1841-1842
278. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, January 10, 1841

Gratitude for draft received. Success of first course and the report on it in l’Univers.

My dear friend,

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the payment of 100 francs which you were good enough to send me. The council’s courtesy to me touches me infinitely. I am all the more pained because I mistook at first its intentions in recommending me to M. Choiselat. I have now received a total of 200 francs. The month of February is therefore paid up.

I am embarrassed at doing so little for the society at the present time. Attention to my debut is taking all my time. The first lesson was given yesterday with a success which, without being brilliant, was happy enough to fill me with gratitude to Providence and to friendship. I have just had a column in l’Univers which, however, rather hurts my case because of the way it quotes my poor words. I would not like them to judge me on this at Lyon, and I ask that if anyone should speak to you about it, you will say exactly what I have written you. The intention is excellent, but not the execution.

Farewell, I will speak to the Cochinese. While I wait to be more useful, please assure the council of my devotion.

Your friend,
A.-F. OZANAM


Notes:
1. Dominique Meynis, (1800-1887) was secretary general of the Propagation of the Faith of Lyon from 1835 until his death. The society had two general councils, one in Paris for the North, and one in Lyon for the South.
2. Charles Choiselat or Choiselat-Gallien (1816-1858), chemist and “sculptor of bronzes for churches,” was secretary-treasurer of the Central Council of the Propagation of the Faith of Paris (L. de Lagarde, Diptyques du collège Stanislas, Paris, 1881, p. 251).
3. The question of honoraria paid to Ozanam by the Propagation of the Faith for the year 1841 remains confused. In principle, these honoraria should be 600 fr. per year, dating from December 1, 1840. The great ledger of expenses of the Central Council of Lyon on the account of Ozanam under #198 lists the following entries:
   - March 9, 1841  50 f.
   - July 8, 1841  100 f.
   - August 10, 1841  100 f.
   - December 30, 1841  200 f.

The draft of 100 fr. mentioned here would correspond to the January-February payment. If the 50 fr. paid by Choiselat is added, we have the sum of 600 fr. for the year 1841. When Ozanam writes on January 10, 1841: “I have received 200 fr,” he is counting the 50 fr. which were paid him (probably before his departure from Lyon) for the month of December 1840.
In 1842 the payments were made in a simpler manner, by semesters completed. The great ledger carries under #214:

June 21, 1842 1st semester honoraria for M. Ozanam 300
December 10, 1842 2nd semester honoraria for M. Ozanam 300.

4. L'Univers, January 10, 1841.

5. Two agents of the Hué government (Cochin-Chinese dynasty in power since 1804, not only over Lower Cochin-China, but also Annam and Tonkin) who were propagandists in France.

The sovereign, Minh-Mang (1821-1842), who persecuted Christians, thus breaking with the tradition established by his father Gia-Long, had nevertheless sent a delegation to France in 1840. "Upon protestations of the Society of Foreign Missions and of the Pope, it was not officially received" (cf. Cultru, Histoire de la Cochinchine français, and cf. I, pp. 442-443).

279. To Madame Soulacroix
Paris, January 16, 1841

Tells of the success of his second course. Makes his apologies for the futile anxieties he has shared with his fiancée. Gratitude for prayers said for him.

Madame,

After the excellent and most motherly letter I had the good fortune to receive yesterday, and the fright I have given Mademoiselle Amélie over my next letter, it is my duty to write a few lines by today's post although the twenty minutes left between my class and the post leave me little time for a proper thank you and news.

The lecture which gave me the greatest anxiety and which made me so weak as to lose my courage yesterday and the past week as well has been successful despite everything. I have taken courage and brushed aside my thoughts with a presumption that somewhat astonishes me. Friends have not been wanting, the audience was full, and the applause was not wanting. There you have a middling modest frankness. But you should not take my minor achievements for triumphs, and if Lucia is unwilling to recognize her hair as truly golden and her cheeks roses, Renzo, too, has been careful lest his words be taken for pure honey, his knowledge profound and the kindness of friendship a monstrous popularity.

Nevertheless, I am duty-bound to confide this success to you as to a mother's joy to which the great desire to share my solicitudes and the way you join in my efforts entitles you. How can I tell you how much the account of that journey of the 9th to Lyon has moved me? Ah, I am no longer surprised that my weakness has been strengthened and that in place of my failing mental powers a secret force has come to relieve me in the twinkling of an eye. I am no longer surprised when prayer was there to sustain me, prayer so pure and kind, prayer if I dare say so more disinterested than ever and consequently more meritorious, freer and also more generous than even the prayers of my poor mother of long ago; for no one is obligated to
me any more. I accept with thanks this moral alms from a hand not yet belonging to me and already so dear. Tomorrow (my feast day) I hope to be at the sacred rendezvous where she was Saturday. I will try, not to repay her upon my return—some debts can never be paid—but at least not to be ungrateful and to deserve what I know myself to be unworthy of. Tell her that, please.

Ashamed of my twenty-four-hour delay I hope nevertheless that my letter to Mademoiselle Amélie has arrived. I take pleasure in the prospect you permit me of a kind reply and am obliged to close now in order not to repeat the infidelity of my delay.

Be good enough to present to M. le Recteur and to accept yourself the homage of my filial respect.

Your most humble and devoted servant,

A.-F. OZANAM

I would like my brother the abbé, to whom I have not written today, to know about the successful outcome.

———

Address: Madame Soulacroix, at the Rector of the Academy, Quai de Retz, Lyon.
Postmark: Lyon, January 18, 1841.
Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
2. Renzo, apparently himself.
3. Amélie Soulacroix, Ozanam’s fiancée, soon to be his wife.
4. Jean Joseph, called Jean Baptiste, Soulacroix (1790-1848), Ozanam’s father-in-law, former normal school student (1809-1812), had taught mathematics at the Lycée d’Avignon (1812-1815) and at the Collège de Marseilles (1815-1821) before becoming inspector of the academy of Montpellier (1821-1825) and rector of the academies of Nancy (1825-1832), Amiens (1832-1833), and Lyon (1833-1845). He was made chief of the third division by the minister of public instruction in 1845.

280. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
Paris, January 24, 1841

He now enjoys writing. He sees himself as unworthy of her; he considers her ideal. His course does not cause him more than a “reasonable apprehension.” He tells her her letters are charming; wants no rhetoric. Gives her advice on studying.

Mademoiselle,

I have been anxious to write for a long time, but I do not take up my pen with-
out some hesitation for fear that out of pleasure I will not be able to stop filling the pages when it is a question of replying to a friend. The written word is a laborious form which strains laziness of thought, a slow process which stirs up its own impatience. In this regard, however, as in several others, I no longer recognize myself. My correspondence day is now a happy day which I look forward to and which does not come soon enough to satisfy me. The hours I set aside for it are cherished hours, savored from the moment when the evening’s work allows complete quiet assured by the order, however courteous, to close the door. I savor this time especially, all week, in fact, in the midst of my studies my thoughts kept straying to the longed-for Sunday. In short, I have needed the occasion to draw near to you again and to tell you how much I appreciate what you have done for me.

I had asked, not however without timidity, a remembrance and a prayer on the occasion of my debut. Since I know what a word from your lips could do for me, it seemed to me that it would also have some power with God. Your goodness was willing to do more; it inspired you to the supreme act of Christian affection. In the depths of this sanctuary of the soul visited by a mysterious Guest the thought of me was present and my name was pronounced. I am, therefore, no longer amazed at the unhoped for help which has come my way. I know, too, the sincere and touching piety which you will disavow but which the facts prove. It is neither the religion of propriety practiced by an indifferent world nor the proud pharisaism of an indiscriminate zeal. It is a serene faith because it is enlightened, a purity whose visible reflection is grace, a charity which can see no evil, merciful to poverty, suffering, even (am I right?) to the pangs of exile. These are in a word the admirable traits of moral character I see taking form more each day, emerging little by little from the cloud of mystery and modesty with which a young girl’s life constantly veils itself. The more the beloved figure comes near bathed in clearer light the happier I am with the choice Providence has made for me. At the same time, I feel less worthy, am envious of the virtues which are still great strangers to me, but I console myself with the thought that they will be an example and safeguard for me, a merit in which I shall share.

Your letters afford me a continually unfolding and charming revelation of yourself. I would not dare to hope that you should give me the pleasure of replying regularly. I thank you and beg permission to believe that you will not lose so kindly a habit, for I must confess that I deceived you once—I had said that I would have the courage and foresight to set aside a dignified leisure for our intended correspondence which would help me without fail over this period of isolation. I judged myself stronger than I am. After the harsh labor of my lessons demanding an enforced application of several days, when leisure time came, limited as it was, it seemed incredibly long and empty. Exhausted with fatigue, I could not rest because one does not rest upon himself. The child puts his head on his mother’s knees; the sister washes the dirt from her young brother’s face; the wife may seem to support her hand on her husband’s arm, but that hand which he presses to him supports his heart. We have the external power but it is you who provide the secret energy from within. There is a slot which you alone can fill, and when you fail to fill it there
ensues weakness and injury; and I experience in a regular way the fitness of this aphorism grown trite in the conversational language of sentiment. I bear the scar of a pain which will not go away. Melancholy overcomes me, and when I measure the five months remaining against the slow passing of the last forty days, I fear I shall not be able to hold out to the end. Every distraction importunes me, no conversation pleases me, unless I can clothe it with the remembrance of you. The piano under strange fingers annoys me, and lately, thinking I heard somewhere the tune I love—you know the one I mean—it struck me as a profanation. Last Tuesday a professor friend of mine invited me to attend his daughter's wedding. I could not refuse without failing in the amenities to spend two hours there. The festivities had an effect of sadness on me: I would carry them out so handsomely in June! He who took my role made me lose my patience: he was a clumsy usurper. I could see in him no ray of that happiness his eyes should reflect. The bride (have no fear!) did not beguile me. How much better this charming role could suit you! What a sweet crown orange blossoms would make you! What joy your smile would bestow upon our two families assembled together! The solemnity would be wonderfully set among those great trees of Vernet, at the foot of those green hills, on a magnificent summer night. The vision was enchanting, but in the moment of fascination, it fled into the future. But the future is waiting, and waiting is privation, and I understand now that hope, whose charms are so much vaunted, has its sorrows, too.

But when the lines signed by you arrive in their soft envelope, then this delicious vision once more haunts my solitude. I see you again not with all the attraction of reality but under the idealized forms of sweetness, intelligence, and simplicity which ravish me. You are there, always a bit reserved as at Lyon, but nonetheless already more familiar because you see me suffering and are so good. You withdraw too soon, but it is so generous of you to have come. And because your words, falling upon the wound I spoke of earlier, left there as it were the perfume of the rose, your momentary presence gives me strength for several days. I work better, and you lose nothing thereby. Just as when you indulge in a useful occupation, sometimes the vague remembrance of a tune you heard sung, a favorite chorus, returns in a whisper that breathes from the mouth without distracting you from the task that must be done. Just as when the heart is joyful, song rises internally without disturbing the serious duties of the mind. I would never have believed two such different things could strive for attention without interfering with each other; could on the contrary be mutually helpful. Oh, be afraid no longer about the consoling offices you discharge: now you know that they make things easier. You have no need of practice; you have performed them so well already at the bedside of poor Théophile. But to the contrary, you can have nothing to learn in this matter for, to borrow your language, if there is a course to take, if exhortations have their eloquence, and consolations their poetry, in your case certainly neither one nor the other is a stranger. From my side, I will make every effort to spare you a ministry so burdensome. I will try not to lose courage, except enough to allow you the pleasure of giving it to me. You shall never see the scenes of
anguish in which I have made you take part from afar. They had their fatal hour which never happens twice in a lifetime.

Even now I am far from having gained assurance; nothing justifies it. On the contrary, my feeling of my personal incapacity increases with a more comprehensive understanding of my field of study. But these reasonable apprehensions no longer bear any resemblance to the panic terrors of the beginning. I hope from now on to lay claim to the continuance of your benevolent solicitude without putting your feeling to too great a proof. In return, I shall continue these accounts which your exceptional good will finds interesting, and as often as I consider my lectures eventful you shall have news of them. I have told Madame your mother of the nearly satisfactory success of the second: I brought animation enough to it and received marks of approbation in which you must surely share. Once again I was amazed on arriving for the third session yesterday, when I expected the flow of the curious to begin shortening, to see the tiers of the amphitheater packed solid and on the floor the crowd of standees which is the crown of a class well attended. But this rejoicing of self-love deserved mortification. I was weary and tired out from working too long into the night. Besides, the subject this time was dry and it was with great effort that I was able to put a little order, light, and heat into the pursuit of learning. I was counting absolutely on three truly beautiful quotations to relieve the monotony of my lecture somewhat and to stimulate applause, not for the professor but for his chosen author. At the end of fifteen minutes when the inevitable difficulties of the introduction were dissipating, I suddenly realized that two of my quotations were at home, lost in the welter of my notes. Consequently, effect missed, need to fill the lacunae and to modify the plan without breaking it; at the same time a moment of terror, and for the time remaining, an uneasiness which no longer permitted enthusiasm. I withdrew crestfallen and convinced of defeat (perhaps like that which M. Noirot counseled you to invoke and which I could come to terms with perfectly so long as the dismissal was not perpetual).

Back at home this evening I could not make up my mind whether to write to you in such trying circumstances. At last some friends stopped by, the kind you believe. They reassured me about the public impression: my fatigue showed a little, but not my shock; the lecture seemed long and heavy but that was excused by calling it learned. In a word, there had been no failure. I have since gotten my wind back and although I certainly expect to see my audience depleted next Saturday by the flight of a few discouraged amateurs, I am confident that enough will remain to allow me to take my revenge by giving more dramatic form and lively movement to my remarks. I have taken at the same time, by advice of those who wish me well, the laudable course of working less from now on. I had contracted the mistaken habit of accumulating piles of books, of storming every library, of keeping an armed watch over a Teutonic camp until two in the morning. Two disadvantages resulted: one was the overloading of my memory with a multitude of facts which became difficult to manage, the other the shaking of my confidence causing me to come to the lecture devoid of half the resources of an ordered mind. Consequently they pre-
scribed for me an easy change: less time given to scientific investigation, more to literary presentation; give sleep its due, and interrupt the strictness of the cloister from time to time. With this regimen (if you are afraid to take the measure of Dame Dulcinée) it could happen that I will end up by looking like Sancho’s horse. Nevertheless, friendship is right. Exaggerated efforts often proceed from a vanity that stifles judgment. Absolute truth, perfect knowledge, is not of this earth. We try in vain to attain it while raising up the Babel of our ambitious pedantry. In the midst of the effort, the head whirls and tongues grow confused. It would be better to be more modest in plan, to construct your little intellectual edifice humbly, elevated enough to see things from on high but with no pretension of reaching the heights. In place of always wanting to comprehend it would be better at times only to admire. A little abandon is in order, alert to inspiration without wishing to constrain it, not depending so much on yourself but confiding more in the two guardian angels that are always with me since you are so willing to lend me yours.

You will pardon this new chapter of general confession, but you received the first part so well that I could not fail to continue, not only in order to prevent illusions but also to have the happiness of making excuses. One falls to his knees willingly when a pretty hand raises him up, and the marvelous penances of the knights have no terror when a darling voice pronounces absolution over them. Further, perhaps my avowals will win me the right to gamble upon a word of advice. Madame your mother informs me that you are starting a series of conferences with the learned and good M. Reynaud. I am delighted at the prospect as I am at everything capable of adding to the merits with which you are endowed. Nevertheless, the frequent crossing of an icy bridge in that impetuous Rhône air along with the rigors of the Lyonnaise winters makes me uneasy for your constitution so recently threatened.

From another viewpoint, I would not for all the world want study to steal the bloom from your style. Be assured of the truthfulness of a witness who is not disinterested. You write very well indeed, nor could your letters be better. If you knew how, after wearisome reading in our philosophies and poets, journals and periodicals, the imagination lovingly comes to rest upon the flower of naivety, sensibility, and grace! I know from experience the mischief rhetoric can make. Short essays have their usefulness, provided they are freely chosen and hatch naturally as it were under your pen, provided you do not pick at them too much and that you are told what to avoid before you are told what to do. Since they will be like Agar’s jewel that I am happy to have stolen from you, you will let me see their first fruits, too. The best office M. Reynaud could render you would be to start you off with a series of simple narratives on the general history of literature, sometimes lingering over the masterpieces to read a few pages with you in order to acquaint you with their beauties. His task will be easy: you have been given an appreciation of art to a rare degree. He will find this to be true of all the various subjects he treats. Is not music the sister of poetry? We will put that to the test soon, I hope. Without wishing to embroil you in my prickly labors, I intend to read to you one day some romances
the troubadour squire sang in the hall of the German countess of the thirteenth century and which will not offend the ears of pretty French girls of the present. I shall say no more about it today, for all turns on a word which ends some verses known to me and which does not permit you to thank the author, you will say.

In the meantime, how are things going? You insist upon sincerity; you want to see to the bottom of what one thinks and feels. Therefore, one cannot deceive you about what he thinks of someone or feels about a matter. And since such things have a name, the mind’s eye knows how to read it even though the mouth knows how to keep silent about it. Frankly it is quite natural for me—poor young man so isolated from the world, ever in rather bleak surroundings, stranger for the most part to the joys of life—to be deeply moved when the will of Providence introduces me to a pious young girl, loving and pure, joining high character to the culture of the mind, and advanced with that external splendor which never fails to attract attention; when her father and mother from whom she has all the advantages of a perfect bringing up, and God Himself whom I see behind them, and from whom her first endowments flow, when these allow me to believe that this vision will not elude me forever; when she herself gives her consent and, scorning the homage the world could render her, prefers to come and to embellish in adopting it, my solitary and toilsome destiny.

If it is not a dream, if the reality is assured, if she draws near, the presentiment must certainly be already fraught with life and efficacy. There will surely be no outbursts of disordered passion, of that violence by which the chalice of youth is overturned and emptied at one stroke. It will be as reverent as worship, noble as mutual devotion, sweet as happiness. But always it will have I know not what instinct infinitely tender, never lacking in affection, ending by vanquishing every obstacle, these because it was put there in the beginning when the first father on awakening foretold the attraction of the husband to the side of his wife. Accustomed to strict manners, to not expressing myself except in irreproachable language, I do not blush for what has stirred for a long time now in my soul. I am most happy about it and all but haughty. I do not grow worse: my wounded nature, it seems to me, is healed and exalted by the minute. Leave me no more. After what happened on January 9, after that solemn pledge made in the shadow of the altar, I am willing to banish my first anxiety, I no longer torture myself over the possible wrongs absence might inflict, and I hope that, of my emotions of this year, it will not be only the most painful that you will have shared. I need the release of thus unburdening myself and would like to prolong it even further. Unfortunately the order of which I spoke on the first page has been disobeyed, M. Ampère has arrived like a brother, without ceremony. I could talk with him about you, then we would forget ourselves. My poor letter undertaken belatedly is threatened with the departure of the mail. I must fold it in haste and there is no time left to reply to the excellent Theophilus. Be my interpreter for him as I wish him to be for you. I will have the pleasure of writing to him soon how much affection I have for him because of his good offices and how much I hope he will not have to report on his health. I have another place in my regards for Charles’ and ask him for a little of that affection you have known so well
how to gain over the rude fellow who bears his name. Kindly give your parents my filial devotion and keep for yourself, Mademoiselle, the assurance of my respect.

Your most humble and obedient servant,

A.-F. Ozanam

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Notes:
1. Théophile Soulacroix (1823-1847), brother of Amélie Ozanam, had been ill since his fourteenth year. He died at Paris on March 9, 1847.
2. Allusion to teasing by Abbé Noirot which she shared with him in her letter of January 17.
3. Character in Cervantes' Don Quixote.
5. Dean of the Faculty of Letters (see letter 231).
6. A writing of the young girl (not found).

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281. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
Paris, January 30, 1841

Notes on his course. He declares himself happy with a more familiar correspondence.

Mademoiselle,

Two mysterious lines written in an unsigned hand at the end of a letter from Madame Soulacroix came to alarm me yesterday. But since they received a reply the same day they were written, I must not cling to the desire to speak of them. And, if you wish to have the early fruits of my professional impressions and to accept the immediate homage of the applause received, it will be necessary to write about the result of the lecture, nor can it be but a page, it is three, fifteen and the mail is collected at four. One proceeds then to inform you about a lecture which was not very brilliant, but which had better success, the speaker did not forget his notes and his erudition was worthy of some bouquets. For all that, I am convinced that, embroiled as I am in serious historical and political questions, I should no longer put my whole trust in assiduity and interest. Clamorous sympathies and the motive which gives rise to them will come to haunt me just at the moment when the course of my studies leads to that order of poetic sentiments of which we have agreed (have we not?) to speak no longer.

The public is extremely kind: it is numerous and loyal. The dryness of my last lecture should have discouraged its benevolent attention. Indeed it was not without surprise that I saw my amphitheatre still packed from the height of the back wall to the foot of the chair below. There is still polite applause when I appear, much
more when I leave. [I want very much to know whether it will be the same with a certain hearer to whom I can have the honor of presenting myself this coming Easter?

Joking aside, I dare to hope, Mademoiselle, that you have never blamed negligence for the silence imposed upon one poor pen so little mistress of itself for a long time now. It would be indeed a profanation for me to take it up, as I do today, without even the leisure to trim it, still filthy from the morning's and night's work, still drenched in German, Latin, and a detestable French, in order to trace a name which is dear and sacred to me. It costs me something to scribble a few fleeting phrases on a common sheet like the correspondence of a merchant because of the threat of time pressing and the departure of the post. [It seems to me that I should have some freedom and quiet in order to be longer and less hasty; I would love to collect my thoughts in my solitude as in a sanctuary where I could unburden myself completely before the adored idol. But since I cannot forsake it and you are so good as to suffer it for my sake, I will henceforward multiply and diversify these enjoyments, the only ones of my exile. I will make use of this neglect which you tolerate; I will profit from it without fussing about whether it is authorized, and each week I will at least have the pleasure of reminding myself "that one loses what one does not recall." I will come to you in the simplicity of the man who in the very instant of leaving off the seriousness of his duties and relaxing among his friends wipes the sweat from his face. I will reflect then that this time next year my return from the Sorbonne will be happier, that another's voice will greet my steps at the door, another's hand will squeeze mine by the fireside. And then, as formerly, especially when I had received one of your charming letters so welcome to me I would make time and place. I will not set myself to toiling over some business letter, but take the necessary ease for a complete unburdening; I will slip away from problems, distractions, outside worries, in order to be more natural, truer, in a word more myself, because I will be more yours.

Thank you for excusing this familiarity. You make me happy. I will be even more so if on your side you wish to exercise a little more the rights which are yours: to ask me questions, to scold me when needed, to form me in advance for the sweet duties I will take upon myself in the near future, to allow me a glimpse of the job's requirements—presumptuous requirements for my part, but you will make them easy—the job of procuring happiness. Well! you will not take offense at my occasional frankness in expressing my feelings, nor at the vividness of my words when I speak of my respectful but always deep tenderness.

Your most humble and obedient servant,

A.-F. OzANAM

Joy at frequent letters, compared to the dove of the Ark. He explains his work habits, discusses the account of his courses printed in the Journal de l'instruction publique. Still apprehension in face of his professional debut. Meanwhile he notices changes in himself. Proposals for living in their first household.

Mademoiselle,

I have good reason to call you good and kind. You know how unhappy I would be to have displeased you: you fear to let me think that, and along come two charming, consoling letters to reassure me on your part. They speak to me of things so sweet and encouraging that my emotion could not contain itself, and several times my lips were pressed against the white sheet which bore your messages. The second especially was a happy surprise, coming as it did to interrupt the five days of waiting to which I had already resigned myself upon receiving your news. I would hope that the like will happen many times again, and that in allowing me from my side to multiply these epistolary visits, you will also afford me the joy of receiving them more often. Far from me, however, is the thought of being importunate and of imposing upon you by indiscreet requests the trouble of replying to me! There is nothing worse for pretty fingers than ink stains. It suits them much better to be poised over ivory keys from which they draw harmonious chords. And again, are they not otherwise occupied in writing for the good M. Reynaud elegant compositions which someone is unwilling to send me? All the same, when they hold the pen thus, if they allow themselves from time to time to take the road to Paris to carry there some friendly words to a poor exile of your acquaintance, that would be a wholly meritorious deed. When Noah was shut up in his ark in that frightening solitude the deluge had made around him, the dove came on occasion with the olive branch which promised him deliverance. As for me, in my Parisian desert, in my Sorbonne ark where I find myself in the midst of animals of every species (I do not refer to my colleagues), your letters are the green branch of hope. Only, why must they come alone and the beautiful dove herself not bring them! Ah! if some day she comes to sit upon my hand, as on the hand of the patriarch, I will do as he did, I will draw her inside quickly lest she fly away, and the window will be opened no more.

You have pardoned my silence then and even more since you see no reason for pardon. Not, please God, that there was negligence on my part, but another kind of imperfection which I must confess to you lest there be deception between us. My friends have given me the reputation for hard work, and indeed the example and lessons I early received from my excellent father have trained my character and constitution to a strict work regimen. There is a certain attachment to a task begun which makes me stubborn and does not permit me to abandon it so long as I feel able to do it better. But that is not the same as that much more precious, much more efficacious disposition which undertakes much and accomplishes all, and
which is known as activity. I am not at all active: at the end of a tiring occupation I cannot steel myself to begin another, however light it might be. It is painful for me to fill up the hours of the day with a variety of matters; my rather slow, and if you will permit, leisurely mind, loves its ease: it does not like to be pushed. It must envisage spare time for each of its plans; it willingly fluctuates between too much study and too much rest; it delights in nights almost entirely wakeful because of some difficult problem, but will be tempted to spend the next day in long and idle chats. The result, when it is forced to put aside these distractions, is a kind of confusion and continual delay: half the week spent in research which was not indispensable, the other half insufficient for the immediate preparation of the course: then days spent entirely in long, drawn-out visits or devoted to catching up on neglected correspondence; and so the free time which I had intended for seeking a bit of happiness in writing to you escapes me, cut up, devoured by imperious demands which my carelessness can neither prevent nor satisfy. There is a heavy avowal which one would not dare to have made three months ago. But to sweeten the effect, it must be added that one is infinitely humbled to be like this, that the resolutions to change are firm and sincere, that one is thinking principally of this fault when he promises you to improve; that already university duties, the discipline of public service, are helping to give more organization to my work; that among other duties, another discipline less strict but more powerful will do the rest, and that is the most beautiful matter of the training which you so much wish to undertake. It will be your joy and honor to have reestablished order in a life troubled successively by such great anxieties and problems. It will be easy, for we are used to telling other philosophers (ask M. Noirot) that order is love.

It was possible once for this kind of worry, when mingled with the sadness and anxieties of absence, to change character and productivity; and more than once this week the tyranny of boredom, desire, and regret came to distract my thought from obligatory functions. The rival of whom I speak to you, Mademoiselle, is hardly to be feared; there are days when she complains about you and I let her talk: she has charms beyond a doubt, but they are six hundred years old; and if, as you say, she often changes appearance, do not think it the means of seducing me. That would be to suppose me inconstant, a vice not mine: be certain that I shall be angry if a charming figure I know should change during my exile. No one is more easily captive than I. The little ring whose red cornelian comes loose in my hand, the medallion which I wear over my heart, the letters pressed between leaves of velour and satin in the center of the desk on which I write; the beloved name Amélie which rises so often on my lips while a vanishing image passes across my memory, these are so many cords which bind and at the same time support me. I am happy and proud to wear them. I love the vowed title of fiancé with which my friends laughingly greet me: your knight joyously dons your colors when he descends to the lists. If a prayer or two rise before the altar of the Blessed Virgin of Lyon on Saturday, here the cherished ringlet, the lock of hair, is gazed on, and then kissed: that brings luck. It is true that in the course of a lecture if certain words of feeling issue from me with some heat, I see some well-known faces in the audience assume a
malicious expression and neighbors give one another the elbow. But they are not the less pleased for it and the waggishness of the compliments they make me is not offensive. Yesterday's session was good: a most beautiful, dramatic, important subject had perhaps given me more assurance; even though notes still too extensive and weighty to remember did not allow freedom and inspiration enough to suit me. They seemed to be satisfied, and for my part I can attest that I have never seen a more courteous public: it was 8 degrees, ice-glazed snow, horrible weather; it nearly prevented me from going out, and I wished the course could do without me. I expected, therefore, that my hearers' zeal, a little chillier than my own, would decimate their ranks. The hall was as full as ever, the stairs crowded, and the two corridors spilled over into the courtyard. After the recess the same crowd squeezed into M. Lenormand's [sic] class; he speaks after me. The last two years have cast a tide of wise and studious youth upon the pavement of Paris to refill our amphitheatres once deserted: a favorable change is noted in this new generation, and grave men truly hope for good from it.

Monsieur le Recteur's comments about my opening discourse have touched me deeply: the basic frankness, the delicacy of expression, cannot but be evident to me, and this letter will have one of the dearest claims on my gratitude. Why then hesitate to take advantage of it, and not avail myself in the future of a father's sincerity? Should not everything that reminds me of what I am soon to be to you delight me? Moreover, my inexperience is great, but not at all presumptuous enough for me to welcome nor solicit advice. His comments were perfectly justified; they repeat what reason tells me every day, what I often hear around me. The article in Le Journal de l'instruction publique must not, however, be thought to be comprehensive: it is abridged, condensed, and digested. It is a skeleton, a framework—ideas, names, a list which tries not to leave anything out. Expression is freer and more flowing, the attitude livelier and the clothing, so to speak, more ample and draped. Thus it can scarcely pass for a lecture where I do not treat in turn philosophical considerations, a historical scene, a citation from some naive and touching poet, some details of customs which stir curiosity, or cause general hilarity. The occasion has arisen five or six times already to recount those marvelous legends which belief rejects but imagination delights in: I love to see the audience's attention perk up to hang upon stories of paladins, chatelaines, fairies, demons, admirable poetic treatment, and great historical insights. For the rest, do not indict the author of the report; he is none other than myself. Lack of time has prevented me from editing the second part: it will be accomplished tomorrow, I think, and published soon. I will place it if I can in a revue which has asked for it and elsewhere, in a form less dry. But here I have thought it necessary to stick exclusively to what is essential; the Journal comes to the attention of scholars who ignore style and seek knowledge. They hold to a doctrine of professionalism which I must say two words to you about, even though they do little honor to our modesty. We distinguish two kinds of success and their union can only assure our future: the success of popularity and the success of esteem. The first is acquired by brilliance or warmth in delivery, by the competence with which the material is presented, even by the choice of appropriate subject. It is
achieved when the crowd is dense and the applause long; it maintains the professor in the world, but by itself it will not make his university career smooth: on the contrary, it is often a temptation and a trap; habitual sacrifice to public caprice compromises and dishonors teaching. The second demands patient research, matters rare and little known appreciated in depth, a learning next door perhaps to pedantry. It is the vote of colleagues, the approval of professionals who do not heap compliments on one another: it is a certain scent of classical powder which the Lady University, our mother, uses and which announces her good graces and favors. “The lessons of the Athenaeum and periodical literature are not approved at the Sorbonne”: such is the external adage of M. Leclerc [sic] and M. Cousin. This latter continues to show me extreme benevolence. The Ecole normale officially sends students to my course. Finally, to conceal nothing and to make you familiar ahead of time with my little indulgences of self-love, I have read the article in the Gazette d’Augsbourg which is unduly flattering, and yesterday someone took notes for a critique to be published in a Spanish magazine.

This prosperity of the moment does not delude me concerning future dangers and, for example, it is not without apprehension that I see the time coming when I must speak twice a week. That will be in Lent, I think. It is doubtful whether there will be sufficient time for me to prepare; it is more uncertain still whether the audience’s diligence will last or stand for a doubling of its captivity. Moreover the final days of the carnival is a disordered time for all schools. I must then report to you on the actual results in light of my future anxieties, knowing that what you have done for some you will do for others. For I fail to recognize where this unhoped-for success came from. From heaven doubtless; the intercession of a sainted mother there accounts for much of it, but she has appointed a powerful helper below in the person of her who earnestly desires to carry the remembrance of me and my name into the mysterious chapel of St. Nizier for eight whole days.

At the same time another thought will encourage this second period of hard work for me; I see the festival of Easter approach for which, without waiting for your gracious invitation, I am already entertaining enchanting plans. Thank you for approving them; we must count on circumstances allowing their accomplishment. For my part the attraction is so strong that I cannot contain it and fear only that I will never again be able to leave Lyon once I set foot there. Can you imagine a poor soul in purgatory given eight days in paradise then made to return? Do not tell me to be reasonable: I am beginning to see that certain emotions know no reason. One gives them time and place with oneself and a short time afterward they have taken over. Believe those who tell you they no longer recognize me. I am wholly astonished at myself.

