Would it not then be necessary to take the matter seriously in hand? This young man seemed to me to be in such good health!

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1089 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET,
SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 17, 1838

Real humility, my dear son, is the effect of the love of God or of faith animated by charity. Thus, love God up to the point of really despising yourself. Love God and you will be

content to be despised by all, well persuaded that they render you justice in despising you. Love God up to the point of receiving with pleasure the ill treatment that might be given you.

My dear son, at the retreat you have taken the resolution of attaching yourself always to the practice of humility, and I have been pleased to see in your letter that it was for the purpose of acquiring the love of God. You feel that the one cannot exist without the other, and this is true; but it seems to me you will advance much more quickly if you go to humility by charity, than going to charity by humility. The path is, at least, in incomparably more smooth, your meditations will be made better, and the same will result with regard to all your other exercises.

Oh, my dear son, how you will love God, once he has deigned to make you know and to feel a little how good and how merciful he is! Goodness is the very nature of God. It is then that you will love our Lord Jesus Christ, that you will also love the most holy Virgin with all your heart. It is impossible to love God, without loving Jesus Christ and his holy Mother. However, you will love well, only in proportion as you despise yourself and all that is in you.

Believe, my dear son, in my paternal tenderness.

Father Chaminade has received good news, regarding the foundation of Saint Dié.[1] *He is preoccupied with the idea of assuring the genuinely religious life of the teachers there.*

1090 – TO FATHER MOUGEOT, VICAR GENERAL OF SAINT DIÉ

Bordeaux, November 30, 1838

Dear Reverend Father, how deeply I have been touched and mindful of the token of benevolence which Your Lordship and the respectable clergy of your city, have given to the three young religious, primary teachers, that I had the privilege of sending to direct your primary schools! They have easily caused to pass into my own soul the sentiments of respectful gratitude with which they were penetrated.

I herewith beg of you to receive my heartfelt thanks.

Brother Bertin informed me, at about the same time, that they had been compelled to take some boarders and part-time boarders. I do not doubt at all, that a well-kept boarding school is able to increase considerably the good which we have in mind for your diocese, but do you not fear that this second good, which has been neither prepared nor foreseen, will become prejudicial to the first? The three subjects are already, so to say, totally absorbed in mind and can no longer make their ordinary religious exercises together. . . .

[1] See Letter 1017.

(The sketch of the letter is not completed.)

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1091 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 22, 1838

As a matter of fact, I had written to Father Fontaine, my dear son, to go to Courtefontaine as soon as possible to replace you there during the time that you would go to make your retreat in Saint Remy, and I had also told Father Saussol about it. I had the further intention that you would be able to take some rest. For some time, I have noticed that you no longer had a fixed direction in your numerous occupations, from which there can result or actually does result, more or less serious improprieties. If you have found yourself too burdened with work, you will render justice before God in admitting that you willed it so, as you must be well aware of all that has happened. I have no intention of making complaints to you and still less of asking you to excuse yourself, but it is urgent that for the future we come to an agreement on a certain number of points.

l. Let us begin with the novitiate.

Article 1. The novitiate of Courtefontaine as we have said and written since the earliest beginnings is joined to a Normal School of primary teaching. In consequence, only young men who can make good in this course are to be received as novices. It is intended neither for workers nor for ecclesiastics, not even for the laymen destined for secondary teaching . . .

All this does not prevent us from receiving all kinds of subjects, laymen and priests, as postulants until they know the Society sufficiently well, and the Society knows them. There is no question of having professors for them, since there is question of only what concerns the spiritual order of things. It is very easy to give them some sort of occupation in what would be their free time, but they will have little of this if they like to apply themselves to knowing the religious state. In their regard, we must be in what may be called a very active correspondence, so as eventually to get to know them thoroughly. The novitiate of the workers being so close, it is better to send the working postulants immediately to Saint Remy. As to the exceptions that might have to be made in this first article, we can come to some sort of agreement.

Article 2. We have said, and we say it again, that until we are better equipped with professors, the most intelligent novices are to teach the less gifted ones and also, as the need may require, the professors of the postulate must also help in the novitiate. The master of novices is to have himself helped in all he cannot do himself, as for example, in the supervision of study periods, and in all places where he cannot be himself. It is very suitable that he be present for the recreations and even in the walks as much as possible. According to the needs that might exist, the professors of the novitiate are also to help reciprocally in the postulate.

Article 3. No serious change is to be made in the establishment of Courtefontaine, except with the authorization of the General Administration. The Superior may neither send nor cede any of the subjects of the establishment to the other establishments, nor dismiss novices without the same permission.

Article 4. The novice master must always keep the General Administration informed about all things of any importance that happen in the novitiate. He is to send very accurate and characteristic descriptions of subjects, especially the first ones, and from time to time, bulletins indicating the progress which they may have made in religious perfection, in the correction of their defects, as also in the acquisition of human knowledge. These bulletins for each one must never be delayed beyond two or three months. All the inscriptions, character descriptions, and bulletins are to be registered in Courtefontaine before being sent to the General Administration where they are also to be registered.

Article 5. Although the novices, and also the professed who are still in the novitiate, have not finished their courses, they always remain at the disposal of the General Administration, either to be placed or to be sent to other novitiates. If the inscriptions, descriptions, and bulletins have been honest and very exact, the novice master will have no observations to make unless he is specifically asked for new ones.

Article 6. The novice master will inspire the postulants as well as the novices with a great confidence in the Superior General, and they may not be admitted either to the novitiate or to temporal or perpetual profession unless they have made known to him all the sentiments of their heart.

Article 7. There is to be a real community council. The Superior is to preside at it and direct it, but not dominate it. Ordinarily speaking, he expresses or proposes questions for discussion without revealing his own opinion in their regard. Thus, he is the last one to speak after all discussion has been ended.

Article 8. The Superior may never oppose a deliberation of the Council to an Ordinance or Obedience coming from the Superior General. The suppositions that the Superior General would not be giving such and such orders were he better informed are ordinarily not admissible. It is up to the Head of the establishment to keep him up to date on all that he needs to know.

2. Boarding school. Once the boarding school has been formed and the classes determined and regulated, the Superior has no other charge than to inspire and encourage the professors as well as the pupils. He is to change nothing of the order first established without the intervention of the Council, in which the director of the boarding school is to be specially listened to. The director himself may call or ask for a convocation of the Council, if he judges certain changes necessary.

3. Ecclesiastical ministry. Parish work must be very carefully done and in such a way that the parishioners may not have reason to complain. The instruction of the parish by the pastor calls for his attention and all suitable preparation for it. As pastor, the Superior of the establishment may well be aided by other priests, if he has them at his disposal, as might be done by assistant pastors, be it for confessions, visits to the sick, private instructions, etc., but he should be certain that these functions are well fulfilled every time he passes them on to others.

Here you have, my dear son, the line of conduct that, it seems to me, you must always follow, so that we may always be in perfect accord and that the good Lord may be glorified. I certainly have the desire that you may not be too burdened with work. We shall be able to make ends meet in proportion as capable subjects will come to us. Although I have no intention of forming new establishments until those we already have are sufficiently staffed, including that of Courtefontaine, nevertheless, I cannot dispense myself, sometimes for major and important reasons, from granting one or the other request. I don't think that you are asking for the reasons of my concession.

Are we in agreement, my dear son, seriously and in conscience, on all the points referred to in this letter? In the case of an affirmative answer, after you have offered yourself anew to the Lord with all your new resolutions, your retreat being happily ended, go back to Courtefontaine. Before leaving Saint Remy, write a good letter which will put me at ease on all these points.

Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces with the assurance of inviolable devotedness.

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To Father Chevaux, who is directing the retreat of Father Meyer, the Good Father gives the following instructions.

1092 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 22, 1838

The Reverend pastor, Father Meyer, my dear son, informed by Father Saussol that Father Fontaine was to come to replace him so as to procure for him the advantage of making his annual retreat in Saint Remy, left immediately while saying thanks to me. His letter is stamped in Saint Vit, on the seventeenth of the present month.

Did Father Saussol remark that the ailment was getting worse or that he had been too indiscreet? It is useless to go into that at this time. I made the decision to write immediately to Father Meyer in Saint Remy. I am carefully avoiding making any complaint

about the past, but I am telling him what to do on just about all points on which it was difficult to have him listen to reason—and several times he did not do even that.

This letter is being written in some haste so that it may not miss the first mail of the day. I am leaving it unsealed. Read it attentively so as to see whether we are in complete agreement on each point.

If his letter answering mine is really good, if there has been but a passing whim or fancy, let him leave in peace. If he means to follow certain systems and to guide himself, you will delay his departure until he sees the truth and submits to it sincerely. I hope that some rest and reflection will suffice to bring him back to his senses.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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A fire has destroyed several of the buildings on the farm of Marast with the harvests they contained. Father Chaminade informs Brother Clouzet of his sentiments at the news of this disaster.

1093 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

November 25, 1838

. . . Father Lamotte immediately informed me of the disaster in Marast. I was awaiting your letter which was to give me greater details. I am of the same opinion as you. Put the property into the hands of two farmers, honest folks, with the reservation that you mention for the grounds that surround the house. It would be prudent to make the lease for only three years, or, if you give more time, to reserve to yourself the right to stop the rental in the one case that the religious of the community would be doing the work. If God deigns to bless the community of Saint Remy, perhaps in a few years we may be able to draw from it a group of religious for Marast.

Let us not worry, my dear son, over the great loss which the Marast disaster causes us. God has had his designs in permitting it and now it is up to us to try to enter into his views and to praise his most holy Name!

Father Chevaux has just informed me about your worry concerning your present position in view of all that had happened before. I was greatly edified because of it, and I render thanks to the good Lord for it. I must tell you, for your own peace of mind, that since last year—especially since the retreat—you are in the position wherein God wants you to be. You have been able to notice this by all the marks of confidence I have given you, and I am now permitting you to act henceforth in all liberty. In proportion as I shall know the designs of God, or as I shall believe to know them, I shall make them known to you without

fear of meeting any opposition in your self-love that I have been obliged to respect, so to speak, so often.

Brother Coustou seems to have changed in earnest and is now an example for the community of Colmar. We can hope for a complete reform in all our establishments of Alsace. Console and encourage Father Lamotte.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

* * * *

Father Meyer had acquiesced, without a doubt, to all the desires of the Good Father. The latter studies with him the causes of the uneasiness and the misunderstandings from which he has suffered and points one out to him in the insufficiency of his spiritual direction.

1094 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, November 25, 1838

My dear son, you owe the favor of having been able to make your annual retreat in peace to what, I thought, was your tired mind as evidenced by the continual contradictions in our correspondence. I believe that these contradictions must have been very painful to your heart, otherwise so well disposed by the abnegation of yourself, as well as by the spirit of obedience in the views of faith. To this end, as soon as you had told me you were going to Saint Remy, I wrote to you on the twenty-second of the current month, and I indicated to you the articles on which I desired your support, pure and simple. I can well imagine that the present letter will not reach you in Saint Remy, if you have received my first one and have gone to resume your function in Courtefontaine.

I am addressing you this one, only because I have found another cause for the kind of struggle, which you had told me in a letter, you felt obliged in conscience to carry on against me. I understood too late that you were in the habit of going to confession to Father Saussol and that, in this way, he became the director of your conscience. That thought had never occurred to me. I easily recall that a short time after the arrival of Father Saussol in Courtefontaine, I permitted you, at your own request, to address yourself at times to be reconciled through him because of the difficulty and the lack of time to go and find your ordinary confessor. All that has happened since, and what you told me yourself did not permit me to conclude that you had made him your ordinary confessor.

It is with reason, my dear son, that at the elevation of Father Saussol to the priesthood, it was agreed with him that he would not hear confessions.[1] However, I do not believe that this agreement is to exclude the confession of some little children or that of some religious who, as it were in passing, would have to go to confession, so as not to interrupt the reception of the sacraments. But Father Saussol being recognized as incapable of being confessor and spiritual director at the same time, especially of the Superior of an establishment, you would want to choose, before God, an ordinary and regular confessor. I have no illusion about the difficulty of finding such a one, but the good God will be there to help you in the search. Furthermore, you will not experience great difficulty if you are satisfied on all points. Should difficulties rise up before your eyes, why not let me know about them?

You must have noticed that the absence of Father Fontaine was very prejudicial to Saint Remy. If, at the reception of this letter you have not yet left for Courtefontaine, hasten to do so. I am hoping to receive in a few days the good letter that I have asked of you.

You have learned no doubt of the great accident that has befallen Marast. The good God deigns to strew our labors with sorrows and tribulations, but may his holy name be blessed! In spite of the rage of the demons against the Society of Mary, it is not ceasing to make progress toward a real reform, and by that very fact to strengthen itself. Let us advance, my dear son, against wind and tide! Let us always look with confidence to our protecting Star, and we shall arrive at a safe harbor.

Receive my paternal embraces.

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1095 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 25,1838

My dear son, I have just received your short letter included in that of Brother Clouzet, dated the nineteenth of the present month. You must have received mine of the twenty-second which included one for Father Meyer in retreat at Saint Remy. I left it unsealed so that you could permeate yourself well with its contents. I fondly hope that,

[1] Regarding Fr. Saussol, see Letter 760.

following your good advice, Father Meyer will have gone to resume his functions in Courtefontaine and that Father Fontaine will have returned to take up his own at Saint Remy.

I am writing another letter to Father Meyer that I am also leaving unsealed, and you will see in it another cause for his mental agonies. It seemed to me urgent that they be brought to an end.

Show spirit and resolution, my dear son! You seem to believe you are abandoned, so to say, since you lack ordinary helps. Nevertheless, the Lord is with you, and all you have to do is to work for him. In spite of the surfeit of labors or occupations, you must not cease to remain united to God with a great faith in his divine presence. Nor must you cease to take care of your feeble health.

Receive my paternal embraces.

* * * *

In Salins the director, Brother Troffer, not content with showing great ostentation in the work that had been confided to him, was taking imprudent initiatives on the spot and beyond to the detriment of his religious life and the better interests of his school. Serious complaints were being raised on the part of the academic and ecclesiastical authorities and were reaching Father Chaminade.

The Founder addressed to him serious observations.

Not receiving any answer, he decided to relieve him of his charge and to name in his place his principal collaborator, Brother Boby, a religious gifted with sound judgment and of proven ability. Whence the following letters.

1096 – TO BROTHER TROFFER, SALINS

Bordeaux, November 29, 1838

My dear son, what can have been the motive for your silence about my last letter? It required an answer and a prompt one at that. I have every reason to believe that you received it. The older Brother Chevassu[1] wrote to me that you had told him to correspond with me. The principal object of his letter was to ask me for Brother Noir, who had just obtained a bachelor's degree as professor of Latin.

I sent you the very letter of Brother Boby, which spoke to me of the complaints that were making the rounds in Salins about you and the defects in the administration of your

[1] Director of the new foundation in Besançon who had been taken care of by Bro. Troffer.

establishment. Do I now have reason to fear that there is real foundation in what I am hearing about you and that your silence is really affected? Whatever the case may be, in the name of obedience, once this letter has been received and after the shortest delay possible, you will leave for Courtefontaine, where you will stay until further orders. You will occupy yourself 1. in seriously entering into yourself and in clearly letting me know of all your interior dispositions; 2. in rendering yourself as useful as your strength will permit in the novitiate or in the boarding school.

The delay which is being granted you in the execution of this order will be employed in handing over to Brother Boby all your account and administration books and all the papers or documents related to them; and afterward, or at the same time, see whoever has a right to be seen, especially the Reverend pastor.

By the same mail I am sending Brother Boby his nomination as Head of the establishment and I am asking him to give this letter over to you. Before leaving, you may also install Brother Boby. This installation will consist, in this circumstance, only in proclaiming him Head of the establishment in the midst of your community and in reading aloud the short formula of his nomination. Be careful not to prolong these operations and take your leave with the least possible delay.

This is your father, my dear son, and your tender father, who has just dictated all these lines.

P.S. If it occurs to you, or rather, if it had occurred to you to stop these messages, of not letting them reach their proper destination and of reading them before delivering them, at least give them up, though unsealed, immediately. If Brother Boby does not inform me about their reception, I shall suppose that he has not received them, and you will then be making it necessary for me to send them anew, but addressed to someone outside the establishment, and to be given to him forthwith. This might cause some scandal in the city.

I am making this observation to you only because I still do not know if Brother Boby has had some knowledge of the last letter I wrote to him and sent in the same envelope as your own.

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1097 – TO BROTHER BOBY, SALINS

Bordeaux, November 29, 1838

Having destined Brother Troffer for another important work, I have cast my eyes upon you, my dear son, and I have done it with confidence to place you at the Head of the establishment of Salins, replacing Brother Troffer, who is so to speak, its founder.

I am naming you Head of this establishment and conferring upon you all the authority that this title bears, be it in regard to all of your associates or in regard to the boarders and day students of all the classes.

I hope that by your zeal you will always maintain both the regularity of the house and the emulation of the pupils, and that this establishment will uphold the distinction which it already enjoys in the circle of the Recotrate of Besançon.

Given in Bordeaux, November 29, 1838.

Brother Francis Boby, 1813-1868, from Archelange (Jura) was one among the most remarkable religious of the Society of Mary by his virtue, his intelligence, his works, and the services rendered in all the employments confided to him.

Having entered Saint Remy in 1830, he made his perpetual vows in 1834 and was sent to the school in Salins of which he became director in 1838 and which he raised to the highest degree of prosperity. He occupied himself with everything and with everybody with equal solicitude and still found time to compose classics that were soon adopted by all the schools of the Society.

To the great satisfaction of all the religious, in 1859, Brother Boby was called to Bordeaux to fulfill there the charge of Secretary General of the Society, which he occupied until his death.

Serious by nature, he became expansive, gracious, cordial in company. In Paris the young religious called to the superior Scholasticate of which he had the direction were extremely attached to him. The perfect clairty and the affectionate tone of his correspondence were deeply appreciated by the entire Society.

He died in the full vigor of age, while on a trip to Besançon, and was universally mourned.

1097bis – TO ARCHBISHOP DONNET OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, Beginning of December, 1838

Your Excellency, I have received with gratitude the communication which you have kindly made to me of the undated letter of M. Soleil (the father) which he thought it his duty to write to you,[1] and also of the copy which he sent to you of the letter he had written to me. I did not deem it worthwhile to answer the latter, since his mental deficiencies cause him to see only injustices in all the arrangements we have agreed upon in place of the sacrifices being constantly made for him and his children.

Nevertheless, if Your Excellency thinks I may have been under a prejudicial illusion as regards M. Soleil and all my affairs agreed upon with him, I am ready to place all the papers under your eyes, to give you all the information you may ask of me and to submit to the decision or judgment you will pronounce.

I am with the most profound respect of Your Excellency, etc.

P.S. I have no matters agreed upon which have not been examined by Father Caillet, who has always been surprised at the sacrifices I was making. These so-called accounts agreed upon have remained each time in the hands of M. Soleil, so that he could see them, examine and discuss them, and after all examinations, sign them benevolently.

* * * *

The following letter is of the highest interest, as much for the expression of the sentiments of faith with which the Founder recounts to Mother Saint Vincent the Marast disaster, as for the wise counsels he gives the Superioress for the government of her community.

1098 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 3, 1838

You must have understood, my dear child, by the laconic character of my last letter how much I was in a hurry while writing it.

On November 13, at eleven o'clock in the morning, it was noticed that a barn (at Marast) was on fire. Soon the fire spread to the second barn and from there to the stables. The barns were filled with the entire harvest of different grains of the past year, with all the straw and fodder, the plows, wagons, carts, and other implements of agriculture. All went up in flames.

[1] See Letter 1010.

Fortunately, the cattle were saved and were sent to Saint Remy because there no longer remained lodging or food for them. Saint Remy is only about twenty-five miles from Marast. No kind of accident was known that could have caused this disaster. One is always tempted to attribute it to ill-will of one kind or another, but silence in the matter is being kept. At the moment when the flames were bearing down upon the large house of the community and boarding school, the wind changed and bore them in another direction, so that it was spared. Although this disaster greatly increases the difficulties of our position, we must not worry on that account, but adore the designs of God. By the very fact that we ignore the natural cause of this fire, we may suspect some moral cause which God will make known to us, if this knowledge is of concern to our salvation. Anyhow, we must do all we can to turn it to our spiritual advantage.

Superiorship is in fact, my dear child, a very heavy burden, in fact too heavy for our feeble humanity if the hand of the Lord were not there to lift it up. We often increase its weight by our bad dispositions, and also by our own self-sufficiency. Superiors must look upon themselves only as ministers of the Lord in regard to personnel, and His stewards in regard to matériel. Doubtless, they must have great solicitude in looking after the interests of their Master, but that is all there is to it, and this solicitude itself is but the effect of the great love they have for their Master. It does not at all turn them away from God. On the contrary, it even increases his love. Of this, we have noteworthy examples today in Saint Francis Xavier and in the two great prophets of the Kingdom of Israel, Elias and Elisha. What contradictions these prophets experienced! Yet they habitually enjoyed great peace in spite of the ardors of their zeal, etc. The faith which works by charity is entirely surrounded by mysteries for those who do not know what it is to love God.

The education of the postulants and novices is a very delicate affair. The making of a good religious Sister calls for a novicemistress who is completely dependent upon the operations of the Spirit of the Lord in her soul. The art of forming religious Sisters is an art altogether divine. Nevertheless, we must not be disconcerted, my dear child, by the experience of our miseries and incapacity. Let us always tend to the pure love of God and to the profound contempt of ourselves, and the Holy Spirit will enable us to work wonders.

It is a blessing of God, my dear child, that so many postulants are presenting themselves, provided they are of the right kind. However good they may seem to be, their formation will demand much work. Although they may have no fortune, you are not to worry about them as soon as it is clear and evident that God has sent them to you. Anyhow, and as much as possible, do not employ them before they are sufficiently formed, otherwise you have only half-religious and the Institute would degenerate very quickly.

Brother Bonnefoi is reproducing for you fifty copies of your Constitutions. He has experienced many difficulties in the printing.[1] The work is advancing, but still laboriously. I

[1] See Letter 1088.

am showing great concern in the project that all your convents and novitiates have a sufficient number of copies of the Constitutions, so that these may be well studied, and that everyone may be thoroughly penetrated with their spirit. The Society of Mary has no less need of such a work than the Institute, but I have looked upon the Sisters as the elders of the family.

I shall say nothing, my dear child, of the postulants you enumerate to me, but take courage! You are the oldest daughter of our august Mother. Work in peace, although with many cares and worries, at the direction, perfection, and formation of all your younger Sisters.

When the first edition of your Constitutions will be completed, I shall tell you in what manner you are to make use of it. My devotedness to you, my dear child, to our dear daughters in Agen, and to the entire Institute, always remains the same: animated by the same sincerity, the same inviolability.

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1099 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 13, 1838

My dear son, at the time that I was going to take up my pen to answer your letter of last November 27, I received one from Brother Clouzet which informed me that you had fallen ill, but that he hoped there would not be any distressing consequences. From the goodness of the Lord, I am cherishing the same hope. You see to what a degree your health is feeble, and how much you must spare yourself. I believe that the affections of your soul are contributing much to the weakening of your bodily health, and I shall make the same recommendation to you that our Lord made to his Apostles: “Possess your soul in your patience.”

It may be the time, my dear son, to hold a Council meeting, to deliberate as to whether Father Glussot may be admitted into the Society as a novice and, supposing the admission, whether his year of novitiate could be reckoned from about the time of his coming to Saint Remy. If it is not possible to come to a decision in one Council session, then hold another and even a third, and in the meantime have recourse to prayer. The decision, for or against, may have rather serious consequences, especially if Father Glussot perseveres in wanting to enter into the Society. During the long years that he passed among the Jesuits, he contracted good habits, but he does not seem to have worked seriously at advancing in perfection, nor to have the zeal necessary to urge and encourage others in that direction. The decision that the Council will take must always remain secret, but it must be clearly motivated, and a copy of the minutes of the Council session or sessions will be sent to me.

Receive, my dear son, the token of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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1100 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 13, 1838

My dear son, I am immediately answering your letter which was without date but stamped in Vesoul on the ninth of the current month. I hope, as you do, that the little lesson given to Father Meyer will do him good[1] and that above all it will do good to the religious and novices of Courtefontaine, but I have no idea of changing his character.

You have done well in coming to the help of Marast. This establishment will finish by prospering, in spite of the chastisements of God, which though severe, are nevertheless paternal and entirely so—but he must be served and well served. All the religious who direct this establishment during the present year seem to be well united and entirely devoted to their duties. They are perhaps overloaded with work.

Your brother has had the kindness of bringing me the two hundred francs, as soon as he had received the counsel which you gave him about them. Brother Troffer had left Salins before the Reverend rector wrote to you.[2] I have named Brother Boby as Head of the establishment. Two days ago, I received news about his installation to which I answered by the last mail. Brother Troffer has accepted and carried out his removal from office in an edifying manner, and that in spite of his great sensitiveness in matters of this kind. The number of pupils in this establishment keeps on increasing. There are now forty boarders and about three hundred day-pupils. You may reassure the Reverend rector of the Academy, for I have already written to Brother Boby on the subject of the brass band, although I am ignorant of the parade on the feast day of St. Cecilia of which the mayor speaks. I am going to write again to Salins and I shall also notify Brother Troffer about the letter from the mayor.

Always work, my dear son, at the proper formation of your community of Working Brothers. Let there be real fervor among them! Choose among them some who may second you in the direction of the labors and even for the bookkeeping. I am quite seriously thinking of sending you Brother Genre. I had assigned him to teaching, but as he has a strong attraction to solitude, he will be better in Saint Remy. His first trade was that of carpenter. It is good and desirable that you have some of these religious who are somewhat educated. He made his perpetual vows on last November 21 in Ebersmunster, with much edification to all those who witnessed the ceremony.

In another letter, my dear son, I shall enter into greater detail about what I think God is asking of you, but in the meantime be thoroughly religious.

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[1] See Letter 1091.

[2] Bro. Troffer had had equipped a brass band or “military band” which competed with the one of the Collège of the city. On the occasion of a parade organized by the music teacher on the feast day of St. Cecilia a fight took place between the two bands, whence came the complaints of the mayor to the rector.

Receive my tender embraces.

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1101 – TO THE MAYOR OF CASTILLONES[1]

Bordeaux, December 19, 1838

Your Honor, I am very much disposed to grant you three religious, Daughters of Mary, for the administration of the Hospice of Castillonnès, but before answering you definitely, you will permit me if you please, to make some inquiries in Auch. I am going to do it by this same mail and, in the meantime, you will be kind enough to have the annual salary of the religious fixed at two hundred francs each.

I shall be obliged to you if you will tell me the reason for which the Hospitalers who previously administered the hospital withdrew.

The Daughters of Mary, Honorable Mayor, will not only take care of the civil and military sick, but they will also visit them in their own homes in the city and its environs, as much as their time and energy will permit.

One of them at least will open a school, but only after having had an understanding with the religious of the convent, to avoid all possibility of friction, even in the slightest degree.

I am, with a respectful devotedness, etc.

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On the date following, we return to the foundation of Besançon where Brother Troffer, unknown to Father Chaminade, had engaged in new activities. Father Chaminade, believing to recognize in these an indication of the work of Providence, prepares himself to sponsor them to the best of his ability.

1102 – TO FATHER DENIZOT, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 22, 1838

Dear Reverend Father, I have read with a very real pleasure your letter of the fourth of the current month, because it speaks to me of our little establishment in your parish, in which I have a very real and lively interest. I had accepted the project as a whole, because it

[1] This is a small place in the diocese of Agen. The project in question was never carried out.

seemed to me well conceived and destined to enter into the views of the Society of Mary—those of multiplying Christians of all classes.

Brother Troffer started it without notifying me and without informing me of the definite arrangements that he had made with you. In the first project that was presented to me, and about which you did me the honor of writing, there was question only of primary teaching for the leisure class of the city.[1] I was quite surprised when Brother Chevassu[2] wrote to me that the commitment with the parents to teach Latin to their children had been made. I concede that in this there may be a great advantage for certain families to initiate their children into the study of this language at the same time that they are being formed for primary teaching. It is an advantage, nevertheless, difficult to procure, not only because for this purpose a teacher supplied with a bachelor of Arts degree is needed, but also because the teacher must be humble enough to lend himself to the teaching only of the elements, and often, to obey a Head who hasn't the same grade as in the present case. I hope, nevertheless, to be able to give you one in a short time. I am preparing him.[3] We would surely have failed, if this subject, whom I have in view, had been sent to the establishment without preparation. He happened to like to teach only in upper classes.

Brother Troffer, ordinarily much in a hurry in his enterprises has, so to say, taken from Courtefontaine the collaborator of Brother Chevassu. This subject, is, nonetheless, very immature as he has not yet made his novitiate. He is from the same country as Brother Chevassu. What authority will the latter be able to have over him? I am thinking of giving you another man, better trained than the last one, whom I shall put back in the novitiate if there is still time to do so.

Brother Troffer is no longer Head of the establishment in Salins.[4] He asked me to withdraw to Besançon. I accorded it to him provisionally, because I believed he could be of some use to the new establishment, but it does not seem advisable that he stay there a long time. While awaiting his replacement, I think he will be better in Courtefontaine. I am writing him the enclosed note to this effect, which you will be kind enough to pass over to him.

The details, Reverend Father, which I am taking the liberty of indicating, will be for you a proof of the particular interest that I am taking in our little establishment in Besançon. It merits my paternal affection because of the quality of the children that are being brought up there, and also because it associates me to your zeal for the good of religion. So that it may grow and prosper, we must remain in perfect agreement. These young religious need to be sustained and directed. You are on the spot, you can see

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[1] See Letter 1025.
[2] The Director.
[3] See Letter 1147. Bro. Noir.
[4] It will be remarked with what discretion Fr. Chaminade speaks of the change of place of Bro. Troffer, seeking here, as always, to safeguard the reputation of his children.

everything that goes on, and your character and virtues give you the upper hand or ascendancy.

