Correspondence 1818

1818

Felix’s arrival in Sainte Genevieve and Saint Louis introduced him to the life of a parish priest, an experience entirely new for him. He continues during 1818 to refine his ideas about Indians, beginning with urgent study of an Indian language. His stomach problems keep him from accomplishing many of his dreams, but he works to develop his pastoral outreach, especially to black slaves. With more experience, he recognizes Dubourg’s difficult character but still appreciates his virtues. John Baptist Acquaroni, his fellow pioneer, presents problems, but the arrival of Joseph Rosati and the others at the Barrens, plus the opening of the internal seminary (novitiate) in Saint Louis, marks a new stage in the completion of the bishop’s plans.

40. REPORT FOR BISHOP DUBOURG (1818)346

Part of the Diocese in Upper Louisiana in 1817.

Table of Parishes or congregations established or which could be established.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numbera</th>
<th>Names of the districts</th>
<th>Their location</th>
<th>Number of Catholic Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saint Louis</td>
<td>at 39° latitude</td>
<td>about 125</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florissant or Saint Ferdinand</td>
<td>15 miles northwest</td>
<td>about 56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carondelet or Videpoche</td>
<td>6 miles to the southwest</td>
<td>about 55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cote sans Dessein</td>
<td>140 miles to the west</td>
<td>about 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Charles</td>
<td>20 miles to the west</td>
<td>about 40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portage des Sioux</td>
<td>27 miles northwest</td>
<td>about 65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sainte Genevieve</td>
<td>60 miles to the southeast</td>
<td>about 140</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bourbon</td>
<td>The Barrens</td>
<td>81 miles southwest</td>
<td>about 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine a Breton</td>
<td>70 miles to the southwest</td>
<td>about 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine Lamotte</td>
<td>55 miles to the southwest</td>
<td>about 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mine Richwood</td>
<td>55 miles to the southwest</td>
<td>about 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Creek</td>
<td>90 miles to the southwest</td>
<td>about 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Girardeau</td>
<td>125 miles to the southeast</td>
<td>about 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Madrid, or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L’Anse de la Graisse</td>
<td>225 miles southeast</td>
<td>about 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>750 miles southeast</td>
<td>about 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

346 Letter 40. From Joseph Rosati, “Recollections III,” VH 3, 145-46. (This document may have been sent as a letter to Dubourg.)

347 It seems that De Andreis had intended to insert here the total number of parishes and settlements, but he did not do so.

346 A nickname meaning “Greasy Cove.”
This last place would be better suited to the priest to be placed in Natchez, since it is only 300 miles from Natchez.

Means of support and remarks

[Saint Louis] It would be necessary to unite them together; all these districts together at the very most can support one priest.
[Florissant] There is a good rectory and 144 arpents of land.
[Carondelet] These could also support another [priest?].
[Barrens] The Church and the priests of the Barrens have sufficient support. Nevertheless, at this moment, I have no one to tell me precisely what it is. The church has been built there (a log cabin) and dedicated to the Assumption of the B.V.M., and they have begun to build a rectory in the form of a small seminary. In truth, it would be too much work for one priest. It would be necessary to put a community there. 349

Thus five priests can serve the entire diocese. At this time there cannot be support for a larger number.

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349 Apparently this was written before the Catholics at the Barrens settlement made their formal offer of land to Bishop Dubourg, but also it indicates that De Andreis may already have been aware of their plans. He may have been preparing Dubourg for it in this report. In all probability, however, no work had yet been done on a rectory or college building. De Andreis’s comment about the log cabin church is the earliest indication that the Barrens parish was dedicated to the Assumption.
Reverend and dear Father Rosati,

At last we are here at our post. The activity of the bishop [Dubourg] has won over the masses, and we now have to await the happy outcome. The installation ceremonies met with great
Correspondence 1818

The people are well disposed, and offer prime matter even before they are receiving any form from the workers. The bishop wants me near him to begin quickly, under his auspices, the great undertaking. The two bishops, after [looking for] a letter received from you for me to transmit, could not find it again. If these might have been important matters, please be so kind as to repeat them to me by mail. The bishop has decided on Bois Brulé for our establishment. He is thinking of moving there as soon as possible to direct the construction of the building, which will probably be built of brick. It will be finished, I hope, by this summer, although I do not know how we will be able to furnish at the same time the major seminary attached to the bishop’s residence. Time and reflection will put everything right. The bishop is reasonable and could be persuaded. I find him identice ["identically"] the same as he was in Rome.

For the rest we must rely not on men but on God alone. I find myself in some worry since I am deprived of so many books and other necessary items left behind there since they could not fit in the saddle bag. For this reason I recommend that you forget nothing when you receive the summons to leave and come to us this spring.