It is not that the exterior has changed much: full dress is maintained on lecture days, always as you wish, but the disorder of work time needs your presence to amend. It is in the imagination, in the heart, that new things are happening. The imagination ruminates on all the phases of that life which will begin in the month of June; it fastens you to my arm in delightful walks on summer evenings. It takes you to the shore of Swiss lakes, to Venetian gondolas, around that lovely Florence
which is indeed like a jewel in a basket of flowers, to Rome amid the ruins, to Naples
and the length of bright Mediterranean coasts. Then a little later, Paris and the
joyous care of our own establishment, the modest happiness of a young household,
the little circle of chosen friends, and the sweeter hours still of intimacy, and those
long winter evenings too short for our conversations. Our seriousness will not be
without distraction nor our simplicity without elegance, and my philosophical
character will not be afraid of compromising itself by dreaming upon your mode of
dress. Our life will have some dignity and ornament, as much as is necessary to
escape the triviality of common habits and to keep intelligence at the height of its
literary functions. Nor is this a deceitful vision, a reminiscence of German legend
transported fantastically into the future: it is the reality of every hour, and before
the year begun has attained half its course all these beautiful dreams will be fulfilled.
I repeat that often

[Page 5 of copy missing.]

A.-F. OZANAM


Notes:
1. New allusion to the lessons in literature which she is taking with the dean of the Faculty of Letters
   of Lyon.
2. Charles LeNormant (1802-1859). Nephew by marriage of Mme. Récamier. She assigned him (with
   J.J. Ampère) the first lecture on Memoirs beyond the Tomb in her salon, in 1834. Mme. Récamier
died at the Lenormant home in 1849. Colleague of Champollion, Lenormant taught at the Sorbonne from 1835 to 1843, then afterward until he left in 1849. In the interval he was curator of the
Collection of Medals. After writing in Le Globe, he managed the Correspondant from 1846 to
1855. Member of the institute from 1839. Professor at the Collège de France.
3. The text of these comments has never been found.
4. The first part of the first course was published in excerpts and under his direction in Le Journal de
   l’instruction publique: 27, I, 41. The conclusion of the first course appeared in the same magazine:
   3, 3, 41.
5. The first lecture had been published in its entirety in Le Nouveau correspondant, 3 vol., pp. 167-
   197, under the title, “Course in German Literature taught at the Sorbonne by M. Ozanam, substi-
tuting for M. Fauriel.”
6. Victor Le Clerc, dean of the Faculty of Letters of Paris. Note the misspelling of Le Clerc’s and
   Lenormant’s names in the correspondence of Ozanam who, pressed by the post time, sometimes
   neglected to reread his letters.
7. Allusion to the letter of January 30-31, 1841, in which she describes one of her days and her bad
dream of the preceding night (Archives Laporte).
283. To Monsieur Soulacroix
Paris, February 9, 1841

Letter of recommendation for M. Auguste Vera, professor of philosophy, friend of M. Ballanche.

Monsieur,

The venerable M. Ballanche, who knows everything good about you by me, asks some lines of introduction for a young friend. M. Auguste Vera, a worthy Italian, taken on ten years ago by the university, and professor of philosophy at the Collège de Toulon, is going to Lyon to pursue his studies in order to further his career. Fit to hold his own very honorably in the baccalaureate examinations, he has need only of a kindly welcome to encourage his shyness. He would suddenly find himself a stranger in our city unless the paternal solicitude of the head of the academy were not assured to men like him in advance. It appears to me, then, that without the indiscreet pretense of recommending someone, I could accompany M. Vera even to that door which is best known to me and which will be hospitable beyond any doubt.

I have the honor to be, Monsieur le Recteur, with filial respect,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

A.-F. OzANAM

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur the Rector of the Academy, Lyon.

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Note:
1. Auguste Vera. Ballanche had recommended him in three letters to Victor Cousin: October 31, 1839, September 9, 1840, the third date unknown but in between the other two (Cf. Barthélemy Saint-Hilaire, op. cit., t. III, pp. 395-397). Vera pursued a career in the university, was in 1846 among the subscribers to the revue La Liberté de pensée (Cf. Paul Gerbod, La Condition universitaire en France, au xix s., p. 184). After his resignation in 1860 he lived in Turin, then in Milan, where embracing Hegelianism, he translated the works of Hegel (cf. Gerbod, op. cit., pp. 413-414).

286. To Joseph Arthaud
Paris, February 15, 1841

Dear friend,

Just a word to thank you for your good and interesting letter, a word to ask you to remember [to do] the same from time to time, and finally a word to ask pardon for my recent fault. I was wrong to reply to La Perrière with impatience, and he rightly enough reprimanded me, although rather severely. Be kind enough to tell him that I would be unhappy to have offended him.

P. Lacordaire's sermon was given yesterday. L'Univers commented on it. But it did not say that this admirable discourse was a great deal less concerned with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul than the installation of the Friars Preachers. The collection, for lack of a number of motives, tallied only 6,000 francs. M. Bailly, indeed, wanted no announcement in the papers.

We are impatiently waiting for the assembly of the first Sunday in Lent, and the narrative of the fine work at Vaise. I earnestly envy you the honor and merit of this aid so easily and Christianly organized. The good God will bless you, and through you, He will bless the conferences whose zeal you directed so well. It would be kind to send your report to poor Baudicour.

I notice that I am writing on a slant, which is rather like my life. My lectures frighten me even more than you could imagine, and demand preparation that brings on extreme fatigue. Happily the health holds up despite the vigils. It is a real credit to the excellent doctor who built it up so well at Lyon last year. Be assured that I often think of him and am happy in the thought that he is carrying on with my brother the close friendship he was kind enough to have for me.

All the best to all of yours: I particularly single out Chaurand, Accarias, La Perrière, Jacquier, and Génin. Tell the last that he would do me a favor if he were to thank his friend de Laprade for me for sending his speech.

Adieu: a remembrance, a prayer for your friend,

A.-F. Ozanam

Original autograph: belonging to M. Louis Arthaud. Unedited.

Notes:
1. L'Univers, Tuesday the 16th and Wednesday the 17th of February.
2. The passage on the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (Cf. l'Univers, February 17) was in a paragraph at the end of a long description of contemporary French Catholicism. In the peroration, addressing himself to Msgr. Affre, Lacordaire said: "I congratulate myself at finding myself once more under the same patronage [the protection of Msgr. Affre] on the day when I come to install here the order and the habit of the French Friars Preachers. This day is the most beautiful of my life . . . ."
3. The president of the Society and editor of l'Univers was a man of extreme discretion. (Cf. Albert Foucault, La Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, Spes, 1933, pp. 45-47.)
4. After the definition of the rule in 1835, the Council of Direction of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (called the General Council after 1840) met four times a year: the first Sunday of Lent, Good Shepherd Sunday, July 19 (feast of St. Vincent de Paul), and December 8 (feast of the Immaculate Conception).
5. At the time of the Lyon floods, the end of November and beginning of December 1840, the prefect of the Rhône had confided the responsibility of disbursing the 600,000 francs of official aid
provided for the victims to the conferences of St. Vincent de Paul of Lyon, then headed by Dr. Arthaud.

6. Ozanam seems to be complimenting Arthaud, in the third person.

7. Victor Richard de Laprade (1812-1883) studied at the Collège de Lyon in the same class with Génin and Velay, a year after Ozanam, two years after Janmot. From 1847 he taught French literature on the Faculty of Letters of Lyon and was on the same election slate of 1848 as Ozanam, with the same lack of success. Elected to the French Academy for his poetry in 1858, he was deprived of his chair in 1861 when an antigovernment poem appeared in le Correspondant.

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287. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, February 16, 1841

The lost letter has been found. Success of his first course and his feeling of insufficiency. Will do his best to carry out Meynis's instructions concerning the association of “Catholicism in Europe.” No more news about the Cochinchinese.

Dear Friend,

I am too fond of you as a brother not to be very happy to receive two letters from you instead of one. But I also appreciate too well how valuable your time is to have you waste it on me. By luck just as unexplainable as before I put my hand today on the note I thought lost. I must hasten to let you know in order to atone for my fault and erase the bad opinion of me I must have given you yesterday.

Such confusion in the house of a poor man who, free of the first terrors of his debut, is none the less the prey of care and worry will not astonish you. Providence has permitted me to be received with the greatest and kindest encouragement by my colleagues and students. And since your affection has a lively interest in all that concerns me, I can and must tell you: my successes are not triumphs, but I am very happily encouraged. The hall is full, attention sustained, the applause sometimes deafening; I am allowed to treat with Christian frankness of questions once dreaded, such as the struggle between the priesthood and the empire, the political influences of the Reformation, etc. I am, beyond doubt, still very anxious and nervous. My lack of learning betrays itself constantly, what I have to say is most imprecise. But they are very understanding, and although they do not admire, I believe they at least like me. If that is the way of it, I will be able to end up by doing some good; help me by praying God that it will last. The carnival and fine days are dangerous temptations to the public.

It so happened that yesterday, by a sort of presentiment which is most natural when ideas and affection are held in common, I wrote you a partial answer. Thank you, nonetheless, for the curious information you give me and which I will use in the way you want. As for discretion, it will be absolute, but do not rely upon my influence. I know only one member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul actively
engaged in the association of Catholicism in Europe, and he is too stubborn, although to be pitied and in good faith, for me to get anything out of him.\(^2\) Besides, as you can see by P. Humphries' sermon, if I have not been misinformed, they are certain that they have pontifical approval.\(^3\)

When I have had the honor of seeing M. de Montalembert, I will speak to him again about the Cochinchinese. But I have heard nothing more about these foreign visitors.\(^4\) I am entirely at your service, and very embarrassed still to have given you a false alarm. I am with Christian and lasting friendship,

Your brother in Our Lord,

A.-F. OzANAM

Envelope: Monsieur, Monsieur Dominique Meynis, Secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Perat, 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. Allusion to a paragraph of his letter of the day before about the association of "Catholicism in Europe" whose activities upset the Central Council of the Propagation of the Faith of Lyon and Ozanam, who officially represented it in Paris.
2. Unidentified.
3. Point upon which all the anxieties of the Propagation of the Faith converged in regard to the association of "Catholicism in Europe."
4. Cf. previous letter to Meynis (January 10).

289. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, February 27, 1841

Agrees to make a report of the association, but asks a delay and precise instructions. Proposes to resume his work on Buddhism. "Catholicism in Europe" business. News of his health.

Dear friend,

I have just now received your excellent letter of the 25th and hasten to reply. I am glad to be assigned the report of the association, a task which always pleases me. But allow me to point out that you are a little late. To ask to have it in Lyon by the 10th is to ask that it be done next week. But my Saturday lecture takes nearly three days of my time and, not knowing that I was going to be so pressed, I have requested appointments for my university business which will take up more time yet. It will therefore be impossible for the work to be complete and ready unless I can be given also the first days of the following week, that is, to have until March 10. I will go at it energetically. But try to obtain the delay: it is not my fault and, if the notes were
sent me by the 20th, I could easily have it ready. Let us pull together. I have been a little distracted from the business of the association¹ lately and need to know whether any new missions have been opened in the meantime and other information of a somewhat important nature. Where do the principal hopes of the Catholic apostolate lie, etc., etc.

That done, I will resume the Buddhism work.² You will find attached the last two issues of the Annales du catholicisme en europe.³ For its continued existence this society relies upon the refusal by the Council of Paris to cooperate with it on the European missions.⁴ I am absolutely ignorant of how l'Univers knew of what transpired between Msgr. de Lyon and the particular council.⁵

Farewell, dear friend, excuse an enforced brevity and join me in thanking the good God who is treating me in this country like a spoiled child. Persistent health despite exhausting work, success despite my inexperience, good friends all about me, and others far from me like you who never forget me.

Farewell! my regards to the members of the council and particularly to good M. de Jessé.⁶

Your devoted,
A.-F. OZANAM

If you cannot obtain an extension I will try to do the work as well as I can, but it will be much shorter.

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Envelope: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Fœt, 6, Lyon.

Original Lost: Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon.

Galopin Copy. Unedited.

Notes:
1. The Association of the Propagation of the Faith for whose report Ozanam, as extraordinary editor, assumed responsibility.
3. Annales du catholicisme en europe, evidently the December 1840 (the 5th) and January 1841 (the 6th) issues. Number 7 did not appear until April 1841.
4. The Propagation of the Faith was of the opinion that the association of “Catholicism in Europe” divided the missionary efforts of Catholics. If the Propagation of the Faith took up European missions, the other association would have no further reason to exist. Such was the opinion at least of the Central Council of Lyon, but not of the Council of Paris where it was feared that patronage offered by the Association of Catholic Churches established in European Protestant countries might set the Propagation of the Faith in conflict with the governments of these countries. The two councils had appealed to Propaganda in Rome for a decision in the matter. For the steps taken and the difficulties of viewpoint, cf. letter of Verna and Meynis to the president of the Council of the North, January 11, 1841 (Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Paris, Carton A, 1a). The difference was evident when there arose the question of the position to be taken in regard to Msgr. Studach and the Swedish mission.
5. Ozanam probably wrote “particular council” for “Central Council” (of Lyon) by mistake. Indeed, a week earlier (February 19), the Central Council of Lyon had held, in the presence of Msgr. Challetan, vicar general of the archbishop of Lyon, Msgr. Bonald, a meeting intended to enlighten the archbishopric upon the association of Catholicism in Europe. It was in the wake of the information
furnished by the Central Council of Lyon that Msgr. de Bonald declared that association useless. L'Univers made allusion to this judgement, but the source of the information received by l'Univers could not be discovered.

6. Baron Antoine de Jessé (1792-1854) was about to succeed Baron de Verna as president of the Central Council of Lyon, starting in July 1841 (cf. letter of Meynis to Choiselat, July 3, 1841. Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Paris, Carton A, 2a). He held the post until his death.

290. To Mlle. Soulacroix
Paris, February 28, 1841

He shows his joy in the improvement of Théophile Soulacroix's health. Thanks her for the most intimate confidences and the assistance given for his Saturday course. Has assisted at a lavish soirée at Lamartine's; opinion on the opulence and pomp. Meeting of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul; some words about its works. He is happy with her letters but does not want her to weary herself nor deprive her family.

Mademoiselle,

I was right in calling the white dove: she heard me, and not overly fearful of this icy winter air, she came bearing the green bough of hope, in other words, good and marvelous news. The brother you love, whose name intervened in so touching a way at a sacred moment for me and whom you also allow me to love as a brother, there he is in full convalescence. Your accounts made me a part of all the progressions of these two years of trial, the sad sights of each day, the prospect of a future sadder still, the flickerings of hope, followed by long and inconsolable discouragements. I understand these things: a recent experience has shown me only too well how devastating it is to watch constant suffering, to deceive oneself as to the progress of illness while one by one the illusions vanish. I also know how heartrending is the sufferer's resignation to those around him. Especially how it revives their regrets and sorrows. But it was not given me to experience what joy can follow these anguishes, how the dread progress has its end, how illusions become probabilities, then certainties, and with what transport one watches the resigned brow restored little by little.

I thank Providence for having reserved this good fortune to you who were worthier of it than I. I come to share it and add my felicitations to those your good parents have received from their numerous friends. I come rather late, but you will forgive this habitual sin: you will enlarge the family circle for me, you will (will you not?) make a little room for me beside you; Théophile is on the other side. I shake his hand and complement him with brotherly ardor; he will not keep the armchair and crutches much longer. His patience is rewarded: the pleasant good humor, which never abandoned him, has not betrayed him; while we gave way to discouragement, there was in his strong and pure youth an instinct which sustained him.
And by the month of June a happier wedding usher will never have been seen. He is laughing maliciously already at the idea. You will read this passage of my letter to him, and his usual mischievousness will find its mark. He will be very curious, for example, as to why the story of the dove comes up this way in our correspondence. It is most indiscreet of him, and as a professor I would refer him to the first verse of the fable of the *Two Pigeons*, whose explanation and application to the present case I would like in writing! . . . But, alas! for the moment, French literature is not in my domain, and I am in every way exiled to a foreign land. If attention were only paid to my lessons in German poetry! But you do not understand the troubadours, and despite what they say, you do not intend the key to be lost!

Now I will leave Théophile to enjoy his wonderful state of convalescence, and I come back to you, Mademoiselle, to thank you again for having thus long admitted me to your past sadnesses and present consolations. Your exquisite sensibility causes you to fear troubling me by confiding your own troubles: but perhaps I have spoken only too much of my own. It is good for all that, it seems to me, to act so and, when two are destined to share the troubles of the future, they should share the troubles of the past. And since this community of everything ought to be shaping between us, recollections, even the most sorrowful, have their value. Afflictions are like bittersweet herbs which perfume and revive. I love thus to see your soul awaken in the limpidity of your simple words. I admire that courage which knows restraint in the face of a stricken family, and that praiseworthy smile which shines like a parting ray in the midst of the most somber thoughts. But I love not less those solitary tears shed in the silent room at the foot of the crucifix; those sisterly prayers would not be such as God wanted if the eyes remained dry. No, no, moral energy has nothing to do with dryness and imperturbability: whatever is strong is not what stands stiffly, but what straightens up after bending. Such stoicism would be out of place among the sweet and Christian virtues with which women are adorned. How could they be our consolers, if they did not feel more intensely than we? I would say that they seem to have the nature of angels: not so much as to wings as to tears. We say jokingly that these are their weapons, but we are well aware that they are also part of their charm, and we would be punished indeed never to see those two fugitive pearls which compassion and tenderness hang on their eyelids. However, do not think I wish to give myself that pleasure often! Happily, one also weeps for joy: there are delightful sensations for which any other language would not suffice. How often I have seen my mother’s eyes fill when she hugged her children to her breast. It should happen again, after what you told me about the little cousin who is in the habit of weeping a bit on that terrible day when one says yes. If that is so, and if on that day, under the white veil, in the shadow of lovely blond hair, I should perceive something of the same, let me believe that it will be undoubt­edly from emotion, not from chagrin.

Besides, you are willing to confide in me that already, at the foot of another altar, that solemn moment has had its prelude. Thank you for that benevolent news and see how the Blessed Virgin has blessed you for it. For was it not from that time, of my first visit, that they date the beginning of the first signs of the unhoped-
for healing? And do you not see that heaven wished us to be together, and well aware that you would not want to abandon the bedside so long as a cherished head rested there, "He said to the paralytic: get up and walk." I was not worthy of this miracle: but it is you who have availed for us, you have indeed performed many others, less astonishing without doubt, but not less indifferent to me. Your pious Saturday remembrances continued to chase the demon of fear, and to loosen a tongue which trouble would strike dumb. Yesterday's lesson, one of the most boring, and singularly compromised by an importunate visit imposed in the morning, came off perfectly. The hall is always overcrowded, and the crowd insists on finding interest in that historical chaos where I am lost, in that labyrinth of barbarous names and strange ideas. The dissipating influence of carnival is not even felt: there must be some powerful unknown working on my behalf, and I am aware of no other talisman than the little gold locket hanging with a cross on my heart.

It seems to me that I am repeating myself and have already told you that, and yet I do not erase it: first because I do not wish to default in favor of disorder, which we are agreed upon; next because there are repetitions which please me, and words whose return charms my ear. It is like that air which your piano reserves for me and which I never grow tired of. When, smiling, I asked you the privilege of it, I was far from imagining you would be kind enough to take my request seriously. I was afraid of being rash; I was well aware that I had no rights yet and I would have been upset most of all at depriving you of that delicate pleasure of giving pleasure to the others. But I was infinitely touched that you took it differently. You were able to perceive a childishness in me; and is there not, really, something childlike, that is, naive and pure, in infant affections? Has not this springlike season of life its primevera and bluets also? Perhaps, besides, the pleasure I took in it was not exempt from a light cloud of jealousy: that is a villainous fault, and all mine, I trust. Nevertheless, must there not be a little, a fine and imperceptible, hint of it in love? Indeed, why would your fiancé, man of good character if his friends are to be believed, and no enemy to his neighbor, smile at the thought of the petted lion resting ear aflop, while the pretty ballad drowses secretly on his eardrum so as not to waken until Easter? Thus I am very happy that you took me at my word. It is still one of those traits capable of brightening up the gloomiest of our brothers; but let me say to them: our dignity in no way suffers, and as I sometimes go ferreting into the lives of great men, visiting the unknown corners of their hearts, I find, among other things, these amiable puerilities. It is always the same when sensibility is new, and I also fear that preferences that are always reasonable are not yet formed by use, or perhaps used by exercise.

I am obedient to your recommendations and continue my music course. Although I go out very little, I went last evening on business to M. de Lamartine's and found a magnificent concert in progress in which were heard, among several people of the highest rank, the admirable voices of Mme. Damoreau-Cinthy and M. Dupre. A violinist such as I have never heard the like was vigorously applauded. As for the piano, it is not my fault if I did not listen to it willingly: it is for me like the Jewish harp which the exiled people no longer wished to hear under the willows of
There was also an incredible luxury of fashion, and yet I assure you that this distinguished assembly, heads crowned with diamonds and shoulders bare, empty faces under a rain of flowers and in a cloud of lace, the complacency in their show of pomp and disdain for the person of their neighbors—all of this gives me a mediocre opinion of what the character of women can gain from habits of opulence and an education in show. Do not be upset, then, at this role of observer, which besides is not often repeated; it makes me better appreciate the differences. This evening another contrast was afforded me: why should I not tell you about it, even though I have already done so once before?

It was one of the four annual meetings of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. We numbered 600 young people, as many as would fill a large lecture hall, assembled to learn about the small good already accomplished and the great deal of good yet to be done. We had a report of our two thousand brothers here in Paris and the provinces: of every rank, every step of the social scale, but principally from the middle class . . . . It is reckoned that 1,500 families here in Paris alone have been helped, the daily bread brought under the needy roof, wood assured for many a dismal home. Besides twenty boys educated free in a paternal household, a truly large number supervised, protected, and encouraged, apprenticed in reliable shops, brought together each Sunday for divine service, corrupt fathers have been brought back to an ordered and frugal life, and future tears of so many good mothers of families dried. But nothing was reported about another and perhaps greater advantage to Christian love, the bringing together of young men whom the necessity of circumstances scatters far from their native village and relations among the dangers of the capital. Nothing was said about a community of faith and works erasing little by little the old divisions of political parties and preparing for a not-too-distant future a new generation which would carry into science, the arts, and industry, into administration, the judiciary, the bar, the unanimous resolve to make it a moral country and to become better themselves in order to make others happier. These are ambitious dreams, but since they are of those which most console my present solitude and contribute most to the sweetness and dignity of our approaching union; since these sentiments seem to me my least reprehensible, I give free rein to them here, for you alone, and for the maternal eyes which follow yours over the friendly page. They, too, will understand the blessing of seeing the gratitude of the poor and the fruit, small as it is, of kindness.

You warn me not to expect long letters always and accompany this information with such amiable expressions that it is impossible to be offended. However great be my privation, I would myself beg you not to sacrifice to the prolonging of my Lenten enjoyment the interests of your health, the cultivation of your talents, and the convenience of your family. When you can do as you have done with so much kindness, at intervals put some lines on the page which a week will fill up; I will receive them with gratitude, and in the consequent variety I will enjoy discovering the different facets of the thoughts which cross your soul. You will understand what a choice pleasure, what a rare and precious thing that is; that diversity of aspects has its own merit when the object is unchanged, and from whatever side
your character is revealed, nothing is lost. What, must I be the first to give bad example? To matters of imperious necessity and the preparation of two most difficult lessons is added an important and remunerated work, due the 10th of this month. Obliged to make efforts that my excellent health permits, I must ask your indulgence to be a little shorter today, and a little late next time. There is little chance of my writing Wednesday evening. It will be a painful sacrifice, but one of those which duty demands from time to time and for which I should find strength in the very ardor of my tenderness.

That graceful name of Amélie seems to be this latest time more charming than ever: you have surrounded it for me with a very lovely setting, that title of fiancée which suits it better than a tiara does a duchess. It is different with my name, which has special need of a companion to pardon its awkwardness and gravity. I sign myself, nonetheless, and with a most contented pen

Your fiancé who loves you very much,

A.-F. OZANAM

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. Ozanam probably refers to his mother’s last lingering illness.
2. Spring field flowers, the first indigenous to France.
3. In a letter to Ozanam, dated February 20, 1841 (Archives Laporte), Amélie told him how, during a party, she refused a young man who had asked her to play on the piano a certain ballad which she had promised to reserve exclusively for her fiancé.
4. Mme. Damoreau-Cinty or Damoreau (born Laure-Cinthie Montalent, she was also known under the name of Cinti). In 1841 she was principal female singer at the Opera Comique. After her retirement in 1843 she taught a voice class at the conservatory.
5. Gilbert-Louis Dupre (1806-1896), a French tenor and composer. In 1841 he was singing at the opera, renowned for his upper range. In 1842 he took a professorship at the conservatory while continuing his professional career.
7. In conformity with the practice adopted in 1835: meeting of the First Sunday of Lent (see Ozanam to Arthaud, February 15, 1841).
8. Allusion to the orphanage for young boy apprentices established in the rue Copeau (formerly rue Locoped) on the initiative of the Conferences of Saint Vincent de Paul of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont and Saint-Sulpice, with the encouragement of Bailly, who furnished them employment in his printing house. Viscount de Melun asked (July 16, 1840) the council of the Society to transfer the patronage of this orphan-apprentice work. Perhaps the transfer had not been accomplished by February 1841 since the orphan apostolate is listed among the activities of the association. (Cf. Albert Foucault, La Société de Saint-Vincent-de-Paul, histoire de centans, p. 58, and J.-B. Duroselle, Les Débuts du catholicisme social en France, p. 183ff.)
9. The annual report for the Annales de la propagation de la foi.
To Mademoiselle Soulacroix

Paris, March 17, 1841

Joy which her last letter brought him. Recollection of family memories.

Mademoiselle,

Since there are emotions which I cannot fight, it would be wholly impossible for me to wait until Sunday to tell you of the profound impression your last letter left with me. I did not dare expect it, and I feared greatly lest my weekly Tuesday happiness find itself supplanted by the good visit of the preceding Saturday. And yet, you write to me, you write to me about things in such a way that never have you more completely stirred whatever of feelings there is in my heart; and now I am still reading you over, and there stays with me a tenderness which I can call religious. Oh! take, please, my poor mother's parasol, if such a thought does not sadden you too much. For I believe that already her shadow truly encompasses and protects you and that her spirit is upon you. Already her ring entwines my finger with yours and the two of them become one before my eyes. God who seems to have loved my family very much ever permitted it to have saints, and each one of my forefathers (for we have preserved long and traditional records) therefore had at his side a chaste and pious vision to guide him to heaven. When one of these angels had finished her mission and folded her wings to ascend on high, another one always came to fill, in the next generation, the post left empty. If you also will come in your turn, you will come like the wife of Isaac into the widowed tent of Sara his mother; and it is written that only on that day was Isaac comforted. Bless you for having understood, bless you for wishing it! The day when I learned of your family grief I too suffered cruelly, not that I felt my own wound open afresh, it has never closed, but at too vivid a vision of too recent a sorrow. However, at sight of such tears and desolation, a consoling thought long overdue came to me also; and I deem myself happy to be under a roof where sorrows so lively attest to such holy affections. Yet you form this heroic resolution to come to inform me. You take pity on my solitude, and by one of those dedications of which women, Christian women, alone are capable, you earnestly wish to accompany on earth this exiled soul. You have consented to a great many separations, trials, sacrifices, in order to do some good to him who suffers. You have accomplished an act of courage whose reward is elsewhere. But here forthwith a first reward is bestowed on you in the infinite tenderness, the imperishable love, the reciprocal devotion of your fiancé.

Say no longer that we do not know each other, or that duty separated us before allowing us to know to whom we had plighted our troth. Perhaps, alas, it is so on one side. Perhaps despite protestations not made out of simple modesty have you wished to preserve in my regard illusions of which more than one begins to fade in light of those weaknesses of character which recent circumstances have disclosed. But, on the other hand, these epistolary conversations have revealed you to me beyond all my hopes. I had set out, delighted above all with your charms, and the extreme reserve of our first rapports scarcely allowed for anything more than hon-
est trust inspired by an excellent family and a perfect education. Your first letters, still stamped with a naive embarrassment and an admirable simplicity, already permitted me to understand better the attraction your person had exercised on me. Then judicious observations, genuine comments, exact ideas, and a number of qualities which made me appreciate the precision and clarity of attention with which your intelligence was endowed, came to mix themselves with this amiable cheerfulness. But your last pages have taught me more than all and I know now with what touching delicacy you interest yourself in all the bruises that can try the heart, with what affectionate care you hasten to heal them, with what ineffable condescension you know how to pardon all, with what generosity, finally, you give yourself completely . . . I know what was done in heaven and on earth for my happiness the day your hand was put in mine!

As for me, forgive me if, in concluding my last letter, I let fall by way of amusing myself a question I should not have asked. No, I ask no more whether you do not love me a little. You will never be able to say that again, but have you not said much more, and with that supreme tact with which women are endowed, have you not said it much better? I would be an ingrate to ask any longer. You heap upon me, you ravish me with, your favors. Oh, rejoice in your work, rest with pleasure on this thought—that the words fallen from your pen have gone to bear joy, peace, and serenity to someone very far away from you. And may this sweet witness which gently lulls your conscience fly to console your days and gild your night dreams.

Farewell. I needed this outpouring but now I can no longer find a way to conclude, a means of expression that corresponds to what I feel, and the words with which I ordinarily close seem to me more helpless to say what I am . . .

Your fiancé who loves you tenderly,

A.-F. OZANAM

I intend to reserve tomorrow a seat on the mail for Palm Sunday. I would then have a dozen days to spend at Lyon: indeed, it is just in time, for I can stay here no longer. My indisposition, completely cured, leaves no further trace of fatigue, and I am able to carry out the schedule of my ordinary duties without difficulty: do not worry, then.

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Note:
1. Meaning is given to this entire paragraph by a letter of Mlle. Soulacroix to her fiancé, dated March 14, 1841. She alludes in it to the death of her paternal grandmother and adds that it was the way in which Ozanam, then a stranger to the family, shared in its grief that made her decide to marry him. (The circumstances in which this death occurred having some analogy to conditions under which Ozanam had recently lost his parents justified his emotion.)
297. To Monsieur Soulacroix  
Paris, March 17, 1841

Asks advice about his career. Begs pardon for his excessive concern. He accepts courses at Collège Stanislas, which will assure a steady income without overwork. Discreet request to set the marriage date.

Monsieur,

If I have allowed much time to elapse without profiting from the filial freedom you have given me to unburden myself to you about the problems of my position and to ask your expert advice, I dare hope that you have not attributed my reserve to a defect of confidence and trust. Little used yet to the bruises which one cannot avoid when it is a question of boring the crowd, endowed unfortunately with too sensitive a nature, I experienced extreme pain at the declaration of M. Fauriel which seems to compromise my future. My imagination called up somber pictures, I became profoundly uneasy over a destiny in conflict with other destinies more cherished, and I felt that if I wrote to you in such a state I would do cruel violence to your affection either by causing you to share my fears or by drawing your attention to the instability of my character. That is why it seemed prudent to address such a communication to you through my brother who, accustomed to my exaggerations, could more easily present them in their true light. Meanwhile, I was completely silent about the matters in question in my letters to Mademoiselle Amélie, thinking to spare the exquisite refinement of her feelings. It was very far from my wish to leave her ignorant, no more than you, Monsieur, of worries that I am only too happy to share. And with lively gratitude have I received the excellent advice which in turn Mademoiselle Amélie, Madame Soulacroix, and yourself have been so willing to give me amid the uncertainty in which I find myself. Today I have the pleasure of informing you that it is coming to an end.

The principal reason for my chagrin was not the reduction of six hundred francs in income anticipated for this year. It was the intention expressed by the incumbent to resume his classes from time to time; a proposal which could become serious, M. Fauriel wonderfully contenting himself with thirty or forty grave, erudite, honorable students who regularly crowd around his chair. It is necessary under such a threat to assure one's independence which in opposing circumstances would ever serve to afford greater calm and stability. I think I can accept at this point, in line with your advice, the proposal of Collège Stanislas. The affair is concluded: Mm. Cousin, Ampère, Peclet and several others urged me to take it. Some of my colleagues are in a similar position: nothing is lost of their dignity. The work will be considerable but not excessive: three evening classes each week in French and Latin poetry. Another professor is responsible for the rest. The initial salary of two thousand francs will probably be increased soon, and if by chance the Sorbonne duties come to be a major interruption, things will be eased by conferences, private lessons, etc. . . . to fill in part the temporary void. For the rest, my class occupies nearly all the intellectual forces I can dispense and while I am looking after all
of my lectures, it will be impossible for me to seek financial supplement through writings, for instance, which demand concentrated thought and fresh imagination. Besides, I would risk branding myself like so many young people fallen headlong into the dangerous literature of newspapers. In this connection, better a regular job which suffices, like my three classes, with a certain knowledge, conscience, and exactitude. There are always the long Faculty of Letters’ vacations and other means for writing memoirs and books which I may be inspired to do.

One only difficulty remains, and I must tell you how painful it is to me. The Collège Stanislas where I will begin teaching on May 1 will need me especially during the time of the competitive examinations. They formally stipulate my presence for the month of July and during the first half of August. This will not prevent the Italian trip to which literary motives also expressly hold me. But it will be necessary to come back here for six weeks which, in my first plans, would have been passed in the bosom of our families. I have twelve days, which I will stretch to fifteen, at the end of June. At that time, we will celebrate that marriage whose appointed time, still so far off, greatly provokes my impatience. Who knows whether we will be allowed to return alone or whether we will find ways to entice a father or mother to share our first trip to Paris? It will not be necessary at that time, as I will write to Mademoiselle your daughter, to set up housekeeping immediately: the problems of settling in permanently can wait for our return from Italy.