I am little known in Besançon, except by His Excellency, the Archbishop. At a great distance from your city, I know only what my young religious choose to tell me, and often enough they explain themselves badly or insufficiently. I am hoping that the accord that will be maintained between us will triumph over every difficulty that may arise.

I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

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The following letters bring us back to the matter of the approbation of the Constitutions.

The voluminous bundle of papers which was prepared in Auch by Father Chaminade had been brought back to Bordeaux, and had just left for Marseilles where a certain M. Hermitte confided it to Capitaine John Olive, commander of the steamship Léopold II, to be brought to the French Consul at Cività Vecchia, who would finally bring it safely to Canon Valentini.

The package finally reached Rome toward the middle of January.

1102bis – TO M. ANTOINE HERMITTE, MARSEILLES

Bordeaux, towards the middle of December, 1838

Dear Sir, in the confidence which the Superioress of the General Hospital of Bordeaux inspired me as regards your honorable self, I am taking the liberty of addressing directly to you, postpaid, a box containing all the papers I have to send to Rome, to Canon Valentini, whose address is on the package. The Superioress assured me that you would have the kindness of finding a traveler to Rome, worthy of all confidence, who would himself be kind enough to bring the package to the address of Canon Valentini.

I have been told that there are such travelers constantly boarding the steamships. I would be very much obliged to you, if you would take the name of the traveler as also that of the boat on which he will be traveling, so as to have the means of checking back in the case of some accident. These papers are of great importance for religion, and you shall have your share of the merit of the enterprise. I am with high consideration, dear sir, your etc.

P.S. The package of papers may go without the box, if the box would be inconvenient to the traveler. Otherwise, all it will do is to keep the papers more intact; but then it would be suitable to use the address herewith enclosed.

Here in detail were the three packages making up the bundle confided to M. Hermitte.

I. Letter of Father Chaminade to Canon Valentine. Inventory of the bundle. Condition of the goods of the Society and of the Institute. Letters of Father Chaminade to Cardinal Giustiani, to Father Veyssière, to Bishop Vizzardeli.

II. Letter of Father Chaminade to Cardinal Lambruschini, with the request to the Holy Father for various favors. Letter of the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch to Cardinal Lambruschini.

III. Requests of Father Chaminade to the Holy Father to obtain the canonical institution of the two orders with a sketch of the purpose of their foundation. Letters of recommendation from the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch, from the Archbishops of Bordeaux and Besançon, from the Bishops of Agen, Ajaccio, Lausanne and Genève, Montauban, Saint Claude, Saint Dié, Strasbourg. Constitutions of the Society and of the Institute.

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1103 – TO CANON VALENTINI, ROME

Bordeaux, December 24, 1838

Honorable Canon, different circumstances have caused to return to Bordeaux the messages which Father Chevallier was, with your obliging permission, to address to you from Auch in favor of the two orders, the Society of Mary and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. At this time, I shall add nothing to the sentiments of gratitude which Father Chevallier must have expressed to you on my part.

In the letter of response you wrote to Father Chevallier, you told him that, if the two orders did not have landed property which would assure their stability, it would be useless to ask the Holy Father for their canonical institution. On the communication which was made to me of this fact, I immediately wrote the answer which you will find herewith enclosed.

I thought, Honorable Canon, in order to give you less embarrassment, it would be advisable to divide all these messages into three packages, and I made an inventory of these three divisions which I am also including herewith. The letter to Bishop Vizzardeli, Secretary of Latin Letters, is from His Lordship, the Bishop of Ajaccio. This Lord Secretary will be able to be of great help in activating somewhat the matters in regard to the Holy Father. The Bishop of Ajaccio expressly recommends them to him, because the two are in very close and friendly relationship. The other letters are confided to your benevolence, so as to have them more surely reach their proper addresses.

The intention of His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, is that the second and third packages be placed in the hands of His Eminence, Cardinal Lambruschini, Minister of State of His Holiness, with the short explanation contained in the inventory. These two Eminences are very closely connected. His Eminence, the Cardinal of Auch, addresses himself in all confidence to His Eminence, the Minister of State. He charges him to present his request to the Holy Father, by whom he is specially known and loved. Our Lords, the archbishops and bishops whose requests and letters are joined to that of His Eminence, only unite with him in humbly asking for the canonical institution of the two orders.

I have had the honor and the precious privilege of conversing with His Eminence, Cardinal Lambruschini, while he was at the Nunciature in Paris. He was quite willing to offer me his mediation with the Sovereign Pontiff and to take charge of the said Constitutions in order to have them approved by the Holy See. What annoying events have taken place since then! I have the honor of writing to His Eminence and I am recalling to him the benevolence with which he honored me, and I beg him to present to His Holiness my two requests: one for the Society of Mary, the other for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, joined to the design with which God inspired me in the foundation of these two orders.

I am adding a third request to obtain various powers for the priests of the Society of Mary, if His Eminence judges it proper.

I have made two distinct requests in the same terms, one for each order, because it seems advisable to me that the two papal bulls, possibly resulting, be distinct, one for each order. I have the honor of joining to this letter a copy of the two requests and the sketch of the design of the Founder.

If His Eminence finds it opportune to present the third request, I would be obliged to you, Honorable Canon, if you would remind him of it from time to time. This small matter can go along with the more important one of the approbation of the Constitution and of the canonical institution of the two orders.

I am placing all my confidence in you, Honorable Canon. The affair with which you have the kindness to occupy yourself, is serious and important for religion. Your name will be placed on the list of benefactors of the two orders, following those of His Holiness Gregory XVI and of His Eminence, Cardinal Lambruschini. Prayers will be said for you by all and each day as long as the two orders will exist. May God grant that this may be until the end of time! If there are expenses to be made, I beg of you to make them in advance. Father Chevallier in Auch or I myself in Bordeaux will be careful to reimburse you.

I shall add another little prayer, Honorable Canon, that of giving me from time to time news about these matters and, first of all, about the reception of the package I have the honor of sending to your address.

I am with profound respect, Honorable Canon, your very humble and very grateful servant.

P.S. I am staying at No. 2 Lalande Street, but the Bordeaux address would suffice.

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Here is the note about the landed property assuring the stability of the two institutes announced by the preceding letter.

The Founder of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is being asked whether these two orders have landed property assuring, as much as possible, their perpetual continuance.

Answer. The Institutor and Founder answers affirmatively for the two orders.

1. For the Society of Mary. From the beginning, he destined for the Society all the goods he possessed in his own name, and those he came to possess as time when on: a country-house near Bordeaux,[1] four houses in the city in the midst of which is a beautiful church[2]; then, a large house in the Saint Seurin quarter to which is still attached a yearly rent of six hundred francs[3]; then, the larger and the smaller Razac Mansions[4]; then, in the Department of the Haute Saône, the superb château of Saint Remy, with its vast dependencies; the Marast domain at some twenty-five miles from Saint Remy, as well as a small farm adjacent to the domain; in the Department of the Jura, the former Priory of Courtefontaine, the new buildings that were added to it, and in the same Department, at small distances some lands in cultivation to the value of eleven to twelve thousand francs; then, in the Department of the Upper Rhine, the little château of Saint Hippolyte with its new building and dependencies; then, in the Department of the Lower Rhine, the beautiful abbey of Ebersmunster. Considerable debts are backed up by mortgages on the two Razac Mansions. Accidents brought on by the evils of the times have not yet permitted that these properties be relieved of their mortgages.

There is question here only of all that is based on or derived from land and not of what is properly classed as furniture.

The furniture constitutes nonetheless considerable property. Independently of movable property, the properties of the Society are furnished with all that is necessary for agriculture; the shops of the workers with all necessary tools and equipment; the churches

[1] St. Laurent.
[2] The Madeleine and the neighboring houses.
[3] The house said to be of the Rode Canton or that of the Cross of Seguey, personal property of Fr. Chaminade, rented to private parties.
[4] The places where stood the old Saint Marie Boarding School, on Mirail Street.

and chapels with their ornaments; etc. Nor is there question of stipends or salaries that are being received.

Nevertheless, the entire body of the Society and each of its particular establishments are vowed to religious poverty. The members may never enrich themselves while always working at the task they have undertaken. See the Constitutions of the Society of Mary, second part.

2. The Institute of the Daughters of Mary. The first Foundress, Mlle de Trenquelléon de Batz, brought along more than eighty thousand francs when she entered, all of which she left to her Institute. The religious sisters ordinarily bring along a more or less considerable dowry, which gradually augments what the Institute possesses. The five beautiful and large communities which they have in the Departments of Lot et Garonne, Gers, and Jura are properties of the Institute.

There is no question here of all the furniture, which nevertheless, may always become more considerable.

The same conditions exist for the religious sisters as for the male religious. The central convent, just as each one of the other convents, founded or to be founded, are all vowed to religious poverty. The Institute grows in the measure that it becomes richer.[1]

We can also consider as means of support the mutual helps that the two orders of Mary give one another according to need.

Given at Bordeaux on November 20, 1838, under my seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary.

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With Father Perrodin, the Founder discusses the works of Courtefontaine and Acey.

1104 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, December 24, 1838

My respected son, far be it from me to contradict in any way all that you tell me that is so good and so excellent about Father Meyer in your letter of the fourteenth of the current month. I think absolutely as you do. I have the same ideas as you have of this estimable religious, and we are linked by the same very close sentiments which I have reason to believe are reciprocal. The movements you have noticed between Saint Remy and

[1] The Institute grows in proportion to its resources, without ever enriching itself, but always living in poverty.

Courtefontaine had not his change for object. They were but an object of religious administration.[2] The Society of Mary must always be disposed for the greatest sacrifices when there is question of the salvation and perfection of its members. I shall not here make the application of this principle to the movements that have disquieted you. I have since had reason to notice that they have produced salutary effects.

Your letter, my respected son, has led me to other observations and estimates of order and convenience. It is very evident that Father Meyer is too burdened. He loads upon himself as Superior the care of pastor, of Superior of the establishment of Courtefontaine, and of master of novices. I have noticed this from the beginning and then I immediately gave him Brother Prost as assistant master of novices and Father Lamotte to aid him in all his functions. When Brother Prost was withdrawn from Courtefontaine—it is useless here to look into the motives for this—I specially named Father Lamotte as assistant novice master, and master with the title when he had his perpetual vows, though always in subordination to Father Meyer. The latter, not finding in Father Lamotte all the activity and solicitude that he would have desired, made another move and took upon himself the three types of functions with which he is really overburdened. To this overburden, he adds frequent trips and a correspondence that would be fairly absorbing if it were carefully thought out.

After this preliminary outline, and the sentiments which you express in your letter, here you have my observations. Father Bardenet would easily allow you, I have good reason to believe, to make your novitiate in Courtefontaine and even to remain there after you have made your vows. Agreeing in mind and heart with Father Meyer, you would share his functions, all would go well and neither you nor he would be overburdened. If such were the will of Father Bardenet, the bishop of Saint Claude would willingly agree to it. About that I have no doubt whatsoever. You would always be able to meet the views of Father Bardenet about you, and at your first sign of need, you could go from Courtefontaine to Acey in a couple of hours.

My respected son, I am continuing my observations. Father Bardenet desired to bring old priests together in the big house which he inhabits.[1] It is an excellent idea but one very difficult to carry out! Up until the present time all enterprises of this kind have failed. I don't even know if any of the kind still exist in France. However, the enterprise of Father Bardenet would eventually become easy if his house were destined for old priests or for infirm or ailing priests of the Society of Mary. To these could be joined old lay religious. In this grouping a suitable order and regularity would then be seen, since they would all be already accustomed to a Rule. When it would be time and necessary, one or two Sisters, Daughters of Mary, who had taken over the new institution of Auch, could be sent to the convent of Acey, to take care of the sick and infirm. Father Glussot, who is in Saint Remy,

[2] Allusion to the visit of Fr. Meyer to St. Remy. See Letter 1091.
[1] In Acey.

will soon be ready, at least it seems so, to enter this hospice and, while awaiting greater blindness, could work as chaplain of the convent.

If there were, my respected son, an early death of Mother Gabrielle, it would be quite fitting that you remain long enough to train the new superioress so that the community would not degenerate by reason of this change.

All my messages have finally left for Rome a short time ago. Ten archbishops and bishops united themselves to His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, in asking of the Holy See the final approbation of the Constitutions of the two orders and their canonical institution.

The bishop of Saint Claude has made a very forceful request.

Receive, my respected son, the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

P.S. I beg of you, please, to offer Father Bardenet the assurance of my respectful remembrance.

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A religious of Saint Remy, Brother Jean Claude Saras, under the influence of illness, left his community and went back to his family. From there he wrote to Archbishop Mathieu to solicit dispensation from his vows, whence the following letters.

1105 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 27, 1838

Your Excellency, as the first answer to the letter with which you have honored me on the twenty-second of the current month, I shall notify Your Excellency that Brother Jean Claude Saras was a master-weaver at the Hospice Saint James of your capital city at the time the administration made a reduction among its subjects. At that time, his health was very bad, but he was given much consideration in Saint Remy, where he was received. I always thought him to be in this last establishment when, all of a sudden, I received a letter from his home in which he told me of the pitiful condition of his health, asking me to dispense him from his vows in regard to all that could be opposed to the reliefs and remedies that his needs might claim. I granted him this provisionally. Indirectly, however, I learned that the information he had given me was far from containing the whole truth.

The letter which this young man takes the liberty of writing to Your Excellency, and that you have the kindness of sending me as a matter of information, seems to me altogether exaggerated and unjust toward the administration at Saint Remy. There could, nevertheless, be motives for dispensation, considering the shattered state of his health. As I am not fully acquainted with all that concerns this young man, I shall write about him to

Father Chevaux in Saint Remy and ask him to send Your Excellency a final answer which will inform you fully as regards the subject in question. I believe that Brother Saras has made unconditional perpetual vows, first the three great vows of religion, to which, in the Society of Mary, are added the vows of stability and that of teaching Christian morals.

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1106 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 28, 1838

My dear son, I have just received a letter from the archbishop of Besançon which brought me another from Brother Jean Claude Saras, which the latter had addressed to him. I am passing on to you the half-sheet of the letter of Brother Saras, in addition to which you will find the copy of the letter the archbishop writes to me, and that of the answer that I have the honor of addressing to him. You will be kind enough to give His Excellency a final answer. I do not know Brother Saras well enough, nor am I aware what has happened in Saint Remy or at his home, since his withdrawal from the Society.

I am hoping that Father Fontaine's absence has not been harmful to Saint Remy.

Father Meyer wrote to me that all the religious employed in the boarding school in Saint Remy are too burdened with work, both the professors and the servants, that he did not know whether this resulted from a defective division of work or from an effective and real overload. He cites a typical example. The cook is without aid or assistance of any kind, even for the preparation of wood for the stoves. It would be a good thing to bring up such questions in council, for it frequently happens that in this way a golden mean is found. On the other hand, Father Meyer has been very much edified by the unity he witnessed among all the members of the community and by their perfect devotedness in the complete fulfillment of their functions.

Receive, my dear son, the renewed assurance of my paternal affection.

Brother Saras pulled himself together and remained faithful to his vocation.

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The following letter is of special interest as it sets forth the views of the Founder on the community of Working Brothers in the Society. These views were at the very moment being realized at Saint Remy.

1107 – TO FATHER FRIDBLATT, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, December 29, 1838

My dear son, perhaps you are surprised at not receiving a final answer to the repeated requests which you made to me last year.

The letter which you wrote to me from Alsace during the vacation attracted my attention in a particular manner on the new views which God could have in your regard. I believed I noticed them, but it was not up to me to explain myself 1. to test you a little; the

Spirit of God is very active but never hasty; 2. what God was asking of you or at least, what I thought he was asking of you, was not in the proper condition[1]; you would not have understood me, if I had spoken to you about it. I am now going to explain myself, nonetheless, in the shortest way possible.

You know, my dear son, that three classes of persons make up the Society of Mary: the class of priests, the class of religious teachers, and the class of religious farmers and other workmen.

The workers are not to be spread among the diverse establishments, nor mixed with other classes of religious. They are, however, to form distinct communities, separated from every other community in the Society which would be in the same establishment.[2] For example, I destined the winter orange-house of Saint Remy for a community of this kind, by adding there suitable walls of enclosure, repairs, work-shops, etc.[3] Not having been able to succeed, for reasons unnecessary to go into at the present moment, I joined the two boarding schools to the château and left all the dependencies of the château for this community. During my sojourn in Saint Remy, it was ascertained that a hundred workers could be kept busy there all year and the plan was drawn up for the lodging of such a number in the winter orange-house and the place of its enclosure. In the last two years, subjects who might trouble or scandalize such a community were dismissed. Brother Clouzet did not follow the primary boarding school to the château, but remained at the head of the community of workers. You have perhaps understood, since the second to last retreat at Saint Remy, that Brother Clouzet was a new man, or renewed in the first spirit of the Society of Mary. As soon as the transfer of the boarding school was made, I wrote to him "that it was time to reform the community of workers, time that these should enter into sentiments of fervor, into the spirit of penance, of the abnegation of themselves, of silence, love for work, etc. and that, a little later, I would send him all our Constitutions, settled and authentically approved.[4]

Brother Clouzet applied himself with the greatest devotedness to form the religious of this community in the spirit of their state, and I have reason to believe that he is the living model of all that he teaches. Here is the last news that I have received from him. It accompanies the letter that brought greetings for the new year. "Our Working Brothers community is getting along well, in fact, very well. There are even a good number of them who want to go too fast in the matter of mortification. In general, hardly any wine is being drunk and a good third less bread is being eaten than last year. Some of them eat no meat

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[1] The community of Working Brothers of St. Remy, of which there will be question, was not yet completely organized. See Letter 1088.
[2] This declaration must not be taken in an absolute sense, because at all times, by right and in fact there were in the Society, religious assigned to the various services of the houses of education. Cf. Constitutions of 1839, Art. 370 and 373, and the letter of the following January 17 to Fr. Chevaux.
[3] See Letter 960.
[4] Letter 1088.

at all and others have fasted all through Advent. However, I permit this only to those who can do it without any threat or danger to their normal health. There are some who get up during the night to go and make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Father Chevaux had permitted them to do so, then I thought it my duty to continue the permission on condition that they remain no longer than a quarter of an hour and that this would in no way harm the exercises of the Rule."

This kind of a community will, to a considerable extent, resemble the first communities of Benedictines and come close to those of the Trappists, with the modifications which will all be favorable to the maintenance and increase of fervor, although easing certain forms of penance which would evidently shorten life and take away the strength needed for the maintenance of the work at hand.

Those who have once made profession in these communities will no longer be able to ask to pass into other classes of the Society of Mary, but if the Superior General believes, before God, that he ought to take someone to fulfill other functions in other classes, this one is to consider it his duty to obey.[1]

When I read your last letter, my dear son, I thought that I saw in it that God might well be calling you to a similar Community in order to be its Head of Zeal. Take notice of what the spirit of the Lord will say to your heart. For the time being, I shall make no further reflections. Anyhow, I must, doubtless, help you distinguish the views and the will of God in the inspirations of his Spirit, but I have no intention of forcing anything.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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Father Chaminade, happy over the fervor of the community of workers at Saint Remy nevertheless believes it his duty to draw Brother Clouzet's attention to the danger of possible excesses in the matter of corporal penance. He then gives him some political advice in order to prepare him for the fulfillment of the mission of Assistant for which he has already destined him.

1108 - TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 2, 1839

My dear son, let me acknowledge herewith receipt of the letter of your community, dated the twenty-third of last December. I would have desired to write directly to the community to express to it at some length my paternal sentiments at the time of this New Year and to exhort it to continued fervor and perseverance, but the great number of my

[1] See Constitutions of 1839, Art. 373.

occupations stand in the way. So I ask you to inform your community of the fact and to be at the same time the interpreter of my dispositions in its regard . . .

It is well, my dear son, that mortification and the spirit of penance reign in the community, but you must be careful to have served in sufficient quantity, above all, bread which the young men require for the maintenance of their health. They have to eat more than the others, even if all are not animated by the same spirit. It might be well to keep bread within their reach so that at table they may help themselves.

I shall write to Courtefontaine soon to have Brother Genre freed to resume his trade of carpenter and to put himself at your disposal.

Continue to train the Heads of your shops. You are not mistaken, my dear son, in believing that a good Head is needed, one who takes in all parts of the administration, even the most detailed. There would be less difficulties, if the shop Heads were well trained, for example, the one in charge of agriculture. It is not necessary that this particular Head know all the sections, having to replace you only from time to time, for almost the entire Society wishes that you remain constantly with me, to take in its complete temporal administration, but as yet, I don't think that this is possible, unless you happen to find a Head capable of permanently replacing you in Saint Remy and who would only have to report to you from time to time, as you desire. For the present, it suffices that a Head be able to replace you during your absences, which you would render more or less long, according as the Head replacing you has greater or less formation, because it is necessary that this community, which could become very numerous, be well organized and that it have for its maintenance Heads fully worthy of all confidence. If you happen to find a head well qualified to take your place, it would be good to let him continue under your eyes, even when you are at Saint Remy. Thus he would be the sooner prepared, and your absences would be less felt or noticed. As long as his health holds out fairly well, Father Chevaux, with his watchful eye, could be very useful during your absences to give advice, or even orders according to need, but he must not be the one ultimately responsible.

When you have to fulfill the functions of the projected place, you will have to bring the Courtefontaine expenses down to the level of what they are in the other establishments.

The establishment of Salins may become very interesting. It has three hundred fifty pupils of whom, I believe, one hundred are in the special school and forty are boarders. The Commune gives Brother Boby eight hundred francs for the superior school. You will easily come to an understanding with Brother Boby, as this young man has admirable devotedness. However, and before all, Saint Remy must be well equipped in every way and your burden of cares must be lightened. You can count on my doing all I can to bring this about.

Nevertheless, my dear son, do not neglect your interior, in the midst of all your concerns. You must come to the point of God's love dominating your entire soul. The greatest labors and the most numerous occupations, commanded by this divine love, do not trouble the soul. Love itself becomes only the more and more inflamed.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

On all sides, recourse is being had to the prudence and the experience of Father Chaminade for the direction of religious communities.

After several other foundresses, such as Mlle Rondeau in Laval, the Venerable Mother Emilie de Rodat in Villefranche, and the Venerable Mother Javouhey in Cluny, Mme Anjorrant (1797-1873), foundress, in Bourges, of the Institute of Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd and of Mary Immaculate for the rescue of poor fallen girls[1] had gone to Bordeaux, from the beginning of her institute, to observe the functioning of the work of the Misericorde (1828). Ten years after, from Rouen, where her work had been transferred, she used to come back to Bordeaux to consult Father Chaminade anew on the most delicate points of her foundation and she shared the result of her interviews with Bishop de Jerphanion, her first guide. Whence the following letter.

1109 – TO BISHOP JERPHANION OF SAINT DIÉ[2]

Bordeaux, January 4, 1839

Your Lordship, on returning from his ordination to Saint Hippolyte,[3] Father Roussel told me of the extreme goodness with which you deigned to receive him and so, I cannot defer offering to you my sentiments of gratitude and, at the same time, of my greetings and good wishes for a bright and happy New Year. Your Lordship has spoken both to Father Meyer and to Father Roussel of the project you have in mind of establishing a novitiate in your diocese. I shall lend myself to all that will be agreeable to you, to the full extent of my ability. I shall be happy to find occasions of manifesting to you my entire devotedness.

At the moment when I was going to have the honor of writing to Your Lordship, I received a letter from Mme Anjorrant, in which she speaks of having had the honor of

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[1] See Mother Anjorrant and her work by M. Fugeroy (Paris, Beaushene, 1927). In the letter of Mother Anjorrant to whom Fr. Chaminade alludes, the Foundress signs "Superioress of the Society of Mary, said of the Good Shepherd."

[2] Bishop Eugène de Jerphanion (1796-1864), after having fulfilled the functions of Vicar General of Bourges, was named in 1835 to the bishopric of St. Dié, and transferred in 1842 to the archbishopric of Albi, where he later had numerous relations with Fr. Chaminade relative to the foundation of Réalmont in particular. He had all the qualities of a prelate of the eighteenth century without the defects. His dignity, his piety, and his mildness left a profound memory in his diocese. "No one, I believe," wrote Fr. Vergne, his Secretary General, "venerates Fr. Chaminade more than he, for Fr. Chaminade has the merit and the glory of having given to the society today, the type of workers which it needs most." (January 8, 1845).

[3] Fr. Roussel had been ordained priest in St. Dié on December 22, 1838.

writing to you and of having told you of my good dispositions on giving her the advice she might need in the difficult situation in which she finds herself, but telling you at the same time that I could and should not do so, but only under your mediation. The Reverend Superioress adds that Your Lordship would not find it necessary to enter into correspondence with me, but that she could continue to consult me directly. She repeats to me the request she made of giving her my decisions in writing to set them against those who oppose her in the work she is undertaking and, in consequence, she proposes five questions to me which she considers the most important.

Your Lordship, I am going to answer this excellent Superioress General: 1. that the decisions I could give her would have very little weight in the eyes of her adversaries, not being backed by any authority in her behalf; 2. that I do not know her Constitutions and that it is not advisable for me to write a few constitutive articles separately. Constitutions must constitute a complete whole, in such a way that all the articles, intimately joined, be interdependent. I have just learned, for example, that her religious were accustomed to make the vow of enclosure. This could be a source of great embarrassment, it seems to me, if she plans to undertake works on a large scale; 3. there are points on which, doubtless, she must have made up her mind, but on which she seems to be following only her own lights. It is in this way that the House of the Misericorde was started in Laval, the one that has had to withstand so many contradictions of all sorts. Acting otherwise, she would run the risk of compromising Your Lordship and all establishments of the same kind. It is difficult to do good these days. The House of the Misericorde of Laval has experienced the same growth, and inspired the same interest as that of Bordeaux.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

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In the preceding letter, Bishop de Jerphanion who, while he was still Vicar General of Bourges, had assisted and encouraged Mme Anjorrant in the beginning of her enterprise—answered by the following lines (January 30):

Your charity, Reverend Father Superior, did not refuse to give Mme Anjorrant during her stay in Bordeaux advice of which she was not slow in appreciating the great wisdom. I beg you to accept my sincere thanks for them. Although now far separated from the place of residence of this good superioress, I continue to take no less a very keen interest in her institute. But at the distance where I happen to be, in the midst of all the diocesan affairs which absorb me and take up practically all my time, it is difficult for me to occupy myself with pursuing the great work of the Constitutions. I had then instructed her to use the permission that you gave her to correspond directly with you on this subject, not that she should quote your authority to her contradictors, but that she would profit by your counsels and follow them in all confidence.

In the meantime the foundation in Fribourg is undergoing new delays. To Brother Enderlin who is waiting in Ebersmunster, Father Chaminade patiently gives advice on how to use these delays.

1110 - TO BROTHER ENDERLIN, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, January 7, 1839

My dear son, I have received your letter of last December 24 . . . I have had no further news from Fribourg. Doubtless, the clergy and the Catholics are having difficulties in obtaining from the government the permission to call the Society of Mary for the teaching of the youths of the country.

The subjects which the examination[1] is about are reading, grammar, writing, arithmetic, some geography, national history, and the particular history of the Canton of Fribourg. These last two subjects are quite difficult to get at, by reason of the postage,[2] but it will be easy for you to make up for that during the first days of your arrival should that eventuality take place. You, nevertheless, do well to be preparing yourself. I would hardly see any better preparation than to teach a class of German every day in the novitiate. In the supposition of the departure, M. Andrew Staffel, whom Father Rothéa is going to attract to Ebersmunster, could continue the class once you have to leave. Make yourself as useful as possible in the novitiate and, in case of need, even a little in the boarding school. In any case, may all the exercises of the novices for the development and culture of their minds in no way harm the exercises of piety which they need for their formation in the true spirit of the religious state. Do the same for yourself, my dear son, having salvation always in mind and progress in virtue before all!

Father Rothéa would no longer seem to me necessary in Ebersmunster, if Father Georges took courage and knew how to bestir himself a little. What is very essential and what seems to cause the greatest embarrassment, to Father Rothéa or to Father Georges, is the economy of the house and the bookkeeping. Would you not be able to relieve them of this worry? It would then be necessary to settle all arrears and start all over from the beginning of this month, 1839. To clear up the debts, you will perhaps need help. Father Georges, nevertheless, believes to have succeeded, and he proposes to have the regulation passed over to me. In my early youth, I fulfilled the functions of property manager in a larger house than that of Ebersmunster.[3] After these days, this employment took up little of my time, but much order and exactitude is necessary, and that without needless worry or preoccupation.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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[1] The examination to which Bro. Enderlin had to submit himself to be admitted to teach in Fribourg.
[2] The postage rates for books were very high.
[3] Fr. Chaminade had fulfilled the functions of property manager or bursar in the Collège of Mussidan from 1784 until 1791. In his letter of April 26, 1836, he says he did that sort of thing for sixteen or seventeen years. If there is no mistake in these figures, it would have to be concluded that from his early youth he was associated with the temporal administration of the house.

1111 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 17, 1839

I am offering you, my dear son, and the entire community of the château, at this renewal of the year, my best wishes, even if they are a bit late. I have been deeply touched by those you express in your letter of last December 26. Oh! If you are able to arrive at the degree of virtue and perfection to which you are all called, all the years of your life will be happy, and the eternity following them will also be happy. May the Lord deign to shower upon you his most abundant benedictions!

The crises which you are experiencing, my dear son, are of great consequence. If you cannot be entirely freed from them, you could perhaps reduce their intensity by sometimes using a little tobacco, or perhaps also taking some ipecac tablets. It seems to me that either one of these products might do you great good. You might also speak of the matter to the doctor, to whom I beg you to offer the tribute of my respectful remembrance . . .

My dear son, I can see only a real good in the fact that the servants of the château go to take their meals in the community of the workers, at least as a matter of habit, disposing of everything, so that it be done with ease and decorum. If it sometimes happens that certain servants are delayed, either because of outsiders or sick ones, the Working Brothers will then set their portion aside for them. Act in such a way, my dear son, that all your actions, little by little and without worry, become works of faith, and although you are cold and almost without feeling—it is of no matter; for it is your labors that are to accompany you before the dread tribunal and not your feelings.