Although unworthy, I am happier each day, and am swept away by the dear calling in which I find myself occupied. I hope that the serpent, by dint of rubbing itself on tree trunks and thorns, will at length leave the old skin behind. Qui confidunt in Domino mutabunt fortitudinem,

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353 Flaget’s diary gives the date of installation as 5 January. The bishop’s name appears first in the baptismal register on 7 January 1818.
354 This expression refers to the theory of prime matter and substantial form central to Scholastic Theology. The writer’s idea was that the workers, the clergy, would succeed since the people had already received some formation.
355 Blank in the copy.
356 Bois Brulé, “burnt wood,” another name applied to the Barrens, and currently given to a township in Perry County.
357 The bishop hesitated for a long time about locating the novitiate at the Barrens and the seminary at his residence in Saint Louis. The temporary solution was that De Andreis would direct the novitiate, teach theology to the seminarians whom the bishop would lodge in Saint Louis, and the other Vincentians would open a mixed college and seminary at the Barrens. Rosati mentions the first solution in Rosati to Nervi, from Bardstown, 26 December 1817. (Original in Collegio Brignole-Sale, Genoa, Rosati papers; French translation in Archives of the General Curia, Rome, American papers.)
assumption pennas ut aquila, volabunt, et non deficiant, current, et non laborabunt [“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, take on wings like an eagle, fly and not grow weary, run and not tire”].

How happy you are to be already well advanced in the work. God be praised, a quo bona cuncta procedunt [“from whom all good things come”].

Try to cultivate the vocation of the postulants. Please give my most humble respects and thanks to Father David, etc., to Fathers Acquaroni, Ferrari, etc. I am impatient to greet you and our confreres. I am writing to have Brother Blanka come from Sainte Genevieve. In this rectory we are one on top of the other, and we do not know where to turn. The room where I am writing is full of people, all talking loudly. Please excuse me if I have written as I have, and if I omit some things that I wanted to mention.

I rely completely on your wisdom and believe me, always with the sincerest affection and veneration,

your humble servant and dear friend,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

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40:31 NAB: “They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar as with eagles’ wings; they will run and not grow weary, walk and not grow faint.”

From the collect of the fifth Sunday of Paschaltide; and cited by Saint Vincent in the introduction to the Common Rules.

Church records from Sainte Genevieve show De Andreis active as pastor, performing baptisms, etc., from 9 November to 30 December. On 31 December, Bishop Flaget officiated, and afterwards Father Henry Pratte assumed his accustomed pastoral duties. (“Sainte Genevieve Church Records. Book C. Baptisms.” Transcribed by Ida M. Schaaf, Saint Louis, 1922. Copy in the Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis.)
Very Reverend and dear Father Rosati,

I wish that I had the time, and that my duties and the condition of my stomach would allow me to write a long letter. Nevertheless, confident that you have already received, or are about to receive my three previous letters sent one after another through the mails, I am dispensing myself from writing at great length. At this time, I am sending you a copy of our novitiate rules. If in your prudence you judge it to be the right time, the postulants might begin to copy them

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361 Letter 42. Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.
362 The only extant one is Letter 41, 8 January 1818.
363 At least Father Ferrari, and Messrs. Tichitioli and Dahmen.
and ex ipso ["by this very activity"] be admitted [to the novitiate] although it is the bishop’s opinion that this would not in fact mark the beginning of the novitiate.

God has wonderfully blessed our works and the bishop is thinking seriously about our establishment at Bois Brulé. With time and patience everything will turn out wonderfully. The brother [Blanka] is here with us, and is working on building rooms in the presbytery. I thank God for the situation in which I find myself of learning here in the bishop’s school—much more by way of example than in any classes—the many things which I need to learn. I learn something new every day from his conduct. His virtues, like those of Saint Francis de Sales, hide under the most common and ordinary exterior. We should thank God for having given us such a fine model.

I am very worried that you are not taking care of your health in view of your manifold responsibilities. God will help you, qui habitat in adjutorio, etc. ["who dwells in the help (of the most High)", etc.] I do not need to tell you to be, and to have others be, of good courage. You know this better than I do. Sustine tentationes Dei ["Bear with the trials from God"]. The will of God and nothing else. I cannot write any more than this.

A thousand humble, profound and grateful best wishes to Bishop Flaget, to Father David, and a dear embrace to Father Acquaroni, et caeteris omnibus ["and to all the others"].

I am, in the love of Jesus Christ, with sentiments of the most distinct and sincere affection for you,

your most humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

The bishop sends to all his pastoral blessing, etc.