If these plans do not seem agreeable to you, I will make only one change in them. The prolonging of an exile of which I am now experiencing the full force must not be imposed on me. There is then only one alternative left, to advance my happiness two months by fixing the moment I desire for this coming Easter. In any case, Easter must not pass without my having the honor of seeing you. And I would the more insist that everything be accomplished then, did I not fear on the one hand to be indiscreet and on the other to compromise the beautiful pilgrimage to Italy, smiling event in our near future, which Mademoiselle Amélie does not seem to want to give up.

In the hope that these arrangements do not displease you, I now rest easy and return to my studies with entire liberty of spirit. I am embarrassed in so far as I have let you see so much weakness in the first difficulties to assail me. But in a way it is perhaps useful for your benevolent illusions about me to be dissipated a bit in advance and that you have seen close up how much need I have of finding a father again, my own having been taken from me too soon, and in the last years I enjoyed too little his advice from which I could have gathered the energetic and firm impulse to step without hesitation over the threshold of a career. Your example and encouragement will complete in me the work left off. In another way those difficulties were not typical. They were part of those I anticipated for my debut, and the anxieties of the debut were precisely those whose prospect made me accept the isolation of the first months of this year so as not to share with a soul tenderly loved worries whose entire bitterness I knew in advance. Mademoiselle Amélie, with that admirable generosity she is endowed with, wanted very much to share all my troubles. And I cannot say with what a noble and judicious manner she treated in
her letters those matters I did not dare bring up in mine. I bless a trial which has revealed so many merits to me where I had already known so many charms.

Yesterday I had the honor of seeing M. and Madame Péclet, and I gave them the first progress reports on Théophile’s recovery. They shared my joy warmly. M. Péclet told me of his intention to write to you in the near future. He does not know yet whether his inspection journey will allow him to visit Lyon. I continue to see M. Miguet and to be perfectly welcome there. Tomorrow I am going to the minister’s soirée. In the morning I hope at last to visit M. l’abbé Soulacroix, who has stopped by here twice, and whose house I have visited twice, without our getting together.

Forgive me, Monsieur, if I have prolonged so greatly a conversation precious to me, and if I have contended too much with public duties for an attention ever so industriously and usefully occupied. I was carried away, which has happened often since I have had the good fortune to be a son and to be able to unburden my heart to a heart ever open to me. Accept in advance the expression of my profound gratitude and the respectful affection with which I am

Your most humble and devoted servant,

A.-F. OzANAM

My respects to Madame Soulacroix. To Théophile, Charles, and Albert my fraternal friendship.

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. New allusion to Fauriel’s change of mind.
2. Jean Claude Péclet (1793-1857), born at Besançon, entered the Ecole Normale Supérieure in 1813, professor of physics at the Collège Royal de Marseilles, then at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, from 1840 inspector general of Public Instruction. His wife, nee Correalis, came from a family of magistrates.
4. He was one of twelve inspectors of studies. Dividing themselves into six commissions, they parcelled up twenty-seven academies which they examined each year between May and August (Cf. Gerbod, op. cit., p. 42).
5. Marc Antoine Soulacroix (1797-1873), younger brother of Rector Soulacroix, had been ordained a priest in 1820. Former chaplain of the Maison Royale d’Education de Saint-Denis (1826-1832), he lived in Belgium after 1832 and more precisely at Brussels after 1842.
299. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, March 17, 1841

Thanks for money sent. Difficulty he encountered in writing the promised article on Buddhism. Matter of Catholicism in Europe which is finding some credit at Paris. Step considered in regard to Msgr. Affre.

My dear friend,

I acknowledge receipt of your last letter, of the important document, and the draft of 110.25 francs which was enclosed. I must thank you also for the confidence with which you continue to honor me and the earnest exactitude so willingly devoted to regulating my little matters of interest. Accept anew the expression of my regrets for having been obliged to send you a piece of work as unbusinesslike as the account rendered, drawn up in a crisis of the most violent fever I have felt in my life. An energetic doctor and his accurate treatment have arrested the illness. I am delivered but not without an extreme weakness remaining with me especially of eyesight which obliges me to suspend some of my duties for a while. It will not then be possible to have the "Buddhism" ready in the desired time. But I will see you at Easter and then, with the approval of the editorial staff, I will do a short provisional article which can allow for the insertion of letters later. I prefer not to curtail my great work, and before going to Rome myself in September I should be able to make the proper reevaluation of it at the same time as the other commissions with which the work of the Propagation of the Faith may charge me.

I had a useful visit with M. Desgenettes in connection with the matter known as Catholicism in Europe. Sunday I will call on Father Boulanger, superior of the Jesuits. I am going to have a long conversation with M. Bailly. M. Bailly thinks that it will be necessary to speak first to Monseigneur the archbishop of Paris who out of ignorance of the facts has approved the new association and ratified the bureau's nominations. Without the archbishop, impossible to work on the clergy: even the internuncio cuts a rather slight figure. M. Bailly, who is on close terms with Monseigneur, has taken it upon himself to speak to him if you will authorize me to give him for this purpose a copy of the cardinal's letter. He will use it with discretion and will not publish it in any manner. I await your prompt reply in this matter.

But I have more evidence than ever that resistance will be long and dangerous, the Catholicism affair being monopolized by a legitimist faction which by every imaginable means seeks to insinuate itself everywhere. Every precaution in the world has been taken to safeguard l'Univers and the St. Vincent de Paul Society from their incursions. When we shall get together, which is to say very soon, I shall discuss with you the long and curious details.

Farewell, my dear friend, count upon my zeal for our admirable association as upon my affection for you.

Your devoted,
A.-F. Ozanam
My respects to the members of the council.


Notes:
1. This sum is not mentioned in the great ledger of the Central Council of the Propagation of the Faith of Lyon (cf. letter of January 10, 1841, to Meynis).
2. Ozanam had already let it be understood that this study presented difficulties that he had not at all foreseen.
3. Charles Dufriche-Desgenettes (1778-1860), pastor of the parish of Missions étrangères from 1819 to 1830, had left France at the time of the revolution of 1830. Some months after his return in 1832 he was named pastor of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires but was especially famous as founder of the Archconfraternity of the Holy and Immaculate Heart of Mary (1838), which has several million members throughout the world. The basilica of Our Lady of Victories founded later by Father Baker in Lackawanna, New York, is its American offshoot.
4. R. P. Clement Boulanger (1790-1868) was superior successively of two houses of the Society of Jesus in Paris (18 rue des Postes and 15 rue de Regard), before becoming provincial in place of Father Achilles Guidée, February 4, 1842. We do not know whether the proposed interview took place with any effect (despite research pursued in the archives of the Society of Jesus at Chantilly and Lille). Three weeks later, April 6, 1841, Father Guidée sent the following circular letter to the superiors of the Paris province:

   "I warn you in behalf of our Father General (Jan Roothan) that the work called Catholicism in Europe not having the approbation of the Sovereign Pontiff who believes it by its nature to impede the great work of the Propagation of the Faith, it is proper for our confreres to remain entirely aloof from it; and if anyone has allowed himself to involve himself in it with permission, he should withdraw." (Archives of the Society of Jesus, Chantilly.)
5. Monseigneur Affre, Ozanam believed, was unaware that the work of Catholicism in Europe did not have the approbation of Rome.
6. Bertier de Sauvigny, count of Brissac, Vatimesnil, and Hamelin; Monseigneur Affre had given him as honorary president Abbé Augé, one of his vicars general.
7. In 1831 the nuncio to Paris, Monseigneur Lambruschini, was recalled to Rome following the funeral obsequies of Abbé Grégoire. Monseigneur Garibaldi, until then auditor of the nunciature, henceforth filled the office of nuncio until 1843, with the title of internuncio. He had the sympathy and confidence of Louis-Philippe. (Cf. P. Droulers, La nonciature de Paris et les troubles sociaux-politiques sous la Monarchie de Juillet, and Monseigneur Jacques Martin, La nonciature de Paris, Beauchesne 1947.)
8. The letter, the copy of which Ozanam asks permission to communicate to Bailly so that he could make use of it in conversing with Monseigneur Affre, could be one which Cardinal Fransoni, prefect of propaganda, addressed to the Central Council of Lyon in order to disavow the work of Catholicism in Europe, March 4, 1841. Translation of the letter written to the president of the Central Council of Lyon (Verna; June 7) by his eminence the cardinal prefect of propaganda:

   "Most illustrious sir, In replying to your letter of February 20 last, I hasten to tell you that with as much surprise as regret I have seen repeated in l'Univers the announcement of the work of the Propagation of Catholicism, and that I have written to Monseigneur the Internuncio of Paris that effort be made to hinder an enterprise which, far from having the blessing and approval of the Holy Father, on the contrary displeases His Holiness very much because it harms the progress of the other work of the Propagation of the Faith. His Holiness has wished that his disapproval be made known and that at the same time there
be expressed to the well-merited association of the Faith that it is his intention that from now on the care and assistance of this association be extended to the Missions of Europe also.

I have communicated this pontifical resolution to the Council of Paris; your lordship may now judge how afflicted I am at all they have tried to do in contempt of this decision. It would not be averse for your lordship to agree to join with Monseigneur the Intendant along with the excellent Cardinal de Bonald concerning a convenient remedy to be employed promptly so as to give the lie to the pretended approval of the Sovereign Pontiff and stifle the thing at birth, urging at the same the stable future of the foundations needed for the Missions of Europe.

With that, I pray God to preserve and prosper your Lordship.

Rome, from the Propaganda, March 4, 1841. Your Lordship's most affectionate affectionate

(signed) G.F. CARD. FRANSONI, PREFECT

The Vice-President of the Central Council attests to the accuracy of this copy.

(signed) TERRET, VICE PRESIDENT

(Archives de la Propagation de la Foi, Paris. Carton A. Ia)

9. Cf. especially the article in l’Univers of December 2, 1841, on this work. We have found no trace of these efforts at penetration within the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

307. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix

Paris, April 26, 1841

He depicts with a wholly romantic melancholy the life he leads far from his fiancée since his return from Lyon. The six weeks stretching before him are going to be very hard. Reflections on the Collège Stanislas, account of visits he has made, especially to the Abbé Marduel. Imagines the family happiness of his fiancée.

Mademoiselle,

Can you believe that only a week has passed since the day of parting, since the moment when on your threshold I still held your hand, since I threw myself into that fatal carriage, looking back time and again at the walls of Lyon from which I have exiled myself for two months? Can you believe that seven more dragging weeks must pass before the blessed hour which will unite me to you? I dare hope that you have some pain in thinking of it; as for me, I do not know how to reconcile myself. Mon Dieu! What must purgatory be, what suffering, after having seen the Eternal Beauty face to face, to be separated from it for ages, if absence brings so much bitterness to the affections here below! To have gazed upon you so for some days, to have been able to sit beside you, to look into your eyes, to read your smile, to hear that sweet tongue whose accents are like rose-dew to the dryness of my soul, to exchange all my thoughts with yours in silence . . . . And then, after so much joy, to have left it at one stroke, to have allowed myself to be carried far away from you, and to find myself once more in my loneliness, in this desert of aridity and
boredom assigned to me, and to wait thus through the whole springtime when nature does not wait to bedeck herself with flowers, when the heart no longer waits for anything in order to love. See, Mademoiselle, what casts me down and makes me suffer greatly. True, there no longer remains that violent upset, those burning regrets which assailed me during the journey; it would have been impossible for them to last. Mine is a calm enough malaise but constant, the cord of feeling stretched too tight, a kind of nervous irritability and moral impatience, a languor which blights the ordinary enjoyments of life, which withers the freshness of my thoughts, which makes duty onerous, distractions importunate, and even friendship indifferent to me. You know how my imagination has the habit of picturing to itself everything the mind conceives and of coloring the most abstract thoughts. But I seem to imagine within me as it were a darkness before dawn most dark still, and the dawn of June 15 appears remote, far off, and of slow approach. I hear from former days something like a sigh, or better a sad and monstrous tune singing inside me, and I cannot hold from quoting that line of Racine whose words come mechanically to the lips: “How times have changed!” Even my work maintains this sadness by recalling to me those elegiac situations which resemble mine, and by transporting me back to all the medieval manors, beneath all their balconies, to the altars of all the madonnas, and in their echoes I recognize my own plaints. Thus, while preparing my lecture just now, I came upon the story of a poor banished knight: he sends his beloved a symbolic present of honeysuckle blossoms wrapped in a branch of hazel; these verses, too charming not to repeat to you, and which I have modernized a bit, are inscribed there. They are by a woman of the twelfth century, Marie de France.

Further, what will be my fourth literature lecture proves that the custom of sending flowers is not at all new to the world. But what does it matter that a pleasure be hackneyed to the world if it be new to us? The good and the beautiful do not grow old. Sentiments’ youth is sheltered from the shocks of time which soil and vulgarize everything else. To cite the thought of that ancient whom one grows tired of hearing forever called the Just: “It is true that one never tires of hearing that one is loved, tenderly loved! . . . ” Let us continue, then, this exchange of simple and naive confidences, nor fear being a little childish; for childhood is good and dear to God. And since, for example, it is a cruelty to make these poor flowers travel between folds of paper whose deadly embrace takes away color, perfume, and life, tell me which ones you prefer so that I can have them sometimes on my mantelpiece in the little glass vase which I have just furnished for the purpose. Do you like Provence roses? I have some there: they remind me of charms happily more lasting than their own . . . I have arranged in the same bouquet a like number of pansies, and need not tell you what they express. I notice, however, that their corollas already begin to droop and that their neighbors’ buds threaten not to open, from which I conclude that symbols end up at fault and that all possible allegories are not worth a little reality.

It is otherwise with those most profound and mysterious sympathies which transcend distance and in certain grave and difficult instances prove of real assis-
tance to the forlorn. Thus I am sure, Mademoiselle, that you did not fail in your promise to me and that you prayed for me last Saturday. The need has never perhaps been more urgent. My dejection of spirit and the many material chores connected with arrival interfered with my preparatory studies, and faced with the resumption of the cause which was not without its terrors, I found myself so behind that I did not even have time to spend, according to custom, five minutes in church before class. Others then—and I counted on it indeed—had to implore for me from on high that help which all the knowledge in the world cannot attain, inspiration. The subject to be treated was vast and difficult, the attendance still considerable, and my physical strength, I do not know why, very tottery. . . . Nevertheless, things went fairly satisfactorily, and if I hesitated more than usual at the beginning, if less moving quotations failed to arouse loud applause, on the other hand I have heard that several members of the university present expressed publicly their learned approval. Monday’s lecture was more worthwhile, but there were more empty seats: the fact that they are not accustomed to the day yet, that it is a time of examinations and excursions, and that our heat has been excessive since the day before yesterday, somewhat console my self-love over these inevitable absences; for the rest they are not numerous enough to disturb me, and indeed I expect others after the next interruption, May 1.

One of the most laborious periods of my career will begin at that time and last until June 15. I will not be able, as I will next year, to substitute a simple conference for one of my lectures to the faculty, and I will have my three classes at Stanislas.¹ Last Tuesday, M. the minister, at whose soirée I had the honor to be present, told me that the matter was settled.² I will try not to let it interfere with my eventual advancement. But it is evident that the Sorbonne chair means regular advancement, official position, and the avenue to fame. Every other position, even the Ecole Normale, is only secondary, and an attempt must be made to render it easy and lucrative while at the same time filling it conscientiously; and seen in this light, I hope that Stanislas will be a post well chosen. Persons least prejudiced in his favor praise the director,³ and lately M. Rausselle, inspector taking over the duties of rector here, spoke of him in my presence in the most honorable terms. Finally, they want me, and I prefer being asked in to knocking for a long time at unproductive doors. Meanwhile you can assure Monsieur your father that I am not forgetting his advice and that, by way of example, the prospect of the Collège de France does not cease to please me.⁴

I left you the other day for M. your uncle, in leaving him I meet you again today (Tuesday morning). I have just seen him off on the Brussels stage, well rested, satisfied with his apostolic labors this Lent, thinking some about returning to Paris next year, but especially happy to have had through me good news of all his family; of you in particular to whom he is very deeply attached, and of Théophile, whose ambulatory exploits he told me about at great length. Some days ago I also had the pleasure of seeing Madame Pécellet; her husband had just left on an inspection tour, and, a widow of several hours, she was better than ever disposed to listen to my troubles. Finally, Madame Vincent⁵ to whom I delivered your letter at the Hôtel
Crillon had not arrived yet: she is expected at the end of this week. I shall be eager to make her acquaintance, too happy to meet one more person with whom I can chat about you!

Last evening’s visits and the morning’s courses have put me behind, and I would be afraid of upsetting you were I not to take advantage of today’s mail. Otherwise I would tell you in greater detail about the habitual occupations of my mind since this tiresome return: how, to cheat the slowness of time, I am already dreaming of the preparations, collecting information, looking at houses for rent, having a copy of my birth certificate sent to me, trying to persuade myself that the great event is not so far off as they pretend. Meanwhile, the good old priest of whom I have spoken to you at times, M. Marduel, is trying to calm my impatient mood by sharing it a little: “he wishes,” says he in my interest, “that today took the place of tomorrow.” He asks me to send you his compliments, and assures me with a patriarchal smile and the experience of seventy-nine years, that if absence brings pain, it can no longer have risk for me, and that he guarantees me my place in that memory, that heart, from which I vehemently desire never to be banished. Do not believe, meanwhile, that I have unworthy fears: you have been so good and so encouraging that from now on I shall no longer be capable of fearing anything. Be blessed for that, for if I had left with a single doubt, with the slightest cloud, with the shadow of an anxiety, waiting would become torture, and even the future a menace. As for you, happiest one, with spirit doubtless more sensible and at the same time less tumultuous than the one which has left you, with shyness full of charm which, without causing you to thrust aside future things, does not permit you to hasten the end of present things too much, in the midst of that most sweet existence as young girl and adored daughter, the last hours of which already take their coloring from the first rays of a new era, surrounded with a family, in whose bosom you will not behold me without perhaps some pleasure (I dare believe it), but which you cannot leave without regret; you are, Mademoiselle, a complete stranger to the pain I feel, but your goodness alone, in caring about it, can make you comprehend it. Ah! in these moments which are the most solemn, the most moving of your life, amid the domestic happiness of your present situation, when health revisits your brother’s pillow and restores joy to the threshold of your house, when you are surrounded with affections more expressive than ever, and your mother, seeing her work in you accomplished, thrills with legitimate pride, when on the eve of putting your hand in the hand it has chosen, your excellent father cannot refrain from pressing it more tenderly, then if you still have a thought for me, you are generous, and I ask nothing more. Rejoice in a happiness Providence has given you and which I do not deserve: I will be only most satisfied and proud to be able to add to it in promising you other days which will not allow you to regret these, in repeating yet once more the assurance of what you already know, but which you will soon know better, that is, of my respectful, lively, and particularly constant tenderness.

Your fiancé,
A.-F. Ozanam
Your kind letter was just delivered to me this morning; it is too flattering, so that I am not eager to reply to it. Otherwise, the slowness of this weekly correspondence seems to me too long. To write you and to read you are two consolations I need more often. I will write then probably between now and Sunday; do not grow anxious if it should be otherwise, however, and do not thank me, for it is a way for me to unburden in some little way an overflowing heart and to obtain as well, when possible, some reciprocity on your part. In the meanwhile, pardon the brevity and disorder of these page. Time presses. I can only express to you my thanks for the welcome you gave my brothers; and ask you to present my respects to your parents, and to Théophile, Charles, and Albert my friendship.

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. Three afternoons in rhetoric.
2. By virtue of statute proper to Stanislas nominations of university personnel to any post at this college had to be made with the approval of the grand master of the university.
3. Père Gratry (1805-1872). It was his first year directing Collège Stanislas, where he succeeded Abbé Bucquet. Inspector General Rauselle, who in his 1840 report expressed severe criticism in regard to studies and discipline at the Collège notes the improvement alluded to here in his 1841 report (Archives Nationales: F. 17-6813).
4. It was in view of a chair in the literature of the Midi at the Collège de France that Rector Soulacroix had advised him to apply himself to the study of Spanish.
5. The former Eugénie Véron (1812-1893), wife of Adrien Vincent (1793-1853). M. Vincent had taught in several institutions between 1812 and 1831 before becoming inspector of the academy of Bourges (1831) and then of Lyon (1834-1838) where the Vincents became acquainted with the Soulacroixs. M. Vincent was inspector of the academy of Douai from 1839 until his retirement in 1848.

308. To François Lallier
Paris, April 30, 1841

He has just returned to Paris. Has immediately taken steps with de Cornudet which could prove useful to Lallier, and tells him the result. News of some friends in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. How he assesses his teaching at Stanislas. The postscript is devoted to the recent general assembly of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

My dear friend,

Your letter came to visit someone who was absent,¹ or rather it came to wait as an agreeable surprise and consolation on his return. It has been so long since I have had news of you, and I was driven, under pain of no longer having any, to seek some at Lyon from our friend La Perrière.
Having arrived a bit late in Paris, I was not able to be of service to you, and things had proceeded as you conjectured. I have seen M. de Cornudet at the Ministry of Justice; he told me that advance in office had ceased until other seats fell vacant. M. de Person could not be included in the promotion, and the next one will probably not affect him either, for, according to the ordinary rules of advancement, it should include magistrates outside the circle of the Royal Court of Paris. By reason of his Christian zeal, his membership in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and his friendship with Montalembert, M. de Cornudet has a lively interest in your affair; and when Iexplained your fears about the immobility of the judges of Sens, he earnestly besought me to dissuade you from too stubborn a candidacy for that tribunal. He is of the opinion that you should hold yourself ready for opportunities which could open up in other cities and, that after all, Providence will perhaps accomplish more by having you pass up this vacancy. Such is the message I am entrusted to deliver to you, with regret at not being able to report a more satisfactory result, but ready to offer my modest services again with joy and gratitude as soon as you think they are still useful.

The decision rendered applies to two of our confreres, one M. Moignon whom I do not know; the other Lejouteux, now president of the Conference of St. Etienne-du-Mont and who is about to go to judge the citizens of Châteaudun. It is another loss for me, another from the little circle of intimate friendships formed in my student days and which is no more. I scarcely ever see Lamache anymore: for the last two, four, five months I have called at his house in vain without his having, on his side, come near mine. Dulac is no longer of help to me. Buried in the newsroom of l'Univers, he is no more visible among his colleagues than a desk; familiar conversation is rendered impossible, and chess is no more than a memory. I have left only poor Henri Pessonneux, banished a league and a half from me, enslaved by his tedious duties, and moreover thrown into a world of shadows where I can neither check him nor follow him.

Further, how insupportable is the solitude here, and my trip to Lyon, while giving me some days with my family and that other family destined to become mine too, has only served to make me feel all the more the hardness of my very real exile. I dare think that isolation for two will cease to be sad; and this hope makes me hasten with every wish the moment that will change my life. In the same moment that an inexpressible impatience seizes upon me and longs for the realization, I do not see the great solemnity advancing without apprehension. Beneath all the festal veils of preparation is perceptible that formidable character common to all definitive things which gives them I know not what strange resemblance to death. The duties and perils of a state so new to me appear like restless shadows, and the time remaining to me until the middle of June would be given over to the gravest thoughts were I not distracted by the sweet image of her whom God chooses for me as helpmate and whose character, better and better known through four months of correspondence and a dozen days of new conversations, seems to give me every earthly guarantee of happiness.

For the rest, my university affairs continue to prosper. Despite the excessive
heat, the ranks of my audience, while somewhat thinned, are not yet deserted, and the resumption of the course has received a sympathetic welcome. Whatever be the fate of later lectures, the success of this year is for all practical purposes achieved and establishes a favorable base for my ultimate advancement. On another front, Collège Stanislas¹ is going to ask me to take on three classes in rhetoric a week with acceptable financial arrangements. This lucrative extra and a little worrying will take care of my situation until further orders. Aside from the religious character of the establishment and the impeccable kindness of those who have enlisted me, be assured that I was touched to find that you are remembered there also. I understand nevertheless all the delicacy and gravity of this mission, a thousand times more difficult than my faculty obligations, because it must be fulfilled among our people handed over to our care by their fathers' trust and to whom we owe moral influence as well as scientific instruction.

You see that I, too, have my scruples and must spurn them in order to accomplish the will of Providence as Providence allows me to see it. But I confide them to your paternal affection so as to obtain the consoling help of your advice and prayers. The privilege of age, which a year or more seems to give me, has been revived by your entering a year sooner upon the second period of life; you owe me now the tax of your new experience. I would be very happy if you can carry out the proposal made recently of a trip here in the month of May. If this pleasure must be renounced, be kind enough at least to make amends by a prompt reply and by more frequent letters. After traveling so long a time together, do not forsake me when I am about to rejoin you on paths where you have taken the lead. As for me, I feel that new attachments do not loosen old bonds and that the power of loving, like all others, increases by greater exercise.

Farewell, my dear friend, trust ever in my sincere devotion.

A.-F. OzANAM

Last Sunday the Society of St. Vincent de Paul held its general assembly. Full hall, a well-written report, the venerable Greek patriarch of Antioch presiding,² fervent address by M. de Ravignan. Thirty conferences in the provinces, twenty-five in Paris; in the future, a weekly conference of the twenty-five presidents, a general council which functions, and Père Bailly active. Never have things gone better. Please God it will last.

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur François Lallier, Substitute Judge of the Tribunal of the First Instance, Sens.


Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. Lallier's letter of April 12 had arrived at Paris before Ozanam returned from Lyon.
2. M. de Person, examining magistrate at Sens, had sought the same post at Auxerre but had not
obtained it, which prevented Lallier, substitute judge, from being named at Sens in his place.

3. Alix Moignon (1812-1876), born at Reims. He pursued his career as magistrate at Épernay, Troyes, and Paris, councilor of the Supreme Court for 1868 (Cf. Arch. nat. BB II 253, BB 21416).

4. Collège Stanislas, directed from 1841 to 1846 by Père Gratry (Cf. Stanislas, le premier centenaire, 1905). The stipends of which Ozanam speaks were 2,000 francs a year for three afternoons a week.


309. To Dominique Meynis
April 30, 1841


My dear friend,

I hasten to send you the early information gathered in conformity with the works of the Council of Lyon. And first, you have, enclosed, the last issue of the work of Catholicism in Europe. It will tell you more than I can about the resources and intentions of those directing it.¹ I have gathered from the principal Protestant library references you want. There is extant only one French journal reporting on missions of the sect and on French missions only.² The subscription is six francs per year, and the revue is monthly. Your correspondents in England could undoubtedly get information and procure them for you; otherwise, the bookseller I have spoken to about it could perhaps undertake it.

As far as communiques extracted from the Annales, l'Univers would do it free of charge; the Gazette and the Press would probably do the same; the others for a fee. One is of the opinion, however, that in newspapers not expressly religious, the items might be shortened in way of tempting and capturing their readers. I hope soon to have more precise information on these matters.

Finally, the letters on Buddhism are not here: moreover, it would not have been possible to lose them. It is evident then that I sent them, as I thought. If you still have doubts, be good enough to come to the house and there in my room insist upon the key to my bureau, inspect the drawers and the boxes, and make certain whether I am in error. Items concerning the Propagation of the Faith have never been put anyplace else.³ In the absence of these materials, I did not feel called upon to work on the notice which should accompany their insertion, although the books and notes needed for the history of Buddhism are still in my hands. I count upon your kindness toward me to learn the plans of the council in this regard. And, not to compromise matters by too prolonged delay, I stop here, embracing you with all my heart.

Your devoted friend,
A.-F. Ozanam
I forgot to tell you that Msgr. Arduini’s comments on the French bigamists in Moldavia have been confided to someone trustworthy and zealous who has undertaken to acquaint M. the Minister of Foreign Affairs and M. the Director of General Consulates with the matter. But it is doubtful whether in the middle of active unrest attention will be paid to moral interests. Msgr. the Patriarch of Antioch immediately sought information from Mm. of the council and especially M. de Verna.

Be assured of my sad sympathy in regard to the persecution of the work in Spain.

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Notes:
1. Number 7 of this revue, out in April.
3. *La Gazette de France*.
4. Documents which had been loaned him for an article he was preparing for the *Annales de la propagation de la foi* (undoubtedly letters of F. Gobet, Vincentian Father).
5. Msgr. Arduini, vicar apostolic in Moldavia.
7. The consulates were subject to the “commercial division” of foreign affairs. This service had succeeded the “division of consulates” of the consulate period. In 1841 the director of the “commercial division” was Drouyn de Lhuys.
9. President of the Central Council of Lyon, who was gravely ill, and who would die in June.

310. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
Paris, May 1, 1841

Pleasure in letter received. He is happy with the progress of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. He asks his fiancée to point out his imperfections. He explains what religion means to him. Beginning of class at Stanislas.

Mademoiselle,

Can it be that our two ways of thinking, destined soon to intermingle, were already so alike that yours is now eager to bend toward mine, to understand it without a word being said, and to answer it without fear? For while I was indicating last Tuesday that this weekly correspondence would be from now on at too long an interval, when I was begging you to shorten it, you were forestalling my wait after a fashion by preparing a very sweet surprise for me for Wednesday. At first the unexpected letter raised that feeling of uneasiness you know as characteristic of me. But
when I had torn open the envelope and found no bad news and had read those charming pages all perfumed with sweet and affectionate things, I sighed with pleasure and the grateful kiss was pressed more tenderly than ever on the consoling paper. If then the consciousness of a good act is not without charm for you, if my desires are not indiscreet, repeat what you have done. Do not entrust the migratory swallow with your friendly messages, who knows whether the capricious bird might not take them to other roofs? Come yourself, at least by word, to dissipate the boredom of my solitude; come, I need you. During the first days of my new exile, impatient to find again some trace of you, I have reread the collection of your first letters from one end to the other, from the one where your still hesitant pen made the first attempt to the gentle lines whose duty was to distract the monotony of my trip. I seemed to see the dear image, uncertain and shy at first, draw near little by little, delineating itself in ever clearer strokes, half-lifting its veil to allow a smiling and reassuring glimpse, becoming more familiar and accessible until it brought me, all trembling with joy and love, face to face with the reality. Why must this moment have passed so soon, why must truth be so evanescent, leaving me for my only consolation shadows of remembrance? Ah! when I pressed your hand in mine, it seemed that nothing could again rob me of it; yet behold now my lips only too happy to brush the page your fingers folded.... But another day will come when I shall be allowed to see you again, and on that day it will be your heart that I shall press to mine and then we shall see whether there is any power in the world strong enough to tear you away!

You are good and compassionate; my sadness afflicts you and you urge me to allow myself some diversion. I have never thought really that you deserved my sullen offering of mood and peevishness, nor that you would blame the brief amusements of friendship. Nor have I refused to accept an invitation received shortly after my return; and shall dine on Monday evening with a friend come from Nîmes to congratulate me on my approaching happiness. The day before yesterday, to cheer myself up, I tried to reread that dramatic proverb of which I have spoken to you: *the most beautiful day of my life*; but it turned out ill. And it is pretty much the same with everything I have tried to distract me from my troubles; after the intoxicating cup given me to drain not so long ago, there is left no draught for me without bitterness. Isolation bores me and conversation with another is a burden; there is no longer any reading able to catch my attention, no task which comes easy.

I must, however, except the day of Sunday last; it was the second of four feasts of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. In the morning a pious throng crowded around the altar where this glorious Apostle of Charity reposes in his silver *chasse*. There were deputations from the twenty-five Paris conferences, young people with whom some illustrious old men mingled in fraternal equality. It was wonderful to see their serried ranks in the choir where some priests were also at prayer, veterans or recruits of those far-off missions in China and America, established by their holy founder and still watered with the blood of his disciples. The nave and the tribunes were filled with good religious who, come together under the same patronage, watch at the bedside of the sick, visit the homes of the poor, receive indigent child-
hood into asylums and schools, and whom the people of Paris voluntarily greet with the title of Sisters. In the evening a large crowd filled our meeting hall. An interesting report was made of the work of the last quarter. A visitor from Lyon had something to say about the good accomplished amid the recent misfortunes of that city. Finally an eloquent orator was heard, and the meeting closed with the blessing of the patriarch of Antioch: white-haired pontiff in ancient dress here to beg the intervention of France in behalf of the oppressed churches of Syria, and delighted to find in the youth of this most maligned country reassuring signs of a Christian future. Long after the assembly the place was covered with groups of friends exchanging encouraging words.

At the same hour, thirty other conferences established in the farthest removed sections of the country celebrated the same solemnity. How can there not be given some hope to such a strength of association, exerted mainly in the large cities, in every law school, in every enlightened home, upon a generation called to fill a variety of offices and influential posts? And if formerly immorality befell the upper classes, the academies, the judiciary, the military chiefs, the politicians, among the middle class and the people, can we not believe without too much madness that divine Providence calls us to the moral rehabilitation of our country when eight years are enough to raise our number from eight to two thousand, when several of us without the help of intrigue and favor already move in the highest levels of society; when on all sides we invade the bar, medicine, the courts, the professorships; when a single one of our conferences is composed of nearly a third of the Ecole Normale and the brightest students of the Ecole Polytechnique? (Only one thing could hinder and destroy us: the adulteration of our primitive spirit, the pharisism that sounds the trumpet before it, the exclusive self-esteem which belittles any power other than that of the elite, excessive customs and structure resulting in languor and relaxation or rather a verbose philanthropy more eager to talk than to act, or again bureaucracies which impede our march by multiplying our machinery. And especially to forget the humble simplicity which has presided over our coming together from the beginning, which makes us love obscurity without cultivating secrecy, and will perhaps win us our ultimate expansion. For God is especially pleased to bless what is little and imperceptible: the tree in its seedling, man in his cradle, good works in the shyness of their beginnings.)