Receive, my dear son, my paternal embraces.

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1112 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, January 19, 1839

It would be necessary that the young man you brought from Orgelet have great qualities in order to compensate for the deformity which renders him irregular as regards the Society. It would be at least necessary that he be able to become a good teacher for the novitiate.[1]

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[1] "He was a dwarf, that is to say, of unusually small stature," notes Fr. Meyer.

1113 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, January 25, 1839

My dear son, I wrote my last letter to you[1] with an open heart, just as I want you to do when you write to me, for my confidence in you is very real. I am somewhat surprised that Father Bardenet has not welcomed our proposition. Since it is, nevertheless, just and well placed, we must not despair or lose hope. We know that he loves what is good, but patience is sometimes necessary before he is able to recognize it. The horror which he has for debts has become in him a sort of sickness. He complains about me when he should pity me. He complains about me because I find myself loaded with debts, but does he know anything about their origin, their causes, their occasion, etc.? He knows about some isolated cases. He often learns about them from persons previously notified; then, when the remembrance of them comes back to him, the fever of his sickness again takes over, and he breaks out in complaints. You tell me that we must pardon him because of the good he has done and continues to do. Assuredly, I have nothing against him, for I love and respect him. He is full of good qualities, only I pity him for having this sickness and I ask of the good God that it may neither neutralize nor paralyze the merit of his good works.

The Head of the establishment of Saint Claude has just written to me that the Reverend Pastor, Father Montgaillard, Father Bardenet, and several other gentlemen, have just bought for the school, a former convent, located in the center of the city; [2] and that Father Bardenet was to go there in the month of April to judge the repairs necessary and to see that they are made. The Society of Mary must, doubtless, be grateful, which it is in fact, and sincerely so, towards Father Bardenet, because he gives it the occasion to do good in places where, presumably, it could not have been done. Never shall we find fault with Father Bardenet for the hardships he causes us in completing the good works which he starts, or because of the sacrifices required in other good works, other establishments, for example, that are offered to us fully equipped and which we are obliged to refuse.

As regards the religious sisters of whom I spoke to you who could take care of the sick, you understand that this could not take place, unless it could be done without suspicion, or shade of scandal.

You have otherwise done very well, my respected son, to stop talking to Father Bardenet about the most important question, which was the main object of my letter, so as not to augment the physical indisposition in which he then was. In this matter, do what prudence and zeal in conforming to the views of God may ask of you.

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[1]Letter 1104.

[2]The former convent of Carmelites, in the quarter of the Poyat, where the work is still found today. It had formerly been in an unhealthy and inadequate place near the bishop's palace.

A short time after the reception of your letter, having had occasion to write to Father Glussot, I told him, without in any way compromising you, that one of his most intimate acquaintances thought him badly placed in Saint Remy, that etc. . . . I begged him to tell me honestly how the matter stood, for I thought he could easily be replaced in Saint Remy. I have as yet had no answer.

The Mother General is very well disposed toward the convent in Acey. She wants to give it a really good mistress of novices. In proposing to you, my respected son, Courtefontaine as the place for your novitiate, it is a sacrifice that I have made,[1] for I would have liked very much to be the witness of your progress in virtue and religious perfection. I am hoping that this sacrifice will be agreeable to the Lord.

Receive, my respected son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

P.S. I beg of you to offer Father Bardenet the homage of my respectful remembrance.

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Father Chaminade openly announces to Brother Clouzet his intention of naming him Head of Temporalities and gives him useful instructions to this effect.

1114 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 27, 1839

I have just received a letter, my dear son, from the older Brother Boillon, the mechanic, the original copy of which I am passing over to you, following this one, which will be a copy of the one I am writing to him as an answer to his. Weigh all before God, and see if you consider him really converted, and also, if you consider him capable of bending himself to the severe rule of a novitiate, if there would not be some imprudence in uniting the two brothers, by reason of their tendency to criticism and murmuring, while, on the other hand, they might serve as a help and a support, to each other.

A few days ago, my dear son, I wrote to Brother Genre in Courtefontaine, telling him to go to you in Saint Remy, and there resume his position as carpenter, and place himself entirely at your disposal. He made his perpetual vows in Ebersmunster last November 21 with great edification, judging from what has been told me. Since he has entered the Society he has always shown a great separation from the world, and, besides, he has always been very docile and obedient.

[1] Fr. Chaminade would have preferred that Fr. Perrodin come to make his novitiate in Bordeaux, close to him.

Always try, my dear son, to disengage yourself. Have yourself represented everywhere, as much as possible, in such a way that you can gradually be able to absent yourself without your absence being harmful in any way to the establishment. My ultimate object would be to make you the Head of Temporalities.[1] All the General Heads, as you know, are usually to remain close to their General, of whom they are the Assistants. This is the wish and desire of the entire Society. How many times have the principal members of the Society made this clear to me! But in this, they have but guessed the sentiments in my own soul. Anyhow, it is evident that it cannot be so, at least for some time yet. The community of workers is presently neither sufficiently formed nor organized, but nothing seems to me to stand in the way of remedying the situation.

It will be necessary that we work together and do it according to the plan traced out by our Constitutions. Before this interview, you might see our main establishments in the North, get a good idea of their financial status, what they owe and what is owed to them, what they spend and what they earn or can earn. See to it that each establishment keeps its accounts in a practically uniform way, so that you may be able to understand the reports they will have to make to you. All this information will be very useful to us, and even necessary, in judging the general condition of the Society, so as to take the means of freeing it from debts, and to see what it would be in the condition to undertake.

There are two establishments, not very far from Saint Remy, which you could first undertake, that of Marast and that of Salins. I shall authorize you in all that you will need. I shall support you, I shall give you all the indications I shall have, all the means that are at my disposal. The establishment of Salins has difficulties that are peculiar to it, namely, the pastor of Saint Anatoile in Salins, Father Colin, for several years pastor of Dôle. He founded this establishment in a former convent of the Ursulines which he bought for this purpose. Several parts have not yet been paid for. I have just learned that Brother Troffer had accepted or had offered himself to pay the interest on the amounts that are due. At the time of my visit to Dôle, I strongly urged Father Colin, in the presence of Father Bardenet, to stop this liquidation, and we indicated to him the means of doing so, and how to donate the establishment to the Society. As far as I understand, nothing has been done about this, unless the interest on the sums still owed, is being paid. If Father Colin were to die, we would be in a rather tight position. Furthermore, the establishment of Salins is one of the most flourishing in the Society, and the one which might be able to procure for it the most *bonis*, but its young director, Brother Boby, very active, docile, and intelligent, is otherwise without experience in temporal affairs. When I shall have made him recognize your authority, all the arrangements that you will make with him, will be, I hope, permanent. As regards Marast, you know more about it than I can tell you. You know Brother Galliot[2] and the way he must be handled. As soon as I hear from you I shall write everywhere to back your authority.

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[1] Replacing Bro. Mémain.
[2] Bro. Galliot had come back to Marast as econome.

You understand, my dear son, that the work you are undertaking will be lengthy, and that, in consequence, it must be consistent, without any other interruption than that of your necessary presences at Saint Remy. You may often even be able to continue by correspondence the work that has been begun.

I am, at this time, receiving the news that Ebersmunster is in a state of great disorder, that there are more than four thousand francs in current debts; and, that the suppliers are having themselves paid what they want.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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1115 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 6, 1839

My dear son, join to your work the constant practice of the interior life. Advance continually in the practice of the virtues. This is a very strict obligation for a religious and with all the more reason for a priest religious.

You tell me that you need an angelic patience. Well, my dear son, I shall add that you need a divine patience. Christian patience is a participation in the patience of Jesus Christ. Do not neglect, my dear son, to make real progress in mental prayer, for meditation is, as it were, the pivot about which turns the entire interior life, and, as a matter of fact, all our life becomes a life of prayer: *Oportet semper orare et numquam deficere*. [1]

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1116 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 11, 1839

Your answer, my dear son, to Father Guerin, Vicar General, is exactly what was needed and so, at least for the time being, there is nothing further to be done.

If Father Glussot asks you to be received as a novice, I authorize you to perform the ceremony, and his novitiate will be reckoned from the time he came to Saint Remy.

I am asking you, please, to tell Brother Gaussens that I had not understood that he formally asked me to place him in the South. I would be able to place him suitably only at

[1] "We need to pray continually and never lose heart." Luke 18:1.

the head of a new establishment, and if your letter had arrived two or three days sooner, I would have willingly sent in his name, instead of the one I had just sent to Castelsarrasin. I am now able to start a new establishment in this city, Sub-Prefecture of the Tarn and Garonne.[2]

Brother Gaussens is greatly mistaken about my sentiments toward him, in believing that I do not love him as one of my children. On the contrary, he has a very distinguished place in my heart. It is true that I was sorry he did not enter more seriously into the spirit of the religious state, but this very sorrow is an effect of the affection that I have for him, and of the desire I have for his salvation and, consequently, for his eternal happiness. Perhaps he may be surprised that I am speaking here of salvation, but you will explain to him, my dear son, how salvation may be compromised in the religious state, if one does not constantly advance in the perfect love of God by an entire abnegation of self. He may finally come to the point of understanding what you mean.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and very sincere devotedness.

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The correspondence with Brother Clouzet continues; it is very instructive and deals with the organization of the Working Brothers community and the functions of the Head of Temporalities.

1117 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 12, 1839

My dear son, I had just written to you at quite some length when I received your letter of the first of the current month . . .

I am very pleased with the conference for the Heads of the workshops, and I include in this group, the Heads of Agriculture. This conference is a necessity, as it can be a repetition of the common conference, to give assurance that all have well understood and appreciate the truths explained in the common conference. You will then draw practical consequences from it. Then your Heads will maintain the community in great fervor; even saints will be formed within it whose example will have an entirely happy response. You yourself, my dear son, work at the practice of what you will teach, for the example of the first Head has a very great influence on all the members.

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[2] The establishment of Castelsarrasin was, in fact, opened during this same year and had as first director, Bro. Troffer who was replaced in the following year by Bro. John Fabre, who remained there until his death in 1875. The work soon gained the esteem and confidence of the entire population and took on a great development. It comprised, besides the communal school, a free school and a boarding school.
It was suppressed in the persecution of 1903.

I easily believe with you that Father Chevaux would be the most likely to replace you, especially if the Heads of the workshops and of agriculture get along well. I believe it will be good, in proportion as the community increases, to look forward to two division Heads, a first, for all that concerns farming, upon whom would directly depend all the materiel of the shops, as well as all their Heads. These two division Heads will arrive at finding themselves, the one among the farmers and the other among the workers. Then a first Head could conduct everything very well, with great solicitude, and he could give the community and all of its Heads many concerns in the spiritual order. It is quite possible that Father Fridblatt will make up his mind to enter the community of the workers. Nothing is as yet decided, but the matter is being considered and discussed.[1]

As to the title and functions of the general Head of Temporalities, of which there is question for you, I have several observations to make about the reflections which you place before me. It is true that many of your Brothers, and possibly the majority of them, have been prejudiced against you, but note 1. that these prejudices had as object only your religious conduct and not the functions that you are going to fulfill; and that 2. you are considered by all as the most capable member of the Society when it comes to the management of its temporal matters. Whether this is true or merely exaggerated in itself matters little in the present case. The past prejudices will not follow you or will follow you only slightly. On the contrary, how about penetrating yourself more and more with the true sentiments of the religious, which, at bottom, are the very ones of Jesus Christ, who tells us so frequently that he is not of this world, that he has come down from heaven?

As to the reasons which you derive, my dear son, from the needs of your sanctification, from the indispensableness of the retirement, etc., I would have you observe: 1. that you have to learn to practice retirement, solitude, recollection in the midst of the affairs to which you will have to attend, whether while traveling or in the stops you will have to make; and 2. that everywhere, you will have to appear and to be in reality, a man vowed to poverty, to chastity, and to obedience, that everywhere you will have to be able to say with the same truth as St. Paul: I am fulfilling such and such a function only for Jesus Christ. Always look upon yourself as inferior to all your Brothers, and as being, so to say, only their business representative, and from that will result mildness, goodness, all the kind attentions of a humble charity, etc., etc.

All this will seem possible to you, my dear son, if faith is there to make you see yourself as an envoy of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will surely have all the graces necessary for this position and, in consequence, the graces of solitude and interior recollection, of zeal, of abnegation of yourself, of entire devotedness to the work of the Lord, etc., etc. . . .

Imagination is working so much in the case of Brother Gaussens, only because he wishes to accommodate the love of himself with the love he owes to our Lord. He will never

[1] See Letter 1107. It was not possible to carry out this project.

succeed in this. I am having Father Chevaux tell him a few words to this effect, but nevertheless, with great discretion.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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1118 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 19, 1839

You will find herewith enclosed, my dear son,

1. Your nomination to the post of Third Assistant. It remains understood between us that your habitual residence will be provisionally in Saint Remy and not here with me, as the Constitutions mention.

2. A Circular to all the Heads of establishments of the Society of Mary. You are authorized to send a collated and signed copy to all the establishments of the Haute Saône, the Doubs, the Jura, and the Vosges. I am writing the same letter to Father Rothéa and authorizing him to send copies to the Heads of all the establishments in Alsace. I am taking care of those for the South.

It is a happy necessity for you, my dear son, to be obliged to live as a real religious, even while traveling. The good God is asking this proof of your fidelity in his service. You will be able to arrange your affairs so as to pass the Easter fortnight in Saint Remy. Perhaps you would do well to begin with the more distant establishments. Although your visits are to be very active, you will have to stay in each establishment at least long enough to accomplish what happens to be the object and purpose of the visit and to give real consolations to the religious who are working there. If, before the Easter fortnight, you have not been able to visit all the establishments, you could continue after it, and then return to Bordeaux, unless some need should oblige you to retrace your steps and return to Saint Remy, eventually to start out again from there.

The blessings that God showers upon the Society of Mary are especially the return of certain dissident subjects, the regularity that is being generally observed in the establishments, the good subjects who are entering the Society, the definitive settlement and authentic approbation of the Constitutions, the favorable reception on the part of the Sovereign Pontiff of the request we are addressing to him for a canonical institution, etc., etc.[1]

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[1] On February 7, Fr. Chaminade had received the first news about the reception of his requests, on the part of the Sovereign Pontiff, in the following letter of Cardinal Lambruschini, dated January 26:

"Dear Reverend Father, the package containing your letter of September 16 of last year, as well as the requests, with the Constitutions drawn up for the Society of Mary and for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, did not reach me until the middle of the present month.

Hardly had I received it when I hastened to place your request at the feet of His Holiness, to whom I expressed the good wishes of His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch, as well as those of several French bishops, for the approbation to the Constitutions by the Holy See.

I have the satisfaction of assuring you, Reverend Father, that the Holy Father has very favorably received your request and that, following his orders, your requests, with the documents, joined to them, have been transmitted without delay to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, which will first

I would have greatly desired to be able to pass over to you as many reproduced copies of our Constitutions as you will visit establishments, but this is not possible. I believe that you may promise to distribute them on your return to Bordeaux, while giving news about all that has been settled and determined.

The dispatches which you will make of the Circular are to be made in my name. All you have to do, is to place at the bottom: *Compared with the original*, and then affix your signature.

If M. John B. Boillon does not seem to you really converted and decided to live as a real religious, he is not to be admitted. To make doubly sure, you might perhaps permit him to come and spend a few days at Saint Remy before having him bring his tools. He would find enough of them in Saint Remy to occupy himself temporarily. It is to be presumed that he will have need of making a general confession.

You will continue, my dear son, the direction of the community according to your plan. We shall discuss the matter in a manner sufficiently detailed when you come to Bordeaux. During your vacation, Father Chevaux is to lodge in the community. He can even occupy your room. He will try to follow your same plan. You must counsel him to spare his health and carefully to avoid all that might compromise it. Otherwise, there is nothing to be changed in the meantime—neither in the château, nor in the community. I readily understand that, in the two establishments, still more good subjects would be needed.

Do not be concerned, my dear son, because of the great number of affairs with which you are charged, as the assistance of our divine Patroness will not fail you. Love to work for the glory of her adorable Son, and have the Blessed Virgin known and loved wherever you happen to be. . . .

A few days ago, I wrote to you, and I asked you specially to send me, as soon as possible, the deposit which Father Glussot has placed into your hands, while adding to it all you possibly can, or to ask your brother to open credit for me for about two thousand francs. I have reason to think you have received the letter, and that the answers must be on the way. I thought it my duty nevertheless, to mention it here, because of the urgency, which it is unnecessary to explain to you at the present time.

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examine the Constitutions and then make a report about them to His Holiness with a view of obtaining his approbation.

I would consider myself very happy to be able to contribute with you in some way, for the greater glory of God, as well as to the honor of the Most Blessed Virgin, to the strengthening of the two pious Congregations, of which you are the worthy Founder.

In the meantime, be pleased, Revered Father, to accept the very special expression of the esteem and consideration with which I am, etc."

Cardinal Lambruschini never ceased to manifest the most active devotedness to Fr. Chaminade and to his religious Families, and he is to be regarded as one of the benefactors of the Society.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and sincere devotedness.

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1119 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 19, 1839

NOMINATION OF A THIRD ASSISTANT

We, the Superior General of the Society of Mary and in this position;

Wanting to give the general administration of the finances of the Society of Mary a final degree of perfection and of uniformity;

Knowing the zeal and the devotedness of Brother Dominic Clouzet for the interests of the said Society:

Have named him and do name him, by this letter, Head of the Temporalities and by reason of this character, Third Assistant to the Superior General.

The present Ordinance will be sent to Brother Clouzet in Saint Remy, by the first mail available.

In virtue of which, we have signed and are having countersigned the present nomination by the Secretary General in the interim and absence of Brother Bonnefoi.

In Bordeaux, February 19, 1839 – W. Joseph Chaminade

By order of the Superior General

R. CORBIN

* * * *

1120 – TO ALL THE DIRECTORS OF THE SOCIETY

Bordeaux, February 19, 1839

CIRCULAR ADDRESSED TO ALL THE HEADS OF THE ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY BY HIS REVERENCE, THE SUPERIOR GENERAL.

The protection of the august Mary, my dear son, drawing every day new blessings on the Society which glorifies itself in bearing her name, and of which I am the very unworthy Head and Founder, imposes upon me the happy necessity of regularizing the financial administration of all the establishments of the North and of the South. To this effect, I call upon all the efforts of your devotedness to the work undertaken. The novitiates are languishing, at least those of Courtefontaine and Ebersmunster, for the lack of means. The novitiate of the South is to be reestablished, for it is absolutely needed; the Central House is without resources; and, finally, the Society has suffered great losses as a result of various accidents, the most recent of which is that of Marast.[1]

I am undertaking, my dear son, the settling of accounts of all the establishments of the Society, the furnishing to the novitiates of all that will be possible or needed for the formation of the subjects according to the spirit of our Constitutions and the multiplication of our establishments. This multiplication, in itself, will serve for the furnishing of new resources.

To put into execution, my dear son, this determination which I have taken before the Lord, I have put Brother Clouzet at the head, with whose zeal, devotedness, intelligence, activity, and piety you are all acquainted, and to this end I have named him General Head of Temporalities.

Before taking up his residence with me, he will stop at all the establishments to secure firsthand information on their real condition, the needs they are experiencing, the expenses they have to make and all the resources they have, all the reserves and economies they are in a position to make.

You will please second the devotedness of Brother Clouzet, my dear son. Put your registers in conformity with those of the other establishments and according to the method he will place before you. Receive him with the cordiality and consideration due to one of the general Heads of the Society. Have with him the greatest frankness, in order to facilitate for him the acquisition of the knowledge of the resources of your establishment, so that it may attain the prosperity that we may expect and look forward to.

Although the object of his visit concerns, so to speak, only what is temporal, you will, nevertheless, be able to profit by it in making known to him the interior griefs you may be experiencing, whatever may be their cause. Brother Clouzet is fully worthy of your confidence from all points of view.

I am authorizing Father Rothéa and Brother Clouzet to send you a copy of this letter, checked and signed by them.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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[1] See Letter 1098.

P.S. Brother Clouzet will be able to tell you the many blessings which Heaven is bestowing on the Society, and he will speak to you especially of our affairs in Rome, for the success of which you are to continue the prayers ordered for this intention on last August 19.

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1121 – TO A POSTULANT IN COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 21, 1839

My dear son, when I received your letter of the sixteenth of the current month, I discovered you in my innermost heart; in fact, you were there so much before, that in spite of your bad conduct and that of your brother, you had not yet been able to leave it. You owe this favor to the Most Blessed Virgin. It is beyond doubt that she had adopted you as her child. O my dear son, what an obligation you will have, to devote your entire life in causing her to be honored!

You ask me for the permission to make your promises as a novice. I cannot grant it to you as yet, for it is advisable that you first make a very exact postulate, I could have said severe, and that, during this time, you busy yourself with the making of a general confession; that you purify your soul by sentiments of real contrition which you will ask ceaselessly from the Lord through the intercession of the most holy Virgin. Mary has begun the work of your conversion, she will want to complete it as the Mother of Mercy. When Father Meyer will judge it proper to give you absolution and to admit you to the Holy Table, then you may beg of him to go through the customary formalities for the admission of postulants to the novitiates and to write to me about yourself. If this postulate time has been spent in the fervor we have reason to expect of you, I shall even count it as your novitiate time.

You ask me, my dear son, to impose upon you penances proportioned, not to your faults, but to your strength and, doubtless, also to your dispositions. Your request announces your repentance and the will for a sincere return. You will yourself let me know the penances you think I should impose on you, and I shall then see what I will have to do, and I shall inform you accordingly.

Receive, my dear son, as a sign of peace, my tender embraces with my fatherly blessing.

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1122 – TO BROTHER JOSEPH BERNHARD, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 21, 1839

My dear son, I have sufficient knowledge of the dispositions of your heart toward me not to have drawn any vexing or annoying conclusion from the fact that I did not see your name with those of your confrères in their New Year's letter. You have, nevertheless, done well in making up for it. Do not worry, my dear son, over your numerous distractions in your prayers and your mental wonderings during your occupations. The first rule to follow is to remain patient; the second, to seek their cause and to work at their removal. You will succeed in this, I hope, by the practice of interior recollection, learning to walk in the presence of God, and of growing ever more in his love.

I greatly desire, my dear son, that you train someone to replace you in the bakery. However, you are doing well in accomplishing all you are told to do, but, even at that, you will never do enough toward the breaking of your own will. A true religious must be in the hands of his Superiors like a well-bred child is in the hands of his father and mother. On the other hand, do not be surprised that your nature is there to oppose this evangelical infancy. St. Peter felt that very thing at the time of the washing of the feet before the Last Supper. Imitate the submission he gave as soon as Our Lord made him see that there was no reason to oppose the orders he was receiving.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender devotedness with my fatherly blessing.

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The following letter treats of the foundation of the Schools of Castelsarrasin, of which it precisely states the conditions and formalities.

1123 – TO M. GRAND, MAYOR OF CASTELSARRASIN

Bordeaux, March 2, 1839

Honorable Mayor, M. de Saget[1] hastened to communicate to me the letters that you wrote relative to the establishment of primary schools which you desire to confide to the direction of three teachers of the Society of Mary. He also had the honor of manifesting to you all the interest I am taking in satisfying your wise and benevolent views in regard to the city of Castelsarrasin of which you are the mayor. It is already understood that the teachers will each receive three hundred francs with the tuition of the paying pupils. You do not believe that there will be any difficulty regarding the reimbursement of their traveling expenses, nor do I hope that there will be any difficulty regarding some accessory expenses connected with the first settling down of the personnel. As regards the furniture, whether of

[1] Former president of the Royal Court who always remained in close relationship with Fr. Chaminade. See Letters 350 and 366.

the schools or of the dwelling of the teachers and its upkeep, as regards also needed repairs on buildings or fixtures, the responsibility will always remain in the hands of the mayoralty.

Everything being thus foreseen and regulated, I would have thought, Honorable Mayor, that there remained to me only to give the order to the teachers to come together and to go to Castelsarrasin and to occupy their respective posts, for that is the way we act in all our establishments. It is thus, in particular, that we have done in Moissac. Upon arriving, the teachers go to the mayoralty, their head presents his obedience and certificate to the mayor. The mayor then gives notice of it to the superior committee and the head writes to the Reverend Rector of the Academy in case he has not already been notified.

You would have thought, Honorable Mayor, that the Head I destine for you would present himself to you, supplied with the attestations of the mayoralties under which he has exercised his functions for three years, and asking you for the position of teacher. This is, in fact, the order prescribed by the University for isolated teachers who belong to no particular body or group. However, if this policy were followed in the case of subjects belonging to corporations, serious drawbacks or situations might result. The subjects in question could shake off their dependence upon the societies or congregations to which they belong. The obediences and attestations of the general superiors would no longer be considered as sufficient and it would be altogether useless that the Society of Mary were approved, that anyone would treat with it, etc.

I hope that these observations will not displease you and that you will be kind enough to believe in my sincere devotedness and in the respectful consideration with which I am, Honorable Mayor, etc. . . .

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1124 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 10, 1839

My dear son, I am not answering the letter of Brother Clouzet, the one dated last February 24, because, according to that letter, he must be on his rounds. If he had given me an idea of the order he is following, I could have made some observations to him as regards certain establishments. You must know this order, since he tells me that he will help you by correspondence.

I am thinking of sending you, before or after Easter, a young man, who was first a farmer. He is, I think, thirty-six years old. He has been in Bordeaux for almost eleven years in the service of a dealer in liquors. Nothing in the religious life either surprises or frightens him. He has always conducted himself well, in his own native city as well as in Bordeaux.

The disposition of his possessions has been made and these amount to twenty-four thousand to twenty-five thousand francs.

Courage, my dear son! Love to recall to yourself this passage from the Psalms: *"Euntes ibant et flebant . . . ; venientes autem venient, etc.*[1]

[1]"They went in tears casting their seed. They will return in joy, carrying the sheaves of their harvest." Psalms 125:6.

* * * *

1125 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 10, 1839

My dear son, I only have time to tell you that I have received your brief letter of February 14 and that you should always take courage, this courage being sustained by the pure love of God. We live eternally in the bosom of God, that is to say, in the love with which God loves himself. Here you have the reason the saints will live, as it were, an entirely divine life. We must then, here below, endeavor to live the life we are to live once we have reached heaven.

Take care of your health, but with this secondary care which will not prevent your heart from being all for God and in God. I always recommend to you, my dear son, the greatest union with Jesus and Mary. The protection of St. Joseph may always be a powerful means toward this end.

I am embracing you paternally.

* * * *

At this time, we find an isolated remnant of the correspondence with Father Lalanne. He was struggling in Layrac in the midst of ever-increasing embarrassments. He was petitioning the Minister of Public Instruction for a completely free hand in his educational work. He had become involved with a priest of the neighborhood who offered to lend him fifteen thousand francs. Father Chaminade gives him his advice on these diverse matters.

1126 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, March 15, 1839

My dear son, I received the letter you wrote yesterday and so, I am interrupting my usual correspondence to write to you and to answer it.

A few days ago, I received a letter from Brother Clouzet in which, after telling me of the letter you had written to him and which you must remember, he adds: “Father Lalanne, my Good Father, will lose himself with his establishment if we don’t come promptly to his assistance with men and with money . . . It seems to me necessary to help him. In this, the good God and the Blessed Virgin would help us.” I did not answer this letter, for I did not know where to address my answer. My last orders having reached him, he left to look over the establishments in the North, in the manner and in the views that I explained to you. I

have learned, by correspondence, of his stop in Salins. With all he has to do, it is not possible for him to be here any sooner than a few weeks after Easter.

The few words he wrote to me regarding your letter have found a great echo in my soul. I am more than willing to enter into all the possible solutions. I shall even send him to you.[1] Brother Clouzet may well be somewhat delayed in the North, since the acquisition of the former community of the Carmelites has just been made in Saint Claude. He is being asked: 1. to decide upon the repairs to be made; and 2. to receive the cession of these large buildings—the church has not yet been acquired—provided the purchase has been concluded. There would be something similar to be done in Salins for the old community of the Ursulines. I have been obliged to remove Brother Troffer from his office as Head of the establishment which is becoming ever more flourishing. This removal has had a salutary effect . . . if, at the return of Brother Clouzet from his round of visits, all is not yet ready in Saint Claude and in Salins for the drawing up of the deeds, I shall have him told to come back to these places only after his return from the South. It is not possible for me to act faster in the arrangements we have to make.

I am now coming back to your letter of yesterday. The resignation of M. de Salvandy[2] it seems to me, should not have stopped the sending of your papers. M. de Salvandy and the other ministers preserve all their authority until the formation and the constitution of a new Cabinet.

You have two means of offering a mortgage to the priest who is offering you fifteen thousand francs: the first, on the houses you have acquired and which serve as lodging for the division of the little ones; the second, on the very house acquired from M. Dardy. The latter would surely grant him the privilege of anteriority which he would have as seller for the said sum of fifteen thousand francs.

Our confidence in Providence must be firm and unshakable in all cases and circumstances, even in the case wherein we would have opposed its designs, but this confidence must, nevertheless, always be submissive. If there happens to be a plank to which we cling for salvation, we must, doubtless, take it, provided it is not merely a temporal plank, which would expose our eternal salvation to being wrecked.

My dear son, I never liked to put anything in a lottery. Lotteries are truly a game of chance and, generally, a lot worse. I am unable to believe that God wants to assist us by any means of that kind. Choosing by lot has sometimes been permitted and even commanded,[3] but that is not the case with lotteries.

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[1] Bro. Clouzet.
[2] Minister of Public Instruction.
[3] For example, the election of the Apostle St. Matthias.

In receiving the vows of M. M. in the tribunal of penance, did you have the intention of receiving real vows and of admitting him definitely into the Society? And he, in pronouncing them, did he have the intention, I am not saying only to take vows in general, but to associate himself effectively and definitively with the Society? In the affirmative, were you receiving his vows as if delegated thereto by the Superior General of the Society? If he has made religious vows, as if wanting to enter the society, but which, in effect, the Society has not adopted, the vows, doubtless, oblige him before God, but he still remains outside of the Society and he could easily obtain a commutation so as to enter another order. By this emission of vows, he cannot oblige or force the Society to admit him. This question of vows, has already been agitated and never before has he taken advantage of the fact of which you are speaking to me. Besides, I believe that this act has been registered in Saint Remy at the opportune time, but, in all possible cases, the vow of chastity would remain perpetual and expressly reserved to the Sovereign Pontiff. I am stopping here, for the mail is about to leave.

Receive, my dear son, my fatherly embraces.

* * * *

1127 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, March 19, 1839

It would seem advisable that the aspirants to the certificate submit to a serious examination in the establishment before presenting themselves for the public examination.

I am very sorry, my dear son, that you don't believe you have the time to engage in meditation, or, at least good meditations. You may be quite sure that if you apply yourself seriously to meditation, you will not complain about not having the time to make it. You ask me today to intercede for you, through St. Joseph, for the grace of an interior life. In truth, the interior life is but a continual meditation, and I do not understand how anyone can reach that stage without good special meditations.

* * * *

Various counsels to Father Chevaux about the direction of souls.

1128 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 30, 1839

I am sending you, my dear son, my answer to the letter which the Community has written to me and which you sent me on the thirteenth of the current month. I thank you for

the tokens of esteem and devotedness which you give me on this occasion. Let us labor wholeheartedly at the work of the Lord during the remainder of our lives, for this is a favor he grants us in calling us to labor at it; because, for a fact, he has no need of us at all.

See, with both the Council and even the Working Brothers, whether there is not a real appropriateness in giving the latter a distinctly religious name, for example, that of St. Joseph. If it is generally adopted, and with pleasure and devotion, at the time Brother Clouzet comes South, I shall do all that will be necessary for this dedication.

Father Glussot wrote to me to wish me a happy feast day, but only for that. I am answering him, but without talking to him about anything else. Since he looks upon the return of his interior anxieties and temptations as an obstacle to the making of his promise of the novitiate, it is to be presumed that he will never be able to make the religious profession and that, in consequence, it is better that he does not make the promise of the novitiate. In allowing him to count his novitiate from the time of his entry at Saint Remy, I had thought that he had made up his mind about entering, and that he was even entering because he had made up his mind. If he really believes that God is calling him to the religious state in the Society of Mary, he must neglect nothing to respond to this vocation. He must be ready to withstand all sorts of trials, to resist every temptation, to place himself above all kinds of worries and weaknesses. You must have him take notice that, by the fact that he enters into temptation and, as a result, he will doubt about his vocation and enter the region of darkness, then, if there happens to be a moment in which he acquires a certain tranquility of soul and asks either to enter the Society or in some way to form part of it, how could we judge that his vocation is really divine, since from one day to another, new temptations could arise—even stronger ones—and then the doubts, anxieties, and worries will come back, and, to us, griefs, even charges for having received him in this fluctuation of ideas and sentiments? You will do well, my dear son, to have a serious interview with him to see if he has made all these observations, to see if, having made them, he acts as he does only by prudence to gain time for himself until he has acquired what he is after. You will quiet him, and we shall grant him all the time he will want. If you yourself, my dear son, think the observations I have just made are just and suitable, you could call him, read to him this part of my letter that concerns him, and give him all the explanations that he might desire. Before going further, you will give me the exact result of all that will have happened.

I am answering Brother Gaussens. He is asking me for permission to go to some convent during the Easter vacation to make a retreat and an examination of conscience spanning from his entry into religion up to the present time. He desires to make his confession to a priest not of the Society. All his Superiors and confessors would be too prejudiced against him. My letter will arrive too late for him to have the time to make a retreat during this short Easter vacation, but I am giving him the permission to choose another confessor in the environs of Saint Remy. This permission once granted, I am having him feel the danger of this change. If it is true that for many years he harbored illusions dangerous to his salvation, he is evidently exposing himself to be confirmed in his illusions.

I am giving him the means he is to employ to get rid of them, taking for granted that his Superiors have not been constantly mistaken, which is not to be presumed.

In regard to what you tell me about Brother Ravoir, my dear son, I shall say to you, in general: have him understand all the great dangers of entering into temptation. *Ne intretis in tentationem—Et ne nos inducas in tentationem*—It does not suffice to speak of the matter and to do it well in general conferences, but you must assure yourself in private interviews that they have well understood what it means to enter into temptation, and the danger involved. Eve fell and brought about the ruin of the entire human race only because she entered into temptation. The devil has two different ways of making us fall into temptation. The first is illustrated by Brother Ravoir; the second by Brother Bousquet. The case of Brother Bousquet is more ingenious and delicate,[1] but in the final analysis it is a temptation. Why should he look upon it as a temptation? Because the devil is leading him to go counter to the vows and oaths so often renewed.

If these young religious often opened their souls with uprightness and simplicity, they would soon recognize the tricks of the devil. All that leads one away from an obligation, under whatever pretext it may be, can only be a temptation. I believe that one should accuse himself in confession of the entries he has given to the tempter, as these are sins more or less great, according to the greater or less degree of the entry. Adam did not enter into temptation in the same way as Eve…I am writing a few words to Brother Bousquet and I am simply asking him to let me know what is going on within him. Much discretion and regard is due to those who have once fallen into temptation, although they have not succumbed to it. Without a special grace, they are not in a condition to understand the counsels that may be given them, for the devil begins by binding them.

Continue, my dear son, to go to God with simplicity and confidence. You risk nothing in asking pardon of God for the part you might have taken or had in the sins of others, be it by ignorance or even by negligence. In any case, don't be troubled . . .

The young man I have announced to you will be able to leave, I believe, shortly after Easter. He has found his substitute whom he is training. On his way to Saint Remy, he will stop at his home to get his baptismal certificate and to give his letter of attorney to the Reverend pastor, in view of having the price of the stocks or lands he has sold included into it, etc. Although the young man can neither read nor write, he is nevertheless provident and well ordered . . .

Embrace Brother Clouzet for me. I am deeply touched by the happy feast day wishes you have given me from him. It seems to me he has made his visits very rapidly. Without doubt, the knowledge he already has of many establishments, and his sharp and quick eye, have helped him to learn all that he needs to know. Were it possible, it would be good for him to make his visit to Saint Claude coincide with the one he is to pay to Father Bardenet

[1] See Letter 969.

during the first days of April, to judge with him the repairs that have to be made on the new house we have bought which is a former Carmelite community dwelling. I have already written to Father Montgaillard to this effect. Nevertheless, see to it that Brother Clouzet settles nothing and takes no engagement without first having let me know all about it.

* * * *

In the following letters we see the preparations being made for the foundation of schools in Strasbourg; foundations which, however, could not take place till several years later—the fall of 1844.[1]

1129 – TO BROTHER ENDERLINE, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, April 4, 1839

My dear son, with deep emotion, I received the hearty expression of kind feast day wishes which you offer me by your letter of last March 11. I am counting implicitly on your complete devotedness, just as you can count implicitly upon mine. Tell me frankly if the preoccupations of Brother Georges are all so useful and so necessary, that he cannot prepare himself to teach a better class. By nature, he is very impractical. On the other hand, his is a rather pleasant character, and I don't think that he would be dissatisfied were you to urge him on amicably.

Try to find out what makes Brother Justin such a mediocre professor. If he does not succeed, it is not for the lack of intrinsic aptitude. He seems to me to have enough good will to receive quite charitably the counsels you would give him. I shall not fail to recommend this to him. He needs to be held in check.

It is very just and suitable that there be a well-defined plan of instruction, as much for the boarding school as for the novitiate. As far as you are concerned take this matter in hand. A little later, I shall tell you with whom you will be able to work. The Method of teaching is to be only the carrying out of the well-ordered plan.

The Reverend pastors of Strasbourg have come together to ask for us, through the voice of Father Laurent, Vicar General and former pastor of Belfort. I can well imagine that Father Doyen, the present pastor of the Cathedral, will easily be able to back up this request. It is then of great urgency to equip the novitiate in Ebersmunster with numerous novices and with all that can make it a model of its kind.

Receive my dear son, my tender embraces.

[1] The schools in Strasbourg, to which had been joined a little boarding school, enjoyed great success until the day when they were closed by order of the Prussian authorities in 1875.

* * * *

1130 – TO FATHER LAURENT, VICAR GENERAL
OF STRASBOURG

Bordeaux, April 6, 1839

Very Reverend Vicar General, your letter of last March 24, filled me with a sweet joy. I did not know of your promotion to the dignity of Vicar General of Strasbourg, and so, now that it is a fact, permit me to offer you congratulations, for I am sure that this is a source of great happiness for this important and vast diocese.

I shall be able to respond to your views and those of the Reverend pastors of Strasbourg, by giving you good and capable religious. I feel keenly the importance of the enterprise, but my one embarrassment concerns the time at which I shall be able to furnish the first five that you are asking for. I would have to know whether all must know the two languages, French and German. The September vacation is close at hand. Could you not grant me more time? I would certainly not abuse it. I hope that our schools will be equipped in such a manner as to incline the Protestants to send their children to them, as that is what has already happened in several of our establishments which nominally are opened only for the Catholics. We are seeking only to do good, but it is difficult to do it, as times are nowadays. If you have occasion, Very Reverend Vicar General, to see Father Doyen, pastor of the Cathedral, I would beg of you to permit that he find herewith tokens of my respectful remembrance. This excellent pastor had constantly won the esteem and affection of our teaching Brothers in Ammerschwir.

As I am sure the first five Brothers will be kept very busy, and they will not be able to prepare their food as well as to maintain cleanliness and order in the establishment, I shall grant you a sixth Brother, but who will be there free of charge at least at the beginning. The salary will be six hundred francs per head, that is to say, for only five, although there will be six in the community.

I imagine that your intention is to form but one house of teachers or professors, who will go to teach in the various parishes and the idea is perfectly acceptable. The more numerous the communities are, the more fervent they will be, and, furthermore, strange to say, the expenses are far less considerable. The one problem is that the professors have greater troubles, and a greater number of certified ones is required. I shall be very much obliged to you, if you will inform me definitely about the entire plan of the Reverend pastors.

I am deeply moved at the interest which His Excellency deigns to take in the project of the new establishment and I feel much flattered because of it. I shall be very thankful if you will offer him the tokens of my profound respect, and I am asking you, Very Reverend Vicar General, to accept the assurance of the sincere and respectful devotedness with which I am, etc.

* * * *

1131 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 15, 1839

My respected son, the bearer of this note is the young man of whom I have already spoken to you[1] and who is to enter the community of the farmers. He will be subject to any other employment that his Superiors would choose to give him. His name is Jean Chenozel. He is from Nonards, Canton of Beaulieu, Corrèze.

Receive, my respectable son, my fatherly greetings.

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In the following letter, relative to the foundation of Castelsarrasin, it is to be noted the ever watchful solicitude of Father Chaminade for poor children.

1132 – TO M. GRAND, MAYOR OF CASTELSARRASIN

Bordeaux, end of April, 1839

Honorable Mayor, in accordance with the letter with which you honored me on last March 25, I am going to write to the director of the teachers that I am destining for you, to supply himself with all the papers needed by the teachers who present themselves to obtain the direction of a communal school. But you will be kind enough to observe that the small treaty of acceptance which will be made, as well as the salary settlement, is not to be made in his individual name but in his qualified name as a member of the *Society of Mary*. The *Society of Mary* will have to furnish you three teachers for the elementary schools. It will be its duty to replace, be it the Head or anyone of his helpers, in case of need. If it should occur that the director should leave the Society, his authority as teacher would by the very fact be null and void.

As regards the salary to be given to each one of the Brothers, you seem, Honorable Mayor, to be mistaken. You say: “The Commune will assure the three Brothers, be it a fixed salary or by means of the products of the school, the sum of twelve hundred francs.” M. de Saget wrote to you that the salary of each Brother was set at six hundred francs. You answered him that the Commune was giving a straight salary of three hundred francs, but

[1] See Letters 1124 and 1129. M. Jean Chenozel (1807-1847) did not misplace the confidence that Fr. Chaminade had in him. “He is pretty much of a closed book,” noted Fr. Chevaux, “he can neither read nor write, and he knows his religion but imperfectly, but he is pious, docile, and mortified.” When he died in Salins in 1847, it was possible to write of him: “Brother Jean Chenozel was a Brother animated by a good spirit, a model of exactitude and of great activity . . . All he knew was how to say his rosary and to do his kitchen work.”

that the tuition would make up for the surplus asked for, which, furthermore, you were guaranteeing. You gave some idea of the tuition, saying that, in the actual condition of the school, there were 150 pupils paying one franc per month. I had the honor of answering you that we were in perfect agreement.

I shall be very much obliged to you, Honorable Mayor, if you will permit free attendance in the elementary schools to all the children whose parents cannot easily pay, and to see to it that these parents be not subjected to any examination into their affairs which could become humiliating.

I easily understand that there are certain drawbacks for the children of families who would frequent these schools, but soon, these drawbackss will no longer exist, as the result of the creation of the superior school of which you are speaking to me. From the beginning, I shall confer with M. Saget about the creation of this school under the name of special school, but a genuine and well-equipped superior school will produce the same effect, and it will have the advantage of having a name conformable to the law in the matter. We could come to an agreement about this second object. M. de Saget must have made known to you the real interest that I have in providing your city with the means of instruction and education for the benefit of its youthful citizens, whether they have been blessed by fortune or not, and without confusion of any kind. There is always a way of according special facilities to certain distinguished families.

I am with respectful devotedness, Honorable Mayor, etc.

1095 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, November 25,1838

My dear son, I have just received your short letter included in that of Brother Clouzet, dated the nineteenth of the present month. You must have received mine of the twenty-second which included one for Father Meyer in retreat at Saint Remy. I left it unsealed so that you could permeate yourself well with its contents. I fondly hope that, following your good advice, Father Meyer will have gone to resume his functions in Courtefontaine and that Father Fontaine will have returned to take up his own at Saint Remy.

I am writing another letter to Father Meyer that I am also leaving unsealed, and you will see in it another cause for his mental agonies. It seemed to me urgent that they be brought to an end.

Show spirit and resolution, my dear son! You seem to believe you are abandoned, so to say, since you lack ordinary helps. Nevertheless, the Lord is with you, and all you have to do is to work for him. In spite of the surfeit of labors or occupations, you must not cease to remain united to God with a great faith in his divine presence. Nor must you cease to take care of your feeble health.

Receive my paternal embraces.

* * * *

In Salins the director, Brother Troffer, not content with showing great ostentation in the work that had been confided to him, was taking imprudent initiatives on the spot and beyond to the detriment of his religious life and the better interests of his school. Serious complaints were being raised on the part of the academic and ecclesiastical authorities and were reaching Father Chaminade.

The Founder addressed to him serious observations.

Not receiving any answer, he decided to relieve him of his charge and to name in his place his principal collaborator, Brother Boby, a religious gifted with sound judgment and of proven ability. Whence the following letters.

1096 – TO BROTHER TROFFER, SALINS

Bordeaux, November 29, 1838

My dear son, what can have been the motive for your silence about my last letter? It required an answer and a prompt one at that. I have every reason to believe that you

received it. The older Brother Chevassu[1] wrote to me that you had told him to correspond with me. The principal object of his letter was to ask me for Brother Noir, who had just obtained a bachelor's degree as professor of Latin.

I sent you the very letter of Brother Boby, which spoke to me of the complaints that were making the rounds in Salins about you and the defects in the administration of your establishment. Do I now have reason to fear that there is real foundation in what I am hearing about you and that your silence is really affected? Whatever the case may be, in the name of obedience, once this letter has been received and after the shortest delay possible, you will leave for Courtefontaine, where you will stay until further orders. You will occupy yourself 1. in seriously entering into yourself and in clearly letting me know of all your interior dispositions; 2. in rendering yourself as useful as your strength will permit in the novitiate or in the boarding school.

The delay which is being granted you in the execution of this order will be employed in handing over to Brother Boby all your account and administration books and all the papers or documents related to them; and afterward, or at the same time, see whoever has a right to be seen, especially the Reverend pastor.

By the same mail I am sending Brother Boby his nomination as Head of the establishment and I am asking him to give this letter over to you. Before leaving, you may also install Brother Boby. This installation will consist, in this circumstance, only in proclaiming him Head of the establishment in the midst of your community and in reading aloud the short formula of his nomination. Be careful not to prolong these operations and take your leave with the least possible delay.

This is your father, my dear son, and your tender father, who has just dictated all these lines.

P.S. If it occurs to you, or rather, if it had occurred to you to stop these messages, of not letting them reach their proper destination and of reading them before delivering them, at least give them up, though unsealed, immediately. If Brother Boby does not inform me about their reception, I shall suppose that he has not received them, and you will then be making it necessary for me to send them anew, but addressed to someone outside the establishment, and to be given to him forthwith. This might cause some scandal in the city.

I am making this observation to you only because I still do not know if Brother Boby has had some knowledge of the last letter I wrote to him and sent in the same envelope as your own.

* * * *

[1] Director of the new foundation in Besançon who had been taken care of by Bro. Troffer.

1097 – TO BROTHER BOBY, SALINS

Bordeaux, November 29, 1838

Having destined Brother Troffer for another important work, I have cast my eyes upon you, my dear son, and I have done it with confidence to place you at the Head of the establishment of Salins, replacing Brother Troffer, who is so to speak, its founder.

I am naming you Head of this establishment and conferring upon you all the authority that this title bears, be it in regard to all of your associates or in regard to the boarders and day students of all the classes.

I hope that by your zeal you will always maintain both the regularity of the house and the emulation of the pupils, and that this establishment will uphold the distinction which it already enjoys in the circle of the Recotrate of Besançon.

Given in Bordeaux, November 29, 1838.

Brother Francis Boby, 1813-1868, from Archelange (Jura) was one among the most remarkable religious of the Society of Mary by his virtue, his intelligence, his works, and the services rendered in all the employments confided to him.

Having entered Saint Remy in 1830, he made his perpetual vows in 1834 and was sent to the school in Salins of which he became director in 1838 and which he raised to the highest degree of prosperity. He occupied himself with everything and with everybody with equal solicitude and still found time to compose classics that were soon adopted by all the schools of the Society.

To the great satisfaction of all the religious, in 1859, Brother Boby was called to Bordeaux to fulfill there the charge of Secretary General of the Society, which he occupied until his death.

Serious by nature, he became expansive, gracious, cordial in company. In Paris the young religious called to the superior Scholasticate of which he had the direction were extremely attached to him. The perfect clairty and the affectionate tone of his correspondence were deeply appreciated by the entire Society.

He died in the full vigor of age, while on a trip to Besançon, and was universally mourned.

1097bis – TO ARCHBISHOP DONNET OF BORDEAUX

Bordeaux, Beginning of December, 1838

Your Excellency, I have received with gratitude the communication which you have kindly made to me of the undated letter of M. Soleil (the father) which he thought it his duty to write to you,[1] and also of the copy which he sent to you of the letter he had written to me. I did not deem it worthwhile to answer the latter, since his mental deficiencies cause him to see only injustices in all the arrangements we have agreed upon in place of the sacrifices being constantly made for him and his children.

Nevertheless, if Your Excellency thinks I may have been under a prejudicial illusion as regards M. Soleil and all my affairs agreed upon with him, I am ready to place all the papers under your eyes, to give you all the information you may ask of me and to submit to the decision or judgment you will pronounce.

I am with the most profound respect of Your Excellency, etc.

P.S. I have no matters agreed upon which have not been examined by Father Caillet, who has always been surprised at the sacrifices I was making. These so-called accounts agreed upon have remained each time in the hands of M. Soleil, so that he could see them, examine and discuss them, and after all examinations, sign them benevolently.

* * * *

The following letter is of the highest interest, as much for the expression of the sentiments of faith with which the Founder recounts to Mother Saint Vincent the Marast disaster, as for the wise counsels he gives the Superioress for the government of her community.

1098 – TO MOTHER SAINT VINCENT, AGEN

Bordeaux, December 3, 1838

You must have understood, my dear child, by the laconic character of my last letter how much I was in a hurry while writing it.

On November 13, at eleven o'clock in the morning, it was noticed that a barn (at Marast) was on fire. Soon the fire spread to the second barn and from there to the stables. The barns were filled with the entire harvest of different grains of the past year, with all the straw and fodder, the plows, wagons, carts, and other implements of agriculture. All went up in flames.

[1] See Letter 1010.

Fortunately, the cattle were saved and were sent to Saint Remy because there no longer remained lodging or food for them. Saint Remy is only about twenty-five miles from Marast. No kind of accident was known that could have caused this disaster. One is always tempted to attribute it to ill-will of one kind or another, but silence in the matter is being kept. At the moment when the flames were bearing down upon the large house of the community and boarding school, the wind changed and bore them in another direction, so that it was spared. Although this disaster greatly increases the difficulties of our position, we must not worry on that account, but adore the designs of God. By the very fact that we ignore the natural cause of this fire, we may suspect some moral cause which God will make known to us, if this knowledge is of concern to our salvation. Anyhow, we must do all we can to turn it to our spiritual advantage.

Superiorship is in fact, my dear child, a very heavy burden, in fact too heavy for our feeble humanity if the hand of the Lord were not there to lift it up. We often increase its weight by our bad dispositions, and also by our own self-sufficiency. Superiors must look upon themselves only as ministers of the Lord in regard to personnel, and His stewards in regard to matériel. Doubtless, they must have great solicitude in looking after the interests of their Master, but that is all there is to it, and this solicitude itself is but the effect of the great love they have for their Master. It does not at all turn them away from God. On the contrary, it even increases his love. Of this, we have noteworthy examples today in Saint Francis Xavier and in the two great prophets of the Kingdom of Israel, Elias and Elisha. What contradictions these prophets experienced! Yet they habitually enjoyed great peace in spite of the ardors of their zeal, etc. The faith which works by charity is entirely surrounded by mysteries for those who do not know what it is to love God.

The education of the postulants and novices is a very delicate affair. The making of a good religious Sister calls for a novicemistress who is completely dependent upon the operations of the Spirit of the Lord in her soul. The art of forming religious Sisters is an art altogether divine. Nevertheless, we must not be disconcerted, my dear child, by the experience of our miseries and incapacity. Let us always tend to the pure love of God and to the profound contempt of ourselves, and the Holy Spirit will enable us to work wonders.

It is a blessing of God, my dear child, that so many postulants are presenting themselves, provided they are of the right kind. However good they may seem to be, their formation will demand much work. Although they may have no fortune, you are not to worry about them as soon as it is clear and evident that God has sent them to you. Anyhow, and as much as possible, do not employ them before they are sufficiently formed, otherwise you have only half-religious and the Institute would degenerate very quickly.

Brother Bonnefoi is reproducing for you fifty copies of your Constitutions. He has experienced many difficulties in the printing.[1] The work is advancing, but still laboriously. I

[1] See Letter 1088.

am showing great concern in the project that all your convents and novitiates have a sufficient number of copies of the Constitutions, so that these may be well studied, and that everyone may be thoroughly penetrated with their spirit. The Society of Mary has no less need of such a work than the Institute, but I have looked upon the Sisters as the elders of the family.

I shall say nothing, my dear child, of the postulants you enumerate to me, but take courage! You are the oldest daughter of our august Mother. Work in peace, although with many cares and worries, at the direction, perfection, and formation of all your younger Sisters.

When the first edition of your Constitutions will be completed, I shall tell you in what manner you are to make use of it. My devotedness to you, my dear child, to our dear daughters in Agen, and to the entire Institute, always remains the same: animated by the same sincerity, the same inviolability.

* * * *

1099 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 13, 1838

My dear son, at the time that I was going to take up my pen to answer your letter of last November 27, I received one from Brother Clouzet which informed me that you had fallen ill, but that he hoped there would not be any distressing consequences. From the goodness of the Lord, I am cherishing the same hope. You see to what a degree your health is feeble, and how much you must spare yourself. I believe that the affections of your soul are contributing much to the weakening of your bodily health, and I shall make the same recommendation to you that our Lord made to his Apostles: “Possess your soul in your patience.”

It may be the time, my dear son, to hold a Council meeting, to deliberate as to whether Father Glussot may be admitted into the Society as a novice and, supposing the admission, whether his year of novitiate could be reckoned from about the time of his coming to Saint Remy. If it is not possible to come to a decision in one Council session, then hold another and even a third, and in the meantime have recourse to prayer. The decision, for or against, may have rather serious consequences, especially if Father Glussot perseveres in wanting to enter into the Society. During the long years that he passed among the Jesuits, he contracted good habits, but he does not seem to have worked seriously at advancing in perfection, nor to have the zeal necessary to urge and encourage others in that direction. The decision that the Council will take must always remain secret, but it must be clearly motivated, and a copy of the minutes of the Council session or sessions will be sent to me.

Receive, my dear son, the token of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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1100 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 13, 1838

My dear son, I am immediately answering your letter which was without date but stamped in Vesoul on the ninth of the current month. I hope, as you do, that the little lesson given to Father Meyer will do him good[1] and that above all it will do good to the religious and novices of Courtefontaine, but I have no idea of changing his character.

You have done well in coming to the help of Marast. This establishment will finish by prospering, in spite of the chastisements of God, which though severe, are nevertheless paternal and entirely so—but he must be served and well served. All the religious who direct this establishment during the present year seem to be well united and entirely devoted to their duties. They are perhaps overloaded with work.

Your brother has had the kindness of bringing me the two hundred francs, as soon as he had received the counsel which you gave him about them. Brother Troffer had left Salins before the Reverend rector wrote to you.[2] I have named Brother Boby as Head of the establishment. Two days ago, I received news about his installation to which I answered by the last mail. Brother Troffer has accepted and carried out his removal from office in an edifying manner, and that in spite of his great sensitiveness in matters of this kind. The number of pupils in this establishment keeps on increasing. There are now forty boarders and about three hundred day-pupils. You may reassure the Reverend rector of the Academy, for I have already written to Brother Boby on the subject of the brass band, although I am ignorant of the parade on the feast day of St. Cecilia of which the mayor speaks. I am going to write again to Salins and I shall also notify Brother Troffer about the letter from the mayor.

Always work, my dear son, at the proper formation of your community of Working Brothers. Let there be real fervor among them! Choose among them some who may second you in the direction of the labors and even for the bookkeeping. I am quite seriously thinking of sending you Brother Genre. I had assigned him to teaching, but as he has a strong attraction to solitude, he will be better in Saint Remy. His first trade was that of carpenter. It is good and desirable that you have some of these religious who are somewhat educated. He made his perpetual vows on last November 21 in Ebersmunster, with much edification to all those who witnessed the ceremony.

In another letter, my dear son, I shall enter into greater detail about what I think God is asking of you, but in the meantime be thoroughly religious.

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[1] See Letter 1091.

[2] Bro. Troffer had had equipped a brass band or “military band” which competed with the one of the Collège of the city. On the occasion of a parade organized by the music teacher on the feast day of St. Cecilia a fight took place between the two bands, whence came the complaints of the mayor to the rector.

Receive my tender embraces.

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1101 – TO THE MAYOR OF CASTILLONES[1]

Bordeaux, December 19, 1838

Your Honor, I am very much disposed to grant you three religious, Daughters of Mary, for the administration of the Hospice of Castillonnès, but before answering you definitely, you will permit me if you please, to make some inquiries in Auch. I am going to do it by this same mail and, in the meantime, you will be kind enough to have the annual salary of the religious fixed at two hundred francs each.

I shall be obliged to you if you will tell me the reason for which the Hospitalers who previously administered the hospital withdrew.

The Daughters of Mary, Honorable Mayor, will not only take care of the civil and military sick, but they will also visit them in their own homes in the city and its environs, as much as their time and energy will permit.

One of them at least will open a school, but only after having had an understanding with the religious of the convent, to avoid all possibility of friction, even in the slightest degree.

I am, with a respectful devotedness, etc.

* * * *

On the date following, we return to the foundation of Besançon where Brother Troffer, unknown to Father Chaminade, had engaged in new activities. Father Chaminade, believing to recognize in these an indication of the work of Providence, prepares himself to sponsor them to the best of his ability.

1102 – TO FATHER DENIZOT, BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 22, 1838

Dear Reverend Father, I have read with a very real pleasure your letter of the fourth of the current month, because it speaks to me of our little establishment in your parish, in which I have a very real and lively interest. I had accepted the project as a whole, because it

[1] This is a small place in the diocese of Agen. The project in question was never carried out.

seemed to me well conceived and destined to enter into the views of the Society of Mary—those of multiplying Christians of all classes.

Brother Troffer started it without notifying me and without informing me of the definite arrangements that he had made with you. In the first project that was presented to me, and about which you did me the honor of writing, there was question only of primary teaching for the leisure class of the city.[1] I was quite surprised when Brother Chevassu[2] wrote to me that the commitment with the parents to teach Latin to their children had been made. I concede that in this there may be a great advantage for certain families to initiate their children into the study of this language at the same time that they are being formed for primary teaching. It is an advantage, nevertheless, difficult to procure, not only because for this purpose a teacher supplied with a bachelor of Arts degree is needed, but also because the teacher must be humble enough to lend himself to the teaching only of the elements, and often, to obey a Head who hasn't the same grade as in the present case. I hope, nevertheless, to be able to give you one in a short time. I am preparing him.[3] We would surely have failed, if this subject, whom I have in view, had been sent to the establishment without preparation. He happened to like to teach only in upper classes.

Brother Troffer, ordinarily much in a hurry in his enterprises has, so to say, taken from Courtefontaine the collaborator of Brother Chevassu. This subject, is, nonetheless, very immature as he has not yet made his novitiate. He is from the same country as Brother Chevassu. What authority will the latter be able to have over him? I am thinking of giving you another man, better trained than the last one, whom I shall put back in the novitiate if there is still time to do so.