This has turned into a very long homily, and, more, has probably made the mistake of being the repetition of a several-times written and preached sermon on the same subject. But lay the first blame on the touching story of your poor Spanish refugee, which has moved and impelled me to pay you back. Then, you have very obligingly invited me to allow you to share in every part of my thoughts and affections; and one day you will know what I owe this society which was the support and charm of the most perilous years of my youth. Finally, why has it never been said what I am well aware of: that taciturnity is not one of my faults, and that in my plethora of words I repeat myself rather than leave off? There is one of the failings for which had I asked your advice, you would have spared me the embarrassment of a confession, and perhaps, while pointing out the defects you noticed, would have
allowed me the sweet belief that they were the only ones. But no! you should not want to skim the surface only. Tell me freely, openly, the little things, the puerilities: tick them off while laughing at them, I will listen to them in the same way and know how to turn it to profit. But since you pretend to notice nothing, and permit me the trouble and merit of revealing my moral deficiencies to you, I will start now, not without a little indulgence. The noble lady before whom the penitent kneels is so powerful and he himself so fearful!

To begin with religion, you undoubtedly think me penetrated with its inspiration, consistent in applying its principles, a rigid observer of its laws, even perhaps rather severe and retaining like the university of former days I know not what musty scent of Jansenism. But, placed by circumstance in rather exceptional situations, in frequent communication with men who by office or inclination are occupied with ecclesiastical affairs, I have acquired the habit of speaking about religion more often than should be; reserve in such matters is, for other laymen, the safer way and in better taste. It is one of those aberrations which even the most excellent things fails to escape; and even our conferences of charity by bringing moral questions to our attention constantly, permit some of us to acquire habits of compromising ostentation and indiscreet zeal. On the other hand the sedentary life which, up until now, the duties of my profession and family misfortunes have forced on me, has given my character a rude timidity and maladroit clumsiness: I do not know enough of the world to understand the deference due it in order to make it honor my name of Catholic while avoiding its agreeable ways and seductive forms. Again, how little the interior is in accord with the exterior! It is certainly easier to hold an edifying conversation, to conform to certain positive precepts, to turn away from certain delights, than to be deeply filled with the spirit of the Gospel, to preserve it in the font of the spirit so as to ennable, purify, and improve it; to reproduce it at length in one's own actions, letting it be the seal of gentleness and beneficence. It is possible for the mouth to mumble many prayers and yet not have that soaring fervor that raises up to heaven, nor the piety that abandons itself to the maternal guidance of Providence without complaint of the present or apprehension of the future. A tender love of God, an active good will toward men, a right and unbending conscience in regard to oneself, these are the elements of a truly Christian life, and you shall not be slow to learn all that is wanting to me in this three-fold regard.

Side by side with a usually lively sensibility, you will find a despairing coldness toward holy things, with mild inclinations toward impatience, general aptitudes for good imparted by education, and yet comprised of inertia and idleness, resolutions reduced to no more than wishes, and each morning's proposals dissipating each evening. And then the vanity, weak point of people like me, the constant preoccupation with self, apparently justified by the demands of advancement and fortune, but in whose shadow hides the universal root of evil, egoism. Assuredly faith, supported in my spirit by the teachings of an admirable philosophy, has made me conscious of all its help amid the dangers of my age, its comfort for its troubles, its fruitful inspirations for its tasks; and yet I see around me so many fine intelligences
ravished by doubt, so many young lives blighted in their flower by corruption. But that is not all: there is much more. Amid my literary studies not always agreeable, the imagination, too often moved by magic scenes, needs to flee romance and drama to the real happiness of the family. That pious perception of the divine presence which seemed to depart from me with my poor mother, its image here below, will revive when another guardian angel takes her place at my side. May your modesty not make you decline this mission! Is it not the mission of every wife? Has not heaven given them the most religious instincts, the most touching qualities? More sheltered from the coldness and contagion of the outside world, they more easily preserve the happy dispositions with which they were endowed, just as the lidded jar better preserves the perfumes within. And to assure their sway, an invincible attraction is part of their example and all their virtues’ charm.

As for you, Mademoiselle, permit me to say: without a doubt you were aware of my respectful glances, the day when I saw you, a pale, laughing, young girl in the midst of your friends; when I listened to you, captivating at the instrument which obeys you. But the presentiments which came to me then had their effect later. That was at those two evening parties in November when I came, a questionable guest, to sit by your fireside, when you impressed me so deeply by the simplicity of your dress, even by your silence, accompanied as it was by unintentionally and unconstrainedly charming manners; your parents with you and you gazing upon them with that expression of tenderness which revealed the sweetest filial compassion, bending from time to time to your suffering brother whose grateful eyes told all he owed your solicitude; when describing to my good aunt the sad scenes of the flood you had visited shortly before, your voice, charged with emotion again, took on the accents of a sorrowing pity; and finally when I learned by chance of the preparations you had made that last time to entertain me (it was Saturday the 21st, feast of the Blessed Virgin); it was then, Mademoiselle, that all was over for me. Then the mystery of my vocation, so long in question, became clear; in one who until now had been only a young and charming stranger, I saw the guide and companion of my future years, and I came to understand those words spoken to the young Tobias in sacred scripture: “Hold back no longer: for she has been destined for you for all Eternity; she will walk in the same paths with you, and the merciful Lord will save you by means of each other . . . . And,” continued the text, “from that moment Tobias loved her, and his soul felt itself drawn to her with an infinite power.”

The end of this story is also the end of mine. With a bit of development, I could have drawn up a little lesson in Hebraic literature. But you have now given me permission to avoid such detours. You try to assure me very earnestly that my repetitions are not tiring to you, and that such discourses could be listened to without end. And I reply that I, less good and patient, permit myself, if not to speak, at least to write. A point is reached when the pen is powerless, when the mouth itself can no longer say everything; when there is impatience with everything except to see, to hear, to be together. To be together, in other words to let what agitates the heart overflow naturally and empty itself into the heart of another, as it were to mingle the streams of two lives and feel them run more limpid and sweet between broader
banks. In short, to arrive at that union of souls which is the marvelous work of love, to draw ever nearer each day by mutual imitation of whatever is good, to bind closer together by reciprocal devotion two wills that are now but one, to lose and find oneself in each other, and to do it so well that only God could distinguish and recognize them, but without ever separating them! Alas, we have not reached that point yet! I must leave you to return to my work. Pity me, Mademoiselle, or rather excuse the gravity and extreme seriousness of this letter which I have just reread and almost hesitate to send. It is my lot, as in my visits, to be left with regret for time badly put to profit. However, I do not want everything to be lost, and you will remain convinced one more time that you are sincerely, tenderly cherished.

Farewell! Your fiancé who loves you dearly,
A.-F. OzANAM

I will join very willingly in your prayers for Théophile. I dreamt the other night that I saw him walking without crutches. My dreams are not all lies, for often, mademoiselle, I have dreamt of you as good, affectionate, and pretty.

My regards to your parents. M. Vincent de Gourgas, who just left and who knew that I was writing to your home, requests that his best wishes be presented to M. the Rector and that he be given the message (without further explanation) that the matter in which he is interested is going well. As soon as he gets to Reims he will have the honor of addressing a letter to Monsieur your father. I will take up my duties at the Collège Stanislas on Tuesday. I intend to write to you on Thursday if time allows. I have not forgotten my promises nor the blank pages of the little remembrance you want so much.


Notes:
1. Unidentified, but probably Curnier.
2. Good Shepherd Sunday. Ozanam had already given a brief description of this feast in his April 30 letter to Lallier.
3. A reference to the official assistance given by the prefect of the Rhône on the occasion of the floods of November 1840, whose organization and distribution was confided to the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul. (cf. letter 260, February 15, to Arthaud).
4. Père de Ravignan.
6. Allusion to a former letter from the young girl that told how she and her mother had helped this poor woman.
7. V. de Gourgas, headmaster of the Collège Royal de Reims. He held the post of acting rector of the secondary school of medicine established in this city.
311. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
Paris, May 2, 1841

He admits to finding the locket empty of its lock of hair; he treats this matter poetically, jesting in the beginning; he remains very trusting.

Mademoiselle,

Do not be frightened at these unexpected lines. To begin with, the May feast' vacation has been extended, giving us an unlooked-for holiday, which I am happy to share with you. Next, there is question of asking of you a kind and urgent favor, pardon for a fault, and its prompt and easy atonement. Confession takes a little courage, but silence will be culpable, and I picture you as so indulgent and generous that I no longer hesitate.

Last evening I was getting ready for bed and, following a custom dear to me, kissed a little silver Christ, and the locket you are familiar with, hung about my neck. Then, giving in to a temptation which occurs frequently enough, I decided to open the little jewel to gaze again upon the lovely treasure it enclosed. It was unfastened; it was empty. I got up and spent nearly an hour searching everywhere for the dear ringlet; useless effort! The daylight which I counted on has been no more favorable, and I have come to realize with a lively and profound sorrow that my most precious treasure has been lost beyond repair. I do not know how to express my shame and grief: I have wanted to say nothing and to wait for fear of hurting you. But I have given way to my natural mode of acting which never allows me to dissimulate, which, when I was little, made me run to tell my foolishness to my poor mother, so as to return to grace immediately; nor can I even now bear the sight of those from whom I might have hidden a fault. But above all, I cannot resign myself to remain any longer without this cherished talisman. Four days of having to wait for a reply is already much too long; alas, will it be severe?

If chagrin should still allow some room for imagination, I would imagine myself in the attitude of my last confession: kneeling before you, head hanging, my hands in yours, your repentant knight, gracious suzeraine, would humbly confess his misdeed. And you, with pitiless memory of past sins, would assess blame for the ring lost momentarily on the day of departure, the studs lost and found, and even the adventures of the too-famous cloak; and you would ask what confidence the negligent guardian merits to whose hands nothing can be entrusted. Perhaps also would you pretend to fear some fatal presage, and threaten to withdraw your faith from someone who cannot keep its symbol. But the poor knight would reply that he once spoke to you of that Oberon, that spirit, happy to thwart innocent loves, who for so long a time harassed the young Huen de Bordeaux and his wife in the winds and on the waves and wept in order to make them pay some little price for their happiness. Your penitent would have his reasons for believing that old Lutin has not left off disturbing the joy of another. It could be possible that, attracted to persecuting me, he was the true author of so many treacheries, that he in an evil night, had suggested parsimonious thoughts in some learned professor, that, disguised as
a valet, he had put my clothing on the back of the aristocratic ravisher, that he then engaged in the fun of pilfering successively the trifling jewels whose history you know in order; in short, to desolate me today by a new trick. In consequence, and having seen the attenuating circumstances of the case, just judge, you would allow yourself a certain mildness; you would give three lashes to the shoulders of the patient sufferer with the gold chain hanging on your bosom, but to assuage his pain, another lock loosened from your forehead would tumble into the gold locket, to leave it never again.

But, I am really too upset to keep jesting any longer with good grace. I dare not ask you to cut off another ringlet of your hair in my favor. Madame your mother has shown me those she has preserved from various ages; would it not be possible to send me one of them in an envelope by the next post without waiting to write me about it? This act itself will be my pardon. Never have I given lectures at the Sorbonne without pressing your dear amulet upon my breast. What would I do on Saturday if it were missing? Strongly shaken feeling makes superstition easy. I no more want to mark a bad omen here than you yourself to see grave blame there. I do not have the foolish custom of losing things, and my little misfortunes of this year can perhaps be explained by a new distraction for which you cannot reproach me. In the present situation my fault has been to open the case too often: does not the motive excuse me? Beyond doubt some importance, a certain sentimental value, can be attached to these symbolic acts inherited from our fathers and of such sweet usage. I for one see no harm.

Who knows whether, to counteract the prerogatives vexations here below assume over our life, Providence does not send us these small but painful reverses at the moment when it wishes to prepare for us boundless consolations. No, no, you are not afraid (are you?) that my heart is as faithless as the locket that rests on it; neither do I dread losing you like those fickle ringlets! True, you are free until the hour when the solemn consent falls from your lips, and I am proud that each thought you give me is a voluntary offering and impatient of the fact as well, because to strange eyes we do not appear to belong to each other yet. But whatever be my haste to seal this blessed union, my wish is entirely without anxiety: for is it not true that I no longer have anything to be anxious about? Will not the hesitations, apprehensions, and discouragements which they tell me often come to try the soul of young girls on the eve of the fateful day befall you? Yet we are each other’s in God’s sight and our families; and with how little regret you will see the moment come when we shall be so before men!

Adieu, Mademoiselle, I close this letter in haste because time presses and I am with an ever constant tenderness,

Your fiancé who loves you dearly,
A.-F. OZANAM
Note:
1. The feast day of the king (Saint Philip, May 1) was a holiday. May 1 fell on Saturday in 1841. Ozanam erred in dating his letter May 2. It was really Monday May 3, as the following letter indicates.

312. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
May 8, 1841

He confesses his worries about his health to her. Is grateful for the lock of hair sent him. He speaks of his family, of the role women have played in it, of its motto and arms.

Mademoiselle,

I seize a fleeting hour between the lecture just finished and the one whose preparation must now begin and come at the same time to excuse myself, to thank you, and to tell you how much more good you have done than you perhaps realize.

When I recounted my unhappiness to you on Monday,¹ I had no thought of an evil omen and was far from expecting anything which would justify nagging apprehensions. In the course of the same evening and as if to inflict upon myself the chastisement from which your mercy exempts you, a raging sore throat assailed me. The general weakness which accompanied it and the remedies necessary to fight it absorbed the greatest part of these past days which I had counted on sharing with you. My imagination, seizing upon the sadness of these circumstances, immediately found in them the most cogent reasons for anxiety. There was my interrupted lecture course, the incalculable delays in my affairs and consequently in the affairs of her who is dearest to me of all, in a word all the painful thoughts capable of running through an aching head in solitude and exile. Happily, the doctor, who has decided to be my companion and friend, came to visit me, consoling and helpful. She guaranteed that I would lecture today,² and against my expectation I was able to speak for an hour without too much fatigue. She now promises me that it will be gone by the end of the week, and the comfort I feel begins to shake my incredulity.

Without disparaging the efficacy of material means, sensitive as I am to the moral side of things, I indeed have the right to ascribe some of the success to those white visitors which arrived yesterday and today bearing your friendly words. They informed me that the evil genie, ravisher of the lost lock, had confined his perfidies to that, that all was not broken off between us, that in short, you would forgive and, magnanimous to the end, you would wipe out the fault in repairing it. Or rather, and to be more serious, in those melancholy moments when the least vexations are as menacing as catastrophes, when isolation seems like abandonment and absence like a final farewell, how most sweet those letters which dissipated fatal illusion and allowed the voice of hope to be heard once again, particularly when another keepsake joined these others; when at the same time one seemed to hear, he
believes, that he also saw once more. I have told you of my poor memory, powerless to retain the most cherished features. Well! these ringlets which you have been so willing to give me again, restore you to me: your image had vanished entirely with them. It is a secret as mysterious as that of the bonds of which our thoughts are intertwined! A shadow can suffice to recall a picture. So, this ringlet snipped from your head was not only yours, but yourself. From now on, while it is here, while it reposes on my breast, it is a little as if you were with me, as if I pressed your hand into my arm and my heart; I find myself no longer alone; I can believe myself, feel myself, strong. Therefore, without being superstitious, I have the right to attribute some efficacy to my favorite talisman, I have the right to be happy in having found it again before my lecture, and I can express to you without exaggeration my lively and deep gratitude.

You know that I hold at great price and take infinite pleasure in the trifles that symbolize great thoughts. I am indifferent to the cold and proud spirits accustomed to scorn symbols and to disdain the adorable childishness of sentiment. And you, on the other hand, you know so well the art of reviving the present again by words preceding and following it! I had expected some dissatisfaction, a few reproaches, sweetened in their presentation undoubtedly, but betraying at bottom a justified impatience. But you play acted at anger so well, with so much grace and gaiety that from the first lines I ceased to believe in your resentment, and held myself certain to obtain my request the next day. You made a fair semblance of wishing to be implored. I knew you too well, knew you to be too soft-hearted and easy to have supposed that you could long keep up an assumed role and prolong my already overlong suffering. And you ask me whether I am happy, whether I still love you? And how could I not love so affectionate a playfulness, so sweet a sensibility? How not be moved to meet thus, on the humblest occasions, and so to speak at each step of life, these charming qualities strewn like so many flowers to perfume the way? Above all, how not thrill with joy and pride while musing that so many merits and charms have been brought together by nature, and cultivated by education, only to belong so soon to me?

In return for the ringlet-precursor which precedes your own person here I send you (poor exchange) my coat of arms which you have requested. It will soon be yours and with it I will give you something worthier I have to offer you, the name it serves. Oh! be assured that it is a fine name and was my mother’s and grandmother’s. It is the name those good and respectable ladies bore who prayed from the beautiful Book of Hours given into your hands today. It is a name which the angels of heaven have often repeated with praise, which here below numberless children have repeated with love. The poor hold it in benediction still. If it is not richly emblazoned, if it is not crowned with the diadem of comtesse or marquise, it is united to a holy crown, hereditary in the family. It is vacant now, waiting only you: it shall be worthily worn; I seem to see it on a twenty-year-old brow more brilliant and lovely than ever. In my pride and happiness at presenting to all who belong to me, to my relatives and friends, the helpmate bestowed upon me, I will echo the
motto of those ancient knights our fathers after theirs wrote on their arms, but with more reason and delight, God permits it.

Farewell, Mademoiselle, in a few days, Wednesday probably, I will have the honor to write you more at length: today the hard law of work summons me nor any longer allows me the liberty of an unburdening of which I have need. I hesitated to tell you about my little discomforts: that is bad policy for me; perhaps it is a worry to you. But I reminded myself of the complete honesty you demand; besides I found in this circumstance an excuse for my delay in writing, an opportunity furthermore to merit your last letters. Nevertheless, the illness was not grave or even discomfiting; it has run its course. The doctor assures me of preventing its recurrence and sees no reason to worry about the future. I dare hope that you will not be upset and that, in the prayers you now say for your excellent brother and in which I join with all my heart, you will yet keep a place for him whom on a certain day, at the foot of the same altar, you called your betrothed, while waiting to bestow upon him a sweeter title; the title can change, but not the love.

A.-F. Ozanam

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. See the letter of May 2 where he relates the history of the lost lock of hair.
2. His Saturday course at the Sorbonne. It seems, contrariwise, that his debut at Stanislas had been delayed.

313. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
Paris, May 13, 1841

Poetic passage on “Mademoiselle” and the name Amélie; he jests about a piece of verse he intends to compose. He has been appointed to examine a Spanish work for the minister of instruction and wonders why. He requests a list of his exterior faults. Also requests a little note so as to make purchases through Mme. Péclet in way of wedding presents. He remarks upon his complete ineptitude at dancing.

Mademoiselle,

I experience a singular pleasure in writing that one word Mademoiselle. Nothing there but itself, light and graceful, hanging in the middle of the white page, it seems to smile at me and I smile back at it. Can you tell me why? Could it be especially because it conjures up an image with the general habit of pleasing? Because a young girl’s presence is like an angel’s: beautiful in flight, love on the move, scattering its fragrance? Because, condemned as I am to a solitary life, I am so happy and astonished to be in communion with one of these mysterious creatures made to
charm earth and to honor heaven? Is it not indeed that for me the archetype has assumed visible forms, that for me these lovely qualities are arrayed with the features of someone beloved, that in charming recollections they represent her as I saw her lately, and that the someone is you? It is a grammatical question involving a compound word, a question of recognizing which beguiles me the more: the noun or the possessive which precedes it? I hold for the latter.

Maid that you are, you could, seeing that I delight in writing Mademoiselle, insist upon my prolonging this delight for some time. But I hasten to declare that the first syllable holds all my predilection and that it would lose nothing in being followed immediately by two shorter ones. God knows the wise lesson I would be honored to give you on the title of Madame, its etymology and synonyms, its origin and worth, did I not fear to push pedantry too far. There is another name also most dear to me, as you know, whose sound is sweet repetition on my lips and which respect even now forbids me to address you with as do your father and brothers, it is the name Amélie! . . . See how proud and happy my pen is to have found reason to write it! And how, besides, it so truly flatters the eye, falls harmoniously on the ear, has so charming a cadence. I am most pleased, furthermore, that it is blessed in not being one of those Romanesque names with which the fad of the moment has baptized so many women. It belongs to a genuine saint. Rather aristocratic, too, and suggestive of the middle ages and strange letters, and indeed fittingly, for it belonged to a queen of Hungary. Admit, nevertheless, that rather than allowing it to be profaned by the sacrilegious barking of your Diane, you prefer to see it set down respectfully in these lines. It shines forth here, it is inscribed with honor, as on the locket I wear. But nowhere is it more deeply etched, more surrounded with the homage of worship as affectionate as it is faithful, than at the bottom of my heart.

This preface was necessary to clarify a controversy of major proportions touching which I need to sue in the court of love before you. The aforesaid court has condemned me for certain misdeeds and crimes to make honorable amend, penance, and satisfaction, of which I should acquit myself to you, since I am suspect of more or less legitimate relations with the demon of poetry, point where my judges (I beg their pardon) are strangely mistaken! But it is a well-known law of the Gai-savoir which forbids troubadours, trouvères, minstrels or any other belonging to the field of song, to insert in their sonnets, sirventes, ballads, lays, virelays, triolets, rondos, chansons and tencons, the name of the chatelaine lady or demoiselle who haunts their thoughts. And on the other hand the devil, who meddles a bit in our affairs, having wished the execution of my aforesaid penance, does it not make it impossible for me not to appeal several times over to the charming ringlet which in its turn points to the poem requested contrary to the laws, usages, and prescriptions above? All that being taken into consideration, you are sued to declare and pronounce sentence without appeal upon the prejudicial difficulty, while the culprit protests his sincere intention of submitting to his sentence. He will go much further, for the fervor of his penitence is so excessive that he is ready to become your prisoner if it please you to be his jailor, and hopes soon to wear for his whole life the chains you will impose on him!
How ashamed I am to bring up once again that piece so long promised! The fact is that I write verse rarely, slowly, and with difficulty: some time ago I had made a beginning when I was taken with the deplorable illness which had lasted two weeks and whose inopportuneness had plunged me into an anxiety and sadness difficult to describe. I would have taken less notice of it at another time; it was trifling, incapable of interrupting my regular work; the doctor made fun of my apprehension for the future. But remember that the sore throat prevented all conversation, the aching made my mind stupid and work unproductive; add to this my anxiety, and I became incapable of anything worthwhile. Now that has all passed, for I am much better since last evening and today conducted my first class in rhetoric at Stanislas almost without fatigue. I certainly do not want to deny either the slightness of the illness of the efficacy of the medicine, but yesterday morning I felt sicker than the night before, and this worried me; I remembered it was the last day of your pilgrimage, that at the very hour you were undoubtedly praying for Théophile. I prayed with you. I, too, counted on a place in those vows you made at the sanctuary of Fourvières; I had asked you for it. Before the end of the day there was a considerable change which continues and grows better, and perhaps by tomorrow evening all trace will be gone. See how all-powerful prayer is and how I have reason to believe that yours hang over me like a protective shadow. May this improvement be the presage of better health and our poor invalid soon continue to improve rapidly on the way to a cure begun when all his hopes were low! Be so kind as to tell me about him and tell him that I would have written to him if I were not overwhelmed at present both by work very far behind for my having put it off too long and by new duties awaiting me.

I count among these latter an unforeseen task sent me by the minister of public instruction without my knowing the reason. The other day there arrived through the offices of a dragoon a packet resealed with the official stamp and containing a course in the Spanish Language which M. the minister begged me to examine to know whether the work merited the approbation of the university. My standing in the Faculty of Letters does not justify a mission of this kind and my colleagues are little accustomed to assume gratuitously this kind of unpaid work. Besides, a committee exists for this kind of thing whose members are remunerated and among whose membership there was question of admitting me. Could it be that this question has come up again? Is it a test, a trap, an exploitation, a civility? Whatever it is, one must extricate himself honorably, read the book in its entirety and draw up a report. The task was begun as soon as received, but it cannot fail nevertheless to rob me of several hours. Not enough remains from this touching tale to buy myself a needed article of clothing, but in return the Religieuse allemand has largely sufficed to pay for the coat which has the further bad luck of not pleasing you. Excuse the pettiness of these details. But they should remind you of a promise made and still unfulfilled, to send me the list of my external faults; if you delay any longer I will end up by frightening myself with the probable length of a list most difficult to finish.

Now that speech is restored to me, and commerce with humans at the same
time, I am going to assume steps abandoned for some days. I have already gotten
the necessary legal information concerning the publishing of the banns. No proxy
or document is needed here. All papers must be filed with the legal authorities of
the place where the marriage is celebrated, that is, at Lyon: a receipt will be given
which M. your father should send me right away and which will serve for the pub-
lishing here at the same time as there. I must then from this end send my birth
certificate to M. your father and will do so as soon as the sworn-translator appointed
to make the copy has sent it to me, which will be, I hope, early next week. In
return, Mme. your mother must be kind enough to send me a little note, as ar-
ranged between us, to guide me and the good Mme. Péclot in a choice I am happy to
make since it has to do with you, but in which I would succeed very badly unless
assisted by some instructions. I ask that they be many, not to do violence to your
discretion and delicacy but in order to give me personally an easier option and
knowledgeable choice. Rest easy, our good grandmother university affords her chil-
dren too modest a situation for the temptations Parisian luxury exercises over some.
I can never do everything I would like and what I would like does not merit
backing, for it is pure egotism, and I admit to you that under our apparent seri-
ousness, we are not insensible to the prestige of finery and elegance. If you cannot look
without pleasure on the chiseled frame, the gilded cornice, the blooming roses
which frame your precious portrait, I too know a beautiful brow that I would like to
deck with diamonds less limpid than itself, hair that I would like to see escaping its
fillets beneath the floating shadow of lace, hands that I would hold charming pris-
oners set with gold and gems, and finally, a whole figure whose simple and modest
attitudes would lend nobility to the ficiest draperies and grace to the most gleam-
ing tissues. Happily you have no need of them, no need of anything to be pleasing,
much less to be loved, but love itself does need to attempt the realization of what it
dreams about.

You are so good as to summon me to a family council about a serious question,
the matter of the fetes and celebrations to be given in honor of the great and memo-
rable event. I have been so graciously accustomed to freedom and ease at the family
fireside that I shall not hesitate to give my opinion. To the number of exterior im-
perfections you could add the complete ineptitude of the individual concerned for
dance steps, nor are they themselves subject to improvement. Time is lacking as
much as the ability, and despite my wish to show my gratitude for the agreeable
surprise that your Italian lessons have been looked after, I cannot oblige you by
returning a passable dancer. But, as you know, since eyes are invariably drawn to
the heroes of the occasion, if dancing must inaugurate things, I am equally ridicu-
lous whether I dance badly or not at all. My humility is not equal to resigning itself
to ridicule on such a solemn occasion nor would you yourself wish it. Besides, how-
ever proper the protocol, however modest the celebration, my older brother would
be rather out of place, my younger brother could take no part (he is no cleverer than
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lous whether I dance badly or not at all. My humility is not equal to resigning itself
to ridicule on such a solemn occasion nor would you yourself wish it. Besides, how-
ever proper the protocol, however modest the celebration, my older brother would
be rather out of place, my younger brother could take no part (he is no cleverer than
I) and among my family of the Haraneder, Jaillard, and Coste lines I can think of no
one who could indulge in this pleasure. There, I admit a calamity, but it cannot be
helped; it could in no way be considered. Even the kind of party must be aban-
A Life in Letters

doned where, without dancing being planned, improvisation is necessary in order to entertain and satisfy certain guests such as I witnessed at the wedding of one of my friends who had, with bad enough grace, to open an impromptu ball with his wife. This being said, I abandon myself entirely to the wisdom and delicacy of the first speakers and while, excluding out of its absolute impossibility for me the idea of a dance-soirée or what could become such, I leave the rest to votes more competent than mine. Anything that would heighten and consecrate a day destined to hold so great a place in our life merits my sincere and profound gratitude.

Midnight strikes and the hour past my bedtime set in obedience to you has come swiftly in the middle of the engaging distraction of this letter. It marks a new date, one of those we are committed to observe. It is May 14. One month more and I shall go to accomplish the great things awaiting me. Well! (Shall I say it?) Amid the impatience which swells within me, it strikes me that time, whose slowness I accuse incessantly, is going to prove too short for my preparations. I am not referring to the official preparations, easy to push if one wishes. Rather to a more important preparation, one carried out in the soul's interior, one I owe you. Surrounded as you are, you have only to look to know, and if needed, the advice of your admirable mother there by your side introduces you to the obligations, problems, and consolations of your new destiny. But I, long now alone in the world, condemned in advance by my studies to this fatal neglect, deprived of domestic models and traditions, I have not as so many others do a father's admonitions to instruct me in my duties; I have no paternal mouth from which to learn the conditions of my happiness: nor was it my lot to live with sisters nor with relations whose conversation would have apprised me of the discretion, consideration, and exigencies which a more balanced organization and livelier sensibility demand. I know nothing about the imposing functions of the head of a family, nothing of what it must cost honor to protect a young wife. I shall offer you a loyal arm but one which is neither supple nor very strong; a heart accessible to the sweetest sentiments but also to the most exaggerated disquietudes; an imagination whose heat must be maintained since it gives life to my speech and my pen, and yet whose digression I must constantly war against; solid principles, but a will often weak; work habits nonetheless bare of order and activity: in short, a fortune obscure and shaky at present and uncertain of the future.

Six months ago I would not have dissimulated, but I would not have dared say so much. Today, I trust, illusions are useless; they would be dangerous. Your intelligence and perception assure me that, however you have known me and however you will know me, you have wanted me. You have not despaired of my becoming better; you have believed in me because of the honorable friendships with which I am surrounded, because of my parents' memory, because of the Providence which has preserved me in their teaching and traditions. Oh well! your faith will support mine, and I will begin to realize that I must be good if I am dear to someone other than myself. And when doubts about my career, my conscience, my role as a man and a Christian, recur, I shall reassure myself by considering that if God could allow me to blind myself and perish alone, He could not permit a young girl all full of
innocence and purity, righteousness and tenderness, to be deluded and to come to her own perdition by falling into my hands. When in the first days of the world He allowed the partition of things here below, he abandoned to Cain the culture of this accursed earth covered with brambles and thorns. But the cherished flocks, the sweet sheep and the little lambs, He confided them to the care of the young Abel whom He loved. No, I can believe no longer, once He gives you to me, I can believe no longer that He does not love me!

Farewell, Mademoiselle; still some letters to write in this style that another style will supplant . . . or rather there will be little room for replacement, for there will be little correspondence, the sad necessity of writing will disappear forever. If I believe an interior voice which speaks no falsehood, once united, we will no longer be able to leave each other easily. And since the Italian sojourn is necessary for my studies, we must join forces to bring it to pass immediately. Later I would never make the decision to go alone. Do you not see that even now I cannot make up my mind to finish? Nevertheless I must and I yield with regret. Farewell once again, and if I have not replied at greater length to the charming insinuations of your next-to-last letter, be assured that I have nonetheless been moved . . . . Your poor fiancé is too happy, and you are the reason; but also will he repay you with a tenderer affection, and without fear of repeating himself he wishes to declare himself again:

Your fiancé who loves you dearly,
A.-F. OZANAM

I am greatly touched at some lines Mme. your mother addresses to me and I will have the honor to respond to them next time. But I absolutely insist upon the little note of which we have spoken. If it is not meant for me, it could be written to Mme. Péclet. Capable of offering but very little, I would at least like to have the satisfaction of a choice well made. The color of the drapes, the place for the laces, and the kind of trinkets—in a word, general indications—and I, in my turn, will write to Mme. your mother what I have done.

I have just received your charming little letter with the instructions enclosed, which, in what concerns the tobacco, have already been accepted, and in regard to the rest will have their scrupulous execution. Do not ask: I am almost cured; be kind enough to tell my older brother, who thinks me still sick. I always made the mistake of raising an uproar over nothing, and I hope to spare you, thanks be to God, for other duties than those of a Sister of Charity.

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. The start of his teaching at Stanislas, expected on Tuesday, May 4, had been delayed until this date.
2. She replied: "My father sees a good augury in your being asked for the Spanish." This gratuitous service requested by Villemain could have been related to an eventual nomination of Ozanam
A Life in Letters

3. He was about to publish in the *Nouveau Correspondant*, tome IV, 1841, pp. 121-171, "A monastic drama in tenth century Germany, 'Gallicanus,' comedy derived from the Theatre of Hrosvita, German religious of the Benedictine Abbey of Gandersheim."