Brother Troffer is no longer Head of the establishment in Salins.[4] He asked me to withdraw to Besançon. I accorded it to him provisionally, because I believed he could be of some use to the new establishment, but it does not seem advisable that he stay there a long time. While awaiting his replacement, I think he will be better in Courtefontaine. I am writing him the enclosed note to this effect, which you will be kind enough to pass over to him.

The details, Reverend Father, which I am taking the liberty of indicating, will be for you a proof of the particular interest that I am taking in our little establishment in Besançon. It merits my paternal affection because of the quality of the children that are being brought up there, and also because it associates me to your zeal for the good of religion. So that it may grow and prosper, we must remain in perfect agreement. These young religious need to be sustained and directed. You are on the spot, you can see

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[1] See Letter 1025.
[2] The Director.
[3] See Letter 1147. Bro. Noir.
[4] It will be remarked with what discretion Fr. Chaminade speaks of the change of place of Bro. Troffer, seeking here, as always, to safeguard the reputation of his children.

everything that goes on, and your character and virtues give you the upper hand or ascendancy.

I am little known in Besançon, except by His Excellency, the Archbishop. At a great distance from your city, I know only what my young religious choose to tell me, and often enough they explain themselves badly or insufficiently. I am hoping that the accord that will be maintained between us will triumph over every difficulty that may arise.

I am with respectful devotedness, etc.

* * * *

The following letters bring us back to the matter of the approbation of the Constitutions.

The voluminous bundle of papers which was prepared in Auch by Father Chaminade had been brought back to Bordeaux, and had just left for Marseilles where a certain M. Hermitte confided it to Capitaine John Olive, commander of the steamship Léopold II, to be brought to the French Consul at Cività Vecchia, who would finally bring it safely to Canon Valentini.

The package finally reached Rome toward the middle of January.

1102bis – TO M. ANTOINE HERMITTE, MARSEILLES

Bordeaux, towards the middle of December, 1838

Dear Sir, in the confidence which the Superioress of the General Hospital of Bordeaux inspired me as regards your honorable self, I am taking the liberty of addressing directly to you, postpaid, a box containing all the papers I have to send to Rome, to Canon Valentini, whose address is on the package. The Superioress assured me that you would have the kindness of finding a traveler to Rome, worthy of all confidence, who would himself be kind enough to bring the package to the address of Canon Valentini.

I have been told that there are such travelers constantly boarding the steamships. I would be very much obliged to you, if you would take the name of the traveler as also that of the boat on which he will be traveling, so as to have the means of checking back in the case of some accident. These papers are of great importance for religion, and you shall have your share of the merit of the enterprise. I am with high consideration, dear sir, your etc.

P.S. The package of papers may go without the box, if the box would be inconvenient to the traveler. Otherwise, all it will do is to keep the papers more intact; but then it would be suitable to use the address herewith enclosed.

Here in detail were the three packages making up the bundle confided to M. Hermitte.

I. Letter of Father Chaminade to Canon Valentine. Inventory of the bundle. Condition of the goods of the Society and of the Institute. Letters of Father Chaminade to Cardinal Giustiani, to Father Veyssière, to Bishop Vizzardeli.

II. Letter of Father Chaminade to Cardinal Lambruschini, with the request to the Holy Father for various favors. Letter of the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch to Cardinal Lambruschini.

III. Requests of Father Chaminade to the Holy Father to obtain the canonical institution of the two orders with a sketch of the purpose of their foundation. Letters of recommendation from the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch, from the Archbishops of Bordeaux and Besançon, from the Bishops of Agen, Ajaccio, Lausanne and Genève, Montauban, Saint Claude, Saint Dié, Strasbourg. Constitutions of the Society and of the Institute.

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1103 – TO CANON VALENTINI, ROME

Bordeaux, December 24, 1838

Honorable Canon, different circumstances have caused to return to Bordeaux the messages which Father Chevallier was, with your obliging permission, to address to you from Auch in favor of the two orders, the Society of Mary and the Institute of the Daughters of Mary. At this time, I shall add nothing to the sentiments of gratitude which Father Chevallier must have expressed to you on my part.

In the letter of response you wrote to Father Chevallier, you told him that, if the two orders did not have landed property which would assure their stability, it would be useless to ask the Holy Father for their canonical institution. On the communication which was made to me of this fact, I immediately wrote the answer which you will find herewith enclosed.

I thought, Honorable Canon, in order to give you less embarrassment, it would be advisable to divide all these messages into three packages, and I made an inventory of these three divisions which I am also including herewith. The letter to Bishop Vizzardeli, Secretary of Latin Letters, is from His Lordship, the Bishop of Ajaccio. This Lord Secretary will be able to be of great help in activating somewhat the matters in regard to the Holy Father. The Bishop of Ajaccio expressly recommends them to him, because the two are in very close and friendly relationship. The other letters are confided to your benevolence, so as to have them more surely reach their proper addresses.

The intention of His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, is that the second and third packages be placed in the hands of His Eminence, Cardinal Lambruschini, Minister of State of His Holiness, with the short explanation contained in the inventory. These two Eminences are very closely connected. His Eminence, the Cardinal of Auch, addresses himself in all confidence to His Eminence, the Minister of State. He charges him to present his request to the Holy Father, by whom he is specially known and loved. Our Lords, the archbishops and bishops whose requests and letters are joined to that of His Eminence, only unite with him in humbly asking for the canonical institution of the two orders.

I have had the honor and the precious privilege of conversing with His Eminence, Cardinal Lambruschini, while he was at the Nunciature in Paris. He was quite willing to offer me his mediation with the Sovereign Pontiff and to take charge of the said Constitutions in order to have them approved by the Holy See. What annoying events have taken place since then! I have the honor of writing to His Eminence and I am recalling to him the benevolence with which he honored me, and I beg him to present to His Holiness my two requests: one for the Society of Mary, the other for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, joined to the design with which God inspired me in the foundation of these two orders.

I am adding a third request to obtain various powers for the priests of the Society of Mary, if His Eminence judges it proper.

I have made two distinct requests in the same terms, one for each order, because it seems advisable to me that the two papal bulls, possibly resulting, be distinct, one for each order. I have the honor of joining to this letter a copy of the two requests and the sketch of the design of the Founder.

If His Eminence finds it opportune to present the third request, I would be obliged to you, Honorable Canon, if you would remind him of it from time to time. This small matter can go along with the more important one of the approbation of the Constitution and of the canonical institution of the two orders.

I am placing all my confidence in you, Honorable Canon. The affair with which you have the kindness to occupy yourself, is serious and important for religion. Your name will be placed on the list of benefactors of the two orders, following those of His Holiness Gregory XVI and of His Eminence, Cardinal Lambruschini. Prayers will be said for you by all and each day as long as the two orders will exist. May God grant that this may be until the end of time! If there are expenses to be made, I beg of you to make them in advance. Father Chevallier in Auch or I myself in Bordeaux will be careful to reimburse you.

I shall add another little prayer, Honorable Canon, that of giving me from time to time news about these matters and, first of all, about the reception of the package I have the honor of sending to your address.

I am with profound respect, Honorable Canon, your very humble and very grateful servant.

P.S. I am staying at No. 2 Lalande Street, but the Bordeaux address would suffice.

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Here is the note about the landed property assuring the stability of the two institutes announced by the preceding letter.

The Founder of the Society of Mary and of the Institute of the Daughters of Mary is being asked whether these two orders have landed property assuring, as much as possible, their perpetual continuance.

Answer. The Institutor and Founder answers affirmatively for the two orders.

1. For the Society of Mary. From the beginning, he destined for the Society all the goods he possessed in his own name, and those he came to possess as time when on: a country-house near Bordeaux,[1] four houses in the city in the midst of which is a beautiful church[2]; then, a large house in the Saint Seurin quarter to which is still attached a yearly rent of six hundred francs[3]; then, the larger and the smaller Razac Mansions[4]; then, in the Department of the Haute Saône, the superb château of Saint Remy, with its vast dependencies; the Marast domain at some twenty-five miles from Saint Remy, as well as a small farm adjacent to the domain; in the Department of the Jura, the former Priory of Courtefontaine, the new buildings that were added to it, and in the same Department, at small distances some lands in cultivation to the value of eleven to twelve thousand francs; then, in the Department of the Upper Rhine, the little château of Saint Hippolyte with its new building and dependencies; then, in the Department of the Lower Rhine, the beautiful abbey of Ebersmunster. Considerable debts are backed up by mortgages on the two Razac Mansions. Accidents brought on by the evils of the times have not yet permitted that these properties be relieved of their mortgages.

There is question here only of all that is based on or derived from land and not of what is properly classed as furniture.

The furniture constitutes nonetheless considerable property. Independently of movable property, the properties of the Society are furnished with all that is necessary for agriculture; the shops of the workers with all necessary tools and equipment; the churches

[1] St. Laurent.
[2] The Madeleine and the neighboring houses.
[3] The house said to be of the Rode Canton or that of the Cross of Seguey, personal property of Fr. Chaminade, rented to private parties.
[4] The places where stood the old Saint Marie Boarding School, on Mirail Street.

and chapels with their ornaments; etc. Nor is there question of stipends or salaries that are being received.

Nevertheless, the entire body of the Society and each of its particular establishments are vowed to religious poverty. The members may never enrich themselves while always working at the task they have undertaken. See the Constitutions of the Society of Mary, second part.

2. The Institute of the Daughters of Mary. The first Foundress, Mlle de Trenquelléon de Batz, brought along more than eighty thousand francs when she entered, all of which she left to her Institute. The religious sisters ordinarily bring along a more or less considerable dowry, which gradually augments what the Institute possesses. The five beautiful and large communities which they have in the Departments of Lot et Garonne, Gers, and Jura are properties of the Institute.

There is no question here of all the furniture, which nevertheless, may always become more considerable.

The same conditions exist for the religious sisters as for the male religious. The central convent, just as each one of the other convents, founded or to be founded, are all vowed to religious poverty. The Institute grows in the measure that it becomes richer.[1]

We can also consider as means of support the mutual helps that the two orders of Mary give one another according to need.

Given at Bordeaux on November 20, 1838, under my seal and the counterseal of the Secretary General of the Society of Mary.

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With Father Perrodin, the Founder discusses the works of Courtefontaine and Acey.

1104 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, December 24, 1838

My respected son, far be it from me to contradict in any way all that you tell me that is so good and so excellent about Father Meyer in your letter of the fourteenth of the current month. I think absolutely as you do. I have the same ideas as you have of this estimable religious, and we are linked by the same very close sentiments which I have reason to believe are reciprocal. The movements you have noticed between Saint Remy and

[1] The Institute grows in proportion to its resources, without ever enriching itself, but always living in poverty.

Courtefontaine had not his change for object. They were but an object of religious administration.[2] The Society of Mary must always be disposed for the greatest sacrifices when there is question of the salvation and perfection of its members. I shall not here make the application of this principle to the movements that have disquieted you. I have since had reason to notice that they have produced salutary effects.

Your letter, my respected son, has led me to other observations and estimates of order and convenience. It is very evident that Father Meyer is too burdened. He loads upon himself as Superior the care of pastor, of Superior of the establishment of Courtefontaine, and of master of novices. I have noticed this from the beginning and then I immediately gave him Brother Prost as assistant master of novices and Father Lamotte to aid him in all his functions. When Brother Prost was withdrawn from Courtefontaine—it is useless here to look into the motives for this—I specially named Father Lamotte as assistant novice master, and master with the title when he had his perpetual vows, though always in subordination to Father Meyer. The latter, not finding in Father Lamotte all the activity and solicitude that he would have desired, made another move and took upon himself the three types of functions with which he is really overburdened. To this overburden, he adds frequent trips and a correspondence that would be fairly absorbing if it were carefully thought out.

After this preliminary outline, and the sentiments which you express in your letter, here you have my observations. Father Bardenet would easily allow you, I have good reason to believe, to make your novitiate in Courtefontaine and even to remain there after you have made your vows. Agreeing in mind and heart with Father Meyer, you would share his functions, all would go well and neither you nor he would be overburdened. If such were the will of Father Bardenet, the bishop of Saint Claude would willingly agree to it. About that I have no doubt whatsoever. You would always be able to meet the views of Father Bardenet about you, and at your first sign of need, you could go from Courtefontaine to Acey in a couple of hours.

My respected son, I am continuing my observations. Father Bardenet desired to bring old priests together in the big house which he inhabits.[1] It is an excellent idea but one very difficult to carry out! Up until the present time all enterprises of this kind have failed. I don't even know if any of the kind still exist in France. However, the enterprise of Father Bardenet would eventually become easy if his house were destined for old priests or for infirm or ailing priests of the Society of Mary. To these could be joined old lay religious. In this grouping a suitable order and regularity would then be seen, since they would all be already accustomed to a Rule. When it would be time and necessary, one or two Sisters, Daughters of Mary, who had taken over the new institution of Auch, could be sent to the convent of Acey, to take care of the sick and infirm. Father Glussot, who is in Saint Remy,

[2] Allusion to the visit of Fr. Meyer to St. Remy. See Letter 1091.
[1] In Acey.

will soon be ready, at least it seems so, to enter this hospice and, while awaiting greater blindness, could work as chaplain of the convent.

If there were, my respected son, an early death of Mother Gabrielle, it would be quite fitting that you remain long enough to train the new superioress so that the community would not degenerate by reason of this change.

All my messages have finally left for Rome a short time ago. Ten archbishops and bishops united themselves to His Eminence, Cardinal d'Isoard, in asking of the Holy See the final approbation of the Constitutions of the two orders and their canonical institution.

The bishop of Saint Claude has made a very forceful request.

Receive, my respected son, the assurance of my inviolable devotedness.

P.S. I beg of you, please, to offer Father Bardenet the assurance of my respectful remembrance.

* * * *

A religious of Saint Remy, Brother Jean Claude Saras, under the influence of illness, left his community and went back to his family. From there he wrote to Archbishop Mathieu to solicit dispensation from his vows, whence the following letters.

1105 – TO ARCHBISHOP MATHIEU OF BESANÇON

Bordeaux, December 27, 1838

Your Excellency, as the first answer to the letter with which you have honored me on the twenty-second of the current month, I shall notify Your Excellency that Brother Jean Claude Saras was a master-weaver at the Hospice Saint James of your capital city at the time the administration made a reduction among its subjects. At that time, his health was very bad, but he was given much consideration in Saint Remy, where he was received. I always thought him to be in this last establishment when, all of a sudden, I received a letter from his home in which he told me of the pitiful condition of his health, asking me to dispense him from his vows in regard to all that could be opposed to the reliefs and remedies that his needs might claim. I granted him this provisionally. Indirectly, however, I learned that the information he had given me was far from containing the whole truth.

The letter which this young man takes the liberty of writing to Your Excellency, and that you have the kindness of sending me as a matter of information, seems to me altogether exaggerated and unjust toward the administration at Saint Remy. There could, nevertheless, be motives for dispensation, considering the shattered state of his health. As I am not fully acquainted with all that concerns this young man, I shall write about him to

Father Chevaux in Saint Remy and ask him to send Your Excellency a final answer which will inform you fully as regards the subject in question. I believe that Brother Saras has made unconditional perpetual vows, first the three great vows of religion, to which, in the Society of Mary, are added the vows of stability and that of teaching Christian morals.

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1106 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, December 28, 1838

My dear son, I have just received a letter from the archbishop of Besançon which brought me another from Brother Jean Claude Saras, which the latter had addressed to him. I am passing on to you the half-sheet of the letter of Brother Saras, in addition to which you will find the copy of the letter the archbishop writes to me, and that of the answer that I have the honor of addressing to him. You will be kind enough to give His Excellency a final answer. I do not know Brother Saras well enough, nor am I aware what has happened in Saint Remy or at his home, since his withdrawal from the Society.

I am hoping that Father Fontaine's absence has not been harmful to Saint Remy.

Father Meyer wrote to me that all the religious employed in the boarding school in Saint Remy are too burdened with work, both the professors and the servants, that he did not know whether this resulted from a defective division of work or from an effective and real overload. He cites a typical example. The cook is without aid or assistance of any kind, even for the preparation of wood for the stoves. It would be a good thing to bring up such questions in council, for it frequently happens that in this way a golden mean is found. On the other hand, Father Meyer has been very much edified by the unity he witnessed among all the members of the community and by their perfect devotedness in the complete fulfillment of their functions.

Receive, my dear son, the renewed assurance of my paternal affection.

Brother Saras pulled himself together and remained faithful to his vocation.

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The following letter is of special interest as it sets forth the views of the Founder on the community of Working Brothers in the Society. These views were at the very moment being realized at Saint Remy.

1107 – TO FATHER FRIDBLATT, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, December 29, 1838

My dear son, perhaps you are surprised at not receiving a final answer to the repeated requests which you made to me last year.

The letter which you wrote to me from Alsace during the vacation attracted my attention in a particular manner on the new views which God could have in your regard. I believed I noticed them, but it was not up to me to explain myself 1. to test you a little; the

Spirit of God is very active but never hasty; 2. what God was asking of you or at least, what I thought he was asking of you, was not in the proper condition[1]; you would not have understood me, if I had spoken to you about it. I am now going to explain myself, nonetheless, in the shortest way possible.

You know, my dear son, that three classes of persons make up the Society of Mary: the class of priests, the class of religious teachers, and the class of religious farmers and other workmen.

The workers are not to be spread among the diverse establishments, nor mixed with other classes of religious. They are, however, to form distinct communities, separated from every other community in the Society which would be in the same establishment.[2] For example, I destined the winter orange-house of Saint Remy for a community of this kind, by adding there suitable walls of enclosure, repairs, work-shops, etc.[3] Not having been able to succeed, for reasons unnecessary to go into at the present moment, I joined the two boarding schools to the château and left all the dependencies of the château for this community. During my sojourn in Saint Remy, it was ascertained that a hundred workers could be kept busy there all year and the plan was drawn up for the lodging of such a number in the winter orange-house and the place of its enclosure. In the last two years, subjects who might trouble or scandalize such a community were dismissed. Brother Clouzet did not follow the primary boarding school to the château, but remained at the head of the community of workers. You have perhaps understood, since the second to last retreat at Saint Remy, that Brother Clouzet was a new man, or renewed in the first spirit of the Society of Mary. As soon as the transfer of the boarding school was made, I wrote to him "that it was time to reform the community of workers, time that these should enter into sentiments of fervor, into the spirit of penance, of the abnegation of themselves, of silence, love for work, etc. and that, a little later, I would send him all our Constitutions, settled and authentically approved.[4]

Brother Clouzet applied himself with the greatest devotedness to form the religious of this community in the spirit of their state, and I have reason to believe that he is the living model of all that he teaches. Here is the last news that I have received from him. It accompanies the letter that brought greetings for the new year. "Our Working Brothers community is getting along well, in fact, very well. There are even a good number of them who want to go too fast in the matter of mortification. In general, hardly any wine is being drunk and a good third less bread is being eaten than last year. Some of them eat no meat

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[1] The community of Working Brothers of St. Remy, of which there will be question, was not yet completely organized. See Letter 1088.
[2] This declaration must not be taken in an absolute sense, because at all times, by right and in fact there were in the Society, religious assigned to the various services of the houses of education. Cf. Constitutions of 1839, Art. 370 and 373, and the letter of the following January 17 to Fr. Chevaux.
[3] See Letter 960.
[4] Letter 1088.

at all and others have fasted all through Advent. However, I permit this only to those who can do it without any threat or danger to their normal health. There are some who get up during the night to go and make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Father Chevaux had permitted them to do so, then I thought it my duty to continue the permission on condition that they remain no longer than a quarter of an hour and that this would in no way harm the exercises of the Rule."

This kind of a community will, to a considerable extent, resemble the first communities of Benedictines and come close to those of the Trappists, with the modifications which will all be favorable to the maintenance and increase of fervor, although easing certain forms of penance which would evidently shorten life and take away the strength needed for the maintenance of the work at hand.

Those who have once made profession in these communities will no longer be able to ask to pass into other classes of the Society of Mary, but if the Superior General believes, before God, that he ought to take someone to fulfill other functions in other classes, this one is to consider it his duty to obey.[1]

When I read your last letter, my dear son, I thought that I saw in it that God might well be calling you to a similar Community in order to be its Head of Zeal. Take notice of what the spirit of the Lord will say to your heart. For the time being, I shall make no further reflections. Anyhow, I must, doubtless, help you distinguish the views and the will of God in the inspirations of his Spirit, but I have no intention of forcing anything.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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Father Chaminade, happy over the fervor of the community of workers at Saint Remy nevertheless believes it his duty to draw Brother Clouzet's attention to the danger of possible excesses in the matter of corporal penance. He then gives him some political advice in order to prepare him for the fulfillment of the mission of Assistant for which he has already destined him.

1108 - TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 2, 1839

My dear son, let me acknowledge herewith receipt of the letter of your community, dated the twenty-third of last December. I would have desired to write directly to the community to express to it at some length my paternal sentiments at the time of this New Year and to exhort it to continued fervor and perseverance, but the great number of my

[1] See Constitutions of 1839, Art. 373.

occupations stand in the way. So I ask you to inform your community of the fact and to be at the same time the interpreter of my dispositions in its regard . . .

It is well, my dear son, that mortification and the spirit of penance reign in the community, but you must be careful to have served in sufficient quantity, above all, bread which the young men require for the maintenance of their health. They have to eat more than the others, even if all are not animated by the same spirit. It might be well to keep bread within their reach so that at table they may help themselves.

I shall write to Courtefontaine soon to have Brother Genre freed to resume his trade of carpenter and to put himself at your disposal.

Continue to train the Heads of your shops. You are not mistaken, my dear son, in believing that a good Head is needed, one who takes in all parts of the administration, even the most detailed. There would be less difficulties, if the shop Heads were well trained, for example, the one in charge of agriculture. It is not necessary that this particular Head know all the sections, having to replace you only from time to time, for almost the entire Society wishes that you remain constantly with me, to take in its complete temporal administration, but as yet, I don't think that this is possible, unless you happen to find a Head capable of permanently replacing you in Saint Remy and who would only have to report to you from time to time, as you desire. For the present, it suffices that a Head be able to replace you during your absences, which you would render more or less long, according as the Head replacing you has greater or less formation, because it is necessary that this community, which could become very numerous, be well organized and that it have for its maintenance Heads fully worthy of all confidence. If you happen to find a head well qualified to take your place, it would be good to let him continue under your eyes, even when you are at Saint Remy. Thus he would be the sooner prepared, and your absences would be less felt or noticed. As long as his health holds out fairly well, Father Chevaux, with his watchful eye, could be very useful during your absences to give advice, or even orders according to need, but he must not be the one ultimately responsible.

When you have to fulfill the functions of the projected place, you will have to bring the Courtefontaine expenses down to the level of what they are in the other establishments.

The establishment of Salins may become very interesting. It has three hundred fifty pupils of whom, I believe, one hundred are in the special school and forty are boarders. The Commune gives Brother Boby eight hundred francs for the superior school. You will easily come to an understanding with Brother Boby, as this young man has admirable devotedness. However, and before all, Saint Remy must be well equipped in every way and your burden of cares must be lightened. You can count on my doing all I can to bring this about.

Nevertheless, my dear son, do not neglect your interior, in the midst of all your concerns. You must come to the point of God's love dominating your entire soul. The greatest labors and the most numerous occupations, commanded by this divine love, do not trouble the soul. Love itself becomes only the more and more inflamed.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

On all sides, recourse is being had to the prudence and the experience of Father Chaminade for the direction of religious communities.

After several other foundresses, such as Mlle Rondeau in Laval, the Venerable Mother Emilie de Rodat in Villefranche, and the Venerable Mother Javouhey in Cluny, Mme Anjorrant (1797-1873), foundress, in Bourges, of the Institute of Jesus Christ, Good Shepherd and of Mary Immaculate for the rescue of poor fallen girls[1] had gone to Bordeaux, from the beginning of her institute, to observe the functioning of the work of the Misericorde (1828). Ten years after, from Rouen, where her work had been transferred, she used to come back to Bordeaux to consult Father Chaminade anew on the most delicate points of her foundation and she shared the result of her interviews with Bishop de Jerphanion, her first guide. Whence the following letter.

1109 – TO BISHOP JERPHANION OF SAINT DIÉ[2]

Bordeaux, January 4, 1839

Your Lordship, on returning from his ordination to Saint Hippolyte,[3] Father Roussel told me of the extreme goodness with which you deigned to receive him and so, I cannot defer offering to you my sentiments of gratitude and, at the same time, of my greetings and good wishes for a bright and happy New Year. Your Lordship has spoken both to Father Meyer and to Father Roussel of the project you have in mind of establishing a novitiate in your diocese. I shall lend myself to all that will be agreeable to you, to the full extent of my ability. I shall be happy to find occasions of manifesting to you my entire devotedness.

At the moment when I was going to have the honor of writing to Your Lordship, I received a letter from Mme Anjorrant, in which she speaks of having had the honor of

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[1] See Mother Anjorrant and her work by M. Fugeroy (Paris, Beaushene, 1927). In the letter of Mother Anjorrant to whom Fr. Chaminade alludes, the Foundress signs "Superioress of the Society of Mary, said of the Good Shepherd."

[2] Bishop Eugène de Jerphanion (1796-1864), after having fulfilled the functions of Vicar General of Bourges, was named in 1835 to the bishopric of St. Dié, and transferred in 1842 to the archbishopric of Albi, where he later had numerous relations with Fr. Chaminade relative to the foundation of Réalmont in particular. He had all the qualities of a prelate of the eighteenth century without the defects. His dignity, his piety, and his mildness left a profound memory in his diocese. "No one, I believe," wrote Fr. Vergne, his Secretary General, "venerates Fr. Chaminade more than he, for Fr. Chaminade has the merit and the glory of having given to the society today, the type of workers which it needs most." (January 8, 1845).

[3] Fr. Roussel had been ordained priest in St. Dié on December 22, 1838.

writing to you and of having told you of my good dispositions on giving her the advice she might need in the difficult situation in which she finds herself, but telling you at the same time that I could and should not do so, but only under your mediation. The Reverend Superioress adds that Your Lordship would not find it necessary to enter into correspondence with me, but that she could continue to consult me directly. She repeats to me the request she made of giving her my decisions in writing to set them against those who oppose her in the work she is undertaking and, in consequence, she proposes five questions to me which she considers the most important.

Your Lordship, I am going to answer this excellent Superioress General: 1. that the decisions I could give her would have very little weight in the eyes of her adversaries, not being backed by any authority in her behalf; 2. that I do not know her Constitutions and that it is not advisable for me to write a few constitutive articles separately. Constitutions must constitute a complete whole, in such a way that all the articles, intimately joined, be interdependent. I have just learned, for example, that her religious were accustomed to make the vow of enclosure. This could be a source of great embarrassment, it seems to me, if she plans to undertake works on a large scale; 3. there are points on which, doubtless, she must have made up her mind, but on which she seems to be following only her own lights. It is in this way that the House of the Misericorde was started in Laval, the one that has had to withstand so many contradictions of all sorts. Acting otherwise, she would run the risk of compromising Your Lordship and all establishments of the same kind. It is difficult to do good these days. The House of the Misericorde of Laval has experienced the same growth, and inspired the same interest as that of Bordeaux.

I am with the most profound respect, etc.

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In the preceding letter, Bishop de Jerphanion who, while he was still Vicar General of Bourges, had assisted and encouraged Mme Anjorrant in the beginning of her enterprise—answered by the following lines (January 30):

Your charity, Reverend Father Superior, did not refuse to give Mme Anjorrant during her stay in Bordeaux advice of which she was not slow in appreciating the great wisdom. I beg you to accept my sincere thanks for them. Although now far separated from the place of residence of this good superioress, I continue to take no less a very keen interest in her institute. But at the distance where I happen to be, in the midst of all the diocesan affairs which absorb me and take up practically all my time, it is difficult for me to occupy myself with pursuing the great work of the Constitutions. I had then instructed her to use the permission that you gave her to correspond directly with you on this subject, not that she should quote your authority to her contradictors, but that she would profit by your counsels and follow them in all confidence.

In the meantime the foundation in Fribourg is undergoing new delays. To Brother Enderlin who is waiting in Ebersmunster, Father Chaminade patiently gives advice on how to use these delays.

1110 - TO BROTHER ENDERLIN, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, January 7, 1839

My dear son, I have received your letter of last December 24 . . . I have had no further news from Fribourg. Doubtless, the clergy and the Catholics are having difficulties in obtaining from the government the permission to call the Society of Mary for the teaching of the youths of the country.

The subjects which the examination[1] is about are reading, grammar, writing, arithmetic, some geography, national history, and the particular history of the Canton of Fribourg. These last two subjects are quite difficult to get at, by reason of the postage,[2] but it will be easy for you to make up for that during the first days of your arrival should that eventuality take place. You, nevertheless, do well to be preparing yourself. I would hardly see any better preparation than to teach a class of German every day in the novitiate. In the supposition of the departure, M. Andrew Staffel, whom Father Rothéa is going to attract to Ebersmunster, could continue the class once you have to leave. Make yourself as useful as possible in the novitiate and, in case of need, even a little in the boarding school. In any case, may all the exercises of the novices for the development and culture of their minds in no way harm the exercises of piety which they need for their formation in the true spirit of the religious state. Do the same for yourself, my dear son, having salvation always in mind and progress in virtue before all!

Father Rothéa would no longer seem to me necessary in Ebersmunster, if Father Georges took courage and knew how to bestir himself a little. What is very essential and what seems to cause the greatest embarrassment, to Father Rothéa or to Father Georges, is the economy of the house and the bookkeeping. Would you not be able to relieve them of this worry? It would then be necessary to settle all arrears and start all over from the beginning of this month, 1839. To clear up the debts, you will perhaps need help. Father Georges, nevertheless, believes to have succeeded, and he proposes to have the regulation passed over to me. In my early youth, I fulfilled the functions of property manager in a larger house than that of Ebersmunster.[3] After these days, this employment took up little of my time, but much order and exactitude is necessary, and that without needless worry or preoccupation.

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

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[1] The examination to which Bro. Enderlin had to submit himself to be admitted to teach in Fribourg.
[2] The postage rates for books were very high.
[3] Fr. Chaminade had fulfilled the functions of property manager or bursar in the Collège of Mussidan from 1784 until 1791. In his letter of April 26, 1836, he says he did that sort of thing for sixteen or seventeen years. If there is no mistake in these figures, it would have to be concluded that from his early youth he was associated with the temporal administration of the house.

1111 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 17, 1839

I am offering you, my dear son, and the entire community of the château, at this renewal of the year, my best wishes, even if they are a bit late. I have been deeply touched by those you express in your letter of last December 26. Oh! If you are able to arrive at the degree of virtue and perfection to which you are all called, all the years of your life will be happy, and the eternity following them will also be happy. May the Lord deign to shower upon you his most abundant benedictions!

The crises which you are experiencing, my dear son, are of great consequence. If you cannot be entirely freed from them, you could perhaps reduce their intensity by sometimes using a little tobacco, or perhaps also taking some ipecac tablets. It seems to me that either one of these products might do you great good. You might also speak of the matter to the doctor, to whom I beg you to offer the tribute of my respectful remembrance . . .

My dear son, I can see only a real good in the fact that the servants of the château go to take their meals in the community of the workers, at least as a matter of habit, disposing of everything, so that it be done with ease and decorum. If it sometimes happens that certain servants are delayed, either because of outsiders or sick ones, the Working Brothers will then set their portion aside for them. Act in such a way, my dear son, that all your actions, little by little and without worry, become works of faith, and although you are cold and almost without feeling—it is of no matter; for it is your labors that are to accompany you before the dread tribunal and not your feelings.

Receive, my dear son, my paternal embraces.

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1112 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, January 19, 1839

It would be necessary that the young man you brought from Orgelet have great qualities in order to compensate for the deformity which renders him irregular as regards the Society. It would be at least necessary that he be able to become a good teacher for the novitiate.[1]

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[1] "He was a dwarf, that is to say, of unusually small stature," notes Fr. Meyer.

1113 – TO FATHER PERRODIN, ACEY

Bordeaux, January 25, 1839

My dear son, I wrote my last letter to you[1] with an open heart, just as I want you to do when you write to me, for my confidence in you is very real. I am somewhat surprised that Father Bardenet has not welcomed our proposition. Since it is, nevertheless, just and well placed, we must not despair or lose hope. We know that he loves what is good, but patience is sometimes necessary before he is able to recognize it. The horror which he has for debts has become in him a sort of sickness. He complains about me when he should pity me. He complains about me because I find myself loaded with debts, but does he know anything about their origin, their causes, their occasion, etc.? He knows about some isolated cases. He often learns about them from persons previously notified; then, when the remembrance of them comes back to him, the fever of his sickness again takes over, and he breaks out in complaints. You tell me that we must pardon him because of the good he has done and continues to do. Assuredly, I have nothing against him, for I love and respect him. He is full of good qualities, only I pity him for having this sickness and I ask of the good God that it may neither neutralize nor paralyze the merit of his good works.

The Head of the establishment of Saint Claude has just written to me that the Reverend Pastor, Father Montgaillard, Father Bardenet, and several other gentlemen, have just bought for the school, a former convent, located in the center of the city; [2] and that Father Bardenet was to go there in the month of April to judge the repairs necessary and to see that they are made. The Society of Mary must, doubtless, be grateful, which it is in fact, and sincerely so, towards Father Bardenet, because he gives it the occasion to do good in places where, presumably, it could not have been done. Never shall we find fault with Father Bardenet for the hardships he causes us in completing the good works which he starts, or because of the sacrifices required in other good works, other establishments, for example, that are offered to us fully equipped and which we are obliged to refuse.

As regards the religious sisters of whom I spoke to you who could take care of the sick, you understand that this could not take place, unless it could be done without suspicion, or shade of scandal.

You have otherwise done very well, my respected son, to stop talking to Father Bardenet about the most important question, which was the main object of my letter, so as not to augment the physical indisposition in which he then was. In this matter, do what prudence and zeal in conforming to the views of God may ask of you.

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[1]Letter 1104.

[2]The former convent of Carmelites, in the quarter of the Poyat, where the work is still found today. It had formerly been in an unhealthy and inadequate place near the bishop's palace.

A short time after the reception of your letter, having had occasion to write to Father Glussot, I told him, without in any way compromising you, that one of his most intimate acquaintances thought him badly placed in Saint Remy, that etc. . . . I begged him to tell me honestly how the matter stood, for I thought he could easily be replaced in Saint Remy. I have as yet had no answer.

The Mother General is very well disposed toward the convent in Acey. She wants to give it a really good mistress of novices. In proposing to you, my respected son, Courtefontaine as the place for your novitiate, it is a sacrifice that I have made,[1] for I would have liked very much to be the witness of your progress in virtue and religious perfection. I am hoping that this sacrifice will be agreeable to the Lord.

Receive, my respected son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

P.S. I beg of you to offer Father Bardenet the homage of my respectful remembrance.

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Father Chaminade openly announces to Brother Clouzet his intention of naming him Head of Temporalities and gives him useful instructions to this effect.

1114 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, January 27, 1839

I have just received a letter, my dear son, from the older Brother Boillon, the mechanic, the original copy of which I am passing over to you, following this one, which will be a copy of the one I am writing to him as an answer to his. Weigh all before God, and see if you consider him really converted, and also, if you consider him capable of bending himself to the severe rule of a novitiate, if there would not be some imprudence in uniting the two brothers, by reason of their tendency to criticism and murmuring, while, on the other hand, they might serve as a help and a support, to each other.

A few days ago, my dear son, I wrote to Brother Genre in Courtefontaine, telling him to go to you in Saint Remy, and there resume his position as carpenter, and place himself entirely at your disposal. He made his perpetual vows in Ebersmunster last November 21 with great edification, judging from what has been told me. Since he has entered the Society he has always shown a great separation from the world, and, besides, he has always been very docile and obedient.

[1] Fr. Chaminade would have preferred that Fr. Perrodin come to make his novitiate in Bordeaux, close to him.

Always try, my dear son, to disengage yourself. Have yourself represented everywhere, as much as possible, in such a way that you can gradually be able to absent yourself without your absence being harmful in any way to the establishment. My ultimate object would be to make you the Head of Temporalities.[1] All the General Heads, as you know, are usually to remain close to their General, of whom they are the Assistants. This is the wish and desire of the entire Society. How many times have the principal members of the Society made this clear to me! But in this, they have but guessed the sentiments in my own soul. Anyhow, it is evident that it cannot be so, at least for some time yet. The community of workers is presently neither sufficiently formed nor organized, but nothing seems to me to stand in the way of remedying the situation.

It will be necessary that we work together and do it according to the plan traced out by our Constitutions. Before this interview, you might see our main establishments in the North, get a good idea of their financial status, what they owe and what is owed to them, what they spend and what they earn or can earn. See to it that each establishment keeps its accounts in a practically uniform way, so that you may be able to understand the reports they will have to make to you. All this information will be very useful to us, and even necessary, in judging the general condition of the Society, so as to take the means of freeing it from debts, and to see what it would be in the condition to undertake.

There are two establishments, not very far from Saint Remy, which you could first undertake, that of Marast and that of Salins. I shall authorize you in all that you will need. I shall support you, I shall give you all the indications I shall have, all the means that are at my disposal. The establishment of Salins has difficulties that are peculiar to it, namely, the pastor of Saint Anatoile in Salins, Father Colin, for several years pastor of Dôle. He founded this establishment in a former convent of the Ursulines which he bought for this purpose. Several parts have not yet been paid for. I have just learned that Brother Troffer had accepted or had offered himself to pay the interest on the amounts that are due. At the time of my visit to Dôle, I strongly urged Father Colin, in the presence of Father Bardenet, to stop this liquidation, and we indicated to him the means of doing so, and how to donate the establishment to the Society. As far as I understand, nothing has been done about this, unless the interest on the sums still owed, is being paid. If Father Colin were to die, we would be in a rather tight position. Furthermore, the establishment of Salins is one of the most flourishing in the Society, and the one which might be able to procure for it the most *bonis*, but its young director, Brother Boby, very active, docile, and intelligent, is otherwise without experience in temporal affairs. When I shall have made him recognize your authority, all the arrangements that you will make with him, will be, I hope, permanent. As regards Marast, you know more about it than I can tell you. You know Brother Galliot[2] and the way he must be handled. As soon as I hear from you I shall write everywhere to back your authority.

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[1] Replacing Bro. Mémain.
[2] Bro. Galliot had come back to Marast as econome.

You understand, my dear son, that the work you are undertaking will be lengthy, and that, in consequence, it must be consistent, without any other interruption than that of your necessary presences at Saint Remy. You may often even be able to continue by correspondence the work that has been begun.

I am, at this time, receiving the news that Ebersmunster is in a state of great disorder, that there are more than four thousand francs in current debts; and, that the suppliers are having themselves paid what they want.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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1115 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 6, 1839

My dear son, join to your work the constant practice of the interior life. Advance continually in the practice of the virtues. This is a very strict obligation for a religious and with all the more reason for a priest religious.

You tell me that you need an angelic patience. Well, my dear son, I shall add that you need a divine patience. Christian patience is a participation in the patience of Jesus Christ. Do not neglect, my dear son, to make real progress in mental prayer, for meditation is, as it were, the pivot about which turns the entire interior life, and, as a matter of fact, all our life becomes a life of prayer: *Oportet semper orare et numquam deficere*. [1]

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1116 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 11, 1839

Your answer, my dear son, to Father Guerin, Vicar General, is exactly what was needed and so, at least for the time being, there is nothing further to be done.

If Father Glussot asks you to be received as a novice, I authorize you to perform the ceremony, and his novitiate will be reckoned from the time he came to Saint Remy.

I am asking you, please, to tell Brother Gaussens that I had not understood that he formally asked me to place him in the South. I would be able to place him suitably only at

[1] "We need to pray continually and never lose heart." Luke 18:1.

the head of a new establishment, and if your letter had arrived two or three days sooner, I would have willingly sent in his name, instead of the one I had just sent to Castelsarrasin. I am now able to start a new establishment in this city, Sub-Prefecture of the Tarn and Garonne.[2]

Brother Gaussens is greatly mistaken about my sentiments toward him, in believing that I do not love him as one of my children. On the contrary, he has a very distinguished place in my heart. It is true that I was sorry he did not enter more seriously into the spirit of the religious state, but this very sorrow is an effect of the affection that I have for him, and of the desire I have for his salvation and, consequently, for his eternal happiness. Perhaps he may be surprised that I am speaking here of salvation, but you will explain to him, my dear son, how salvation may be compromised in the religious state, if one does not constantly advance in the perfect love of God by an entire abnegation of self. He may finally come to the point of understanding what you mean.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and very sincere devotedness.

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The correspondence with Brother Clouzet continues; it is very instructive and deals with the organization of the Working Brothers community and the functions of the Head of Temporalities.

1117 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 12, 1839

My dear son, I had just written to you at quite some length when I received your letter of the first of the current month . . .

I am very pleased with the conference for the Heads of the workshops, and I include in this group, the Heads of Agriculture. This conference is a necessity, as it can be a repetition of the common conference, to give assurance that all have well understood and appreciate the truths explained in the common conference. You will then draw practical consequences from it. Then your Heads will maintain the community in great fervor; even saints will be formed within it whose example will have an entirely happy response. You yourself, my dear son, work at the practice of what you will teach, for the example of the first Head has a very great influence on all the members.

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[2] The establishment of Castelsarrasin was, in fact, opened during this same year and had as first director, Bro. Troffer who was replaced in the following year by Bro. John Fabre, who remained there until his death in 1875. The work soon gained the esteem and confidence of the entire population and took on a great development. It comprised, besides the communal school, a free school and a boarding school.
It was suppressed in the persecution of 1903.

I easily believe with you that Father Chevaux would be the most likely to replace you, especially if the Heads of the workshops and of agriculture get along well. I believe it will be good, in proportion as the community increases, to look forward to two division Heads, a first, for all that concerns farming, upon whom would directly depend all the materiel of the shops, as well as all their Heads. These two division Heads will arrive at finding themselves, the one among the farmers and the other among the workers. Then a first Head could conduct everything very well, with great solicitude, and he could give the community and all of its Heads many concerns in the spiritual order. It is quite possible that Father Fridblatt will make up his mind to enter the community of the workers. Nothing is as yet decided, but the matter is being considered and discussed.[1]

As to the title and functions of the general Head of Temporalities, of which there is question for you, I have several observations to make about the reflections which you place before me. It is true that many of your Brothers, and possibly the majority of them, have been prejudiced against you, but note 1. that these prejudices had as object only your religious conduct and not the functions that you are going to fulfill; and that 2. you are considered by all as the most capable member of the Society when it comes to the management of its temporal matters. Whether this is true or merely exaggerated in itself matters little in the present case. The past prejudices will not follow you or will follow you only slightly. On the contrary, how about penetrating yourself more and more with the true sentiments of the religious, which, at bottom, are the very ones of Jesus Christ, who tells us so frequently that he is not of this world, that he has come down from heaven?

As to the reasons which you derive, my dear son, from the needs of your sanctification, from the indispensableness of the retirement, etc., I would have you observe: 1. that you have to learn to practice retirement, solitude, recollection in the midst of the affairs to which you will have to attend, whether while traveling or in the stops you will have to make; and 2. that everywhere, you will have to appear and to be in reality, a man vowed to poverty, to chastity, and to obedience, that everywhere you will have to be able to say with the same truth as St. Paul: I am fulfilling such and such a function only for Jesus Christ. Always look upon yourself as inferior to all your Brothers, and as being, so to say, only their business representative, and from that will result mildness, goodness, all the kind attentions of a humble charity, etc., etc.

All this will seem possible to you, my dear son, if faith is there to make you see yourself as an envoy of our Lord Jesus Christ. You will surely have all the graces necessary for this position and, in consequence, the graces of solitude and interior recollection, of zeal, of abnegation of yourself, of entire devotedness to the work of the Lord, etc., etc. . . .

Imagination is working so much in the case of Brother Gaussens, only because he wishes to accommodate the love of himself with the love he owes to our Lord. He will never

[1] See Letter 1107. It was not possible to carry out this project.

succeed in this. I am having Father Chevaux tell him a few words to this effect, but nevertheless, with great discretion.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

* * * *

1118 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 19, 1839

You will find herewith enclosed, my dear son,

1. Your nomination to the post of Third Assistant. It remains understood between us that your habitual residence will be provisionally in Saint Remy and not here with me, as the Constitutions mention.

2. A Circular to all the Heads of establishments of the Society of Mary. You are authorized to send a collated and signed copy to all the establishments of the Haute Saône, the Doubs, the Jura, and the Vosges. I am writing the same letter to Father Rothéa and authorizing him to send copies to the Heads of all the establishments in Alsace. I am taking care of those for the South.

It is a happy necessity for you, my dear son, to be obliged to live as a real religious, even while traveling. The good God is asking this proof of your fidelity in his service. You will be able to arrange your affairs so as to pass the Easter fortnight in Saint Remy. Perhaps you would do well to begin with the more distant establishments. Although your visits are to be very active, you will have to stay in each establishment at least long enough to accomplish what happens to be the object and purpose of the visit and to give real consolations to the religious who are working there. If, before the Easter fortnight, you have not been able to visit all the establishments, you could continue after it, and then return to Bordeaux, unless some need should oblige you to retrace your steps and return to Saint Remy, eventually to start out again from there.

The blessings that God showers upon the Society of Mary are especially the return of certain dissident subjects, the regularity that is being generally observed in the establishments, the good subjects who are entering the Society, the definitive settlement and authentic approbation of the Constitutions, the favorable reception on the part of the Sovereign Pontiff of the request we are addressing to him for a canonical institution, etc., etc.[1]

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[1] On February 7, Fr. Chaminade had received the first news about the reception of his requests, on the part of the Sovereign Pontiff, in the following letter of Cardinal Lambruschini, dated January 26:

"Dear Reverend Father, the package containing your letter of September 16 of last year, as well as the requests, with the Constitutions drawn up for the Society of Mary and for the Institute of the Daughters of Mary, did not reach me until the middle of the present month.

Hardly had I received it when I hastened to place your request at the feet of His Holiness, to whom I expressed the good wishes of His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop of Auch, as well as those of several French bishops, for the approbation to the Constitutions by the Holy See.

I have the satisfaction of assuring you, Reverend Father, that the Holy Father has very favorably received your request and that, following his orders, your requests, with the documents, joined to them, have been transmitted without delay to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, which will first

I would have greatly desired to be able to pass over to you as many reproduced copies of our Constitutions as you will visit establishments, but this is not possible. I believe that you may promise to distribute them on your return to Bordeaux, while giving news about all that has been settled and determined.

The dispatches which you will make of the Circular are to be made in my name. All you have to do, is to place at the bottom: *Compared with the original*, and then affix your signature.

If M. John B. Boillon does not seem to you really converted and decided to live as a real religious, he is not to be admitted. To make doubly sure, you might perhaps permit him to come and spend a few days at Saint Remy before having him bring his tools. He would find enough of them in Saint Remy to occupy himself temporarily. It is to be presumed that he will have need of making a general confession.

You will continue, my dear son, the direction of the community according to your plan. We shall discuss the matter in a manner sufficiently detailed when you come to Bordeaux. During your vacation, Father Chevaux is to lodge in the community. He can even occupy your room. He will try to follow your same plan. You must counsel him to spare his health and carefully to avoid all that might compromise it. Otherwise, there is nothing to be changed in the meantime—neither in the château, nor in the community. I readily understand that, in the two establishments, still more good subjects would be needed.

Do not be concerned, my dear son, because of the great number of affairs with which you are charged, as the assistance of our divine Patroness will not fail you. Love to work for the glory of her adorable Son, and have the Blessed Virgin known and loved wherever you happen to be. . . .

A few days ago, I wrote to you, and I asked you specially to send me, as soon as possible, the deposit which Father Glussot has placed into your hands, while adding to it all you possibly can, or to ask your brother to open credit for me for about two thousand francs. I have reason to think you have received the letter, and that the answers must be on the way. I thought it my duty nevertheless, to mention it here, because of the urgency, which it is unnecessary to explain to you at the present time.

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examine the Constitutions and then make a report about them to His Holiness with a view of obtaining his approbation.

I would consider myself very happy to be able to contribute with you in some way, for the greater glory of God, as well as to the honor of the Most Blessed Virgin, to the strengthening of the two pious Congregations, of which you are the worthy Founder.

In the meantime, be pleased, Revered Father, to accept the very special expression of the esteem and consideration with which I am, etc."

Cardinal Lambruschini never ceased to manifest the most active devotedness to Fr. Chaminade and to his religious Families, and he is to be regarded as one of the benefactors of the Society.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and sincere devotedness.

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1119 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, February 19, 1839

NOMINATION OF A THIRD ASSISTANT

We, the Superior General of the Society of Mary and in this position;

Wanting to give the general administration of the finances of the Society of Mary a final degree of perfection and of uniformity;

Knowing the zeal and the devotedness of Brother Dominic Clouzet for the interests of the said Society:

Have named him and do name him, by this letter, Head of the Temporalities and by reason of this character, Third Assistant to the Superior General.

The present Ordinance will be sent to Brother Clouzet in Saint Remy, by the first mail available.

In virtue of which, we have signed and are having countersigned the present nomination by the Secretary General in the interim and absence of Brother Bonnefoi.

In Bordeaux, February 19, 1839 – W. Joseph Chaminade

By order of the Superior General

R. CORBIN

* * * *

1120 – TO ALL THE DIRECTORS OF THE SOCIETY

Bordeaux, February 19, 1839

CIRCULAR ADDRESSED TO ALL THE HEADS OF THE ESTABLISHMENTS OF THE SOCIETY OF MARY BY HIS REVERENCE, THE SUPERIOR GENERAL.

The protection of the august Mary, my dear son, drawing every day new blessings on the Society which glorifies itself in bearing her name, and of which I am the very unworthy Head and Founder, imposes upon me the happy necessity of regularizing the financial administration of all the establishments of the North and of the South. To this effect, I call upon all the efforts of your devotedness to the work undertaken. The novitiates are languishing, at least those of Courtefontaine and Ebersmunster, for the lack of means. The novitiate of the South is to be reestablished, for it is absolutely needed; the Central House is without resources; and, finally, the Society has suffered great losses as a result of various accidents, the most recent of which is that of Marast.[1]

I am undertaking, my dear son, the settling of accounts of all the establishments of the Society, the furnishing to the novitiates of all that will be possible or needed for the formation of the subjects according to the spirit of our Constitutions and the multiplication of our establishments. This multiplication, in itself, will serve for the furnishing of new resources.

To put into execution, my dear son, this determination which I have taken before the Lord, I have put Brother Clouzet at the head, with whose zeal, devotedness, intelligence, activity, and piety you are all acquainted, and to this end I have named him General Head of Temporalities.

Before taking up his residence with me, he will stop at all the establishments to secure firsthand information on their real condition, the needs they are experiencing, the expenses they have to make and all the resources they have, all the reserves and economies they are in a position to make.

You will please second the devotedness of Brother Clouzet, my dear son. Put your registers in conformity with those of the other establishments and according to the method he will place before you. Receive him with the cordiality and consideration due to one of the general Heads of the Society. Have with him the greatest frankness, in order to facilitate for him the acquisition of the knowledge of the resources of your establishment, so that it may attain the prosperity that we may expect and look forward to.

Although the object of his visit concerns, so to speak, only what is temporal, you will, nevertheless, be able to profit by it in making known to him the interior griefs you may be experiencing, whatever may be their cause. Brother Clouzet is fully worthy of your confidence from all points of view.

I am authorizing Father Rothéa and Brother Clouzet to send you a copy of this letter, checked and signed by them.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender and inviolable devotedness.

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[1] See Letter 1098.

P.S. Brother Clouzet will be able to tell you the many blessings which Heaven is bestowing on the Society, and he will speak to you especially of our affairs in Rome, for the success of which you are to continue the prayers ordered for this intention on last August 19.

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1121 – TO A POSTULANT IN COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 21, 1839

My dear son, when I received your letter of the sixteenth of the current month, I discovered you in my innermost heart; in fact, you were there so much before, that in spite of your bad conduct and that of your brother, you had not yet been able to leave it. You owe this favor to the Most Blessed Virgin. It is beyond doubt that she had adopted you as her child. O my dear son, what an obligation you will have, to devote your entire life in causing her to be honored!

You ask me for the permission to make your promises as a novice. I cannot grant it to you as yet, for it is advisable that you first make a very exact postulate, I could have said severe, and that, during this time, you busy yourself with the making of a general confession; that you purify your soul by sentiments of real contrition which you will ask ceaselessly from the Lord through the intercession of the most holy Virgin. Mary has begun the work of your conversion, she will want to complete it as the Mother of Mercy. When Father Meyer will judge it proper to give you absolution and to admit you to the Holy Table, then you may beg of him to go through the customary formalities for the admission of postulants to the novitiates and to write to me about yourself. If this postulate time has been spent in the fervor we have reason to expect of you, I shall even count it as your novitiate time.

You ask me, my dear son, to impose upon you penances proportioned, not to your faults, but to your strength and, doubtless, also to your dispositions. Your request announces your repentance and the will for a sincere return. You will yourself let me know the penances you think I should impose on you, and I shall then see what I will have to do, and I shall inform you accordingly.

Receive, my dear son, as a sign of peace, my tender embraces with my fatherly blessing.

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1122 – TO BROTHER JOSEPH BERNHARD, COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, February 21, 1839

My dear son, I have sufficient knowledge of the dispositions of your heart toward me not to have drawn any vexing or annoying conclusion from the fact that I did not see your name with those of your confrères in their New Year's letter. You have, nevertheless, done well in making up for it. Do not worry, my dear son, over your numerous distractions in your prayers and your mental wonderings during your occupations. The first rule to follow is to remain patient; the second, to seek their cause and to work at their removal. You will succeed in this, I hope, by the practice of interior recollection, learning to walk in the presence of God, and of growing ever more in his love.

I greatly desire, my dear son, that you train someone to replace you in the bakery. However, you are doing well in accomplishing all you are told to do, but, even at that, you will never do enough toward the breaking of your own will. A true religious must be in the hands of his Superiors like a well-bred child is in the hands of his father and mother. On the other hand, do not be surprised that your nature is there to oppose this evangelical infancy. St. Peter felt that very thing at the time of the washing of the feet before the Last Supper. Imitate the submission he gave as soon as Our Lord made him see that there was no reason to oppose the orders he was receiving.

Receive, my dear son, the assurance of my tender devotedness with my fatherly blessing.

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The following letter treats of the foundation of the Schools of Castelsarrasin, of which it precisely states the conditions and formalities.

1123 – TO M. GRAND, MAYOR OF CASTELSARRASIN

Bordeaux, March 2, 1839

Honorable Mayor, M. de Saget[1] hastened to communicate to me the letters that you wrote relative to the establishment of primary schools which you desire to confide to the direction of three teachers of the Society of Mary. He also had the honor of manifesting to you all the interest I am taking in satisfying your wise and benevolent views in regard to the city of Castelsarrasin of which you are the mayor. It is already understood that the teachers will each receive three hundred francs with the tuition of the paying pupils. You do not believe that there will be any difficulty regarding the reimbursement of their traveling expenses, nor do I hope that there will be any difficulty regarding some accessory expenses connected with the first settling down of the personnel. As regards the furniture, whether of

[1] Former president of the Royal Court who always remained in close relationship with Fr. Chaminade. See Letters 350 and 366.

the schools or of the dwelling of the teachers and its upkeep, as regards also needed repairs on buildings or fixtures, the responsibility will always remain in the hands of the mayoralty.

Everything being thus foreseen and regulated, I would have thought, Honorable Mayor, that there remained to me only to give the order to the teachers to come together and to go to Castelsarrasin and to occupy their respective posts, for that is the way we act in all our establishments. It is thus, in particular, that we have done in Moissac. Upon arriving, the teachers go to the mayoralty, their head presents his obedience and certificate to the mayor. The mayor then gives notice of it to the superior committee and the head writes to the Reverend Rector of the Academy in case he has not already been notified.

You would have thought, Honorable Mayor, that the Head I destine for you would present himself to you, supplied with the attestations of the mayoralties under which he has exercised his functions for three years, and asking you for the position of teacher. This is, in fact, the order prescribed by the University for isolated teachers who belong to no particular body or group. However, if this policy were followed in the case of subjects belonging to corporations, serious drawbacks or situations might result. The subjects in question could shake off their dependence upon the societies or congregations to which they belong. The obediences and attestations of the general superiors would no longer be considered as sufficient and it would be altogether useless that the Society of Mary were approved, that anyone would treat with it, etc.

I hope that these observations will not displease you and that you will be kind enough to believe in my sincere devotedness and in the respectful consideration with which I am, Honorable Mayor, etc. . . .

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1124 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 10, 1839

My dear son, I am not answering the letter of Brother Clouzet, the one dated last February 24, because, according to that letter, he must be on his rounds. If he had given me an idea of the order he is following, I could have made some observations to him as regards certain establishments. You must know this order, since he tells me that he will help you by correspondence.

I am thinking of sending you, before or after Easter, a young man, who was first a farmer. He is, I think, thirty-six years old. He has been in Bordeaux for almost eleven years in the service of a dealer in liquors. Nothing in the religious life either surprises or frightens him. He has always conducted himself well, in his own native city as well as in Bordeaux.

The disposition of his possessions has been made and these amount to twenty-four thousand to twenty-five thousand francs.

Courage, my dear son! Love to recall to yourself this passage from the Psalms: *"Euntes ibant et flebant . . . ; venientes autem venient, etc.*[1]

[1]"They went in tears casting their seed. They will return in joy, carrying the sheaves of their harvest." Psalms 125:6.

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1125 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 10, 1839

My dear son, I only have time to tell you that I have received your brief letter of February 14 and that you should always take courage, this courage being sustained by the pure love of God. We live eternally in the bosom of God, that is to say, in the love with which God loves himself. Here you have the reason the saints will live, as it were, an entirely divine life. We must then, here below, endeavor to live the life we are to live once we have reached heaven.

Take care of your health, but with this secondary care which will not prevent your heart from being all for God and in God. I always recommend to you, my dear son, the greatest union with Jesus and Mary. The protection of St. Joseph may always be a powerful means toward this end.

I am embracing you paternally.

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At this time, we find an isolated remnant of the correspondence with Father Lalanne. He was struggling in Layrac in the midst of ever-increasing embarrassments. He was petitioning the Minister of Public Instruction for a completely free hand in his educational work. He had become involved with a priest of the neighborhood who offered to lend him fifteen thousand francs. Father Chaminade gives him his advice on these diverse matters.

1126 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, March 15, 1839

My dear son, I received the letter you wrote yesterday and so, I am interrupting my usual correspondence to write to you and to answer it.

A few days ago, I received a letter from Brother Clouzet in which, after telling me of the letter you had written to him and which you must remember, he adds: “Father Lalanne, my Good Father, will lose himself with his establishment if we don’t come promptly to his assistance with men and with money . . . It seems to me necessary to help him. In this, the good God and the Blessed Virgin would help us.” I did not answer this letter, for I did not know where to address my answer. My last orders having reached him, he left to look over the establishments in the North, in the manner and in the views that I explained to you. I

have learned, by correspondence, of his stop in Salins. With all he has to do, it is not possible for him to be here any sooner than a few weeks after Easter.

The few words he wrote to me regarding your letter have found a great echo in my soul. I am more than willing to enter into all the possible solutions. I shall even send him to you.[1] Brother Clouzet may well be somewhat delayed in the North, since the acquisition of the former community of the Carmelites has just been made in Saint Claude. He is being asked: 1. to decide upon the repairs to be made; and 2. to receive the cession of these large buildings—the church has not yet been acquired—provided the purchase has been concluded. There would be something similar to be done in Salins for the old community of the Ursulines. I have been obliged to remove Brother Troffer from his office as Head of the establishment which is becoming ever more flourishing. This removal has had a salutary effect . . . if, at the return of Brother Clouzet from his round of visits, all is not yet ready in Saint Claude and in Salins for the drawing up of the deeds, I shall have him told to come back to these places only after his return from the South. It is not possible for me to act faster in the arrangements we have to make.