4. The sworn-translation was necessary, since the birth certificate of Ozanam, who was born in Milan, was in Italian.

314. To Charles Ozanam

Paris, May 19, 1841

My dear friend,

It is said that you accuse my silence and envy the long pages I address to others. But others write to me, and without wishing to wound etiquette, it seems to me nevertheless that the older should not take the first step. True, your duties are numerous; mine overwhelm me, and the time I take from my nights, while undermining my health, hardly fulfills the most demanding needs of my duty. Aside from this excuse, it is a long time since you have heard from me directly: until now you have had to share those received at the academy or the Carthusians.

First, my congratulations on your good marks, and still more on the work of which they are the result. You see that your extreme apprehensions were not realized—they were due to your characteristic modesty—M. Demogeot's goodness will avail to make easy these last months of rhetoric, so formidable when seen from a distance. No longer is it necessary to stir up your zeal; I think intelligence and taste are developing also: you are at one of those times of life when the faculties grow by leaps and bounds; they can feel themselves growing and swelling. God, who performs this work in us, must be tenderly thanked and asked for the grace to use His benefits in a holy manner.

You must be conscious of the eagerness with which so many people crowd around you. It would seem that you cannot satisfy their invitations. These social relationships are not useless. They help form your manners and strip away the wildness and rudeness often characteristic of young people your age. But meanwhile you will form solid Christian and comforting friendships. You will feel the heart struggling to swell itself, the old affections melting at contact with the new, and no longer can it be said as formerly: the three of us, always the three of us, none but the three of us.

Beyond a doubt the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is preparing for you those
delights of holy brotherhood I have always found numerous and sweet. It seems to me, I do not know why, that I am completely happy and eager to see you join it. It is another bond between us; it brings us together by putting you, so to speak, more within my reach; it is a subject on which we will always be able to understand each other. However, your extreme youth needs certain cautions: I am strongly of the opinion, for example, that you should not be sent to visit poor families alone. Greater demands than that of the military service should not be made on you or on your needed rest. These reservations being made, you should bring a joyful dedication to the works placed under the patronage of so good a saint and which have received such unbelievable blessings from Providence. It is eight years since the first conference was formed at Paris: we were eight men. Today our ranks count more than two thousand youths. We penetrate every school, every class of society, every village of any importance. Three new divisions are forming at Besançon, Amiens, and Douai: it will soon be impossible to set foot anywhere in France without meeting a kindred welcome. Be good enough to remember me to those gentlemen you see, especially Matheron, your worthy president.

You could not imagine how I have wished to change places with you for a while these past days and to visit for some hours with Alphonse, whom I see in my mind's eye motionless and captive with that stubborn disease of the knee. But in return heaven has given him a serenity of soul in comparison to which all external misfortunes are but as light shadows. In choosing God's service he has chosen the best part. Further, despite his troubles, is he not still the guide and consoler of others? He is especially mine at this time which is not without trouble and vexation for me.

My sore throat, after having quickly abated last week, has recurred to a worse degree the last three or four days. My affairs of every kind are suffering because of it, and I am far from having the patience necessary to bear misfortunes come at such an inappropriate time. In the meantime I have had to begin my tenure at Stanislas and have proved that rhetoric is not an easy subject: between professor and students, the one most burdened is not always the one you think.

Farewell, my dear brother; since you are going to my Aunt's, take her my respects and be sure to ask Uncle, if he has not done so, to answer the letter I wrote him yesterday as soon as possible. A thousand compliments to Marie. We will meet again within the month.

While waiting, pray for your brother,

A.-F. OZANAM

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. At Rector Soulacroix's.
2. At their brother's, the Abbé Alphonse Ozanam.
4. An auxiliary work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul which had its origin with the conferences of Lyon.
5. Misprint for Mathenon.
7. Their former housekeeper.

315. To Mademoiselle Soulacroix
Paris, May 19, 1841

He reproaches himself with egotism for following the path of his duties without troubling himself enough about those of others. Reply to teasing from their friends (Bailly, l’abbé Noirot, Mme. Péclet). To meet Mme. Vincent at last.

Mademoiselle,

I wrote the date on this letter last evening: an urgent duty made the pen fall from my hand and here I am on Thursday morning, very happy with your good letter, which I have just received, and very much hindered from answering it as I would like. Today the post leaves early, just as on Sunday, and yet I wish to thank, too, Madame your mother for having been so obliging as to send the note requested. Our dear interview must then be shortened, save to renew it as soon as possible.

First, you must have the avowal of a twofold remorse. One is for having upset the charming order you have established: that of writing on a fixed day, the same day, and of lending the attractiveness of a rendezvous to the correspondence. The wish to give and receive more frequent news has made me fail to adhere to the agreed arrangement, and I have perhaps seemed not to appreciate the delicate pleasure of reuniting ourselves at least in thought, of consecrating ourselves to each other at the chosen moment, and of being truly together despite difficulties and distance. The second reproach is that too often I abandon myself to the flow of my thoughts and come to the end of my time and paper without leisure to respond to so many good, charming, and interesting things you have told me. This habit of preoccupying oneself exclusively with one’s own caprices, of following one’s inspiration without troubling oneself with that of others, does it not conceal some egotism? From that arise my fears of a failure I have not needed to confess to you: he talks enough about himself; I wish to accuse him of talking too much. But on this point amendment will be easy. Of the numerous joys I have known since a certain time, one which most moves me is to listen to the accents of a sweet voice. You would scarcely believe how much those harmonies ravish my ear, in which I feel throbbing all that soul to which I will soon belong, all that life that will be mine. You have no idea what I would pay for the happiness of hearing a word from you, even were I too far away to distinguish the sense. Beyond a doubt the instrument which obeys you so well moves beneath your fingers with the liveliest admiration. Yet many times I have prayed for it to be silent for a little while so as to hear you in turn. If then you make me wish to silence your pretty piano, how much more reason to relieve you of the intemperance of my speech?
Thanks, noble and gracious sovereign, for the laws and ordinances you have
deigned to make your friend, vassal, and subject. He has received them with all the
respect due royal words and is permitted to jest at them only insofar as absolute
obedience to you allows. He has noted with satisfaction in the preface that the liter-
ature lessons of M. Reynaud were not lost, and he has conceived from that the same
hope for his own. Yet you will allow him to revolt against the Machiavellian maxim
of M. Noirot, inappropriately invoked by your Highness, by the way, as if she did
not know that he belongs to the profession of people who do not engage in making
fun of others. Now or ever, revolt is the most sacred of duties. I rise up then to pro-
test that the empire which has fallen to you will have no end except at your good
pleasure; I pride myself in not creating ephemeral institutions, and the day when I
shall install you as Queen of my hearth will long last. More to the point, you are
already aware of how your commands are anticipated. Your intervention is none-
theless still necessary to render the execution possible. For example, M. Bailly being
well paid to watch me eat, but not to carve his own boiled beef. I am deprived of
serving my apprenticeship as carving squire at his table, and this experiment is put
off until the solemn day when, hanging the hook from the domestic mantelpiece I
enter into the possession of my functions as family head. Again, a silk cravat, sev-
eral times resumed since your judicious observations about collars, has never
succeeded in being worn with any elegance. It must await the succor of the beautiful
hand which some time ago tied such a pretty rosette of blue ribbon on my favorite
carrying-case. For the rest, some courses with Madame Péclet will acquaint me with
the art of walking two by two; and as for pointed dancing slippers, they have not
given me too many bad turns so as not to dispose me to sacrifice them with good
grace upon the altar of marriage.

Théophile's progress must be a great consolation to all of you: I share it with all
my heart, and if the blessings from on high only continue to fall upon him I do not
despair of his being able to play his full role in the great solemnity which approach-
es. I myself would be very upset if we could not have at our side in church this excep-
tional brother whose courageous and serene virtue has sweetened your bitterest days,
and whose hoped-for presence would add even greater wonder to this day of hap-
piness. From my side, I think you will be pleased to learn that I have had the honor of
seeing Madame Vincent. Honor is the word. For after having written her to inquire
the hour when it was most convenient for her to receive me, I was awaiting her reply
when she took the trouble to stop here! And as I stumbled all over myself in excuses
and admitted the fear of your chiding me, she replied that the multiplicity of her
errands did not give her a moment at home and my going there would have been in
vain. Nevertheless I intend to call constantly. I am overjoyed at the opportunity to
chat about you with someone who is so tenderly attached to you.

Mon Dieu, how time flies! Already I must leave you. But is it leaving you to turn
to Madame your mother?

Your fiancé who loves you dearly,
A.-F. OZANAM
Why have you not scolded me a little about my opposition to the proposal of dancing? It is still the same, and the reasons seem to me ever more decisive. But since there must be something on the other side, it would be better to say so. Such frankness would assure me that mine had been pardoned.

It seems to me that I have given you too brief a goodby . . . even though I have been interrupted here. It will be too late for the letter to Madame your mother to be finished in time. I am going to send this one; the other will follow close on it. A twofold hurry must excuse the double postage.

Many thanks for your little flower. Health to the good bearer. We are not so intelligent as to know enough to continue stripping the petals from the daisy, and the reply of this vegetable oracle has delivered us a most sad, modest, but sweet word which we delight in seizing upon as the true word of the puzzle. Why is it that this day of all days I haven’t the tiniest bouquet at my convenience?

316. To Madame Soulacroix
Paris, May 20, 1841

Mme. Péclet is occupied with the wedding presents which regrettably can only be modest. Request for prayers required for the banns of marriage. News of a flu relapse which is not serious. Steps taken by Soulacroix with Mignet on the subject of the Collège de France.

Madame,

It is a very long time since I determined to write you. It is only proper to court your maternal power and make it the accomplice of my assault on a heart whose keys are still yours. It is in response to the sweet name of son with which you already address me and to bear witness to my gratitude by the sincerity of my confidences. Several circumstances have joined to refuse me until now the leisure to dash off these hasty lines destined for your eyes. But today the thanks I owe you for the note which came this morning could wait no longer.

You will forgive me, Madame, for having offended your delicacy by my importunities. But the good Mme. Péclet, who is very eager to assist in the great business of the wedding presents, has agreed to cancel the first instruction. Now her more enlightened zeal can be exercised without any trouble, and we have already held a preliminary conference and put our heads together. Mme. Péclet somewhat suspects my cashmere merchant of smuggling, and since the tariff on this article greatly increases its price, she is of the opinion that perhaps it would be better to select a
French cashmere of the best quality and the fullest measure. In any case I insist that that first be verified, so we will pay our Jew a visit. In what concerns the rest, I can from now on surrender myself entirely to the taste and judgment of your respectable friend. Except, that I would greatly enjoy accompanying her. And, singular as it may seem to see a pretended philosopher play with a tailor’s dummy, it would be very charming indeed for me to busy myself with something which could bring a satisfied smile to lips so dear. It will no longer be without regret for me to find myself limited by the paucity of my resources, far removed from the horizons my eagerness would reach out for. This good desire, I have said already, is fruitless. I already experienced the husband’s ambition of seeing young charms destined to shed so much joy upon my life set off with all the external splendor that art can still furnish them. Love would like to adorn without limit this vision of which it is the reflection according to its exalted destiny. It is understood that certain lacunae will remain which Mademoiselle Amélie’s taste will have to fill: a sum has been put aside for this purpose.

Apropos of these lines, I must ask you, Madame, to be my mediatrix and advocate in regard to other lines long promised and still unwritten, which, except for extenuating circumstances, would constitute a crime of negligence of the first order. The truth is that I have had a severe attack of the flu, an illness hardly dangerous usually, but which is epidemic in Paris at present. The sore throat and its consequences lasted three weeks. The bad weather and some absolutely necessary lectures brought on a slight relapse since the day before yesterday, but it seems to be over. All my affairs have suffered somewhat because of it. The course, without being interrupted, has languished for some lessons, which has resulted in a relaxation among the auditors; the benches have been emptied to a great degree, decimated also by the weather; and there are scarcely 150 to 200 people left. Consequently, I had to redouble the work and fervor to rekindle the interest of the sessions, and I have not done it without fatigue. Obliged to save my voice for the most urgent occasions, I have had to forbid myself even useful conversations. That is why I have not been able to see either M. Mignet or M. Dupont, or even for a while M. the Minister: conversation tires me even more than lecturing. That explains also why I have dragged my heels so miserably. I have finally procured my birth certificate, and as soon as it has been stamped by the minister of foreign affairs, that is, I think, the day after tomorrow, I will send it on to M. the Rector. He must be good enough to take the assembled papers to the city hall and have them give him a receipt which should then be sent to me as soon as possible so that the first banns can be announced here starting a week from Sunday (since the civil state requires two and I must then get the certificate back so as to be able to proceed with the marriage at Lyon). Finally, concerning the publication in the church, I need names and Christian names of M. the Rector, of yourself, Madame, and of Mademoiselle Amélie to be posted in the sacristy of my parish along with mine and my parents’.

Like all spoiled children, I am too happy to complain, especially to an excellent mother; nor in any case would I want to upset you. This passing illness, annoying because of its inopportuneness, gives no further reason for alarm. It is the tempera-
tured, the climate to which at the moment the greater number of Parisians are exposed. No strong medicine, no troublesome attentions, no impossibility of working. Only a little weariness all over, enough to excuse my delays and unreliability to Mademoiselle Amélie. Nothing more nor less to explain the bizarre kind of letter enclosed. Begun last evening, taken up today to go with this one, interrupted by a visit which obliged me to lay it aside, finally finished at post time, it should have gone by itself. Rereading it I found it so strange and so little presentable that I would have done it over if leisure were not lacking. At least have I wished in the circumstances to present it under your patronage and accompanied with the apologies and justification it needs. In hands so benevolent my cause can run no danger.

Why does this jealous slavery to my affairs constrain me in such a way as not to allow me to write to Théophile in order to tell him of the share I take in his slow progress, but my certainty of his recovering? And to M. the Rector likewise, to thank him for his letter to M. Mignet in the matter of the Collège de France? Be so kind, Madame, as to serve as go-between and tell him how much I long to greet him with the name of father. I know through my younger brother also how these sweet family relationships already precede by means of amiable preludes their approaching reality. Your kindnesses to that young man are a further claim on my deepest gratitude.

I have the honor to be with filial respect, Madame, your most humble and devoted servant,

A.-F. OZANAM

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. Necessary formality because of his birth in Milan.
2. Approach of the Rector Soulacroix to M. Mignet. The rector sought to solicit for Ozanam the Chair of Literature of the Midi, in case Fauriel's substitute should retire (the approach was anterior to the official nomination of Quinet).

317. To Joseph Arthaud
Paris, May 20, 1841

Gives news of his health and consults Arthaud about treating his sore throat. Gives Arthaud advice for someone who asked him in behalf of a friend about to take a trip to Belgium and the Rhine region.
My dear friend,

I am very ashamed at replying with just a few lines written in haste to the good letter I received from you the day before yesterday. My excessive duties must be my excuse. In demanding excessive effort on my part, they have wearied and overheated me to the point where they have actually made me ill. A deceptive feeling of strength carried me away this winter into works beyond the call of duty. For a long time no result was noticeable, and I began to think of myself as immune until the onset of this raging sore throat which has lasted three weeks. After having quickly abated some days ago, it has suddenly and all at once recurred in strength; so your encouragement and advice could not have come at a better time. I have taken Seidlitz water today, and next week, if the sickness continues, I am thinking of applying a blister. You understand how frustrated I must be surrounded with vexations like these at a time meant for other cares. Nay more, never will I be able to make up my mind to go to Lyon to celebrate the great act which must not take place unless I feel myself nearly recovered. Despite my earlier plans, I should leave on June 15. It is then not without reason that I am suffering at present and anxious about the future; and to assure myself of some energy I greatly need good inspirations from heaven and the encouragement of friendship.

At least my gratitude ought to be expressed by giving you in some decent way the information that M. Terret wishes. But a simple listing is entirely insufficient, and details would never end. M. Terret should buy a *Guides du voyageur dans les Pays-Bas, en Allemagne et sur les Bords du Rhine*. Booklets like these are well done and cost little, especially those by Richard. As for me, I am limited to indicating places I have been and remember. Brussels; Louvain: Catholic University; Liège: a town manufactory; Aix-la-Chapelle: church and tomb of Charlemagne; Cologne: a dozen churches noteworthy at least for their architecture, the famous cathedral, priceless paintings; Bonn: university; Coblenz and the banks of the Rhine, which must be seen by steamboat; Mainz: cathedral, fortifications, museum, etc. . . . Frankfurt-am-Main: chief town of the Diet, the church where the emperors were crowned, the hall where they were proclaimed, etc. . . . Carlsruh; Strasbourg, but I travelled through these countries as the bird flies and in fifteen days. How speak about them with any depth?

La Perrière is here, and I have already seen a great deal of him. This morning he had a three-hour conversation with M. Bailly. The business of the Society has been conducted vigorously and successfully here for the past two months. And much of what you wish has already been foreseen. Three new conferences have been established at Amiens, Douai, and Besançon. I am most sincerely grateful to you for admitting my young brother. He is very good, but his age requires directions which will make him a moderately useful member.

If some means of making me better comes to you, be kind enough to write to me. The larynx is less affected than the pharynx, but the latter has a particularly sore spot which goes quite deep on the left side. Headaches and perhaps some fever accompany the pain which, moreover, is more intense when I swallow. Speech greatly fatigues me.
Farewell! Why am I condemned to interest my friends only in my miseries? Pray for me.

Your devoted friend,
A.-F. OZANAM

My regards to all at your house, please.

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Arthaud, Doctor of Medicine, rue des Capucines 3, Lyon.
Postmark: May 2, 1841.

Notes:
1. André Terret (1794-1859), notable of Lyon, silk manufacturer, then director of Loire and Ardèche forges, was one of the founders of the Gazette de Lyon and especially of the Propagation of the Faith, of which he was vice-president of the Council of Lyon from 1822 and president from 1854 until his death.
2. The complete reference is Boyce and Richard, Guides du voyageur (the two volumes concerned with Belgium and the banks of the Rhine are called booklets). The series was revised to form the Joanne guidebooks. Le Manuel du voyageur en Belgique is found in the Archives Laporte. N.B. Richard being a pseudonym, these guidebooks are classified at the Bibliothèque Nationale under the real name of the author: Audin, Jean Marie.
3. Itinerary of his trip of October 1840.

318. To Joseph Arthaud
Paris, May 27, 1841

Uneasy at the proposal for reform of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul which La Perrière is about to submit to the General Council (Paris) in the name of the Council of Lyon, he asks Arthaud whether La Perrière expresses the point of view of the Council of Lyon with exactitude. He gives news of his health.

Dear friend,

Allow me a delicate communication, indiscreet perhaps, certainly hasty, but which the interests of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul render extremely urgent.

De La Perrière came to let me see the memorandum he is planning to present to the General Council as expressing the wishes of the Council of Lyon. I have just finished reading it. I find several proposals perfectly wise. I recognize others I have often heard developed in our friendly meetings. But there are new ones and so rash that they astound me. And, since according to La Perrière himself, the memorandum does not appear to be entirely your work, I would like to know what part you had in the editing, and what ideas on the contrary are the editor’s.

1. Does the Council of Lyon truly lean toward becoming a consultant general council and centralizing all the correspondence of the conferences of the south
when several other cities, Toulouse, for example, have Societies equally as flourishing and a great deal more numerous? Do you not understand besides, the dangers and delays of an administration partitioned between two authorities and two headquarters?

2. Do you really propose that the election of the president general take place at Lyon, when Paris by itself possesses half of the total number of conferences, all of whose presidents or delegates would have to travel, to the advantage of a single provincial Society?

3. Do you also wish to have, and be the only one so to have, a representative in the ordinary General Council?

4. What do you intend by a chargé d'affaires of the Society assigned to the Holy See and one from the Holy See assigned to the Society?

On all of these points I do not permit myself to express an opinion, but La Perrière wants the General Council to do so, and he wants it done soon. I will try to have it wait until Wednesday.

Try to reply to me by courier to courier from both ends, as to whether these are indeed your wishes, and whether the memorandum is a faithful expression of them, both basically and in format. Without such a guarantee we could find ourselves in the greatest embarrassment. It could besides harm our friend who, left to himself to formulate your wishes, could easily have allowed himself to insert his own proposals.

There are otherwise excellent things in the work, expressed well and dictated by the primitive spirit of the Society. I will support them with all the energy of personal conviction if, however, my health permits me to speak on the day of discussion.

Alphonse will have told you of my relapse, suffering, and anxiety. I am really suffering a great deal, and the fever has not abated for eight days. At present, however, I feel better, and treatment scrupulously followed will end by curing me. In the meantime my course and work are suspended, and isolation and silence are recommended. I trust that, having tried me, Providence will grant me better days. Who knows whether the coming joys reserved for me must be bought at this price?

Give me news of yourself and yours. Will you be good enough to send to the house, so that it can be taken promptly to my brother, the enclosed note, a postscript to a letter which left this morning. Pardon so many liberties, but your goodness authorizes them. I take, then, that of embracing you fraternally.

Your friend,
A.-F. Ozanam


Notes:
1. This is a follow-up to the May 20th letter to Arthaud. La Perrière was in Paris in connection with changes in the organization of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (cf. Albert Faucault, op. cit. pp. 61-64).
2. La Perrière's proposal consisted in patterning the organization of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul on the two-headed organization (Lyon-Paris) of the work of the Propagation of the Faith.

3. The ultramontane tendency of the Lyon works as opposed to the more Gallican tendency of the Paris works.

4. Abbé Ozanam.

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326. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, June 9, 1841


My dear friend,

I acknowledge reception of the remembrance and both your letters. The stubborn sore throat which will not go away does not permit me to earn your thanks and praise. The editors of l’Univers have spontaneously caught fire over the Gibraltar affair and continue to make it their fervent business. They are sure to be reprinted by several English papers.

Your comments about the need of preserving the unity of the work seem perfectly right to me, and agree with my most cherished wishes. You will not learn without some satisfaction that the work of “Catholicism in Europe” shows signs of dissolving. As for the appeal in behalf of Msgr., I had not noticed it, and unfortunately a new article on the subject has just appeared in today’s issue. You can count on my objections. In the meanwhile, do not exaggerate the importance of this bothersome business. In the first place, it is concerned only with a particular work, that of the prisoners, and not the assistance of the whole mission. In the second place, the appeal can only be momentary, for even if it should be indicated otherwise, there could not be much of an extension, and l’Univers is not usually happy with that kind of uncertainty. I would insist that what is done not be repeated. In the meanwhile, consider it insignificant and negligible. Some lines from Msgr. Dupuch to M. Bailly, whose close friend he is, would in any case resolve any difficulties.

I will take a subscription to the Protestant missions magazine for you. Be sure that I am much humiliated by the inaction this stubborn illness forces on me. Even so, in regard to the kinds of outside publicity which the work would use, it would be difficult for me to assist it without certain preliminary arrangements of a sufficiently delicate nature and which should perhaps be discussed viva voce. It seems that it would not be easy to get political magazines to contract to carry all and any news. Each article would be the object of a little negotiation of its own, not without trou-
ble and money. Therefore it would be necessary (1) to have someone edit the notes or articles in the form demanded by the magazine whose columns are wanted; (2) to find someone reliable, friendly with the editors-in-chief of the principal publications and who will assume the task of obtaining the desired space from them, able to advance money to that end, of which they will afterward render an account and be reimbursed regularly. The Protestants do not fail to do things this way, which is why they fill the whole Parisian press with the words and deeds of their so-called missionary, M. Gutslapf. 

Farewell, dear friend; I am leaving next Tuesday, and in the midst of the serious and sweet thoughts which accompany this return, be assured that there is room for the joyful intimacy of seeing you again. Again, farewell! Pray for your brother in O[ur] L[ord],

A.-F. OZANAM

My regards to the members of the council.

Notes:
1. l'Univers, June 4, 1841.
3. l'Univers of June 5 had published on the first page an appeal to Catholics in behalf of Msgr. Dupuch, who wished to raise funds to ransom Christians imprisoned by the Moslems. On the same day l'Univers had started a subscription (first subscribers: l'Univers, 100 francs; Bailly, 25 francs; du Lac, 25 francs; Saint-Chéron, 25 francs). L'Ami de la religion having protested against this subscription, l'Univers made a rebuttal on June 9. (Ozanam's allusion is to this rebuttal.) Those directing the Propagation of the Faith feared a scattering of missionary resources, similar to what they feared in regard to the work of "Catholicism in Europe."
4. l'Univers pressed its campaign in favor of Msgr. Dupuch's work. One reads in l'Univers of June 23: "The Propagation of the Faith has already worked wonders; it will continue to do so; but still more is needed: this is a very special case, special cooperation is needed" (due probably to Ozanam's influence).
6. Protestant missionary of German origin who exercised his apostolate in China.

331. To François Lallier
Chateau du Vernay, near Lyon
June 28, 1841

In this letter, written five days after his marriage, he shares his happiness with his friend.
My dear friend,

The great things your affection involved itself with are accomplished. Last Wednesday, June 23, at ten o'clock in the morning, in the church of St.-Nizier, your friend knelt; at the altar was his older brother, raising his priestly hands, and at his feet, his young brother, making the responses to the liturgical prayers. Beside him you would have seen a young girl, in white and wearing a veil, pious as an angel, and already—she lets me say it—attendant and affectionate as a friend. Happier even than I, her family surrounding her, and yet at the same time she welcomed all the family heaven has left me here below; and my old comrades, my brothers of St. Vincent de Paul, numerous acquaintances, filling the choir and peopling the nave. It was beautiful, and strangers who chanced upon it were seen to be profoundly moved. I could scarcely restrain great but delightful tears, while I felt the divine blessing descend upon me with the sacred words.

Ah, dear Lallier, companion of hard times, comforter of bad days, if only you could have been there! I would have asked you as I did the good Pessonneaux to sign the commemorative document of this great feast; I would have presented you, too, to the charming wife who has been given me; she would have greeted you, too, with the gracious smile which claims everybody. And now for the five days we are together, what calm and serenity in this soul who has been known to be so upset and so ingenious in finding how to suffer!

I let myself be happy. I no longer count moments nor hours. There is no more passage of time for me. . . . Of what interest is the future? The good fortune of the present is eternity . . . . I understand heaven.

Help me to be good and understanding. Each day, revealing numerous merits in her who is mine, increases my debt to Providence. . . . Useless to tell you that I am much better. My throat is gradually becoming normal and no longer requires discretion and precautions. What a change from the days when you beheld me so cast down in Paris!

I was pardoned in a fashion for having shown you a certain letter; I will be entirely cleared when someone has the pleasure of knowing you. You are invited for the housewarming, in the month of November.

Farewell, my regards to Madame Lallier, to you a fraternal embrace.

Your friend,
A.-F. Ozanam

Original: Archives Laporte.
332. To Emmanuel Bailly
Le Vernay, June 28, 1841

Expresses his thanks to Bailly and his family. Shares his happiness.

Monsieur,

Good fortune does not allow ingratitude. Since the beautiful day which gave me a good and charming companion, I have not forgotten those whose friendship, care, and good offices assuaged the pains of waiting and exile. Among numerous friends, all our confreres of St. Vincent de Paul followed me to the foot of the altar. But their multitude did not prevent me from noticing the gaps left by those absent; and among these latter who could be more regretted than you? I know, however, that your prayers and those of Madame Bailly have not failed me. Heaven answers them: already my health, for which you had so much concern and worry, is rapidly improving. Speech has been restored to me in order to make good and frequent use of it. My heart especially overflows with joy: its most cherished dreams have been crowned by even more beautiful realities. I owe you a share in these first fruits of my happiness; you always took so great a one in my afflictions. Adieu for now. I hope in some weeks to show you what a happy man is like.

Your grateful friend,
A.-F. OzANAM

My respects to Madame Bailly and to M. Vivier. Madame Ozanam and her family also send you their thanks on my behalf and the assurance of their sincere attachment.

335. To Montalembert
Lyon, July 25, 1841

He thanks Montalembert for the help given to the patriarch of Antioch. Asks him to speak to the minister of foreign affairs in behalf of the leaders of the Propagation of the Faith in Spain, in order to set the government there to come to terms. He shares his marriage with him. Allusion to Montalembert's Saint Elisabeth.

Count,

Often, in the affectionate talk with which your friendship honors me, you
have been fervent in expressing your admiration and zeal for the work of the Propagation of the Faith. Your interest in the recent incident concerning the Greek patriarch of Antioch affords me an especially grateful example. I have been entrusted today again by the council of the association to ask your charity to interpose in a less difficult but possibly serious circumstance.

The most beautiful characteristic of the work of the Propagation of the Faith is the catholicity which divorces it from national concerns, washes from it the odious hues of politics, and seals it with the faithful seal of the Church, whose active instrument it is. Furthermore, it draws tightly together all Catholic peoples so as not to give France alone the honor of taking the initiative. Spain’s adherence has been the latest. Amid the moral and financial ruin which bespatters the desolate face of that country, there are two sincere men; and like the noble and pious citizens among us who did not despair of our religious nature in 1830, M. O’Lombell and M. Ximena have held to the old faith of Spain. By their dedication the association was established and has grown with unlooked-for success. The sum of 30,000 francs is the result of their efforts in the first year.

You are not ignorant, Monseieur le Comte, of the schismatic decrees of the regency. Protestant propaganda, along with Jansenism, is surely hastening the proscription of an association whose first result was the strengthening of the people’s ties with the Holy See. Hostile politics are part of it, and the government document interdicting the Propagation of the Faith blamed it especially “for spending by French hands the pennies of Spanish charity.”

At the same time, M. O’Lombell and M. Ximena were placed under arrest, one in Cadiz, the other in Madrid. But M. O’Lombell is a French subject, and the energetic action of the consul immediately obtained his release. It was of short duration. The enclosed account and letters reveal the ceaseless persecution and new captivity of which he is the victim. The upshot is that from now on only the embassy can bring him effective help and by taking active steps put an end to his imprisonment. In this situation the council of the association of Lyon has come to the conclusion that a recommendation of the minister of foreign affairs to the ambassador will be the most effective and easiest means. National honor is sufficiently at stake to appeal to the minister’s attention, and it is hoped that religious interest is pressing enough to motivate the intervention of your high influence. Certain paths of duty of yours will perhaps contribute to unlocking the prison of a compatriot who is also a companion in arms in the defense of the divine cause.

Having acquitted my duties as an intermediary, allow me a few more words of my own. I have accomplished a purpose which you were in sympathy with. The engagement entered into this past winter was solemnized a few days ago. God, who took my poor mother from me, has not wished to leave me without a guardian angel any longer. My happiness is great, and while I rejoice in its first sweetness, I remember that you foretold it in advance. I recall that, taking leave of you at our last meeting, you took me kindly by the hand and told me that infinite joy here below crowns Christian marriages.

At present I am laying claim before God to the place you promised me as a
Christian husband. St. Elisabeth has revealed the chaste secrets of conjugal piety to us; the friendship of her biographer can help us realize it.

I am, with respectful attachment to you and gratitude for your kindnesses,
M. le Comte,

Your devoted and obedient servant,
A.-F. Ozanam

Original: Property of the Montalembert family. At the top of the original autograph in Montalembert’s hand: “Wrote to Guizot, August 6, 1841; see his favorable reply of the 12th.”

Previous publications: Lettres (1912), t.1, pp. 406-408.

Notes:
1. The Propagation of the Faith had been introduced to Spain in 1839 by O’Lombell (a Frenchman living at Cadiz). Desirous of obtaining an official authorization from the Spanish government for the association, he was deterred from making the request by a letter of the Central Council of Paris (December 30, 1839), which alleged that no similar action had been taken in any other country. O’Lombell had made recruits in Spain (Ximena, of Madrid, was one) and had the approbation of the archbishop of Seville and the bishop of Cadiz (cf. archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Paris, Spanish branch, correspondence 1839-1859, especially a long note—without date, but able to be placed between May 1841 and May 1842—in the middle of which is inserted a copy of the letter of December 30, 1839, cited above).
2. The dynastic crisis precipitated in Spain in 1833 (death of Ferdinand VII) was resolved (1839) by the defeat of the Carlists. The triumphant regent’s party (the Cristinos) was dominated by its left wing (Espartero). This latter favored English influence by making the purchase of goods confiscated from religious communities easy for adherents of England (cf. P. Renouvin, Historie de relations internationales, t. V, XIX s., Part I [1815-1871], pp. 112-113).
3. By the decree of April 18, 1841.
4. The accounts of the Propagation of the Faith (already mentioned).
A Life in Letters 273

will which exists between M. Guizot and M. de Saint-Chéron has nothing to do
with the cause taken by l'Univers which is more interested in forcing the govern-
ment's hand than in sustaining his impetus.¹

My somewhat improved health allows me today to resume some of my inter-
rupted work. I will take advantage of it to send you next week the note so long over-
due which is to serve as preface to the letters concerning the conversion of a young
lama. May I trust that my delays and silence have not caused you to doubt my devo-
tion? Please accept once more its sincere expression and give the members of the
council my fondest regards.

Your most humble and obedient servant,
A.-F. OZANAM

Address: The President of the Council of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. Saint-Chéron's reply to Ozanam's two letters is dated August 6 (cf. Galopin papers). We do not
   have Ozanam's two letters relative to the O'Lombell affair (evidently contemporaneous with the
   letter to Montalembert of July 25).
2. The following passage of Saint-Chéron letter (August 6) clarifies the allusions in the first para-
   graph of Ozanam's letter and shows how Saint-Chéron had proceeded by l'Univers' method (cf.
   l'Univers, July 31).

Paris, August 6, 1841

You must have seen in l'Univers that I received the documents you sent me concerning the busi-
ness of M. O'Lombell. I thought it would be in the best interests of our countrymen to air publicly
the scandal of these persecutions of a Catholic and a Frenchman. So long as things lie hidden, the
ministers will not press nor pay any attention to the most important of facts, but publicity challenges
their honor and responsibility. That is why, dear sir and friend, that it would have more effect to
begin by publishing these letters before speaking to M. Guizot. I have seen him, and he is struck by
the details published in l'Univers. I told him what I thought the government should do in this matter
for the Propagation of the Faith and for a citizen undeservedly persecuted. He promised faithfully to
write to our chargé d'affaires in Madrid and to intervene with the Spanish government. I will make a
point of following this up and will inform you of everything that has been done.

A. de Saint-Chéron

347. To Antoine de Jessé
Allevard, August 25, 1841

Report on new steps taken in behalf of O'Lombell, the association's imprisoned repre-
sentative in Spain. He has not yet completed the note-preface for the Letters on the
Conversion of a Young Lama which he owes the Annales de la propagation de la foi.
Monsieur le President,

I persevere in sending you the replies I received in the O'Lombell matter. This one is from M. Cornudet, former chief officer of the minister of worship. Although less encouraging than could be wished, I think you should be familiar with it. M. de Saint-Chéron's approach will perhaps attain its purpose better than all the others. Nevertheless it is not without importance that a French minister of worship’s complaint against an attack of Spanish religious tyranny should be important evidence of the solidarity of Catholic interests in the two countries. On this occasion, as on previous ones, I commend the enclosed paper to the prudence and personal care of the president.

A note has asked me to furnish an introduction for Some letters on the Conversion of a Young Lama. It is still not entirely finished, and I regret that I must put off sending it until tomorrow’s post. The members of the council entrusted with the editing must still have the charity to accept my excuses. I beg M. le President to be willing to offer them at the same time that he accepts the assurance of my respectful devotion.

A.-F. Ozanam

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Address: Monsieur, Monsieur the President of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. Martin du Nord.
2. It has been seen how Saint-Chéron proceeded with Guizot by publication in l'Univers of articles recounting the ill-usage undergone by O'Lombell (cf. letter 342 of August 11 to Jesse).
3. Article for the Annales de la propagation de la foi, which had already seen several delays.

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352. To Antoine de Jessé
Allevard, September 1, 1841

Success of the steps taken in O'Lombell's behalf: sending of instructions to the French embassy at Madrid. The preface to the Account of the Conversion of a Young Lama is finally ready, but he is not satisfied with it.

Monsieur le President,

A letter of the Count de Montalembert’s herewith enclosed will inform the council that the steps taken in the O’Lombell matter have not been useless, and the minister of foreign affairs, with unlooked-for dispatch, has sent instructions in the matter to the French embassy in Spain. Without a doubt the council will judge it
fitting to write some lines of gratitude to those who have extended themselves in
the association's interest and especially to M. de Montalembert in way of reply, as
well to his gracious offer to procure a copy of the instructions. Let us hope that
Providence will do the rest and that the voice of France will not be raised in vain for
Catholic interests threatened in the person of your brave correspondent.

The article long requested to serve as preface to the Account of the Conversion of
a Young Lama will have reached you very belatedly and is most unsatisfactory. It
was written amid the influence of a hydrothermal treatment, in the upset of a sud-
dden journey on which all sources of research were lacking. The censure of the edito-
rial committee will make up for it by doing what it wants with it, and perhaps its
kindness will forgive the collaborator, who has already spent several months wait-
ing for the return of a health imprudently compromised. Amid the embarrassment
of this false position and despite the feeling of my uselessness, I experience real con-
solation in thinking of the indissoluble ties binding me to the association and
which will ever hold at least my heart.

Please, M. le President, convey to the gentlemen my respectful devotion. I will
soon have the honor of telling them of it in person. Accept also the assurance of my
deep affection for you and my gratitude for your kindness.

Your most humble and obedient servant,

A.-F. OzANAM

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur the President of the Council of the Propagation of the Faith.

365. To Henri Pessonneaux
Rome, November 12, 1841

Travel descriptions. Historical comments. Papal audience.

Dear Henri,

In the midst of the pleasures of the traveling life and the numerous enjoyments
encountered along the way there is, nonetheless, something wistful, that is, not
happening on the faces of friends as usual, those faces which smile at you passing by
and bidding with a cordial gesture hello or goodbye. Yet I had a very pleasant sur-
prise when, this past week, the eve of my departure from Naples, I found you await-
ing me at the post office and bringing me news of Paris. Thank you for that
brotherly remembrance and for answering mine immediately: more than once in
the leisures of the road, chatting with your new cousin 1 about our approaching ex-
ile and those who would alleviate its solitude, your name rose to the lips as one of the dearest.

I have, then, visited Naples and its so vaunted sites: Pompeii, Boja, Amalfi, and Pestum. I have admired its always fresh verdure and those marvellous antiquities that have not aged. It is no longer astonishing to find so many living monuments there where the leaves of the trees do not fall. It seems as if under the happy sky the destructive power of time has disappeared. The perishable side of human things, however, is evidenced by terrible examples. The menacing crater of Vesuvius and the baths of Herculaneum are dread lessons for the voluptuous capital sleeping in their neighborhood. I would like to talk more about it and tell you about the magnificent views of Chiaga and Castellamare, the historical traces of French and Spanish domination, the strange customs of the people, the joyous tumult of the streets, the improvisers on the mole and the last of the lazzeroni race, scantily clad in the required pantaloons, seeking on the quays a corner in the sun to converse in or a pocket to pick.

But the place where more imposing sights awaited me, where I first saw the southern character in all its majesty, where Greece was wholly revealed in its historic past and admirable genius, was Sicily—the lighthouse of Messina, the theatre at Taormina facing the black ashes of Etna, the solemn desolation of Syracuse, and the ruins of Selinonte and Segesta are sights never to be forgotten. And yet even they are effaced by the great scene of Agrigento. On these shores of the African sea on which reigns a tropical vegetation, where the palm thrusts itself up crowned with fruit while the woods of orange and citrus trees perfume the air and the acanthus, aloe, and cactus intermingle among the ruins, there nestled among a long range of hills rises the old and powerful city. The outline of its walls carved in rock is still there, and everywhere on the ramparts as a place of honor, the tombs of heroes and temples of gods. Of these, eight remain variously preserved, but all imposing, whether in their integrity or partial destruction; all brought together to give an idea of that noble doric architecture, itself bound up with a civilization and poetry too little known. A sun ever serene gilds those great facades and long colonnades; and in the face of such pure contours, such knowledgeable proportions, in the face of such simple means which produce such great effects, that axiom and general formula of Greek art can be understood: beauty is order.

The successive dominations which have passed over Sicily have left their imprint. Palermo, the Phoenician city, one of the havens of the Carthaginians, also possesses great souvenirs of that other African race, heir of Carthage, that is, the Saracens. It has moorish palaces in which you find the style of the Alhambra and the Generalifa. It has old Byzantine churches sparkling with mosaics and Norman chateaux, and magnificent dwellings erected by the Spanish viceroy and whose walls are still covered with inscriptions in Castillian verse. And the fleur de lis, which glitter on the curtains, recall that a French dynasty still reigns here today. But the marvels of this place are the Montréal basilica and the Palatine chapel. I left them wholly full of those impressions which are never lost: just as in leaving a sa-
ceremony you remember for a long time the perfumes wafted there and, as it were, the last echo of the chants heard.

Now, delayed by unforeseen difficulties, we have been eight days at Rome and are about to leave in three. We could not dream of making an intelligent exploration of it and have decided to content ourselves with a simple pilgrimage. Certainly we have inspected with admiration the Coliseum, the Pantheon, and the Vatican museums. But we have especially tried to visit as sincere Christians the tombs of the holy apostles. From this point of view we have gazed on the evident ruins of Roman corruption and divine chastisements and that new glory which surrounds the Papacy. We have venerated the sanctuaries where so many illustrious men repose, pontiffs, doctors, and martyrs. Today (November 13), after receiving Communion at St. Peter's tomb and praying for all belonging to us (you can well imagine that I did not forget you), we have made the solemn visits of the churches. Yesterday we had the honor of being received by the Pope. His Holiness deigned to admit us to an audience devoid of all protocol; it was not the rather awesome majesty of the tiara, but the simplicity and sweetness of a father. During the fifteen-minute conversation he spoke to me of France with singularly moving kindness, and of my studies with all the learning and presence of mind of a scholar speaking in his special field. I received his blessing for myself, my family, and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul which he knows and loves. If it is fine to see the Sovereign Pontiff amidst all the pomps of priesthood bless the city and the world on Easter Day, it is not perhaps less moving to see this apostolic old man, alone and without ceremony extend his hands over two young and obscure pilgrims.

Belviala is here, and I had the pleasure of seeing him with Cazalès. He asked for you and listened with a great interest to what I told him about you. I am grateful to you for bringing me up to date on our Paris friends. Be sure to tell them all that I think of them: I am coming back better prepared, ready to attempt the renewal of my course without being sure of my reestablishment. My affairs are in the hands of Providence. It has for some time granted me so many favors that I would be ungrateful not to hope.

Adieu, dear Henri. I embrace you in my heart while waiting to do so as soon as I can.

Your devoted cousin,
A.-F. Ozanam

Postmark: November 16, 1841. Place illegible.
Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.
Notes:
1. Ozanam's wife, Amélie.
2. Neapolitans of the lowest class.
3. Renowned palace of Moorish kings at Granada.
4. Another nearby Moorish royal palace.
5. An indulgenced pilgrimage of the four major basilicas of St. Peter’s, St. Paul’s Outside-the-Walls, St. John Lateran, and St. Mary Major.

366. To M. and Mme. Soulacroix
Rome, November 15, 1841

Regrets for the unavailability of sending letters during the travel in Sicily. The stay in Rome and the audiences. The Pope, the Cardinals Pacca and Mezzofante. Usefulness of this trip for his work. Some other comments.

Dear parents,

Amélie’s letter could not leave without my joining the sentiments she expresses toward you. Regrets, first, for the anxieties you have had due to our involuntary silence. Relegated for three weeks to one of the extremities of Europe, far from all regular communication with the civilized world, we have also had our anxieties and problems. One of the liveliest was not being able to write, and we have experienced what a terrible thing it is to live on an island, and since the king and queen of Naples had to be rescued from the gulf we swear with the good Sancho to visit only the isles of terra firma from now on. You will forgive us if our correspondence, even from Naples, has not been as active as we would have liked. But it was not a question of our being economical with our dearest consolations, even though the price of postage was enormous. On the other hand, during our entire stay, our time was spent in trips to the surrounding countryside, and when returning from Boja or Vesuvius we arrived back late and dead with hunger and fatigue, I could not allow nor could you that eyesight be ruined by staying up until one o’clock in the morning. On my part, I hardly managed to reread certain authors’ passages and dispatch short notes absolutely necessary so as not to lose the fruit of my trip. I had intended to send the rector a letter from Sicily for the Journal de l’instruction publique. But the four or five hours it would have taken were wholly lacking.

The ten days we have spent in Rome have been like a dream. What we have seen and done in so little time is unbelievable; and nevertheless we are leaving with the conviction that ten days more would be necessary to take advantage of being here and profiting from the occasion in the interest of my future. Only since the day before yesterday has it been possible for me to see some of those with whom it is important for me to establish relations, and we are already loaded down with kindness and favors. If the obligation of being at our post prevents us from responding to so many invitations as pleasant as they are respectable, at least we carry away with us recollections which comfort us and are in themselves sufficient to honor and enhance life. We shall never forget the solemn moment when the Sovereign
Pontiff extended his venerable hands over the two of us and blessed us and our absent family at the same time. We shall also remember the patriarchal welcome of Cardinal Pacca, whose octogenarian face has suffered every political and religious tempest of the past without once flinching. We have visited and conversed with Cardinal Mezzofante, whom the ancients would have made a god and whom God will undoubtedly make a saint.

But it was certainly no penance to kneel at the tomb of the holy apostles and pray together before the simple stone which covers the remains of St. Peter; nor was it useless to go down into the catacombs, burrowing so to speak into the entrails of Catholic Rome. What the trip to Sicily was for the understanding of antiquity, the stay in Rome was even more for the understanding of Christianity.

I sense a new life stirring in my thought, and my rather sterile ideas awakening and stretching in an early thaw.

[I trust it will be the same little by little with my physical strength and, wholly incomplete though the recovery be, it seems to me sufficient to allow a trial. It was the lack of a positive result in this regard which has kept me from speaking. Meanwhile, amid the usual fluctuations the good seems to be prevailing more and more. Thank you for the solicitude you show me in the matter. Be assured, also, of my deep gratitude for the benevolences of every kind with which you continually surround my poor Charles and of which he has so great a need. You have done for M. Fauriel much more than we could have done, and I do not doubt that it has made a favorable impression. There is another of your favors whom I cherish more each day. You know whom. This trip, by testing Amélie’s ways, patience, sweetness, and devotions so greatly, is demonstrating to me how much she is capable of. But, even more, you could not believe what she does for me by her presence in other circumstances, what more gracious hospitality I especially encounter when she is with me, how she interests and captivates from the very first. Cardinal Pacca, the old and venerable eminence we visited yesterday, told his secretary last evening how impressed he was by that young lady; you have been told already about the Benedictines at Catania and the Capuchins at Syracuse. But new conquests have been made since. There was the procurator general of the Observatines whom we met in the Naples coach and twice or three times more at Rome, smiling his most gracious smile in his grey beard. There was another Capuchin father at St. Peter’s in Montorio, of whom we asked directions, and who offered Madame a bouquet of roses. There was the Abbé Barola, still one of her best friends; in a word it would be something to worry about did not virtue outshine courtesy here.

Adieu, dear parents. In a little while we will not be reduced to enclosing our farewell embrace in a letter, and if separations occur again, the distances at least will have lessened. A thousand regards to Théophile and Charles.]

Your affectionately devoted son,
A.-F. Ozanam
373. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, January 1, 1842

Excuses for having forgotten to deliver when he was in Lyon a letter for Meynis entrusted to him at Rome. O'Lombell matter. Some anxiety over the Committee of the Holy Land.

Dear friend,

It is on a day such as this given over to reconciliations and the pardon of wrongs that I am going to confess a great fault and seek an easy pardon. When I left Rome several letters were sent to me at the last moment and thrown hastily into my portfolio, most of them from Paris. When I got to Lyon a stopover of eight days scarcely gave me time to check my packages. And once here, having to attend to the priorities of finding a place to live and preparing a course made me forget until yesterday the envelope I had for you. Imagine my embarrassment, shame, and chagrin when I discovered it. Shamefaced and humbled, I confronted myself with a mistake which seems to point to great indifference toward the interests of the association and of friendship. But then I remembered your kindness and that you would never believe me indifferent. And I had confidence, in repairing my fault today, of obtaining your forgiveness. There remains a single reassuring thought: the letter did not come to me from Propaganda and so probably is not concerned with anything very urgent or important.

I have been less unreliable regarding the latest commission I have been given. The medals' arrived safely. I have sent one to M. de Montalembert. I went to M. Sauzet's house but he was not home, and I have seen M. de Saint-Chéron. Maybe it
would be fitting to add another one to the list for M. de Cornudet, who has also
been most active in the O'Lombell affair. I noted that M. Salvandy, on his depar-
ture for Spain, carried the strongest instructions from the French cabinet for the
purpose of obtaining freedom pure and simple for this excellent man who is still
only released under surveillance. As for the circular letter of the Committee of the
Holy Land, it is doubtful whether there is one; an announcement only has ap-
peared in the papers and perhaps I could get that for you; but it would seem that the
association has a political tone and is headed by compromised men.

There is nothing more but to request you to thank the council of the associa-
tion for the worthy trust it continues to place in me and to which I will try to re-
spond better. I am very touched by the gift of your beautiful medal. Since it
commemorates a great and memorable epoch of the association’s works, let us hope
that the new year will have its share of glories and benefactions. That is my prayer
to God this morning as I make the usual requests for the future of my family,
friends, country and church. For will not this institution, which brings comfort to
the church and honor to the country, also unite us as one family, and has it not
given me in you and certain other members of the Council of Lyon friends whose
memory I will always cherish?

Farewell. Your devoted,
A.-F. OZANAM

Please send through M. Sandier my special regards to M. Dufieux.


Notes:
1. The Propagation of the Faith had a commemorative medal struck for the twentieth anniversary of
   its founding.
2. Achille Salvandy (1795-1856). Born at Condom, writer, journalist, deputy from 1830-1831 and
   from 1833 to 1848. A Constitutional Party member, minister of public instruction in Molé’s cabi-
   net from 1837-1839 (he would have the same post in Guizot’s from 1845 to 1848). He had just been
   appointed ambassador to Madrid (October 1841).
3. Allusion to an association like Catholicism in Europe and distrusted like it by the Propagation of
   the Faith because of the risk of dividing missionary efforts. It is possible that it was connected with
   the Association of Mont-Liban, whose head was Ferdinand de Bertier de Sauvigny.
4. Frédéric Sandier (1796-1849), notable of Lyon, former mayor of the Croix-Rausse (1826 and late
   1847-1848) where he enjoyed the role of reconciler during the troubles of 1834 and 1849, member
   (1839), then treasurer (1841) of the Central Council of Lyon of the Propagation of the Faith.
   “Member of several charitable societies and useful institutions, M. Sandier had only one constant
   aim: to love God and do good” (Gazette de Lyon, August 30, 1849). The address of letter 493
   “Monsieur, Monsieur Dufieux-Sandier” may indicate a relationship between the two men.
To Dominique Meynis
Paris, January 26, 1842

Sends the thanks of Saint-Chéron, de Montalembert and Sauzet for the medals given them. Inquiry about the Committee of the Holy Land. Gratitude for the council's regard.

Dear friend,

I hasten to answer your kind letter of the day before yesterday: I must be short so as not to miss the post and in consequence Wednesday's meeting. You know that otherwise I would enjoy chatting longer with you.

According to the council's wishes I called upon M. de Saint-Chéron but could not catch him at home until today. He asked me to tell you how moved he was at the token of esteem he received from the council and at the confidence they still placed in him. The desired meeting with the minister of foreign affairs will take place this week, before the weekend. Besides, the minister appears in general to understand perfectly the association's intentions and does not identify it in any way with political parties.

Count de Montalembert told me again recently that his conversations with M. Guizot on the O'Lombell affair have left him completely satisfied. He also thanks the association for his beautiful medal and renews his offer of future service.

I am happy to carry the same message from the president of the Chamber of Deputies. He received with sincere gratitude, both as a citizen of Lyon and a Catholic, this memento from his pious fellow-citizens. I myself was deeply moved at his sincere feeling and the truly religious conversation that occupied this visit.

After a vain search, I think I am on the track of the Committee of the Holy Land. I have the address of its chief representative and the hope of getting all its publications. If I succeed, there will be no delay in their reaching you. I am only afraid of being found out.

In closing I must emphasize one thing, that is my lively gratitude for the council's kindness and my heartfelt resolve to render myself more worthy of it. Please let me know if they want anything of me. The time will soon be here when my affairs will clear up enough to let me take at least a small part in the editing. Would you be kind enough to assist my memory; I cannot recall when I last received my stipends. I think, but am not certain, that December is paid up?

Farewell, my regards.

Your devoted friend,

A.-E. Ozanam

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Paris (letter returned because of wrong address: Paris instead of Lyon).

Notes:
1. Allusion to the medal which had been given him by the Propagation of the Faith (cf. letter 373 of January 1) in gratitude for his intervention in behalf of O'Lombell. A new approach to Guizot had just been asked of him in the name of the association.
2. The question of eventual support by the Central Council of Paris to the Committee of the Holy Land made the Central Council of Lyon anxious. The register of letters received by the Central Council of Lyon has the following for January 22, 1841: "Choiselot to Meynis—Lyon having asked abstention from assisting the Committee of the Holy Land and having asked Paris what its position was, Choiselot replied that Paris had not committed itself." Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon.
3. Ozanam had in reality received the 600 francs agreed upon for the year 1841. The last installment was paid him on December 30, 1841 (cf. letter 278 of January 10, 1841, to Meynis, taken from the ledger of the Central Council of Lyon).

384. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, February 9, 1842

Ozanam sends Meynis the answer of the minister of foreign affairs to Saint-Chéron’s approach relative to the work of the Holy Land Commission.

My dear friend,

In consequence of the communications for M. de Saint-Chéron with which the council entrusted me, he has seen the minister of foreign affairs, and came within the last few days to report his answer. It is contained in the note which I have the honor to send you enclosed, and whose preciseness should clarify the council’s deliberations. It is very consoling to see our country’s Christian role perpetuate itself in this way despite men and circumstances.

Farewell, dear friend. Having no other news to give you, I wait impatiently for yours and ask your good will in giving the gentlemen the assurance of my respectful devotion.

Pray for me,
A.-F. OzANAM

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur D. Meynis, Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.

Original lost: It belonged to the Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon.
Galopin copy no. 221. Unedited.

Note:
1. Subsequent to the approach made to Guizot by Saint-Chéron at Ozanam’s request in behalf of the work of the Propagation of the Faith (cf. letter 380, January 26, 1842, to Meynis). We have not recovered the text of the “note” alluded to by Ozanam, but the gist of it can be reconstructed:
Guizot's confusion of the "Holy Land commissions," whose political views had disturbed him, with the Propagation of the Faith had been avoided.

a. The list of correspondence received by the Central Council of Lyon records for February 12, 1842: "Ozanam sends copy of a letter of M. de Saint-Chéron relative to the work of the Holy Land."

b. The transcript of the same council's letters indicate on February 14 Meynis's thanks to Ozanam for the "note relative to M. Guizot's answer."

c. On February 7 Saint-Chéron had written Ozanam the following letter preserved in the Archives of the Propagation of the Faith at Lyon:

Paris, February 7, 1842

Dear sir and friend,

On the first of this month I communicated to Monsieur the minister of foreign affairs what you had entrusted to me in the name of the Central Council of the work of the Propagation of the Faith. I explained to H. E. that the Central Council was completely divorced from any political action and especially from the establishment and actions of the Holy Land Commission. I added that the Central Committee had not sent any direct aid to the people of Syria, but had entrusted this aid to the Latin bishops responsible for distributing it among Christians of different rites. I ended by saying that the Central Council had no other budget than that published each year in the Annales de la propagation de la foi.

M. Guizot seemed quite satisfied with this information and asked me to express his gratitude to the Central Council. The answer given by H. E. having perhaps some importance for the Central Council, I reproduce it faithfully for you:

"Thank the Central Council for this information. I have always had the conviction that it was always entirely aloof from all political maneuvers. This Holy Land Commission is the cause of serious embarrassment to me in my negotiations for the betterment of the situation of Catholics in Syria."

387. To Charles Ozanam
(Paris), March 28, 1842

He recounts the Easter ceremonies at Notre Dame. Judgments on the vitality of Catholicism in France and especially in Paris. During morning mass he prayed for his two brothers. Encouragement and congratulations in regard to Charles's studies.

Dear brother,

Today is too beautiful not to spend with my family. Even this morning at Notre Dame I was not alone. Each evening since last Monday six thousand men made the retreat preached by M. de Ravignan. I was absorbed by the admirable conferences: to hear anything more elevated and solid would be impossible. It would be especially impossible to see anything more beautiful than the congregation: on leaving, the crowd streamed out of the three doors and covered the plaza. The great basilica with its black facade and majestic towers revealing the illuminated nave through its portal represented so to speak the sacred edifice of the faith whose mysteries are also
imposing and grave outwardly but conceal an interior of infinite clarity. Today a
general communion of the men crowned the pious exercises, our serried ranks filled
the central nave, twice as long as that of Saint-Jean; there were nobles and rich men
covered with decorations, and beside them poor men in ragged shirts, soldiers,
students from the Ecole normale and the Ecole polytechnique, and children, but
especially students in great number. After Communion, which, given by two
priests, took an hour, a magnificent Te Deum filled the vaults, and we broke up
deply moved.

Solemnities such as these are a most eloquent answer to one of the difficulties
which often trouble minds of your age. In leaving the religious haven of their first
years and finding themselves suddenly in the midst of the world, they are at first
dismayed to see so little faith. This universal abandonment is alarming, and there
never fail people who exaggerate it even more, some through melancholy, others
through weakness, and certain ones in the hope of being won over by example. But
only children fear solitude. A firm soul, nourished on the great recollections of
history, is not ignorant of the fact that truth and virtue often find themselves alone in
the midst of a multitude of enemies, and that their honor does not bend the knee
to the general sway. Meanwhile, when one has lived a little longer, one comes to
remark two other things more reassuring. First, in preceding ages usually regarded
as ages of belief and peace, there can be found temptations and perils like those of
our day. God never spares His servants from trial because He does not wish to spare
them the merit and glory; and the result of past struggles tells us how things will
turn out in the present age. In the second place, if one takes a closer look one will
discover around him a great deal more Christianity than he first thought. One is
greatly astonished to behold in this French society tormented for the past one hun-
dred and fifty years by so many perverse doctrines, shaken by so many scandals, so
despised by strangers, works of charity in great number, practices faithfully
observed, the Gospel embraced with such universal homage, the Church assured of
such great dedication, and still so many Christian attitudes and salutary memories,
favorable dispositions among those who do not belong to us. I am not speaking of
the countryside and many provinces where one finds the true backbone of the na-
tion and where the Catholic soul has not ceased to exist. But even here, in Paris, in
this foyer of human enlightenment and ambition, among those blasé intellects for
whom pleasure, art, and study no longer have attraction, among all things consi-
dered there is only one that preserves dignity, respect, and true popularity, and that
is religion.

There is a long effusion of my emotions of the morning. I cannot finish without
telling you, just the same, that with these thoughts of general interest the affections
of the heart are most sweetly mingled. This feast is one of those when the hours pass
more swiftly, where meditation is easier, where one does not leave off praying. In
praying for all, I could not forget my good brothers. I asked for you that wisdom
which reinforces judgment, that strength which sustains the will amid the thunder-
storms of adolescence. I have asked that you may preserve that piety with which
you are endowed, so that you may know your vocation and will not fail in the cour-
age to follow it, nor the consolations to embellish it. I have begged for our dear Alphonse the graces his ministry has need of, the definite reestablishment of that health so long uncertain, and joy of soul, recompense of a life vowed to good. I begged that fraternal union, symbol of and prelude to the celestial company of the saints, flourish among us and that, fulfilling the last word of the Savior to His Father, we be one as they are one. At this moment I have no doubt that we shall be united in the same meeting place: our mother will be there, too, since it is with God.

It was not without a lively pleasure that we learned of your placing second. [17, 10, 4, 2, there you have a sustained progress which has more worth than the most brilliant start.] If you continue in this way, nothing prevents your having a share of the prizes at the end of the year. But it is especially proof of intellectual development, a good augury for the future. You should be very grateful to the excellent M. Noirot, whose solicitude has made the introduction to philosophy easier for you. Please thank him most earnestly for me. His teaching is a great boon; I have daily proof of his influence over my early years. When better circumstances will have brought us together you will be amazed at how many ideas we have in common. I look forward to it eagerly: your being here will enliven our exile; and Amélie, who loves you very much, will be delighted to see one of her four brothers again.

You ought to write to her the first time you have an opportunity. A little letter would please her; you have answered hers only indirectly. I will write to Alphonse in a few days; give him a fond hug for me and tell him what a painful privation it has been for me not to be able to visit him at Easter, like last year. My love to Marie and my fondest regards to my uncle and aunt.

Your brother who loves you dearly,

A.-F. Ozanam

[P.S.—I would like to congratulate you better for placing second, but if you do not despise a 20-sous piece from a poor professor, Alphonse will give it to you. Please give the enclosed letter to Ballofet.]
News of the article on Buddhism. Details about the outline and offer to change the text upon the advice of the committee. He regrets being so far away from the association's center and offers to do more for it in Paris. News of friends; Chaurand's visit. Dugas's letter.

Dear friend,

So much time has passed without writing to you, nor have I even been occupied with the association. For more than three weeks, and during the Easter holidays, I have worked constantly at the interminable article on Buddhism. I had to consult innumerable sources to refresh my rusty memory and the writing several times over in order to set a scholarly style that was at the same time clear and especially edifying. The principal difficulty was to make certain points in a way which would not arouse a dangerous curiosity in lay readers and at the same time let the scholars know there was no ignorance of fundamentals. I have followed the advice of a prudent and pious man who approved my work, and I am almost completely finished. Yet it cannot be sent off today because I must still check something in the Mémoires de l'Académie de St. Pétersbourg; at the library of the Institute which is opened tomorrow only. I must be unassailable on facts and citations. Once it is finished, it is finished. It will run about twenty pages, as the council wishes. The manuscript is closely written so as to spare postage. Even so the package will still be costly, and I ask you to let the office know in advance so it will not be refused.

I have transcribed proper names as best as I could and entrust their accuracy to you both as to the printed article and the copy to be sent to Rome, if you are agreeable. For the rest, there are still many erasures, and I beg the service of your friendship to read it over first especially to insure its intelligibility to the editorial committee; otherwise I run the risk of being misunderstood in more places than one. If the committee thinks a great many changes should be made, I would be too busy to change the article according to its wishes. If, on the other hand, it confines itself to some deletions, I agree in advance. When it goes to press I would like galleys sent to me. You will see in the conclusions at the end that this work has, aside from anything else, roused my interest in an important question. I have relegated to footnotes many things which interrupt the flow of the text but which I consider indispensable to the mental impression that should be left. It is good to preserve them despite the slight expense they cause.

It might seem odd that I should talk with you about an article still unfinished. But that will not delay its reaching you. You should certainly have it tomorrow by eight at the latest, providing that the little left to do can be taken care of before my next class. Then, I could not bring myself to let you go so long a time without a reply, even though I have no news. The last I had from you told me of your suffering and left me anxious. On the other hand, being put to work for the association dur-
ing the holy days gave me such consolation that I had to tell you. Yes I do miss sincerely the time when a regular service bound me to this fine institution, when every week I went to strengthen my weak faith by the tales of heroism and the sight of your great enterprises entered into for the world’s religious fate. Here in this haunted center of luminaries I find nothing to compare to it. I wish at least to fill up the distance with zeal and some active cooperation. This year should make up for last year’s inactivity. I would be delighted to be busier, to be asked this coming autumn for a longer article than the one I have done.

Your errands have been taken care of. M. Guizot has received your circular with gratitude and has promised to write to the council of the association. Other than that you have given me no other chores to do. Without misjudging the power of the Propagation of the Faith, I am convinced that its ambassador to Paris is of little use to it. The Easter holy days have been moving here, all the more because some people from Lyon came to celebrate them with us. Chaurand is here, and we have gotten together to study, like six years ago, with the difference, however, of a conjugal setting. We often talk about our mutual friends. Some time ago Dugas (Prosper) wrote me an affectionate letter. Deluged with business, I have not yet answered it. Please tell him at once that I will answer it next week. Tell me something about Lyon, and about yourself, especially the daily visits you make to Our Lady of Fourvière. Assure the council of my respectful devotion and let me clasp your hand like a brother.

A.-F. OZANAM

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pèrat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. Ozanam had published several articles on the religions of India and China. He intended these works to be part of the vast apologetic synthesis he had in mind to undertake from the time of his student days, in which he meant to demonstrate through history the common origin of all religions:
3. Either the Congregation of the Index or the Congregation of Propaganda. Ozanam was in touch with Abbé Barola, who was a member of both.
4. The text of this circular is lost.
5. Chaurand, then a lawyer at Lyons, spent several weeks in Paris.
392. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, April 14, 1841 [1842]

Sending his article on Buddhism. Scholarly approach of this article. Conversion of Ratisbonne.

Dear friend,

Here at last is the interminable article. The research which delayed me demanded some changes. I hope that it is now unassailable in the field of scholarship. I leave it to better judges in so far as religion is concerned. Only let me say that the Jesuits had no fear of expounding in the Lettres édifiantes, written for the faithful, those teachings of Confucius which suggest accommodations and at first raise very dangerous doubts.

I have been careful, for the rest, not to frighten off the reader; all purely scholarly comments have been relegated to footnotes. I want them kept, as well as the transcriptions of names in parentheses in the text. These are my proofs, and it is important that the scholars into whose hands it might fall know that we warm ourselves at the same fire they do. For too long Catholics have been regarded as strangers to those studies which a malevolent pedantry seems to want to keep to itself. If you should consult Rome, please make the copy exact. A certain word is used precisely for the purpose of satisfying men I think I understand there.

Will you be kind enough to let me know as soon as it arrives, for I have no second copy and will be anxious for fear it is lost. When the editorial council studies it, I would be grateful if M. de Jesse were there. For the rest, I await comments and will answer them promptly.

Your packages arrived this very morning. Be assured that I will take care of everything at once. Your pious thought seems excellent to me, and I will share it with the General Council of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The conversion of M. de Ratisbonne has raised a stir on all sides here. Seeing such signs and others like them makes you wonder what God really has in store. Be sure, however, that what He has in store is sovereignly merciful.