I am now coming back to your letter of yesterday. The resignation of M. de Salvandy[2] it seems to me, should not have stopped the sending of your papers. M. de Salvandy and the other ministers preserve all their authority until the formation and the constitution of a new Cabinet.

You have two means of offering a mortgage to the priest who is offering you fifteen thousand francs: the first, on the houses you have acquired and which serve as lodging for the division of the little ones; the second, on the very house acquired from M. Dardy. The latter would surely grant him the privilege of anteriority which he would have as seller for the said sum of fifteen thousand francs.

Our confidence in Providence must be firm and unshakable in all cases and circumstances, even in the case wherein we would have opposed its designs, but this confidence must, nevertheless, always be submissive. If there happens to be a plank to which we cling for salvation, we must, doubtless, take it, provided it is not merely a temporal plank, which would expose our eternal salvation to being wrecked.

My dear son, I never liked to put anything in a lottery. Lotteries are truly a game of chance and, generally, a lot worse. I am unable to believe that God wants to assist us by any means of that kind. Choosing by lot has sometimes been permitted and even commanded,[3] but that is not the case with lotteries.

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[1] Bro. Clouzet.
[2] Minister of Public Instruction.
[3] For example, the election of the Apostle St. Matthias.

In receiving the vows of M. M. in the tribunal of penance, did you have the intention of receiving real vows and of admitting him definitely into the Society? And he, in pronouncing them, did he have the intention, I am not saying only to take vows in general, but to associate himself effectively and definitively with the Society? In the affirmative, were you receiving his vows as if delegated thereto by the Superior General of the Society? If he has made religious vows, as if wanting to enter the society, but which, in effect, the Society has not adopted, the vows, doubtless, oblige him before God, but he still remains outside of the Society and he could easily obtain a commutation so as to enter another order. By this emission of vows, he cannot oblige or force the Society to admit him. This question of vows, has already been agitated and never before has he taken advantage of the fact of which you are speaking to me. Besides, I believe that this act has been registered in Saint Remy at the opportune time, but, in all possible cases, the vow of chastity would remain perpetual and expressly reserved to the Sovereign Pontiff. I am stopping here, for the mail is about to leave.

Receive, my dear son, my fatherly embraces.

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1127 – TO FATHER LEO MEYER,
COURTEFONTAINE

Bordeaux, March 19, 1839

It would seem advisable that the aspirants to the certificate submit to a serious examination in the establishment before presenting themselves for the public examination.

I am very sorry, my dear son, that you don't believe you have the time to engage in meditation, or, at least good meditations. You may be quite sure that if you apply yourself seriously to meditation, you will not complain about not having the time to make it. You ask me today to intercede for you, through St. Joseph, for the grace of an interior life. In truth, the interior life is but a continual meditation, and I do not understand how anyone can reach that stage without good special meditations.

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Various counsels to Father Chevaux about the direction of souls.

1128 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, March 30, 1839

I am sending you, my dear son, my answer to the letter which the Community has written to me and which you sent me on the thirteenth of the current month. I thank you for

the tokens of esteem and devotedness which you give me on this occasion. Let us labor wholeheartedly at the work of the Lord during the remainder of our lives, for this is a favor he grants us in calling us to labor at it; because, for a fact, he has no need of us at all.

See, with both the Council and even the Working Brothers, whether there is not a real appropriateness in giving the latter a distinctly religious name, for example, that of St. Joseph. If it is generally adopted, and with pleasure and devotion, at the time Brother Clouzet comes South, I shall do all that will be necessary for this dedication.

Father Glussot wrote to me to wish me a happy feast day, but only for that. I am answering him, but without talking to him about anything else. Since he looks upon the return of his interior anxieties and temptations as an obstacle to the making of his promise of the novitiate, it is to be presumed that he will never be able to make the religious profession and that, in consequence, it is better that he does not make the promise of the novitiate. In allowing him to count his novitiate from the time of his entry at Saint Remy, I had thought that he had made up his mind about entering, and that he was even entering because he had made up his mind. If he really believes that God is calling him to the religious state in the Society of Mary, he must neglect nothing to respond to this vocation. He must be ready to withstand all sorts of trials, to resist every temptation, to place himself above all kinds of worries and weaknesses. You must have him take notice that, by the fact that he enters into temptation and, as a result, he will doubt about his vocation and enter the region of darkness, then, if there happens to be a moment in which he acquires a certain tranquility of soul and asks either to enter the Society or in some way to form part of it, how could we judge that his vocation is really divine, since from one day to another, new temptations could arise—even stronger ones—and then the doubts, anxieties, and worries will come back, and, to us, griefs, even charges for having received him in this fluctuation of ideas and sentiments? You will do well, my dear son, to have a serious interview with him to see if he has made all these observations, to see if, having made them, he acts as he does only by prudence to gain time for himself until he has acquired what he is after. You will quiet him, and we shall grant him all the time he will want. If you yourself, my dear son, think the observations I have just made are just and suitable, you could call him, read to him this part of my letter that concerns him, and give him all the explanations that he might desire. Before going further, you will give me the exact result of all that will have happened.

I am answering Brother Gaussens. He is asking me for permission to go to some convent during the Easter vacation to make a retreat and an examination of conscience spanning from his entry into religion up to the present time. He desires to make his confession to a priest not of the Society. All his Superiors and confessors would be too prejudiced against him. My letter will arrive too late for him to have the time to make a retreat during this short Easter vacation, but I am giving him the permission to choose another confessor in the environs of Saint Remy. This permission once granted, I am having him feel the danger of this change. If it is true that for many years he harbored illusions dangerous to his salvation, he is evidently exposing himself to be confirmed in his illusions.

I am giving him the means he is to employ to get rid of them, taking for granted that his Superiors have not been constantly mistaken, which is not to be presumed.

In regard to what you tell me about Brother Ravoir, my dear son, I shall say to you, in general: have him understand all the great dangers of entering into temptation. *Ne intretis in tentationem—Et ne nos inducas in tentationem*—It does not suffice to speak of the matter and to do it well in general conferences, but you must assure yourself in private interviews that they have well understood what it means to enter into temptation, and the danger involved. Eve fell and brought about the ruin of the entire human race only because she entered into temptation. The devil has two different ways of making us fall into temptation. The first is illustrated by Brother Ravoir; the second by Brother Bousquet. The case of Brother Bousquet is more ingenious and delicate,[1] but in the final analysis it is a temptation. Why should he look upon it as a temptation? Because the devil is leading him to go counter to the vows and oaths so often renewed.

If these young religious often opened their souls with uprightness and simplicity, they would soon recognize the tricks of the devil. All that leads one away from an obligation, under whatever pretext it may be, can only be a temptation. I believe that one should accuse himself in confession of the entries he has given to the tempter, as these are sins more or less great, according to the greater or less degree of the entry. Adam did not enter into temptation in the same way as Eve…I am writing a few words to Brother Bousquet and I am simply asking him to let me know what is going on within him. Much discretion and regard is due to those who have once fallen into temptation, although they have not succumbed to it. Without a special grace, they are not in a condition to understand the counsels that may be given them, for the devil begins by binding them.

Continue, my dear son, to go to God with simplicity and confidence. You risk nothing in asking pardon of God for the part you might have taken or had in the sins of others, be it by ignorance or even by negligence. In any case, don't be troubled . . .

The young man I have announced to you will be able to leave, I believe, shortly after Easter. He has found his substitute whom he is training. On his way to Saint Remy, he will stop at his home to get his baptismal certificate and to give his letter of attorney to the Reverend pastor, in view of having the price of the stocks or lands he has sold included into it, etc. Although the young man can neither read nor write, he is nevertheless provident and well ordered . . .

Embrace Brother Clouzet for me. I am deeply touched by the happy feast day wishes you have given me from him. It seems to me he has made his visits very rapidly. Without doubt, the knowledge he already has of many establishments, and his sharp and quick eye, have helped him to learn all that he needs to know. Were it possible, it would be good for him to make his visit to Saint Claude coincide with the one he is to pay to Father Bardenet

[1] See Letter 969.

during the first days of April, to judge with him the repairs that have to be made on the new house we have bought which is a former Carmelite community dwelling. I have already written to Father Montgaillard to this effect. Nevertheless, see to it that Brother Clouzet settles nothing and takes no engagement without first having let me know all about it.

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In the following letters we see the preparations being made for the foundation of schools in Strasbourg; foundations which, however, could not take place till several years later—the fall of 1844.[1]

1129 – TO BROTHER ENDERLINE, EBERSMUNSTER

Bordeaux, April 4, 1839

My dear son, with deep emotion, I received the hearty expression of kind feast day wishes which you offer me by your letter of last March 11. I am counting implicitly on your complete devotedness, just as you can count implicitly upon mine. Tell me frankly if the preoccupations of Brother Georges are all so useful and so necessary, that he cannot prepare himself to teach a better class. By nature, he is very impractical. On the other hand, his is a rather pleasant character, and I don't think that he would be dissatisfied were you to urge him on amicably.

Try to find out what makes Brother Justin such a mediocre professor. If he does not succeed, it is not for the lack of intrinsic aptitude. He seems to me to have enough good will to receive quite charitably the counsels you would give him. I shall not fail to recommend this to him. He needs to be held in check.

It is very just and suitable that there be a well-defined plan of instruction, as much for the boarding school as for the novitiate. As far as you are concerned take this matter in hand. A little later, I shall tell you with whom you will be able to work. The Method of teaching is to be only the carrying out of the well-ordered plan.

The Reverend pastors of Strasbourg have come together to ask for us, through the voice of Father Laurent, Vicar General and former pastor of Belfort. I can well imagine that Father Doyen, the present pastor of the Cathedral, will easily be able to back up this request. It is then of great urgency to equip the novitiate in Ebersmunster with numerous novices and with all that can make it a model of its kind.

Receive my dear son, my tender embraces.

[1] The schools in Strasbourg, to which had been joined a little boarding school, enjoyed great success until the day when they were closed by order of the Prussian authorities in 1875.

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1130 – TO FATHER LAURENT, VICAR GENERAL
OF STRASBOURG

Bordeaux, April 6, 1839

Very Reverend Vicar General, your letter of last March 24, filled me with a sweet joy. I did not know of your promotion to the dignity of Vicar General of Strasbourg, and so, now that it is a fact, permit me to offer you congratulations, for I am sure that this is a source of great happiness for this important and vast diocese.

I shall be able to respond to your views and those of the Reverend pastors of Strasbourg, by giving you good and capable religious. I feel keenly the importance of the enterprise, but my one embarrassment concerns the time at which I shall be able to furnish the first five that you are asking for. I would have to know whether all must know the two languages, French and German. The September vacation is close at hand. Could you not grant me more time? I would certainly not abuse it. I hope that our schools will be equipped in such a manner as to incline the Protestants to send their children to them, as that is what has already happened in several of our establishments which nominally are opened only for the Catholics. We are seeking only to do good, but it is difficult to do it, as times are nowadays. If you have occasion, Very Reverend Vicar General, to see Father Doyen, pastor of the Cathedral, I would beg of you to permit that he find herewith tokens of my respectful remembrance. This excellent pastor had constantly won the esteem and affection of our teaching Brothers in Ammerschwir.

As I am sure the first five Brothers will be kept very busy, and they will not be able to prepare their food as well as to maintain cleanliness and order in the establishment, I shall grant you a sixth Brother, but who will be there free of charge at least at the beginning. The salary will be six hundred francs per head, that is to say, for only five, although there will be six in the community.

I imagine that your intention is to form but one house of teachers or professors, who will go to teach in the various parishes and the idea is perfectly acceptable. The more numerous the communities are, the more fervent they will be, and, furthermore, strange to say, the expenses are far less considerable. The one problem is that the professors have greater troubles, and a greater number of certified ones is required. I shall be very much obliged to you, if you will inform me definitely about the entire plan of the Reverend pastors.

I am deeply moved at the interest which His Excellency deigns to take in the project of the new establishment and I feel much flattered because of it. I shall be very thankful if you will offer him the tokens of my profound respect, and I am asking you, Very Reverend Vicar General, to accept the assurance of the sincere and respectful devotedness with which I am, etc.

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1131 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, April 15, 1839

My respected son, the bearer of this note is the young man of whom I have already spoken to you[1] and who is to enter the community of the farmers. He will be subject to any other employment that his Superiors would choose to give him. His name is Jean Chenozel. He is from Nonards, Canton of Beaulieu, Corrèze.

Receive, my respectable son, my fatherly greetings.

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In the following letter, relative to the foundation of Castelsarrasin, it is to be noted the ever watchful solicitude of Father Chaminade for poor children.

1132 – TO M. GRAND, MAYOR OF CASTELSARRASIN

Bordeaux, end of April, 1839

Honorable Mayor, in accordance with the letter with which you honored me on last March 25, I am going to write to the director of the teachers that I am destining for you, to supply himself with all the papers needed by the teachers who present themselves to obtain the direction of a communal school. But you will be kind enough to observe that the small treaty of acceptance which will be made, as well as the salary settlement, is not to be made in his individual name but in his qualified name as a member of the *Society of Mary*. The *Society of Mary* will have to furnish you three teachers for the elementary schools. It will be its duty to replace, be it the Head or anyone of his helpers, in case of need. If it should occur that the director should leave the Society, his authority as teacher would by the very fact be null and void.

As regards the salary to be given to each one of the Brothers, you seem, Honorable Mayor, to be mistaken. You say: “The Commune will assure the three Brothers, be it a fixed salary or by means of the products of the school, the sum of twelve hundred francs.” M. de Saget wrote to you that the salary of each Brother was set at six hundred francs. You answered him that the Commune was giving a straight salary of three hundred francs, but

[1] See Letters 1124 and 1129. M. Jean Chenozel (1807-1847) did not misplace the confidence that Fr. Chaminade had in him. “He is pretty much of a closed book,” noted Fr. Chevaux, “he can neither read nor write, and he knows his religion but imperfectly, but he is pious, docile, and mortified.” When he died in Salins in 1847, it was possible to write of him: “Brother Jean Chenozel was a Brother animated by a good spirit, a model of exactitude and of great activity . . . All he knew was how to say his rosary and to do his kitchen work.”

that the tuition would make up for the surplus asked for, which, furthermore, you were guaranteeing. You gave some idea of the tuition, saying that, in the actual condition of the school, there were 150 pupils paying one franc per month. I had the honor of answering you that we were in perfect agreement.

I shall be very much obliged to you, Honorable Mayor, if you will permit free attendance in the elementary schools to all the children whose parents cannot easily pay, and to see to it that these parents be not subjected to any examination into their affairs which could become humiliating.

I easily understand that there are certain drawbacks for the children of families who would frequent these schools, but soon, these drawbackss will no longer exist, as the result of the creation of the superior school of which you are speaking to me. From the beginning, I shall confer with M. Saget about the creation of this school under the name of special school, but a genuine and well-equipped superior school will produce the same effect, and it will have the advantage of having a name conformable to the law in the matter. We could come to an agreement about this second object. M. de Saget must have made known to you the real interest that I have in providing your city with the means of instruction and education for the benefit of its youthful citizens, whether they have been blessed by fortune or not, and without confusion of any kind. There is always a way of according special facilities to certain distinguished families.

I am with respectful devotedness, Honorable Mayor, etc.

M. Ravez, the arbitrator, gave his decision in the cause of M. Auguste (February 11, 1844). This decision condemned the Assistants and confirmed the validity of the agreement entered into with M. Auguste in which was seen an act of prudence and wisdom.

The moment having come to regularize the government of the Society, the Founder informed the Council of his intention to designate his successor.

The Council opposed this matter and this was the basis of the difficulties which filled the last years of the life of Father Chaminade.

His active life was thus ended, and he entered into sorrowful trials which completed his sanctification.

VOLUME 5

THE DECREE OF PRAISE OF THE SOCIETY
THE LETTER TO THE PREACHERS OF RETREATS

(MAY 1839 – OCTOBER 1839)

As of January 26, Father Chaminade had been informed by Cardinal Lambruschini and his great protector Secretary of State to His Holiness, of the favorable reception granted by the Holy Father to his requests of the preceding September 16.

On April 23, Canon Valentini finally informed him that, after the examination of the Constitutions by Cardinal Polidori, a Decree of Praise was going to be rendered in favor of the two Institutes. He begged Valentini to let him know of his intentions concerning the formalities relative to the execution of the Decree, whence the following letters.

1133 – TO CANON VALENTINI, ROME

Bordeaux, May 12, 1839

Very Reverend Canon, a few days after the reception of the letter with which you have honored me on last April 23[2] I had the communication of the one written on the thirtieth of the same month by his Eminence, Cardinal Giustiani to Father Marliani.[3] Here is what I read in it: "You have possibly, perhaps already, seen or you will see in a few days, the Decree which approves the Congregation of Father Chaminade. In this Decree, you will have occasion to see my signature, since, at the time and in the circumstances, I was temporarily replacing his Eminence Cardinal Sala, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, who is recovering from a serious illness."

You have the kindness to tell me, Very Reverend Canon, that "His Holiness has had the condescension of receiving my requests most graciously, and that, in view of the observations and the opinion of the Cardinal appointed to examine them, he has deigned to grant to my Constitutions a general approbation in ordering that I be sent a Decree of praise and of encouragement, to continue in the charitable works that are proper to my Societies and to my Regulations, and also granting to me the indulgences and spiritual favors according to my desires." "You are not able," as you have the kindness to add, "to express the form and the words of the Decree more precisely, as well as the extension of the favor which has just been accorded me."

[2] The letter of Canon Valentini bears the date of March 23, but the text of the letter indicates that the correct date should be April 23.
[3] A Roman priest residing in Bordeaux.

I have reason to presume, Very Reverend Canon, that this precious Decree is conformable to the demands of the first two requests, that is to say, to the authorization of the Constitutions of the two Orders and to their canonical Institution, although his Eminence does not say so literally in giving the news of the approbation to Father Marliani.

I have reason to believe, in the second place, that the Decree of His Holiness will be forwarded in two distinct Briefs, one for each Order, although somewhat similar, and that the indulgences and the spiritual favors that I have asked for in a third request, will be the object of a third Brief, since His Holiness has deigned to grant them in one and the same Decree.

As soon as Bishop Casanelli of Ajaccio learned that his Eminence Cardinal Sala was the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, his Lordship hastened to write to his Eminence, to recommend to him the affair of the requests, in which he placed the most lively interest. His Eminence Cardinal Giustiniani, in replacing Cardinal Sala, will, no doubt, have found this last letter joined to my requests and to those of the Archbishops and Bishops. It would be difficult to express adequately all the interest that his Eminence Cardinal d'Isoard and his Lordship, the Bishop of Ajaccio, place in the success of this affair. Since these requests have been presented to His Holiness, three Communities[1] have been established in the diocese of His Eminence. At this time, the plan for a fourth is being drawn up, and, in the Novitiate, subjects are being prepared to be send to the Island of Corsica.

Although the Decree of His holiness does not formally include the canonical Institution of the two Orders, and that this last would be postponed to another time, I authorize you, Very Reverend Canon, to make the necessary expenses, be it for the sending of the Decree to the Secretariat of the Bishops and Regulars, or for the issuing of the Decree itself. As soon as you have had the kindness of letting me know that these communications are being or have been made, I shall arrange the usual 400 francs for a banker, and he will see that you get them. If there should be other expenses that have not been foreseen, I beg you to meet them, without even consulting me, and, upon the first word from you, I will fully indemnify you in the same way.

Kindly permit me, Very Reverend Canon, to place in this same envelope a letter for his Eminence Cardinal Lambruschini[2] who deigns to take so much interest in this affair, and in whom I have such great confidence, just as I have in his Eminence Cardinal Giustiniani,[3] although I do not have the honor of knowing him personally. If you judge it proper, you might communicate to both of their Eminences the letter which I have the

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[1] Of the Third Order of the Daughters of Mary of Auch.
[2] About this dignitary, see letter 440.
[3] Cardinal Giustiniani, who signed the Decree of Praise of the Society, had been Nuncio to Spain, and then enjoyed great prestige in Rome. At the time of the Conclave of 1831, he was one of the Cardinals who, with Cardinal Maur Cappellari, the future Gregory XVI, obtained the greatest number of votes, and might even have been elected Pope without the "exclusive" pronounced by the Spanish Ambassador.

honor of writing to you. I am leaving the one and the other unfolded, unenclosed, and unsealed, so that you may get a thorough knowledge of what I am taking the liberty of writing to them, and furthermore, so that the charges for postage will be somewhat less. I beg of you to do all that will be suitable before handing them over. I am addressing myself to you as to a friend who seeks only to do good and always to add new jewels to the crown of immortality that is being reserved for him.

I am, with a respectful devotedness, Very Reverend Canon, etc.

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1134 – TO CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI,
SECRETARY OF STATE TO HIS HOLINESS, ROME
Bordeaux, May 12, 1839

Your Eminence, I learn, with a very real consolation, that His Holiness has just pronounced a Decree of Approbation of the two Orders that the divine mercy has granted me the favor of founding, and accords me the favors and indulgences that I desired. I am sure that I owe all these favors to your powerful protection and to the solicitude with which you have named, temporarily, His Eminence Cardinal Giustiniani, Prefect of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, to replace His Eminence, Cardinal Sala, during the latter's serious illness.

I have the honor of writing to this truly venerable Cardinal, to ask him to arrange things in such a way, that the Decree of His Holiness may be issued in three distinct Briefs, each with the force of the Decree itself, pronounced after the general report, so very favorable, which His Eminence has given him.

Canon Sauveur Valentini, who will have the honor of transmitting this letter to your Eminence, makes me doubt that the canonical institution will be included in the Decree of His Holiness. Nevertheless, this does not seem to be the case, to judge from the news of it which Cardinal Giustiniani himself gives to Father Marliani, a priest of Rome residing in Bordeaux. He simply tells him that His Holiness has approved the said Orders by a special Decree.

However, Your Eminence, I am always falling back upon your powerful and benevolent intervention, and I beg your Eminence to continue to lead to a happy ending, this work which is so interesting and which I look upon as the very work of God.

I am with the most profound respect, of Your Eminence, etc.

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1135 – TO CARDINAL GIUSTINIANI, PREFECT PRO TEM OF THE
SACRED CONGREGATION OF BISHOPS AND REGULARS, ROME

Bordeaux, May 12, 1839

Your Eminence, I have just learned, with great consolation, from a letter with which you have honored Father Marliani last April 30, that His Holiness had just pronounced the approbation of the two Orders of Mary that I had been bold enough to solicit, and that I owed this signal favor to Your Eminence, temporarily replacing Cardinal Sala, Prefect of the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, who is on the road to recovery from a serious illness.

Henceforth, with the name of Gregory XVI, these two Institutes will bless that of Giustiniani. With that satisfaction their friends and their illustrious protectors will learn of this happy news! Above all, it will be welcome and agreeable to His Eminence Cardinal d'Isoard and to his Lordship, the Bishop of Ajaccio.

I have also understood, Your Eminence, from a letter of Canon Valentini that, following the benevolent report which Your Eminence had made of the examination of the Constitutions and of the matters asked for by the requests, the Decree of Approbation of His Holiness covers the ensemble. I would ask Your Eminence to manage things in such a way that its expedition be made out in three distinct Briefs, one, of approbation for each of the two orders, and the third, for the concession of the favors and indulgences asked for. Canon Valentini, who will have the honor of presenting this letter to Your Eminence, is authorized to make all the expenses that are usual in the different Secretariats for all expeditions.

May God deign to prolong the days so precious to Your Eminence! This is the ardent and very sincere wish of the one who is, with the most profound respect, etc.

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The following letter, in answer to a consultation on the part of Father Chevaux, is for us a new proof of the extent of the knowledge of Father Chaminade in matters of moral theology. Also it shows us with what breadth of view he sought to interpret the overly-rigid rules of his time.

1136 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 17, 1839

I do not know the work entitled *Conduct of the Confessors in the Tribunal of Penance,* by Salvatori, and, I am not able, at this time, to verify the passage that you quote.

Never to send away the penitent without giving him absolution, or to send him away for at most a week, is probably the general practice of the Italians, the Spanish, the Germans, etc. This practice seems to me to come from a fairly wise doctrine of the *Sapientia* (University of Rome), but I believe that a bad application of it is often made. The *Sapientia* thinks that the sinner would not accuse himself, were he not sincerely repentant, but how many sinners, especially the relapsing ones, are obliged to admit that they have no horror of sin and even less, detestation!...French confessors, before the first Revolution, made too rigid an application of these principles. Great wisdom is required to reconcile all that is involved. It is also certain, as the Spaniards claim, that there must be confidence in the efficacy of the Sacrament. This view is correct, but it, nevertheless, does not do away with the difficulty of a moral presumption that the sinner has reached the beginning of love required by the Council of Trent. I conclude that it is not possible to lay down a practical law, without some kind of exception, for giving absolution indifferently to all kinds of penitents after the accusation of their sins, because it would be necessary, often enough, to blind one's eyes, so as not to see that the penitents have not yet reached this beginning of love. Receive, my dear son, my fatherly embraces.

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1137 – TO BROTHER CLAUDE MOUCHET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, May 22, 1839

You have done well, my dear son, to tell all to Father Chevaux, since he asked it of you. He has the permission to grant you, in certain extraordinary cases, all that you might need. Conduct yourself, in his regard, as in regard to the other superiors, with the docility of a little child who would want to do what is good, but who does not know what it is, and who has not enough reason to understand what it is. Thus, never reason about the orders that may be given to you or about what may be done with you, and, in regard to your confrères, and even the boarders, act always as the servant of all. Furthermore, continue to act as we have said.

I desire that the love of God continue to grow in your heart, in such a way that you no longer see in yourself only a miserable nothing or the most unworthy of creatures. You will find no exaggeration in the expression "the most unworthy of creatures," when you better recognize the goodness of God in your regard and your modicum of love, of gratitude towards Him, which could easily be looked upon as a sort of ingratitude. Receive, my dear son, my tender embraces.

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New counsels to Father Lalanne for the solution of the crisis in Layrac.

1138 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, May 29, 1839

I shall pass over to you, my dear son, a literal extract of the concise account which Brother Clouzet sent to me on the twentieth of the current month, of the visit he paid to you in Layrac. Brother Clouzet requests an answer from me. In the situation wherein you find yourself, my dear son, it would seem to me dangerous for you to await any longer, an answer from the Society to the proposition whether it can or cannot accept the Layrac Establishment. The more the position of the establishment is critical, the less the Society can accept it. The critical situation must first be remedied, whatever the cost, and then it will be easy to see that the Society will be able to accept it.

The crisis arises from the more or less urgent debts that have to be paid, and from the lack of intrinsic means by which this is to be done. All the means that you could have from legitimate profits from the boarding school, and which I place at about twenty thousand francs, are absorbed, and more than absorbed, by the charges which you have imposed upon yourself. It is certain, my dear son, that this situation is really critical, and that you are continually being threatened by some kind of clash, and one clash could easily bring along many others. What is to be done? Here is what I think, my dear son.

1. Have all your professors, boarding-teachers, and servants know the actual impossibility for you to give them any salary or wages outside of food and decent dress. I think that, if all do not consent to this, in spite of the good reasons you will have given them, there will be at least a certain number who will consent.

> Among other means you would have of replacing those who would not consent, you would have that of finding subjects in the Grand Seminary of Agen. For this purpose, you would have to interest His Lordship and the two Vicars General, by having them know, on the one hand, your critical situation, and, on the other, nevertheless, the prosperity of the establishment and the good order that reigns in it, etc. The Bishop consenting, you could easily have the Superior and the Directors of the Seminary enter into your views, and you would surely find the subjects you would need. In fact, to how many seminarians would it not be advantageous to suspend their courses for some time, in order to indulge in teaching, above all in a House where the studies are well regulated! All this, you will tell me, is painful and disgusting.[1] I agree it is even possible, it is even to be presumed, that these seminarians will not have the knowledge of those they will be supposed to replace. No matter, provided that they have what is sufficient and that they be well directed.
>
> The measure that I am counseling you is distasteful, painful, humiliating, and, perhaps, you will find in it a great obstacle in the haughty manners of which M.

[1] Disgusting: that which inspires repugnance and aversion. (Littré). Father Chaminade freely uses this word in this sense.

Brunet[2] has spoken, and may still speak, of those students of the Grand Seminary. The problem still remains, my dear son, that of getting out of the crisis, and, to this effect, withdrawing from the earnings of the boarding school all that the bankers leave for the professors: fifteen and even sixteen thousand francs. M. and Mme Dardy[3] are to be considered as boarders, and their life-annuity of one thousand francs suspended, but with their consent. It will also be necessary to have M. Estebenet consent, through M. Auguste, to suspend the payment of his life-annuity. It is, as in the case of failures, of which it is said that it is advantageous to them to suffer losses, as they would be losing a lot more, should the crisis breakout.

In the supposition that you have assured to yourself as many gains as possible, then:

2. You will come to an agreement with all your creditors, so that they are paid proportionately to the effective gains you will be able to have, and accept suitable times of payment. You may have some debts to be paid immediately, like that, for example, of nine hundred francs to M. Valentin. I told you in my last letter what I thought you ought to do.

Ordinarily, debtors in your position do not act by themselves, at least with all of their creditors, and if you could find a capable third party, one who could enter well into your interests, you would do well to employ him. I think that M. Auguste could render you this service. If this advice is agreeable to you, and if he himself can make up his mind about it, I would have him advised by persons of wide experience in such matters. All I am telling you now is only as the result of my little experience.

Brother Clouzet considers the furniture of Society as seriously hazarded in a time of crisis. If you wish that this should not be so, let me know, and I shall immediately inform you about the precautions that will have to be taken.