Farewell, dear friend, I embrace you and recommend myself to your prayers.

A.-F. OzANAM

Notes:
1. Year’s date obviously wrong, although it is in Ozanam’s hand. Unedited.
3. Allusion unclear.
4. Marie Alphonse de Ratisbonne was converted at Rome, January 20, 1842, and baptized in the Church of the Gesu, January 31, 1842. Back in Paris, he placed himself under the direction of P. de Ravignan and on May 20, 1842, entered the Jesuit novitiate at Saint-Acheul. This miraculous conversion of a distinguished French Jew and outspoken enemy of the church was effected on the instant by a vision of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in the Roman church of St. Andrea delle fratte, and did much to effect the official ecclesiastical (papal) approval of the medal, given in a vision to St. Catherine Laboure at Paris in 1830, and its continued widespread adoption and diffusion. (For a detailed account of the extraordinary events leading up to this conversion, cf. Joseph I. Dirvin, C.M., St. Catherine Laboure of the Miraculous Medal, Chapter XIV.)

393. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, May 3, 1842

Mass at St. Sulpice. He accepts the council's decision not to publish his article on Buddhism. He expresses his regrets that he could not serve better and discusses the objections which prevented the publication. The better apologetic, he says, is to state the truth frankly. Congratulations on the May issue of the Revue. The Bulgarian consulate affair. Distribution of the booklets on Ratisbonne.

Dear friend,

Today's solemnity is too beautiful for me not to show my need to be a part of it. I have already assisted this morning at the Mass offered at St. Sulpice by the archbishop of Paris,1 and at Père de Ravignan's sermon. I then read the association report in the May issue,2 and this evening here I am to chat about things so dear to us both.

The publication council has decided not to publish the article on Buddhism. There was no need, in telling me, to make excuses.3 It is a matter of conscience, and it would scarcely be Christian to take offense at a decision dictated by prudence and charity. Since I have the dangerous honor to speak and write, I cannot but fear the responsibility of speech. And when its circle is enlarged, when a million men are its audience, when it treats of faith and the piety of peoples, then its consequences become too weighty for a single mind and should not be assumed without the approval of a higher authority.

But bear with fraternal frankness. I cannot help feeling deep regret in being so useless to the Association of the Propagation of the Faith. To collaborate with it gave me comfort, it was like a consecration of my pen, that weak instrument so often employed in a less rewarding way. I especially enjoyed writing the annual report, being the first to rejoice and bringing joy to others at our progress and our plans. In leaving Lyon, I preserved in this way sacred bonds. Now I am afraid that absence can be harmful and that I will end up not being on good terms. In this case, for example, I gave the matter mature thought and assembled material carefully
researched. I consulted wiser and better men. All the while I was conscious that there would be difficulties and that corrections and changes would be necessary, and even that the advice of theologians might have to be sought as to the opportu-

teness of publication.

But, permit me to say, the reasons for absolute rejection do not seem conclusive to me. On the one hand the objections are too strong and the replies hardly stand up. But all these analogies of lamaic worship and the hierarchy of the Church have been expounded, and the same explanations have been given in Msgr. Wiseman’s conferences which I have almost completely translated. And these conferences of an eminent scholar, professor at the Sapienza, now a bishop, were preached to Protestants, at Rome, under the eye of a saintly zealous authority; they were received with applause by the whole Papal court; they have been published in three languages, myriad copies of them. They have been distributed all over Italy by the Annals of Religious Knowledge, without fear of scandalizing the docility of the faithful with a weak apologia.

And again there is anxiety over the vestiges of the Holy Trinity in pagan religions because there is no sign of it among the Jews. But why is there not the same anxiety about the immortality of the soul? It is well known that unbelievers have made a great to-do about the fact that this doctrine is not as precisely formulated in the writings of Moses as in those of Plato. Yet, without understanding why the Bible is obscure in this matter, no one gets excited about it. The same holds true for the doctrine of the M(ost) H(oly) T(rinity). It is proven to be part of the explicit teaching of the synagogue which follows the priestly tradition; but that did not protect it from the interpretations of a more obtuse people; and the frenzied sacrifices of paganism show the danger well enough. Besides, the presence of truth among the Gentiles, in the prophecies of the Sibyls, and in the books of certain philosophers has always been one of the pious beliefs of the Roman church. Contrary ideas are part of our Gallican puritanism. So it is that in the verses of the Roman breviary:

Dies irae, dies illa
Teste David cum Sibylla
Solvet seclum in favilla

we have changed the second line, afraid to place the Greek prophetress side by side with the prophet-king. It was too easy to anticipate every scruple by crossing out or adding lines.

Again, I point to the example of the Lettres edifiantes and the profit the impious chose to draw from the teaching of Confucius. The Jesuits never retreated; they never hesitated to bring the whole truth out into the open. Such candor does honor to the faith. It does not fear questioning, it is too sure of itself to be afraid of anything the world has to offer. Furthermore, risk cannot be avoided. Take the literature of China, Tartary, Ara and of all the idolatrous East which is full of allusions that cannot be blotted out entirely without destroying interest nor published without commentaries. Partial clarification does harm by leaving the perpetual ob-
scurity, provoking questions without answers and raising suspicion. Should one point be dissembled, there the restless attention fixes itself and it is easy to suspect in the writer's reticence the impossibility of an answer.

It is therefore the importance and suitability of the subject that I defend, and not my work. Evidence of incompleteness or defectiveness is what disturbs the conscience of its judges. That is not the truth's fault, but his who is its instrument. It is therefore my wish that the editorial council, in a matter as serious as this, had taken theological counsel. Without consulting Rome, which had been considered in the beginning, without bothering the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda with numerous worthless pages, my article, the letters on the subject, and the doubts of the council could have been submitted right there in Lyon to the curé of Saint Paul or Abbé Pavy. I am bold enough to express the wish that it still be done and would return the article for that purpose, if it is agreeable. Further, I am ready to make any change requested. I would not even insist any longer upon the insert. I made it only because I was convinced of its opportuneness, as well as the fact that every other point depends upon this central one, and the question is whether the Annales will rise to the eminence of the old Lettres édifiantes, or if they will become strangers to the world of scholarship, useless to the progress of human knowledge and, by the same token, to the propagation of the association among the higher classes of society.

However, I congratulate you sincerely on the May issue. Msgr. Hillereau’s is admirably written and most courageous. There is not enough awareness of all the perils which menace us out of St. Petersburg and the intrigues which radiate from it to create schismatic churches as far away as Spain and Portugal. The official census of the Russian Empire for 1839 lists in that year alone 2,500 apostasies among Latin Catholics, not counting Greek-Uniates; and 4,000 conversions of Muhammadans and idolaters. Could not the Association of the Propagation of the Faith make an attempt in Upper Asia?

M. de Saint-Chéron has called on M. Guizot twice to pursue the matter of a French consulate in Bulgaria and twice failed to see him. But there is little hope. Fear of displeasing the czar militates against establishing a national representative in a country which lies in the direct path from Moscow to Constantinople. You would not believe, dear friend, the depth of humiliation and impotence we have descended to in the Levant. England's dominance, shaken by the events at Caboul and kept in check by a ruinous war in China, could well be on the decline. The only star rising in the hour that has fallen on the world is the north star. The great barbarian and arian invasions of the fifth century came from the North and the East. Who knows what is in store for the end of the nineteenth century if the sword of France rests in its scabbard?

Now, dear friend, some personal words of thanks for your thoughtfulness in involving me in the excellent work of the brochures about M. Ratisbonne. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul would be glad to distribute them if it knows where they can be obtained in lots of a hundred as it needs them. There should be an outlet in Paris, and I have no doubt but that the circulation of this wonderful story
will do great good. Personally, I am deeply moved by it but not surprised. If the signs, daily more menacing, make me dread the future storms, I also expect to see signs of the divine protection multiplied so that the world will not despair. I am aware that you have renewed your efforts to restore the sacred observance of Sunday at Lyon. In this matter it is for the episcopate to take the lead; then the rank and file will fall in and hopefully a commercial city like yours will set an example. Be assured that, despite the outcry from the godless press and the imprudence of religious papers, good will grow among us. But it must be remembered that only in union is there strength. Let us pray for one another in constant remembrance before God.

Your devoted friend,

A.-F. OZANAM

My regards to the members of the council; all the best to our mutual friends.

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.

Original lost: Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Galopin copy. Unedited.

Notes:
1. Mass celebrated each year for the deceased members of the Propagation of the Faith.
2. Ozanam, who usually did it, had not written the annual report published in the Annales de la propagation de la foi.
3. It has been noted that the article rejected by the Annales de la propagation de la foi appeared in l'Université catholique, t. XIII, June 1842, pp. 453-462.
4. Henry Wiseman (1802-1865), following his education at the English College in Rome, became its rector in 1828. His field was Syriac and Hebraic studies. In 1835 he was named by Gregory XVI to give conferences for the English colony in Rome at the Church of Jesus and Mary on the Cross. These are the conferences alluded to here.
5. Roman university founded in the thirteenth century. Wiseman taught there before his return to England (1840).
7. In the article Ozanam, following the thought of the traditionalist school, sought to find in pagan religions traces of a primitive revelation concerning the Trinity, of which the polytheist mythologies would be a corruption. Catholic theology has not retained this opinion (cf. A. Baudrillart, in Le Livre du centenaire, l'apologiste, pp. 395-396, and J. Lebreton, in Histoire du dogme le la Trinité, Beauchesne, 1930, t. I, p. 17).
8. Ozanam was unhappy with the substitution of breviaries proper to various dioceses for the Roman breviary; this substitution, dating from the eighteenth century, being in many cases evidence of the growth of Jansenism. Ozanam's remark is a clear echo of the criticism made by Dom Gueranger in his Institutions liturgiques of which volumes 1 and 2 had just come out in 1840-1841. The indicated change was in the second line, which became Crucis expandens vexilla, op. cit., t. II, p. 375, Paris, Debecourt, 1841.
9. Ozanam, by this fresh allusion to the Lettres edifiantes, expresses his admiration of the missionary methods practiced in the East by the Jesuits of the sixteenth century.
10. Ara, sometimes called Upper Asia.
11. The cure of the parish of St. Paul was at that time Abbé Jean-François Cattet (1786-1865). It can be questioned whether Ozanam did not confuse him with his brother, Abbé Simon Cattet (d. 1858), vicar general of Lyon, who seemed better qualified for such consultation.
12. Msgr. Hillereau, patriarchal vicar apostolic of Constantinople. The French ambassador to Constantinople had rebuked him for accepting support from Austria (cf. Aff. Étr.; Cor. pol. Turkey, 282). In his letter published in the May issue of the Annales, he discusses the Greek and Armenian churches whose autonomy he feels must be assured lest they risk dependence upon Moscow or St. Petersburg in the event of a confrontation with the Turkish empire.

13. These statistics appeared in the l'Univers article quoting a German paper published in November 1841 in the Catholique de spire.

14. The Bishop of Bulgaria, Msgr. Mulajoni, who had Wallachia (the two countries then forming part of the Ottoman empire) under his jurisdiction, supported the establishment of a French consulate in Bulgaria. He had made overtures for this purpose to the Propagation of the Faith at Lyon. Under April 8, 1842, the minutes of the meetings of the council of Lyon read, “Msgr. Mulajoni . . . wishes steps to be taken for the appointment of a consul who would protect the Catholics of Wallachia . . . . An excerpt from Msgr. Mulajoni's letter has been sent to M. Ozanam, so that, through M. de Saint-Chéron, it might come to the attention of the minister of foreign affairs.”

15. The annihilation of the British troops of occupation in Afghanistan had occurred the year before (1841).

16. The Opium War. The English, having encountered diplomatic difficulties in China, were no longer in control of Shanghai (cf. P. Renouvin, La Question d'Extrême-Orient 1840-1940, Hachette, 1953, p. 27).

397. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, May 18, 1842

Settlement of the business relative to the article on Buddhism which will be published elsewhere. Remains bound to the association. The bishop of Bulgaria matter. Opinion of the candidates proposed for the assistant secretaryship of the Propagation of the Faith.

Dear friend,

Your letter, received a few days ago, has touched me deeply. To be kinder and more brotherly is impossible. You did very well in entrusting the writing of this year's report to another pen for variety, and the work was otherwise excellent. As for my article on Buddhism, I will say no more. Only that, to ensure that my time was not completely lost to the association, I will publish it in another periodical which will pay me and I will turn this little sum over to the treasury of the Propagation of the Faith. Be assured that only one thing concerning us is of interest to me, to live as one with you. We belong to an age and a city which is wholly divided, even the good people, which needs to hold on to something in order to grow strong. It is not in the academic world, not among the literary men and the press that I find that moral fellowship which supports and encourages. But God allows me to discover it first in the family, then in the midst of numerous friendships which absence fails to weaken, and finally among those Christian associations where faith is strengthened and charity specified.
I thank you then for your trust and ask you to be so kind as to convey the expression of my gratitude to the council. I am sorry that I cannot tell you the results of the steps taken in behalf of the bishop of Bulgaria. M. de Saint-Chéron left for the country without giving me an answer, but he will not be away long. I am honored to be consulted on the choice of an assistant secretary. I find it difficult to give definite opinions. M. Onofrio is a man of great distinction and solid piety. But le Barreau, it seems to me, shows promise of too great a future for him to renounce. However, there is no reason not to approach him. I know M. Génin better and am happy to be able to call him one of my oldest and most devoted friends. He has a great deal of talent and even more virtue. He possesses a high character, a generosity, and an extreme delicacy which are often lacking in the affairs of life. He belongs to the number of those who in these recent days have suffered from the business reverses which have befallen the most reputable houses of your city. However, I think he is still well off; and I am not well enough informed of his plans and opportunities to assure you that he would accept it, especially if the condition is a contract of very long duration. If I were in Lyons, I would volunteer to sound out the dispositions of these two gentlemen, so as to make your steps clearer.

Farewell, dear friend, in the midst of the many sorrows which cause universal dismay here there are none to regret among our acquaintances. Chaurand and his wife were at Versailles, but they had the happy inspiration to return by the right bank. My regards to the gentlemen.

Your devoted,

A.-F. Ozanam

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. L’Université catholique, t. XIII, n. 78, June 1842, pp. 453-462.
2. Polemic on the monopoly of teaching.
Dear friend,

On leaving for class I am taking advantage of the short time remaining before the post leaves to tell you that I received the commission of the Council of the Propagation of the Faith yesterday. The medals arrived safely. Not so the letter. It reached me very rumpled because the envelope was too flimsy, and it does not seem to me to be presentable in that state. If, then, you would not find it inconvenient, you should send me another copy enclosed in heavier paper, which will stand up better. Next, see whether it is permissible for me to seek advice from someone who has been at the palace occasionally, such as M. de Montalembert or M. de Carné, to learn the steps to take for the audience and the best way to discharge it. I would enjoin secrecy, and they are men too dedicated to the Propagation of the Faith for anyone to have the least anxiety. But on the other hand, I do not know whether the matter can escape the risk of publicity, the court being perhaps accustomed to publish its audiences. Nor am I without embarrassment; for, little used to seeing the powers of this world at close range, I am very much afraid that you have made an unfortunate choice of ambassador. I run a strong risk of getting nervous and of representing most unworthily an association which must, here especially, maintain all its dignity. I am nevertheless deeply touched at the honor the council does me and ask you to convey to it my sincere gratitude. You will pray to God for me so that I may get through so important and unusual an event in a competent manner. After all, when I shall be in the prince's presence, I shall remind myself that some months ago I was in the presence of another more august sovereign, his master and mine.

Farewell, dear friend, excuse my brevity which the hour of the mail imposes.

Your devoted friend,
A.-F. Ozanam

Envelope: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. Audience whose purpose was to present a gift to the king and attract at least his gracious protection in behalf of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, which enjoyed no legal existence.
2. Reminder of the audience granted him by Gregory XVI.

400. To Théophile Foisset
Paris, May 23, 1842

He thanks him for news and apprises him of Mme. Ozanam's accident. Promises a review of Foisset's book. Comments on the proposal of issuing Correspondant. Var-
ious echoes of Carné’s speech, and the rivalry between the Cercle and the Institut catholique.

Monsieur and friend,

We have gotten so used to seeing you for a few minutes each evening that your letter arrived truly to fill a gap for us. Since your departure my thoughts have followed you more than once, even into that beloved family you were so impatient to be with again and the occupations of all sorts awaiting you. I will often visit you in memory there again and, to begin, if feeble my prayers may be, they will mingle with yours the day you ask for them. May the feast of the Comforter have brought a beneficent ray to brighten your trials.

Here, we were not expecting to have need of it so soon. You saw the serene and tranquil happiness of my interior. Ever since my young and pious wife entered there the angels have inhabited it with her. But it had to be that we would have our troubles, too, and an accident which cannot be blamed on any imprudence and whose outcome cannot yet be measured has occurred to plunge us in affliction. After cruel suffering, my wife is still bedridden without yet knowing how serious the situation really is: I am assured that there is no positive danger, but certainly hopes are compromised. You see that it is my turn to ask you to pray for us.

You will also forgive the brevity of a reply written on watch by a bedside in one of those too infrequent moments for preparing lessons which otherwise I could not interrupt. It is very sad when one’s heart is preoccupied to have to be involved in affairs of the mind. I am not thinking along such lines. I regard as a matter of friendship and a duty of proselytism whatever concerns the propagation of your excellent book. Besides, the review has been done since the week after you left Paris. With more trouble taken it would have appeared in the last issue. It will surely be in June’s. My only fear is that, after being afraid it would be finished too late, you have the occasion to find it done too quickly. Your indulgence will pardon a work which is not familiar to me.

The publication of Correspondant, a new review, made possible by your zeal, will not languish through our fault. In finding the funds that we were lacking, you have deprived us of the possibility of blaming the indifference of Catholics: we do not want to incur the same reproach. Frequent messages have been exchanged in the matter between M. Wilson and us; the financial organization of the thing will still hold us back some time. Concerning personnel, I had thought of M. Didron and I have already insisted on the usefulness of his cooperation. M. Lenormant had been perfect at the last meeting, but how annoyed he is that M. Bautain could not come. We must not pretend; we will be like an army without generals; non multi nobiles, non multi sapientes. That is why the enterprise has special need of being commended to Him who chooses the weak and contemptible so as to confound the strong. For the rest, the opportunity could never be greater. Situations worsen and debate is not joined. We are not represented in the press, and it could be said, in turning a celebrated witicism: one treats us, in our own territory and without us.
I would like very much to know how you feel about M. Carné’s speech here—complete division, nearly general approbation from old Christians, revolution from others. And always rivalry between the Cercle and the Institut catholique. We are so few, and we do not know enough to unite. Happily the archbishop, whose firm attitude and exalted character have an ever increasing influence, is kind enough to occupy himself with an alliance of the two organizations, and if God pleases, I hope we will soon have for letters and the sciences what we have for charity in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. You left Paris with gloomy predictions; I share them, and yet I deliberately allow myself to be misled by the glimmers of hope which seem to arise. May they perhaps visit your toilsome solitude, and without being with us, you will be able to direct yourself at our expense by accomplishing easily the little good we think about.

Adieu, Monsieur and friend, be kind enough to present my wife’s compliments to Madame Foisset, and to preserve for me a place in your remembrances, especially those you have before God.

Your most humble and devoted servant,

A.-F. OZANAM
11. Probable allusion to Louis Veuillot, whose conversion Ozanam had referred to earlier. (Cf. letter 242 to Olivier, July 11, 1840.)

12. The *Cercle catholique*, founded in 1841 by Ambroise Rendu and his son-in-law, Doubet, and the *Institut catholique*, founded in 1839 by Cauchy, were two centers of philosophical, literary, and scientific conferences. The two organizations had different orientations. The *Cercle catholique* attempted to make up for the lack of Catholic higher education by means of conferences; the *Cercle* tended to be liberal, the *Institut catholique* conservative.

412. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, June 8, 1842

Informs him of the illness of his wife. Tells of Montalembert’s advice, the process of obtaining an audience with the king in behalf of the Propagation of the Faith.

Dear friend,

Excuse the fact that your last letter is a long time without a reply. During this period God has tried me severely. Madame Ozanam has been gravely ill, and for two weeks we were in the most painful uncertainty. At length, we were so prayed for on earth that they had pity on us in heaven. My wife is well on the way to recovery, and I am taking up the interrupted course of my affairs.

These unhappy circumstances have not for all that held up the honorable mission which the council has been good enough to confide to me. It could not be carried out while the king was traveling. Now that His Majesty has left the Chateau of Randon and the audiences have been resumed at the Tuilleries, I can proceed usefully. Yesterday I saw the Count de Montalembert, whose filial piety toward the association’s interests has not cooled, and I am going to make my request today along the lines he suggested. He has forewarned me that there will be perhaps a short delay in the reply.

We had the pleasure of seeing Abbé Desgeorges, and you would be right to think that, among the thousand matters of interest a friend from Lyon could bring exiles, the plans of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith and of those engaged in it would hold first rank. You will see him again soon; I trust that he will be good enough to take you a good impression of me and will tell you how everlastingly fond of you he is.

Your friend,
A.-F. OzANAM

My regards to the members of the council.
Ozanam continues to work toward obtaining a royal audience. He is making sure of the sovereign's good will toward the Propagation of the Faith. He must act discreetly, considering France. The elections over, the intervention of Guizot could be expected.

Dear friend,

I come once again to inform you about the business with which I have been entrusted and which suffers many delays. Following the Count de Montalembert's advice, I took the first step two weeks ago without results. Would there not in other circumstances be reason to take offence? But habitués of the court assure me that in the wake of the actions of the archbishops of Toulouse, Paris, and Lyon, the king takes a dim view of church affairs. At M. Sauzet's recently they cited the case of two eminent churchmen proposed by the minister of worship for bishoprics and rejected by His Majesty solely because of their talent and vigor. In such a critical time it is possible that the measure adopted by the council of the association might not at all produce the desired effect. The association having no legal character, it could be judged irregular for the gift to be presented by its hands instead of following the usual path of the apostolic nunciature. Nevertheless, there is an incontestable advantage to interesting the king personally in the French association and thus preventing possible difficulties later on. There is perhaps reason, therefore, not to give up, but to wait. Such is M. de Montalembert's advice, at least, whom I saw again yesterday; he thinks that we should wait for the elections, then a little later approach the minister of foreign affairs who, having granted the wishes of the council more than once, would probably go out of his way to request the audience for me and to prepare His Majesty favorably. M. Guizot would probably be flattered by such confidence and thus become all the more committed as far as the future is concerned. Kindly submit this plan to the council and let me know whether it is acceptable. Whatever the decision, kindly give it the reassurance of my strict devotion.

If you see Abbé Desgeorges, be good enough to give him my regrets for not having gone to say goodbye. During his last three days in Paris I was forced to stay...
home because of a relapse of my dear wife, who has suffered much, but whom I now see regaining her health, thank God.

Farewell, dear friend. In two months at the latest I will be with you and will embrace you with that fraternal affection that restores so many words. We are distributing your accounts of Alphonse Ratisbonne.

Your devoted,
A.-E. OZANAM

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
2. Msgr. d’Astros. His Lenten pastoral of 1842 took accurate aim at Professor Gatien-Arnoult of the Faculty of Letters of Toulouse (cf. controversy between l’Univers and le Journal des débats, from March 6 on). Paul Thérèse David Cardinal d’Astros (1772-1851), born at Tournes, was the nephew of Comte Portalis, one of the redactors of the civil code and minister of cults under the Empire. D’Astros was his uncle’s cabinet chief for the negotiation of the concordat, and drew up the list of future bishops. In 1806, he edited the imperial catechism. Imprisoned from 1810 to 1814 for opposing imperial orders, he became bishop of Bayonne in 1820, archbishop of Toulouse in 1830, and cardinal in 1850.
3. Msgr. Affre. On April 30, during an official reception at the Tuileries, he had displeased the king by raising the questions of the weekly day of rest and the monopoly of teaching.
4. Msgr. de Bonald. We could not find the precise event alluded to here.
5. Martin de Nord.
6. Canon Doney (Besançon) and Abbé de Salinis (then at Juilly) had just been denied the episcopate by the king himself because of their former sympathy for Lammenais. Cf. letter of the Internuncio Garibaldi to Msgr. Mathieu, July 12, 1842, quoted by P. Paupard in Correspondance inédite entre Msgr. Antonio Garibaldi internonce à Paris et Msgr. Césaire Mathieu archevêque de Besançon, Paris, de Boccard, 1961, p. 358. Antoine de Salinis (1798-1861) was later bishop of Amiens (1849-1856) and archbishop of Auch from 1856 until his death.
7. One of the commemorative medals of the twentieth anniversary of the association.
8. The Chamber of Deputies having been dissolved in June, elections were anticipated on July 9.
9. Ozanam’s letter was brought before the Council of Lyon in the course of the meeting of July 1. It was decided to leave Ozanam free to act according to his own judgment, asking only of him previous knowledge of the steps to be taken (cf. Minutes of the Central Council of Lyon, archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon).

421. To his wife
Paris, July 23, 1842

He received Communion that morning. Visits to Père Marduel, Dr. Durnerin, Bailly, and Beaudicour. He suffers from the separation but joins in the familial good fortune of
his wife. He hopes that he can fix the date of his departure after he has seen Mignet. He has worn his new clothes, after alterations. Allusion to the preparations for the funeral of the duc d'Orleans.

Saturday evening.

How good you are, my well-beloved, and how your tender solicitude touches and charms me! You are tired from 33 hours of travel. It is the middle of the night, a time when everyone sleeps and consequently forgets: a stop in a miserable way-station with hardly a light, where a bad-humored attendant rubs his eyes; the grumbling conductor is urging the travelers to their seats; the stamping of the relay horses hitched for departure is heard. It is an effort just to find paper, pen and ink; and yet the little white paper is filled, so as to go off bearing good news and a sweet kiss. Your pretty fingers fold it in haste, and you are anxious that it be put in the post promptly, so as to surprise me gracefully, as when you come up quietly behind me as I work, to bend down to my cheek which never turns away with impunity. I am no longer amazed at the comforting dreams that came to me the same night: we are truly together and the vision did not lie. And today, knowing that you were continuing the journey overland, I no longer expected anything, but when I heard the bell ring at 7:15, I had not a moment’s doubt and ran to get the letter: I have read and reread it, pressed it against my lips and my heart. It has not left me for an instant; it has kept me company all day. See how happy you make me. I am well aware that for you it is nothing, that you are capable of much more, and that you may find my imagination too ready and my thanks too much. But I am also aware that attentions are still more charming than services, and that there is sometimes more love in a delicate thought than in a courageous act; and, however love be shared, in whatever way it be shown, it can never be welcomed with too much joy and gratitude.

Sunday evening.

This morning, my good Amélie, I went to find the Comforter of every trouble, the friend of the afflicted. Good Père Marduel, whom I saw yesterday, gave me permission. It was in the Chapel of Saint Vincent de Paul where I had missed the feast of the 19th, but the octave is celebrated today. The remains of the blessed patron were exposed in their crystal chasse. This simple and humble priest was surrounded with all the homage of the Church and of that double family of missionaries and sisters who carry his benefactions to the utmost limits of the world and the last degree of misery. I had the good fortune to receive Communion. And there in the bosom of Him whose arms are wide enough to encompass all distances, I found you again. I felt your soul like a white dove beside mine, and I offered your purity, your sweetness, your simplicity, and all those things God loves in return for my pride, impatience, and perverse imaginations. I renewed the resolution to become better, is not that a means, and the surest one, of bringing me near you? My emotion was
profound, and for a long time I have not left church with more salutary thoughts.

Then, how is it that the day no longer seemed endless? Could it be that days when I am not wicked are also those when I love you more? But how painful were the hours of absence for me until they no longer dragged by so slowly. No gloom, no shadow, none of those humors not to your liking; but a languor which follows me in everything I do makes me feel that half of my life has ceased. The time has been well taken up. I have made a call on M. Fauriel, whose compliments I send you. I have gone to M. Durnerin; he had sent me his bill for the past year; and as all Paris knows everything, he is not ignorant of your illness and our recourse to another Aesculapius. M. Bailly, at whose house I called to thank him for his hospitality, was not in. Madame received me, and I understand after the conversation that they do not want anything. I had also to write Marie a letter and chat with M. de Beaudicour about the affairs of the society of St. Vincent de Paul. But all these cares which distract the mind do not occupy the heart and I am forever amazed at the powerlessness of even study to overcome such torments. This evening, as yesterday and the day before, we had a magnificent sky: at sunset a flood of light comparable to all the magical effects of the horizon of Rome or Naples. At the Luxembourg the golden light played among the leaves in a manner entirely ravishing. But I no longer have the courage to admire and rejoice: your being far away changes every aspect for me and hides for me every ray. And then always to go back into this house where a charming voice no longer greets me. To sit by myself at that table, to pass by the silent piano in order to lie down in that bed whence the smiles and caresses have flown!

Yet everything in the way of consolations an exile could have, joined together today. I received your good letter this morning. Read and reread, it has stayed with me; it did not leave me at the moment I approached the altar. Thank you, my well-beloved, I am happy to share thus in your traveling, in the joys of your arrival. You shared in the feast day, and I feel that I was not wrong when thought transported me to you. How I envy my brothers the good fortune of embracing you on Tuesday! Do you know that if I were jealous I could not forgive them? May you be blessed with all the tender recollections which, amid all those effaced, recall you to the arms of your husband! If that astonishes you, I myself am never in doubt of it. Oh! do not reproach them. Think of him who loves you, but think of him happily. If his melancholy face comes back to you at times, persuade yourself that it is good to put this lord and master to the proof, to remind him of his chivalrous customs as fianceé, to make him sigh a bit again. The role of severity does not sit badly on women, especially when sentiment poorly repressed betrays you, and then your merciful looks return to reassure your inconsolable slaves. So that I may hold to tradition, I have made a vow of love: not to buy little cakes so long as I have not the pleasure of sharing them with you. Today I have resisted all temptation although my courses made me pass by the richest display of that appetizing industry. At dinner Marie, who takes care of me, put a cherry tart in front of me. The case was serious, and the problem most thorny. After a long and mature examination in which all the economic, gastronomic, and moral considerations were weighed, I wisely resolved the
problem by one of those distinctions with which I distinguish myself. Seeing that the fruit tart was undoubtedly unavailable to you, surrounded with the delights of Quillons, I, not in my own name, but as your power of attorney so charged with receiving and consuming all revenues, received and consumed your portion, that is, half of the object in litigation; the rest was left intact, and I have renewed the promise not to set foot inside any bakery on earth until the day when other pretty little feet will cross the doorsill with me, while a beautifully gloved hand disengages itself from my own to select from the elegant display a petit four.

While plotting thus I see that it is late. The music I requested and which fell on my ear seems to have ceased; the instrument is closed. Farewells are exchanged; each takes up his torch, and I leave, alas! like the others. A year ago at this time we were not apart.

Monday, three o’clock in the afternoon

Another half a day spent in the dust of libraries. I grab a moment to embrace you and close. Do not envy my poor books, dear child, they are doing nothing wrong. While the hand unfolds the Latin folios or embellishes with notes a darkening paper, the imagination runs after you in the gardens at Quillons; it catches up with you at the turn of the path and taps you on the white shoulder it knows; it plucks a flower to offer you and, at the moment of taking its reward, everything around it disappears and it finds itself alone in these learned but somber halls where sleep as in a tomb the illustrious dead of all the ages.

And so I must leave you. I am about to take my book to M. Mignet for his opinion. From now until the end of the week I would like to refine my research and make it possible to set a time for its conclusion. Adieu, little friend, I press you to my heart. Adieu, my angel, kiss me on the forehead. Adieu, will there not be a time when we will not leave each other?

Your dear husband,
A.-F. OZANAM

A thousand affectionate regards to our good father and mother, and to all the brothers, and I ask Charles, if the terrors of his examination harass him, to visit his little sister, who will know how to encourage him. My compliments to the two Mariés. I am waiting impatiently for news of my aunt and her family. Do not forget me in regard to M. Noirot, to whom we owe special obligations. The tailor has delivered my dress coat, vest, and trousers after some alterations judged to be necessary. I appeared yesterday all newly turned out; I was thinking that you, too, would have taken your bit of satisfaction, after having had so often to take the arm of my old threadworn coat, and I wished that your pretty rose or blue sleeve intertwined in the crook of my arm had introduced these new clothes. At least the thought was there.

I have not told you enough how much pleasure your good letter gave me. I am about to read it again. Oh yes, my Amélie, you love me very much: all those charm-
ing words fill my memory like a perfume of love. Write me often like this. Write me at length. Is it my only consolation. Is it not one of yours, too?

Everything is being readied here for the funeral ceremonies. The Place de Notre Dame is but a great studio. The band of the national guard assembles in front of the city hall to go over and over the marches it must play. The deputies are arriving. M. de Lamartine is here; I will go to leave a card at his house. I forgot to tell you that I went to the archdiocesan chancery to take care of the restitution with which I had been entrusted and which greatly intrigued the personnel.

Original: Archives Laporte.

Previous Publication: The end of the second paragraph and the beginning of the third: “I had the good fortune to receive Communion . . . that half of my life has ceased” in l’anneau d’or n. 54, art. cit., pp. 493-494.

Notes:
1. The former feast of St. Vincent de Paul, July 19.
2. The priests of the Congregation of the Mission (Vincentian Fathers) and Daughters of Charity.
3. Dr. Durnerin was a friend of Ozanam’s father. Ozanam had not called him, but Dr. Recamier and Dr. Gouraud, at the time of his wife’s miscarriage.
4. Aesculapius, son of Apollo, god of medicine or healing.
5. When Madame Ozanam was ill, the Baillys had provided Ozanam with a lodging near the Luxembourg.
6. A suburb of Lyon where the Soulacroixs lived.
7. Ferdinand Phillipe, duc d’Orléans (1810-1842), oldest son of Louis Philippe, had been killed in an accident on July 13.
8. Lamartine was reelected deputy from Mâcon on July 9.

424. To Mme. Bailly
Paris, July 28, 1842

Through Ozanam, Mme. Bailly had recommended to Mme. Ozanam a poor traveler passing though Lyon. Ozanam informs Mme. Bailly that the necessary steps have been taken.

I offer my respects to Madame Bailly, and conforming to her kind intentions, I have just addressed her letter to my wife. Regrettably she is in the country—at Quillons near Lyon—at a summer residence. She could be contacted best through her father’s house in town, M. le Recteur de l’Academie, quai de Retz 38. But that would take a long time and be too late. But if Madame Bailly is agreeable, these good people could be directed to M. Arthaud, president of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (rue des Capucins 3). The Society at Lyon has indeed a special service for poor travelers. I will write to point out the need. My wife for her part will do what she can,
and if it is very little, at least she will be very grateful to Madame Bailly for being so kind as to wish to share her good works with her. That is one of the sweetest proofs of Christian friendship: the soul's welfare, and after that the body's.

I pray Madame Bailly to present my compliments to M. Bailly and to consider me always her most obliged, most obedient and most humble servant.

A.-F. Ozanam


Note: 1. The original has no date. An allusion in the following letter adopting Thursday, July 28.

425. To his wife  
s.l.n.d. [Paris], July 29 [1842]

Has met at the Cercle Abbé Desgenettes, back from Rome. Description of the funeral of the duc d'Orléans. Regret at having missed his visit to M. Marduel. Counts on her to smooth out some family problems. Advises her to take piano lessons and to pursue the study of Italian. Passes on to her Mme. Bailly's request.

Wednesday, 10 o'clock in the evening

I must make excuses once more, beloved. I came from the Cercle where, despite my protests of retirement, they insisted upon my going to see the venerable Abbé Desgenettes, who is back from Rome bringing with him the blessing of the Sovereign Pontiff. That is why I am late; I have not had my habitual leisure for writing to you, that sweet moment I save for the end of the laborious day. Nevertheless, no day must go by without your having a few lines from me. I am bound by happy scruple to this religion of love. Except that, before going to bed I have still several pages to read and am pressed, so that there is hardly time to kiss your lovely forehead. And, so that you can share in what happens to me, I add to it a story. The Pope was with Cardinal Lambruschini, who is said to be a bit Austrian. M. Desgenettes reported the status of good works in Paris, the archconfraternity, the Cercle, etc. The Pope expressed his delight. Then turning to the cardinal, with that simplicity which also has a bite: "In France, Your Eminence, in France, do you hear?" And Austria said not a word. Now there's a story! I have another too. But you shall not have it until tomorrow. You want me to get my sleep, and your maid has just reminded me again of your wish.
Saturday, two o’clock in the afternoon

I have just been at the funeral procession of the duc d’Orleans. I hesitated quite a bit about losing nearly four hours in that manner when time is so precious to me. And then I no longer like to see anything alone. It was to my way of thinking a kind of infraction of the penance I am observing. However, I thought you might want to know something about the funeral rites other than the newspaper accounts and I went in order to please you. From the beginning of the Champs-Elysées where I stood, you could see the Place de la Concorde overflowing with the moving multitude and a rank of people four-deep behind the soldiers, down both sides of the avenue. Public attitude was proper. Outbursts of sorrow could not be expected; but the usual curiosity was joined to a kind of sadness and sympathy for so much youth and hope so quickly withered, for so much family affection so cruelly desolated. Women spoke of the queen with respect, and men doffed their hats when the cross passed by. The impression on minds should have been beneficial. Populaces have need of being touched sometimes. Great spectacles are necessary for them. If processions are denied them, they wind up wanting scaffolds. The cortège was perhaps too exclusively military. With the exception of a group of clergy, nearly all the députations were in coaches, and the richness of the equipages did not have the same effect that the great body of the state marching on foot behind the coffin would have made. For the rest, the hearse drawn by eight horses caparisoned old style; behind it, the warrior’s horse; at the four corners, the four marshals of France. All this warlike panoply was of an extreme magnificence and left in passing this painful thought: that all the power of royalty, all the opulence of a great nation, all the genius of the arts, all that converged in this superb pomp could not restore a breath of life in a young man of thirty and dry the tears in the eyes of his widow! In this inflexible equality of nature there is a hard lesson for our frettings and cupidities. And Providence teaches us that it is necessary to evaluate human grandeur when the most elevated of all are subject to such reverses. I would have wished that, in this immense crowd, there had been one thing especially, some thing more than decency and pity—prayer. What greater help for a soul in those invisible regions it inhabits than the remembrances of three hundred thousand Christians going up to heaven. I have not on my part refused this supreme alms which the poor prince trapped beneath that lugubrious luxury seemed in passing by to ask for, and I quietly recited the De profundis, feeble tribute for one so immensely stricken: and I can still see the blank stares and smiles of those who passed me.

Sunday, one o’clock.

I am finishing a correspondence of five letters and I have reserved the last lines for you, dear friend, as I did the last kiss on the day of departure. There is hardly time to reply to your gracious letter of yesterday to which I would like to give special attention because of its being still longer and lovelier than the others. I am very grateful for your pious rendezvous planned for this morning. When I was getting
ready last evening to go to M. Marduel’s, a visit was made me which lasted beyond limits and prevented me from leaving. I find it hard to reconcile myself to the fact. And this Sunday, lovelier than the last, is particularly melancholy.

One thing only comforts me, which is the thought of having served half my sentence if, however, my obligations permit me to leave on August 11. Do not neglect the information I asked for on Thursday. Certainly you cannot involve yourself in disputes. You are not involved, and God does not wish your poor heart to be chilled by the disagreements of men. But you can foresee that certain differences may arise in attitudes of mind, in each one's opinions and intentions. It would be a miracle if it were not so, and those which are advanced should be no reason for preferring one’s own less. It was very thoughtful of you to visit my good aunt, and the good news you give me of her and my family consoles me very much. Only, if I have veneration for the family root, I should have the same for the branches, and I remain scandalized at the two states of health, one of which needs to hunt every week and the other to be away for six months. Probably, when you go back to Lyon you will visit Pauline and Madame Jaillard. But if you want to perform a charitable, a gracious act immediately, you could call at the house on rue St. Jean. The old nurse and poor Charles would appreciate that charming thoughtfulness very much. Since I am making recommendations, I implore you not to neglect M. Billiet’s piano lessons as we agreed: it is a worthwhile expense and among those I would not hesitate over. Allow me also to remind you of the Italian, and if you are willing to make me happy, promise me to stop biting your fingernails. Is he not a most irritating husband? I have not finished, however. Madame Bailly asks you to give a poor Italian she is sending to you a sum of 25 francs, the proceeds of certain concerted appeals for them; she will reimburse me. It would be the proper thing for you to write to her. Such acts of courtesy would discharge some of our obligations.

Adieu, my well-beloved. Pitiless time is pushing me: I can no longer take you in my arms, hug you to my heart and bid you farewell, alas, as I did twelve days ago today. Only twelve days! Mon dieu, and such a long time!

Your friend,
A.-F. OzANAM

My affectionate regards to our parents. I have shared deeply in the sorrow M. Larrey’s death must have caused you all especially. Much love to Théophile, Charles, and Albert, to say nothing of the little cousins. Adieu, my beautiful lady. If your knight is dear to you, send him by the first dove to carry your message a flower which lay on your bosom. That very day I will put it in front of your portrait.
Notes:
1. The Cercle catholique.
2. Luigi Cardinal Lambruschini (1776-1854) had, toward the end of his nunciature in Paris, shown a great deal of sympathy for his Austrian colleague, Count Apponyi. Ordained in 1799, Lambruschini, a Barnabite father, archbishop of Genoa (1819-1830), and nuncio to Paris (1826-1830), was created cardinal in 1831, and named secretary of state by Pope Gregory XVI. Known for his authoritarian bent and Austrian sympathies, he left office on the advent of Pius IX, and became prefect of the Congregation of Rites.
4. There were at the time seven marshals of France: the duc de Dalmatie (Soult), the duc de Reggio (Oudinot), Comte Molitor, Comte Gérard, Marquis de Grouchy, Comte Vallée, and Comte Sebastiani.
5. Ps. 129, appropriated by the Church as a prayer for the dead.
6. Abbé Marduel was his confessor.
7. Madame Haraneder.
8. A play on the name of his cousin Pauline Haraneder, by marriage Madame Branche.
10. The Ozanam family residence.
11. Ozanam's younger brother.
12. Madame Ozanam had taken up the study of Italian during their engagement period.
13. See letter 424, Ozanam to Bailly, July 28, 1842.
14. Baron Dominique Larrey (1766-1842), surgeon general of the Grand Armée, b. at Beaudean (Hautes-Pyrénées). He had died at Lyon on July 25, returning from a tour of inspection in Algeria, and before he could reach Paris.

428. To Henri Pessonneaux
Paris, August 3, 1842

He gives him facts concerning the curriculum for the licentiate and shares interest in his personal research with him. Reflections upon the death of the duc d'Orléans and upon the demeanor of the crowd at the funeral obsequies. Allusion to the meeting of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul under the chairmanship of the new archbishop of Avignon.

Pardon me, dear friend, for making you wait so long for a reply and a favor. You were never late when I needed you. However, Amélie's departure, which was imminent when your letter arrived, necessitated frequent errands and assiduous attentions which hardly left me any freedom for eight days. Then I fell into a state so depressed and troubled that I could think of nothing, and when I thought of anything it was to plunge into the research which keeps me here. In the midst of these daily visits to libraries I again forgot your commission, which at times returned to haunt me in the evening. Finally I spent today at Hachette's. There is no collection of authors for the licentiate. There are several works indicated for the curriculum; certain ones, Sophocle's Oedipe à Colone, and Aristotle's Rhetoric are extra; others like the speech of Percicles in Thucydides are in the anthologies, still others such as
an idyll of Theocritus might be studied in the author. The same holds for the Romans. Consequently it is necessary to buy only what is extra, which is very little, and leave the rest to be studied in the Parisian libraries. Send me your instructions letter by letter and I will carry them out with all the more scrupulousness since I must expiate my first negligence. Whatever my mistakes, dear friend, do not suppose that I would ever forget what I owe to your long and affectionate friendship.

I prize it more than ever because it is a necessary comfort in my loneliness. My life for more than two weeks has been like a bad dream, the kind that make the night so long and trouble sleep so distressingly. I am not used to the empty house, the silence, the dreary, empty life I have been living. A year’s happiness has made me forget entirely, and it seems never to have been otherwise for me. It is because the mystery of the marriage bond so welds souls together that every separation lac­erates and leaves both partners bleeding. I used to believe that temptation should be resisted and the interests of work never sacrificed. The further I would penetrate a subject, I would recognize truly great and beautiful things, worthy of man’s attention. I had to research on a grand scale; now I see how ignorant I was, how much there is to learn, and how I will still be ignorant after all. But I see also, up close and with filial awe, all the wonders the church has done for this Germanic race, this European civilization which has shown her so much ingratitude. Everything that has been said for years about the benefits of the episcopate and monasticism, all the encomiums which are in danger of becoming trite, are nothing in the face of the marvelous reality. Men have carried wrapped in the folds of their garments not war or peace, but learning, charity, the destinies of the world.

The good news you give me of yourself was one of the pleasures of the last days Amélie spent here. She was very pleased to learn that you find yourself improved in your feudal way of life at the manor of Beaurepaire. She was amused at the picture you drew of your picturesque costume and hunting expeditions. Bracing air, exercise, fruit, milk, game, all these things restore a man, and especially the sight and enjoyment of lovely nature which God has made us part of, and which we do not leave without regret. The country has charm along with a kind of innocence and purity; the preoccupations of artificial life scarcely penetrate it, nor political passions, nor the demands of pride, nor humiliating necessities. Undoubtedly there are great sins everywhere, but immorality has more resources in the cities.

However retired your life, the sad event which even today casts Paris into grief must have troubled your country repose. It seems that God wishes to shatter every human plan and keep to Himself the secret of the future. The papers have carried a description of the funeral obsequies. It is correct to say that the reaction . . . is fitting. The heart still retains what is best in us; it is a part of the national character still uncorrupted, the part where the faith still has a hold. A committee for the observance of Sunday is in the process of formation. The St. Vincent de Paul ceremony, July 19, was reverent and moving. H(is) G(race) the archbishop-elect of Avignon spoke; but what was better yet, the sovereign pontiff has established it at Rome by bestowing upon it every blessing.

Farewell, dear friend. Please give my regards to M. de Beaurepaire. I trust we
shall soon find ourselves neighbors and will embrace each other better than I can here. Pray to God for me.

Your cousin who loves you,

A.-F. Ozanam

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur H. Pessonneaux, Château de la Marche, on the Daubs near Verdun, Saône-et-Loire.

Original: Archives Laporte. Unedited.

Notes:
1. The Greek texts included in the licentiate curriculum were the following: Thucydides, *Speech of Pericles*; Plato, the *Gorgias* and the first *Hippias*; Aristotle, *Rhetoric*; Demosthenes, *Speech against Leptine*; Aeschylus, *Prometheus*; Sophocles, the choruses of *Oedipus à Colone*; Aristophanes, *Pluto*; Theocritus, *Combat of Hercules and Amycus*.
2. Pessonneaux spent part of the summer with the Beaurepaire family at the Château de la Marche, as a tutor. Joseph Claude François de Beaurepaire (1769-1854), former emigre (Bourbon army), deputy in 1815, peer of France in 1827, mayor of Beaurepaire (Saône-et-Loire).
3. The question of a weekly day of rest had been taken up with the king by Msgr. Affre during the audience of April 30, 1842. The movement in favor of a weekly day of rest had begun at Lyon a few weeks earlier. Cf. L’Ami de la religion, 1842, n. 113, p. 770.
4. Msgr. Naudo, who had just left the episcopal see of Nevers for the archiepiscopal see of Avignon.
men, with a familiar knowledge of the court. The council gave me permission to consult the Count de Montalembert, peer of France, and M. de Carné, deputy. The former, who already kindly advised me two months ago, not being in Paris, I went to the latter. I have seen him on the matter three times; he has taken time for reflection, has accepted the council’s trust gratefully, and wishes to respond to it warmly. His political position allows him to do so intelligently. Also, I have sought further enlightenment from a cleric of consummate wisdom who is attached to the household of the queen and acquainted with the present climate of feeling. The result of both their opinions is that it is decidedly inopportune to request an audience at this time.

1. “The king cannot receive at the present time other respects than those of public sorrow. Any effort to attract the attention of H[is] M[ajesty] to anything besides the most urgent business of the state would be considered an indiscretion; everything else must respect a father’s grief and the family’s consolation. Even the queen, although accessible for favors, must receive no requests. This situation will last for another month at least. In face of this delay one can only hope.

2. “The gesture which the council of the association wishes to make is beyond doubt an honorable obeisance freely given; a voluntary proof of respect and gratitude. But it can also be misunderstood as an appeal for royal protection in regard to possible future difficulties. The king could not accept it without obligating himself in some way. On the other hand, it is a delicate piece of business, because the association has no legal existence and the government does not recognize it as a legal person and because the bad will of some could contest the welcome you will receive as an irregular obligation; and a simple courtesy could be impeached as a favor. Amidst the serious circumstances in which the crown finds itself, it must avoid a scandal in the press or of a public nature, which would also affect the Association of the Propagation of the Faith.

3. “A means must then be found outside of ordinary conditions and all publicity to communicate in entire privacy and secrecy. An indirect and sure approach must be taken, which will bring about the desired result. Such an interview is possible, but only when the court has returned to normal. The means will have to be submitted to the council’s judgment, and it would be better to talk about it face to face rather than in correspondence, where everything cannot be said.”

Such, M.le President, is the advice they have given me; it appears to me serious enough to delay for the time. I am leaving soon for Lyon and will be present at the August 19th meeting. If the council is kind enough to hear me, I will be honored to develop the summary which I am forced to make here. My duties call me back to Paris by September 15, or October 1. This absence, which I would not permit myself if it were possible to act in the association’s interests now, will not delay the progress of the matter, but will on the contrary give me the welcome opportunity to become better acquainted with your intentions and to absorb your wishes.

I am, with respect, M.le President,

Your most humble and devoted servant,

A.-F. OzANAM
Be kind enough to give the Members of the Council my most respectful regards.

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur the President of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. An original copy of this letter to be transmitted to the king had reached Ozanam in a damaged condition.
2. Aides-de-camp. Twelve in number, with three more honorary aides-de-camp (Cf. Almanach royal, 1842, p. 49). None is mentioned by name in Ozanam's correspondence.
3. Chaplain of the queen's household: Abbé Guillan, professor of the Faculty of Theology of Paris.
4. Ozanam's prudence and that of his advisers is explained by the juridical situation of the Propagation of the Faith. The law of February 1834, which confirmed Article 291 of the Penal Code, forbade associations. In reality religious associations existed by tacit agreement (for example, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, which would not be disturbed before the circular of Persigny in 1861). The Propagation of the Faith had steadfastly refused to request legal authorization under the title of exception. The mission entrusted to Ozanam envisioned obtaining for the association the guarantee of the king's protection without any official recognition.

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433. To François Lallier Quillons, near Lyon, August 17, 1842

He has finally just rejoined his wife in the country. He converses with his friend about their recent trials, and his lack of serenity. The book he is working on is progressing: it deals with demonstrating that Germany owes the largest part of its civilization to Christianity. News of some Lyon friends.

Dear friend,

I have been on vacation only four days, in the country, at my father-in-law's, where I have rejoined my wife, who left with her mother three weeks before me to breathe the good air and build up her strength. I for my part stayed behind, held back by the research for my future book and in that isolation whose habit I had lost, and hurried to finish and get here at least for the family feast of August 15. Those long hours of work, compromised by conjugal affection, will be perhaps some excuse for my silence. But I promised myself to reserve one of my first moments of leisure for you, and you see that I am keeping my word.

Let us chat first of all about you and yours. The last time you came to Paris I scarcely had time to thank you for the wonderful letter by which you undertook to comfort me in my misfortune. No more friendly and Christian sentiments could have been uttered. Amélie was very touched by it, and as for me I asked God for
that faith and courage of whose secret you are in such full possession. Alas! my poor friend, you yourself also have need of it. You had informed us of the accident which interrupted your second hopes, but we have been told since that Madame Lallier was still suffering greatly. We have thought of it often and have shared your anxieties, whose complete bitterness I can today understand. And the desire of being reassured about it was one of the reasons which urged my writing to you. Meanwhile, La Perrière tells me that you are thinking of leaving to visit your brother. That trip would presuppose that health lives under your roof, and I am congratulating myself with you. I imagine, at least, that your child continues to grow happily before your eyes, getting bigger in body and mind, and giving you those pious joys of fatherhood of which I fear to have looked forward to only to lose them forever. For I am still crushed under the blows with which Providence struck me. I will be so for a long time yet. Look at Le Taillandier, Chaurand, Arthaud, and yourself, as well as others still; look at the little Catholic families that are developing and promising to preserve the traditions of faith and virtue. Undoubtedly I was not yet worthy, was not yet capable of this ministry.

Despite all the graces which the Good God has lavished upon me for some time, my character, far from growing stronger and more meritorious, is more than ever full of troubles and weaknesses. The literary occupations with which I occupy myself, by keeping the imagination in perpetual activity, inflict a disordered empire on it. The inevitable slowness of a university career often discourages and frightens me. There is in the extreme competition which blocks all the avenues something of the impatient and tumultuous that I do not know how to deal with. And without the sweet serenity reigning in my interior, I could be lost amid agitation from without. Why do I not have in practice that confidence in the divine goodness whose purpose I so well understand? Why this restless ardor, nothing of abandonment and little of prayer? Why does the destructive activity of my thoughts not leave me the refuge and repose others find before their crucifix? In the meantime I have so many encouragements and examples around me! I have had such happy experience of the celestial solicitude that watches over us.

At the moment I am rather tired from my studies and the year's efforts. It was only when my course was finished that I could give proper and serious attention to the subject. I am showing that Germany owes its genius and civilization almost entirely to the Christian education which was given it; that its grandeur was in proportion to its union with Christianity; that it has power, light, and poetry only by fraternal communication with the other European nations; that for her as for all, there is not, there cannot be, true destinies except by oneness with Rome, depository of all the temporal traditions of humanity as well as the eternal designs of Providence. But on the other hand, national pride is complacent in the dream of native-born civilization, which without Latin contact would have developed with an unexampled splendor, and finally of a future which shall be magnificent if its strength is renewed in an unmixed Teutonism. The Germanic prototype is not Charlemagne, but Arminius!

These doctrines surface under different forms, amid the different philosophi-
cal, historical, and literary schools from Hegel to Goethe and from Goethe to Strauss. There seems to me some utility in attacking them at home, on their own ground; of making them see that by themselves they were only barbarians; how, through bishops and monks, by the Roman faith, by the Roman language, by Roman law, they entered into the procession of the religious, scientific, and political heritage of modern peoples, and how in repudiating it they will return little by little to barbarism. An introduction which precedes and the conclusions which will follow the history of the literature of chivalry, principal topic of my book, will bear witness to this idea. Do you think such a work could be really valuable?

I am working on the Introduction at present. My former lessons have been of little help in this section whose importance I perceived only latterly: that caused me to make extensive research. The Germans under the Romans, the military structures, the municipal organization, and the schools. The original preaching of Christianity before the invasion of the barbarians. The activity of the church in the face of, and following, the invasion. The development of the state: on one side the empire, on the other the towns. Finally the preservation and propagation of letters, the interrupted teaching of the languages and arts of antiquity, the admirable works which made of the monasteries of Fulda and Saint-Gall the schools of Germany.

In the absence of general treatments I had to research particular histories, the lives of the saints, and the chronicles of the towns. I seem to have discovered unknown and decisive facts which will establish the perpetuity of the scholarly tradition in an era accustomed to being branded with the name of barbarian from Charles Martel to the Crusades. I am going to try editing all this, about two hundred and fifty pages, and publishing some of it in the review, in order to stimulate good advice. A book in a short time is not a small matter, especially for me who compose slowly and risk taking a great deal of trouble for little result. I do not hesitate, therefore, to recommend what I have begun to your good and fraternal prayers. You probably expect me, since I am here, to give you news of our Lyon friends. While my stay has not been long enough to allow me to see much of them, La Perriere has, however, profited by our nearness and came to visit me yesterday.

He is recovering from his illness; his courses and excessive exhaustion had brought on, I believe, an inflammation of the intestines which was serious enough. Stronger now, he is going into le Bugey to rejoin Janmot, whose health also seems to be improving little by little. As for Doctor Arthaud, he wears on his prosperous face the best evidence of his profession. They are doing a great deal of good here, and the little Society of St. Vincent de Paul is on the best terms with the archbishop.

Adieu, dear friend, the postman is waiting for this letter, and I only have time to embrace you most affectionately, your friend,

A.-F. Ozanam

My wife presents her compliments to Madame Lallier.
447. To Dominique Meynis  
Paris, October 10, 1842  

Approach to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to obtain a postal exemption for the Annales in the Levant seaports.

Dear friend,

I was forced with deep regret to leave Lyon without saying goodbye to you and without receiving from you the council’s instructions. I am grateful for your kind thought of furnishing me with useful and enlightening instructions for my efforts.

In line with your advice I have had the honor of visiting M. Etienne,\(^1\) procurator general of the Lazarist missions, to discuss the Annales’ exemption in the seaports of Levant. He advised me to see M. Saintra,\(^2\) chief of the political division of foreign affairs, and explain to this official, whose good will and zeal for the Church’s interests have long been evident, the council’s wishes. M. Saintra received me with every kindness due a young man with a commission from a respectable association. He did not, however, disguise the fact that there were difficulties because of the postal laws jealously guarded by the Ministry of Finance.\(^3\) On the
other hand, he earnestly promised me his entire support. He thinks the only approach to take is a petition indicating the number, weight, and destination of the packages and signed by the president of the association’s council. He will assume the responsibility of transmitting and personally recommending the request to the minister from whom he has already obtained a great deal for Oriental Christians. He hope to succeed again.4

Such is the reply which I hasten to transmit to the council. If it judges it fitting to make the request, which seems to be the only path to success, I will be happy to deliver the letter, press for a decision, and cooperate to the best of my ability in this enterprise which, by propagating the association in infidel countries, will impress upon it ever more deeply the glorious seal of universality.

I am waiting for the bronze medals before ordering the case for H[er] M[ajesty] the queen. When I go presently to post these lines I will pay the subscription for the protestant missions’ magazine.5 I will not forget your comments when I write the footnote on the origin of tithing in the Propagation of the Faith.

Be kind enough to convey my deep and respectful regards to the members of the council. My respects to M. Sandier. To you, dear friend, the ever lively affection of your weak assistant.

A.-F. OZANAM

Depend upon my zeal in concluding this delicate but long-drawn-out commission.


Notes:
1. Jean-Baptiste Etienne (1801-1874). He was about to become superior of the Congregation of Lazarists (Vincentian Fathers) in 1843. There would seem to be no written trace of Ozanam’s approach to him in the archives of the Congregation of Lazarists.
2. Cintrat (not Saintra), deputy director for political matters in foreign affairs (Almanach royal, 1842).
3. Minister of finance, Lacave-Laplagne, successor to Humann, who died in April 1842.
4. Guizot, whose favorable dispositions toward the Association of the Propagation of the Faith have already been noted.
5. Mentioned previously: Journal des missiones évangéliques.

454. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, October 12, 1842

Treats of the opportunity of approaching Guizot in order to obtain free delivery for the Annales de la propagation de la foi to the seaports of the Levant. Means proposed for the success of this matter. Asks clarification about the gift to be presented to the queen.
Dear friend,

In reply to our last letter, the council, bearing in mind that the association has no official character and could not make a petition, thinks that consequently the course of action begun at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to obtain free transportation for the *Annales* should not be pursued. Without presuming to give advice in a serious problem I will perhaps be excused if I offer some comments with the intentions of helping. I offer them with respect, and if they are not acceptable, I withdraw them willingly.

The objection of the irregular situation of the association ought to give the council pause only if it hesitates to make itself heard by the government, or suspects that the text of the petition could be construed as constituting in some way the existence of an illegal association, and obliging it to regularize itself by seeking formal authorization. But, from all the communications addressed to the minister and received by him, it would seem that his good will toward the association is without mental reservation, and that his tactfulness would not abuse a request for which he strongly desires just treatment. It would be transmitted, besides, through the hands of friends like M. Saintra, and the indiscreet publicity common to offices would thus be avoided.

On the other hand, if the council insists on keeping out of it entirely, could the approach not be made by the editor-in-chief of the *Annales* in his own name? He could sign the letter, and there would be no need of any official sanction. This first step would be supported by M. Etienne, and the administration seems to be so well disposed that success would be practically assured. In this way the responsibility of the association would not be compromised, and monetary advantage would be obtained without danger to independence.

I am ready, then, to carry out the orders of the members of the council if they find it agreeable to abandon their first intentions. I need instructions in the other and more important matter with which I am entrusted. When having the little casket made for H[er] M[ajesty] the queen, should I have traced in gold lettering on the casket intended for the king the inscription: *Sagra Congregazione de Propaganda fide*? Please enlighten me on this point. The bronze medals have arrived as well as the document from the seminary of foreign missions, which will be of use for the history of the foundation of the association. If it were possible to gather some data on the way in which the laity, peoples, and governments have joined in support of the missions over the past three centuries, my work would be easier and perhaps more interesting.

Farewell, dear friend. Please convey the assurance of my respectful regard and accept the assurance of my deep and lasting affection.

Your friend,

A.-F. Ozanam
Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, Secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
1. The problem of the difficulties engendered for the Propagation of the Faith by its tolerated existence has already been raised in the correspondence between Ozanam and the Central Council of Lyon; but the problem has not been otherwise clarified.
2. Ozanam's advice was followed and proved effective. Cf. letter addressed by Guizot to the secretary of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith (Meynis) December 9, 1842.
   "No one, Monsieur, appreciates more than I the merit and usefulness of the association whose request you sent me.
   "I know the good it does, the services it renders to religion, humanity, and civilization; the devotion, disinterestedness, and purity of the sentiments which animate it in carrying out this task so eminently French and honoring France so highly. Such claims are more than sufficient to recommend it to the benevolence as well as the esteem of the king's government, and it gives me personal satisfaction to give evidence of that by approving the request you submitted to me. . . ." Archives of the Propagation of the Faith, Lyon.
3. An approach to the queen. This had been decided on after the proposed audience with the king had met with numerous difficulties (cf. letter 432).

459. To Marquise de Dolomieu
s.l. n.d.¹

He asks her to present to Queen Marie-Amélie his request for an audience.

Madame la Marquise,²

You have been kind enough to allow me to hope for your assistance in obtaining an audience with H[er] M[ajesty] the queen and presenting her with a letter and medals in behalf of the council of the Association of the Propagation of the Faith.

Today, after waiting for the period of official observances, I have the honor to send you my audience request, happy to entrust to your ever kind auspices an effort which can contribute to the good of religion.

In expressing to you the gratitude of the association's council, which recognizes your effective interest in this matter, allow me, Madame la Marquise, to thank you for having directed me in the accomplishment of a mission of the greatest importance to me.

A.—F. OZANAM
To Dominique Meynis
Paris, November 30, 1842

Success of the matter of the free postage. State of efforts to obtain the audience with the queen. Beginning of the article requested for the next report in the Annales de la propagation de la foi. Account of Boré and his work in behalf of the association.

Dear friend,

Pardon my long silence. I break it to acknowledge receipt of your recent letters. The one addressed to the minister of foreign affairs has been delivered to him. I am delighted at the happy outcome of that effort. Perhaps I should thank M. Saintra particularly on your behalf because without doubt his active kindness served the interests of the association greatly.

The more important business with which I have been honored has not been neglected. First of all I have had the second inscription for the two medals made up. The work, which seems to me most satisfactory, cost fifteen francs. Next, as I waited in vain for certain means of introduction promised me, I addressed the Marquise de Dolomieu, lady-in-waiting and friend of H[er] M[ajesty], directly for the purpose of obtaining by her intervention the most favorable audience possible.¹ I am waiting for her reply!

I will soon begin the article so kindly confided to me for the next report.² It is a task I will acquit with love. There is much pleasure in telling of the humble origin of great things. It is so wonderful thus to reveal the secret work of God. And besides, we are at the moment caught up in apostolic marvels. The last issue of the Annales continues for us the acts of the martyrs of Tonkin. We have also had for some weeks now our admirable friend Eugène Boré and have been able to avail ourselves of his tales, which are always too short because he must of necessity speak of himself. You will learn not without consolation that at the brilliant gatherings he takes part in, the Asian pilgrim recruits many dozens of subscribers for the Association of the Propagation of the Faith.

It remains to tell you how touched I am at your kind assurances. You know that I am bound to Lyon by all the roots the heart shoots forth. I am counting on you to
remember the get-together of December 3. Please give the council the homage of my respectful devotion.

Your friend bound by every tenderness,
A.-F. Ozanam

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur D. Meyris, Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith, rue du Perat, n. 6, Lyon.


Notes:
2. In 1842 it was not, by way of exception, Ozanam who wrote the annual report of the association's activities for the *Annales de la propagation de la foi*, pp. 169 ff. The article traces the history of Catholic missions since the sixteenth century.

462. To Dominique Meynis
Paris, December 11, 1842

Status of the efforts to obtain an audience with the queen. The Marquise de Dolomieu's advice on the steps to be taken.

I have just left the Marquise de Dolomieu, lady-in-waiting to the queen. I explained the matter to her. She advised me to request first an audience with the queen, which she promises to obtain, in order to present to H[er] M[ajesty] the medals intended for her, and then to tell her of the hesitation about offering the medals to the king and simply to ask her advice. It could happen that she would be kind enough to take charge of the casket herself, or she might point out the procedure to follow in order to be received by the king, and in either case our doubts will be dispelled.

It is suggested that the council send along a letter to the queen with the offering it makes her. It would be sufficient to express in it respect for her person, which is only right, and incurs no obligation. I would also like another copy of the letter for H[is] M[ajesty] sent to me. The date on mine is too old. I hope that this great and too long drawn-out business will be finished soon.

Now, dear friend, since the end of the year is a time of many expenses, you would infinitely oblige me by having sent to me the total of my second quarter's fees, that is, 300 francs, at the next opportunity. I have worked very little for the association this year. But the father of the family did not disdain to pay the workers of the eleventh hour.
Please present to the council the assurance of my respectful devotion.

Your friend forever,

A.-F. Ozanam

Address: Monsieur, Monsieur Meynis, rue du Pérat, n. 6, Lyon.