I am not recalling to you any of the religious motives proper for the strengthening of your courage, for you already know them, and I have no doubt that you are fully disposed to penetrate yourself with devotedness.

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The following letter treats of the foundation planned for Strasbourg, but which was not to be realized for some time to come.

1139 – TO FATHER DOFFNER, PASTOR OF SAINT JOHN, STRASBOURG

Bordeaux, June 4, 1839

[2] Former professor of rhetoric in Saint Remy, who left the Society and was employed in Layrac.
[3] The former owners of Layrac, actually living in the boarding school and giving it their collaboration. See letter 771.

Reverend Father, I have understood the importance of the establishment planned for Strasbourg, and that is why, from the very first proposition made to me about it (See Letter 1130), I consented to it with all my heart. I shall be happy when I see your wishes and mine regarding it fully realized.

The result of your dealings with the Mayor and the Reverend Rector encourage me greatly. It would be highly imprudent on our part to wish to establish ourselves in a city of a mixed population like yours, against the wishes and without the previous authorization of its highest authorities.

I am delighted with the conditions which you offer us. The distribution of the schools, well suited to the needs of your city, in no way opposes the development and application of our method; the salary, set at about 2,400 francs for four teachers, seems to me sufficient, and, as regards the building and location, I believe I have already told you the requirements of our Rules. Besides the four class-rooms in the house destined for the teachers, there must be at least seven rooms: for our oratory, a study-room, a reception-room or a parlor, a dormitory, a dining-room, a kitchen, and store-room for the smaller provisions. I forego the idea of tuition money from the classes of paying students, in view of the fixed salary of 2,400 francs. What we ordinarily call first expenses remain in your charge. This is, doubtless, what you understood by furniture and traveling expenses.

You see, Reverend Father, that I am accepting, simply and without condition, the propositions you make to me, and I give you my word that I shall actively occupy myself with the preparation of the teachers. However, to be entirely frank with you, I think it my duty to notify you that I have had no idea of tying myself down with any promise, when I gave reason to hope for opening the school, at the time of the next reopening of classes. Furthermore, I had in mind employing subjects who are purely French, with one or two Germans...But the extent of knowledge that their position will require of them, especially the knowledge of the principles of the two languages French and German, in my eyes, changes altogether the point of view of the establishment, in such a way that, whilst giving you my word that we shall start at the earliest possible date, I am not yet able to designate for you a fixed and definite time. All I can assure you of, for the time being, is that I shall adopt all possible means to prepare for you, within the shortest time possible, teachers such as I know you desire to have.

You may, Reverend Father, bring my answer to the knowledge of your Reverend and Honorable Confrères, assuring them of the profound respect and singular esteem with which I have the honor of being, of you and of them, the very humble servant.

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To Father Rothéa, Superior in Saint Hippolyte, an administrative letter forcibly vindicating the rights of religious societies in their relations with school authorities, concerning the placing and replacing of the subjects.

1140 – TO FATHER ROTHEA, SAINT HIPPOLYTE

Bordeaux, June 6, 1839

My respectable son, here is what you might answer the Rector of the Academy of Strasbourg. You could say to him:

1. That, actually, we have not found it difficult to change the subjects in question, as soon as we believed that compelling reasons called for it, and that, if we have not given due notice and in the ordinary forms—be it to the Committee or to the Mayor—this real wrong must not be imputed to us as though it weighed upon us as our responsibility. The Superior General of the Society of Mary never had in mind to free himself from a rule which is as much a matter of suitability as it is of equity. It is not his fault if the local Superior has not done his duty for some reasons that the General Administration has highly disapproved, above all in what concerns the Colmar establishment;

2. That the incriminating changes, either in Colmar or in Ribeauvillé, have taken place at times sufficiently distant from one another. The Superior General has reason to be astonished that, after his accepted and justified explanations, old happenings are being rehashed, which should be considered as never having happened, and that are being maliciously grouped as if belonging to one time, and to lend to his administration the odium of the cavils of absolutism and contempt for the laws;

3. That the change brought about in Ribeauvillé has taken place only after two years of solicitations on the part of the Reverend Pastor of the place, and that it obtained the consent and approbation of the local Committee;

4. That the changes in question, be it in Colmar or in Ribeauvillé, have not been the result of arbitrariness and caprice, but that of necessity and of good to be done;

5. That a corporation cannot be required always to make known to a Committee the intrinsic motives behind the changes it believes to be indispensable, for the reason that purely family affairs are to be treated only in the family. The Superior General is able to affirm that it is motives of this nature, serious and compulsory, in the interest of subjects as of schools, which have forced him to make the incriminating changes;

6. That a teaching body has respective rights, in virtue of which, it can act in such and such a case, otherwise than ordinary individuals, and that it cannot be subject, as a corporation, to the same exigencies, as in the case of isolated teachers, on whom, in the matter of teaching, public confidence never rests but in virtue of their academic titles;

7. That the right of making changes cannot be restrained, when it makes use of it only with wisdom, and for the real good of public instruction. When there is question of new establishments to withhold from us the right of choosing among the subjects in the full exercise of their profession such as have acquired practice and experience would be to take from us the means of sustaining and extending ourselves.

It will, furthermore, be well to have the Reverend Rector know, with all the consideration to which he is entitled, that the Superior General of the Society has reason to be astonished at the difficulties of all kinds that are being caused to a body that has already rendered great service to the country, that devotes itself to the continuance of good works, and whose administrative body is far from trampling under foot the laws of the land. Certainly, it would be wrong to accuse it of this, because, from time to time, circumstances do not permit it to conform to Regulations, which, it would seem, after all, are not made for teaching bodies, but rather for isolated teachers.

Here you have, my respected son, what you will answer the Reverend Rector. You may even, if you so prefer, transmit these notes directly to him.

* * * *

To Father Chevaux, counsels for the direction of diverse subjects in delicate situations.

1141 – TO FATHER CHEVAUX,
SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 7, 1839

Your reflections, my dear son, with regard to Brother Philippe Roussel, seem to me perfectly fair and just. It is evident that it is pride that is taking him away from manual work, and I can very easily understand that the very prospect of an employment of this nature throws him into a state of the deepest sadness. However, I believe, that, with due care and discretion, we shall finish by curing him, but this can hardly be without clashing head on with his most decided tastes. Grace seems to be working in him, and if he is unfortunate enough to abuse it, he will be creating an abyss for himself. My idea has always been to employ him in teaching in the new establishment we are starting in the South. His earnest entreaties, those of Brother Troffer, and dire need, impose it upon me as an absolute necessity.

In spite of his apparent frankness, Brother Silvain is still drawing a thick veil over his miseries. He admits only the cause, pride, the necessary subject of all pious mournful complaints, but the word you use pleases me, and I am very glad that he seriously wants to

correct himself. Lead him on with mildness, my dear son, but with prudence, as I am doing. Say no more, or at least appear to do so, about all the miseries in Marast and elsewhere.

As regards Brother Bousquet, I am grieved at seeing him always the victim of the same illusions, but I am not losing hope, for he has too long been exemplary and too long been faithful to the august Mary to succumb without repentance in the present trial. Consult God and your heart, my dear son, in the direction of this interesting subject so as to do it in the manner most suited to him. You may permit him to make his ordinary Communions, provided he does not willingly participate in the illusions that are bothering him, and that he be constantly under religious obedience.

Since you have grasped the character of the spiritual malady of Brother Ravoir, I hope that your charity, aided by the divine goodness, will indicate to you the most effective remedies to be used.

All the news coming to me from Saint Remy is as consoling as yours on what concerns the ensemble of the house. You know well, my dear son, that the Community will never get along so well, that all the subjects as a unit are exemplary. Such a Community, morally speaking, is impossible here below, especially in the century in which we are living. As far as you are concerned, my dear son, humiliate yourself before God for not being the first in fervor, and after having said to yourself what you say to the others, set to work in good earnest and cut out the evil from the root and with the help of God, you will succeed in all you attempt to do. I willingly consent, my dear son, to take you at your word when you claim yourself to be one of the least fervent in the establishment, on condition that, far from allowing yourself to go into discouragement, you only humble yourself the more before God, recognizing, like the publican in the Gospel, your profound unworthiness, asking with fervor for what is lacking to you and hoping for it from heaven, whilst doing all you can to correspond with grace to the best of your ability.

I close here, my dear son, recommending you to look after your health and embracing you with tenderness.

* * * *

Father Lalanne did not think he should follow the counsels of Father Chaminade. He looked for a new lender and found one. "My affairs are set in order," he wrote to Father Chaminade, "Providence has sent me a good Samaritan who did not fear to risk his fortune to deliver me from the danger…" Rather poor help, which was of short duration!

Father Lalanne then mildly complains that a particular individual has done for him what neither Father Chaminade, Brother Clouzet, nor Father Caillet had been willing to do, forgetting that these last could not dispose of the goods of the Society in the same way that a private person could with his own.

Finally, Father Lalanne blamed Father Caillet who acted as intermediary for Father Chaminade in these negotiations, and whose tact, here as elsewhere, was not quite up to the degree of efficiency that the circumstances called for.

Consequently, the following letter.

1142 – TO FATHER LALANNE, LAYRAC

Bordeaux, June 8, 1839

My dear son, I hastily opened your letter of the fourth of the current month. Those first words: "My affairs are now in order," have greatly consoled my soul, more saddened than I allowed to appear, by your preceding letters. I blessed the good Lord because of it and I thanked the Blessed Virgin, our august Patroness, in a very special manner. However, the reading of your entire letter caused me to make the following reflections, which I am now passing over to you in all simplicity.

It seems to me, you do not sufficiently distinguish what, as a matter of sentiment, is proper to collective names and to such as are individual. I have the one and the other, and so have Brother Clouzet and Father Caillet. The person whom Providence made use of to assist you has only an individual name in regard to you. He was able to resort to all the sacrifices to which his heart inspired him, something that I was unable to do.

Father Caillet is the editor of the letters that he wrote to you in my place. He nevertheless had me read them before mailing them. I did not find in them the clearness and the simplicity I would have desired, but as both he and I were pressed for time, and as the letters contained the essential idea that I wanted to convey to you, I let them go at that.

You are reporting the expressions of the letters that have affected you the most and you do well, for it is always good to empty one's heart of what oppresses it.

"Father Caillet tells me that the feeble resources of which Brother Clouzet was able to speak to me are so uncertain and so distant in availability, that it would be really imprudent to count upon them." Our actual resources are really feeble, if we compare them to the debts we have to pay. Several of these resources have no intrinsic certitude, as they depend in great measure on events and on the good will of certain men. Several other resources have no fixed certitude at all as regards time. These involve objects to be sold. Would it not be imprudent to count upon them? I left these expressions pass in the letters of Father Caillet because they contain their element of truth when there is question of taking engagements on set terms.

"On the other hand," adds Father Caillet, "they have their fixed destination and ought necessarily to serve for the liquidation of the Society." It is very true that the first resources which will be realized are destined for the payment of certain debts which are

very heavy, whether we accept Layrac or the contrary, and they will always serve towards the general liquidation of the Society, whether Layrac is accepted or not.

It is annoying, my dear son, that you have seen in the words of Father Caillet an opposition to what I wrote to you on last May 16. The preoccupation in which you must have been excuses you well. Brother Clouzet is charged with the general liquidation of the Society, whether Layrac is included or not. If Layrac is included, a start will be made there and we shall continue until each debt is paid in full, but this does not mean to say that, in the meantime, certain urgent debts of some establishments will not be paid. I would be ashamed, my dear son, to enter into further explanations. There is still powerlessness, but not bad will. The matter is still in the *status quo*.

I have never believed that, in whatever case it may arise, you would knowingly want to harm the Society of Mary. I shall send Brother Bonnefoi to Layrac supplied with suitable instructions, to regularize with you our written agreements in such a way that there will be no expenses, or, at least, very minor ones, so as not to risk, as Brother Clouzet says, the furniture of the Society under any circumstances. I am stopping here, my dear son, for the mail is about to leave. Receive the customary token of my tender devotedness.

* * * *

The Foundress of the Good Shepherd of Rouen, not discouraged by a first answer of Father Chaminade (see Letter 1109), has come back to the charge, in order to obtain his help in the direction of this work.

"Your house of the Miséricorde of Bordeaux," she writes to him, "is something really admirable. I can admit to you, that, of all those I have occasion to know and observe more or less closely, that is the one in which I breathed freely, as in a kind of native and natural land, because of the spirit and regime of this work, so difficult to understand and to perform. My heart is there and, in thought, often reposes there (June 4, 1839)."

Father Chaminade persists in his reserve, and this discretion brings out in even greater relief the assurance with which, in the midst of incessant difficulties and contradictions, he directs the works for the foundation of which he knows himself to have been "called" by God, and of which God has "confided to him the secret."

1143 – TO MOTHER ANJORRANT, SUPERIORESS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, ROUEN

Bordeaux, June 11, 1839

Reverend Mother Superior, I am not hiding from you the embarrassment I feel in answering you. On the one hand, your entreaties are as humble as they are urgent, but on the other, I believe I see so clearly that God does not wish that I should occupy myself with a work to which He has not called me, that I could not meddle in it, even in the slightest

degree, without definite rashness or temerity. Once you will have heard me, I am certain that your charity will do me justice.

In the first place, I shall say to you that the esteem you seem to place in my decisions, increases my reserve. It is so difficult to establish such works solidly, and, if I were mistaken, as so often happens with men, what a responsibility would I not be assuming?

However, perhaps I should overlook this consideration. Here is one which seems to me of greater importance. I believe that God alone will inspire you, Reverend Mother Superior, just as He has inspired your venerable Founder[1] with the answer to all the difficulties which embarrass you, since it is His work you have undertaken, a work He is to sustain and of which He has confided the secret only to you. Having chosen you, as His Lordship has done, to realize it, He will reveal His entire thought to you, have not doubt about it, and that, at the opportune time and in the most suitable manner.

There is more to be said. Providence not having inspired me with anything relative to the particular works you have undertaken as its order, I do not see that it is possible and prudent for me to bring along the tribute of my personal ideas to the work of the Constitutions which determine their basis or foundation, their extent, and their means of procedure. This important work is a task imposed upon the venerable Founder, who alone has the idea and the plan of it. If another hand takes it over, you may well have a complete whole, but the parts of which, more or less homogeneous, possibly do not entirely coincide with the initial divine inspiration. I add that it is not possible for me to decree anything about the fundamental articles which you have done me the honor of submitting to me, for the very simple reason that, not knowing the complete idea, I could perhaps decide the isolated cases correctly and, nevertheless, decide them incorrectly because of the ensemble. I foresee, Reverend Mother and venerable Superioress, your answer. “I am ready,” you will doubtless say to me, “to keep you well informed.” I believe it, and your confidence touches me as much as it confounds me, but if you only knew of the immensity of the labors of all kinds that the works we have undertaken impose upon me! I am continually working; nor am I working alone, still I have the certitude that I shall not have completed the task when death will overtake me.

Surely, Reverend Mother Superior, it is not that I consider your Institute unworthy of my cares and attention. God forbid that I should be guilty of such an injury towards heaven which has inspired it. I have no doubt about it, and about you, Reverend Mother, and his Lordship, the Bishop of Saint Dié! No, I believe it to be according to the views of Providence, and I shall never cease to give it the most lively interest. My regret and my despair is to see myself, at least for the time being, in the absolute impossibility of occupying myself with it seriously.

[1] Bishop de Jerphanion.

For what remains, Reverend Mother Superior, do not believe that I am giving you a last refusal. Since you believe that I can be of service to you, I shall be happy to profit by the occasions that you will procure for me, of giving proof to you of my respectful devotedness. You may assure His Lordship that I am at his command, and when he will definitively occupy himself with the work of the Constitutions, which God has exclusively reserved to him, if he deigns to let me know of some difficulties, I shall be only too glad to submit my counsels to him. Then, my counsels, based on his fundamental idea, will not make me fear that I am introducing into it the slightest shade of contradiction. Another means, Reverend Mother, of proving my zeal to you, is to notify you that the Superioress of Laval[1] is awaited in Bordeaux. If you could come there with her, you could have an interview with the two Superioresses and with me for as long a time and as freely as you wish.

In all these circumstances, Reverend Mother Superior, I shall appreciate all that is edifying and sublime in your devotedness to a work accompanied by contradictions and trials of all kinds, especially in the evil days that have fallen to our lot. No one more than I will make every effort to render you the services that lie within my power. I have the honor of asking you to accept my regrets, my good wishes, my feeble services, and the tribute of my great respect.

"Mother Anjorrant," wrote Bishop Jerphanion to Father Chaminade on August 17, "sends me word that she proposes to return to Bordeaux to have the advantage and privilege of conferring with you about what concerns the works of zeal and charity to which she is devoting herself. Permit me to thank you in advance for the important service that you will render her and allow me to recommend her more and more to your benevolent interest. I venture to say that she is worthy of it, by her devotedness to the salvation of souls and by her ardent desire of corresponding to the grace of her vocation."

So great was the confidence inspired by the direction of Father Chaminade.

[1] Mother Rondeau, see Letter 144.

1144 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, June 15, 1839

I am hastening to inform you, my dear son, that all is concluded in Castelsarrasin. I have just received a letter from the Mayor which tells me that the local Committee and the municipal Council have unanimously and kindly accepted the request of Brother Troffer, and that the Superior Committee, having accepted his candidacy with a five majority, named him to the post of teacher in the elementary school of Castelsarrasin. In consequence, and by the same mail, I have just given notice of the fact to Brother Troffer and notified him at the same time, that he is to bring together, without delay, his two colleagues Brother Philippe Roussel and Clerc and leave immediately. I am telling him to arrange things, so that they may meet in Besançon and leave from there.

You will be kind enough, my dear son, to advance to Brother Troffer, for himself and his two colleagues, what is necessary in money and luggage for the voyage. It may be that Brother Troffer already has something. Find out about it. The Mayor of Castelsarrasin is to reimburse all the money required for the first expenses. He will even supply the personal linen of the teachers. Be kind enough, my dear son, to put into this affair all possible diligence and care, and heartily recommend to our Brothers to do the same. Receive my dear son, my tender embraces.

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It must be admitted that, in his correspondence with Rome, Father Chaminade was most unfortunate. After the long delays which had accompanied the sending of his requests in the fall of 1838, new delays, equally unforeseen,[1] now prevented him from receiving the answer of the Holy See, so long awaited and so ardently desired. We can judge of this from the following letter.

1145 – TO CANON VALENTINI, ROME

Bordeaux, June 25, 1839

Honorable Canon, your letter of last June 13 to Father Chevallier explains to me the delay you are encountering in handing over to me the very text of the Decree of Approbation, as you had promised me to do. We were worried, the one and the other, because of the silence we were both keeping. The cause of this silence, of which we were ignorant, apparently comes from the fact that you do not seem to have received the answer that I had the honor of addressing to you on May 12, along with two other letters in the same folder, the one for His Eminence Cardinal Lambruschini and the other for His Eminence Cardinal Giustiniani.

[1] The folder containing the Decree had been confided at the beginning of May by Canon Valentini to a person of confidence, and, at the beginning of July, neither Father Chaminade nor Canon Valentini had had any news from or about him.

I am now hastening to send you a duplicate of this message which has probably been lost, and I take the liberty of asking you the favor of excusing one with their Eminences, whilst at the same time, giving each one his letter after having read it over yourself.

By my letter of May 12, in answer to yours of April 23, you will see that I am giving you all necessary authorizations to have the Decree of Approbation, whatever may be its terms, sent us in two Briefs, one for the Institute and the other for the Society. I have had reason to believe that this double mailing would not double the expenses and even if it should, as it is probable that the mention of the motives will be different for each one on some points, we shall not consider the expense. I desire a third Brief for the concession of the various favors that His Holiness has been kind enough to grant us.

Certainly, you have no reason to doubt, Honorable Canon, of my deep satisfaction about all the measures you have already taken to insure the success of our works, and I would certainly be ungrateful if my gratitude and that of the two Orders had not come to you in the highest degree. You may be sure that it will continue as long as the two Orders themselves. It is then with much assiduous attention that I shall place you in contact with our works, and if a Diploma of Affiliation, as we have the time-honored custom of granting to our signal benefactors and friends, would be agreeable to you, it would be a veritable feast for me to send it to you, just as well as I would be flattered to be able to inscribe your name on the lists of affiliations alongside of those of the venerable priests whose names are already to be found there.

Permit me, Honorable Canon, to await from your kindness, in as short a delay as possible, definite news about the Decree of Approbation and your steps relative to the mailing of the Briefs. I would be happy to be able to announce to my dear Children of the Institute and of the Society the definitive conclusion of this great affair with the copy of the Briefs, at the time of the annual retreat towards the end of the month of August.

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1146 – TO M. GRAND, MAYOR OF CASTELSARRASIN

Bordeaux, July 4, 1839

Honorable Mayor, I have the honor of presenting Brother Troffer to you. He is retaining his two colleagues here, until the school buildings are ready for the opening. I hope that all the furniture will soon be manufactured and ready, following the orders which you will have the kindness to give and the directions which Brother Troffer will give to the workmen. It will be due to the teachers, not myself, if this new establishment does not respond to your views and to the views of all those under your administration. We have reason to expect from them the happiest success due to the precautions we have taken towards this end.

I am, with respectful devotedness, etc.

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Next follows a long letter to Brother Clouzet informing him of the ensemble of the affairs of the Society.

1147 – TO BROTHER CLOUZET, SAINT REMY

Bordeaux, July 5, 1839

My dear son, I am now answering your letter of last June 21. You do not tell me positively what Father Lalanne has written to you. It is always well and good to answer him, but in a dilatory way, recalling to him his debts, immense for us, the small number of subjects on whom we can count, the chances of being deceived by the University authorities, as well as those being taken in the matter of his health, all the good-will of the boarding school resting on his head, his inconsiderate love for expenses, which is natural to him for his father was like him, although in a somewhat different manner...

He doesn't seem to be accepting any of the advice that I have given him to stop the flow of expenses he is making, and which absorb more than his profits. In taking this boarding school as ours, he will still remain its Head, but have we any idea of where his ardor is likely to lead us? Furthermore, the times in which we are living must be considered. Are not all these reasons proper to have us at least avoid all haste? What has touched us directly is the fact that we believed in the sincerity of his conversion, but that is precisely what several respectable persons always insist on calling into question. His last letters, and the way he has conducted himself in his seemingly hopeless plight, would lead us to believe that he has no other regrets about all he has done other than having put himself in a condition of not being able to advance and of being obliged to make all kinds of efforts to make some kind of opening to keep going ahead.

One of the principal affairs stopping Father Lalanne was the Valentin debt.[1] At least it is the one which he indicated to me. Nevertheless, when he wrote telling me that his affairs were finally arranged, this one was not included in the arrangement, as I had had reason to believe. He sent M. Valentin to M. Mémain, who had signed the notes to M. Valentin. M Mémain went to Bordeaux to find the means of making me guarantee this debt and of making me pay it, as an old debt of the old boarding school on Mirail Street. He addressed himself first to the Archbishop, who answered him that he had no intention of

[1] This is what Fr. Lalanne also used to call the Mémain affair. There was question of promissory notes, signed by M. Mémain in his capacity as steward of the Saint Marie Boarding School, in favor of M. Valentin Jamon, music teacher of the school and amounting in capital and interest together to the sum of 5,333 francs. In this claim is to be found one of the points of departure of the lawsuit which, in 1841, was the occasion for the resignation of Fr. Chaminade.

getting involved in this affair. Upon the refusal of His Excellency, he went to find M. de Size[2] and upon the advice of the latter he addressed M. Faye.[3] This gentleman told me all of which there was question. I gave him my answer, and that is about how the matter has stood for more than two weeks.

Here, my dear son, I have been interrupted, at least two entire days, by the arrival of Brother Troffer and Brothers Philippe and Justin Roussel and Brother Clerc, four instead of three, and from that fact, what discussions! But, finally all ended happily and I am hoping that it will be to the spiritual advantage of the four. Brother Troffer has left for Castelsarrasin so as to arrange everything in the large house destined for the schools. Brothers Philippe and Clerc are preparing to leave as soon as everything will be ready. Brother Justin will remain indefinitely in Bordeaux. Brother Philippe seems to be opening his eyes widely upon himself and to be willing to repair the past, as much as will depend upon him. Brother Troffer told me that you had given him 248 francs for traveling expenses and that Brother Boby had added fifty francs for Brother Justin. When they arrived in Bordeaux, they had only eight pennies left.

A short time after your departure from Bordeaux, Brother Boby told me that all the affairs with Father Colin, Pastor of Dôle, had been settled[1] without telling me just how this had been done. I made several observations to him and told him to hand over to you a copy of my letter, so that you might be able to judge of the solidity and propriety of this affair. I believe he was telling me that the Society was remaining charged with a rather heavy debt, but that a kind lady in Salins wanted to take it upon herself to pay a considerable part of it, I don't recall which part. Clear up this affair, if you have not already done so, as Brother Boby has no longer spoken to me about it.

Father Rothéa seems to be working whole-heartedly at the removal of the obstacles to the reunion of the two primary boarding schools at Saint Hippolyte.[2] It seems to me it would be desirable that his two brothers be not employed, at least for some time, Brother Louis in Saint Hippolyte and M. Xavier for the interior of Ebersmunster. Their way of running things has been so displeasing, that all the sensations experienced as a result are still far from forgotten. These two gentlemen must, however, be treated kindly, as they are really full of regard for the interests of the Society and, above all, for the success of these two establishments. It is somewhat annoying that their zeal goes as far as indiscretion.

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[2] Former President of the Court of Bordeaux, friend of Fr. Chaminade. See Letter 236.

[3] M. Anthony Faye (1799-1882), attorney and counselor, brother of the printer and lawyer of the same name, fulfilled at different times the functions of Prefect of the Sodality of the Madeleine, and was one of the most faithful disciples and the most active collaborators of Fr. Chaminade. Outstanding benefactors of the poor, he was the soul of the visits to the prisons of Bordeaux and the founder in this city of the works of St. Vincent de Paul and of St. Francis Régis.

[1] See Letter 1114.

[2] There was question in the project of uniting in Saint Hippolyte the two boarding schools of Saint Hippolyte and Ebersmunster and reserving Ebersmunster for the House of Formation for Alsace.

The giving up of Latin has become necessary in Saint Hippolyte because of the unhappy events that have taken place there, but it does not seem suitable to me to suppress secondary teaching in the establishments where it has been introduced, provided that each one of these establishments does not go beyond the limits permitted. In Marast and in Besançon, only beginners are to be received such as are capable of continuing at least to the ninth grade. One professor in each boarding school is to be in charge of it. When the pupils are able to advance to a higher grade, the Heads of these houses are to exhort their parents to place them in Saint Remy, where the moral regime must be the same, and where the classes must be maintained at a high degree of efficiency. As regards Courtefontaine, the one professor must be left to get along as best he may.

In Marast, Brother Galliot claims he can proved that the tuition rate is high enough to provide a sufficient profit considering the regime observed there; and that, if this tuition rate is raised, there will be far fewer pupils, the profits will be reduced in proportion, and that the pupils not received there would not necessarily go to Saint Remy. I shall answer Marast that Brother Galliot submit to you all his calculations and that you may approve them if necessary, as it is easy to understand that this is possible. In the days of my youth, I had a long experience of that very thing.

No doubt young Brother Meyer[1]would be better suited for Besançon than Brother Noir, but when it will be possible to free Brother Meyer, he will have to study theology, etc. I have no news from Fribourg and I have not as yet learned whether the Government of Fribourg has pronounced itself for or against the admission of members of the Society of Mary.

I have never had the intention of giving to Besançon a Bachelor of Arts to teach Latin there. The Pastor of St. Maurice knows it well. Since Brother Noir has just obtained his diploma of Bachelor of Arts, Brother Chevassu[2] and the Reverend Pastor multiplied their requests to have him. I granted him to them, after having had Brother Noir submit to new trials. The latter understands well that he is to be really submissive to his Superior, but it is up to Brother Chevassu to know how to use his authority with prudence, moderation, and firmness, and to keep me informed about what is going on, so that I can be of service to him in his government of the house and the direction of the school.[3]

I am frequently written to from Saint Hippolyte and Ebermunster for the accounts and debts of the two establishments, and ordinarily I answer and tell the parties to address themselves to you. I believe that a trip to these two establishments, where you would check each account, see the dates on which the debts fall due, and regularize all that refers to temporalities, if not absolutely necessary, would be at least very much in order and would deliver you from many an embarrassment. Furthermore, you would aid Father

[1] Destined for the foundation of Fribourg.
[2] Director of the establishment.
[3] See Letter 1102.

Rothéa with your counsels, so that the union of the two boarding schools could be made with prudence. Father Rothéa would willingly communicate to you all that I have written to him about this subject, in different letters.

A Circular on my part to all the establishments of the North does not seem necessary to me. A little letter from you to each Head, asking him to hold at your disposition all the boni he would or could have, would be sufficient.

Arrange the time for your passage only for this year, as it is in these visits that you will be better able to judge of the time of the year when you could check all accounts (...)

Receive, my dear son, my very tender embraces.

P.S. In going to Ebermunster, you will not fail to encourage M. Xavier Rothéa[4] to speak to him of all the interest we place in suitably equipping this Novitiate and making him a recruiter of novices. You may even draw up a deed releasing him from the debt that he has on the establishment, on the conditions that he has proposed.

It is well that there is a time of the year during which every account with the establishment is really settled, but I believe that, when a Head has been able to have money in the course of the year, over and above what is rigorously necessary to meet his needs, he should pass it over to you or give you notice to have it taken.

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The Decree of Praise has finally reached Father Chaminade. He hastens to give notice of it to the Archbishop of Bordeaux and to the Bishop of Agen, to inform Canon Valentini of its reception, to thank the Sovereign Pontiff and Cardinal Lambruschini and, in the effusion of his joy, to give the good news of it to his children of the Society and of the Institute.

[4] The third of the Rothéa brothers, affiliated to the Society, who consecrated to it his time and his fortune.