364 Ps 91:1.
365 Sir 2:3. The NAB, translated from a Hebrew text, differs significantly.
Correspondence 1818

43. TO CARLO DOMENICO SICARDI, C.M.,
VICAR GENERAL, ROME

Saint Louis,
Capital of the Territory of Missouri,
in Upper Louisiana
the Feast of Saint Matthias [24 February] 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father Sicardi,
Vicar general of the Congregation of the Mission,

I thank the Lord for the consolation afforded me by the letter of our worthy visitor, Father Ceracchi. Father Rosati had it sent to me from Kentucky, and I was delighted to receive such good news of our Congregation in Italy, and especially to hear of the confreres' friendly feelings toward the American mission. Again I humbly thank our Lord for the kind remembrance in which we are held.

I have recently written two long letters, one to Father Giordana to apprise him of my arrival at our destination and another to Father Giriodi concerning the issue of the two brothers, [Giovanni Antonio] Albassini and [Luigi] Generali. I nonetheless think it advisable to add a page to Father Rosati's, as so many letters are lost, and also to make up for anything that he may have omitted.

I write you this from the very ends of the earth, on the banks of the Mississippi, since there is nothing else except a few days journey between us and the Pacific Ocean, which separates us from China. Only

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*Letter 43. Autograph letter, Italian, four pages, with address, in the archives of the General Curia, Rome; De Andreis collection, Volume I, Part I, Sect. D, #10, 41-44. Several early copies, complete or partial, also exist, such as in the archives of Propaganda Fide. One copy in the De Andreis collection, Volume XVIII, is incorrectly dated as 15 February 1818. Cited in Rosati/Burlando, Sketches of the Life, 137-44. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 335-40, 388-90.

*367 The designation "Territory" is exact, since Missouri became a state on 10 August 1821.

*368 No longer extant.

*369 Brothers Albassini [the more accurate spelling] (b. 1784) and Generali (b. 1777). The issue mentioned in the letter is not explained.
Correspondence 1818

wild animals and Indians, whose state is not unlike theirs, inhabit the country. Though the climate ought to be rather warm, since our latitude is only about thirty-nine degrees, the cold is so intense that I have never experienced anything like it. We cannot remain very far from the fire, though we often put on one coat over another. The cold is so piercing that it seems to reach the brain, and nearly makes us faint. I have sometimes found nothing but ice in the chalice while at the altar, and had some difficulty in melting it by means of a fire that had to be brought to the altar. Even then, in consuming the sacred species, I was compelled to chew it. This extreme cold proceeds from the north winds, which, descending from the icebergs of Greenland and passing over the frozen lakes of Canada, come here to freeze us where we stand. God be blessed. We can say with Saint Paul, in frigore ["in cold"] though not in nuditate ["in nakedness"],\textsuperscript{370} for we are but too well provided for.\textsuperscript{371}

When I consider the admirable care of divine Providence for this mission, I am profoundly moved and overcome with gratitude on the one hand, and embarrassment on the other, because of my unworthiness. I can only exclaim: \textit{et unde hoc mihi!} ... \textit{funes ceciderunt mihi in praeclaris!} ... ["and how can this happen to me!\textsuperscript{372} ... the measuring lines have fallen for me on pleasant sites..."\textsuperscript{373}] It is not only difficult but impossible to describe what I feel. The most ardent zeal would here find an ample field for its labors, and we have already many bright prospects of success.

This diocese covers an immense tract of land, six or seven times the size of Italy, and the labor that it will demand will soon make it expedient to divide it. Cities, towns and villages are growing up before our very eyes with marvelous rapidity; emigrants are arriving in crowds from all parts of the United States, as well as from Europe. Ireland, Germany, Switzerland and France send multitudes to people the smiling and fertile plains of Missouri, and in a few years the country will become so flourishing that Europe will no longer excite envy. The

\textsuperscript{370} 2 Cor 11:27.

\textsuperscript{371} Stephen Hempstead noted the extreme cold in his diary during February: “A very cold day Said to be the coldest this Season.” Jensen, Dana O., “I At Home (The Diary of a Yankee Farmer in Missouri), by Stephen Hempstead, Sr.” \textit{Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society} 14:1 (October 1957): 80.

\textsuperscript{372} Luke 1:34.

\textsuperscript{373} Ps 15:6.
An excerpt from Letter 43. Transcription of the letter with sketch of Saint Louis Cathedral.

Copy courtesy of the author
Correspondence 1818

chief part of the population is French (or Creole as they call it) and consequently Catholic in their roots. They have, however, no religious culture, because of the long period during which the place has been destitute of every means of instruction and of priests. One of the wisest citizens told me: "If Bishop Dubourg had not come in time to our relief, the last spark of faith would have been extinguished in our country."

But this portion of the population will soon be absorbed by the Americans and the English, among whom only a small portion are Catholics, but these are generally very fervent; the greater part are Protestants of a thousand various sects. We have also both English and French infidels. They call themselves Nullifidians, that is to say, without any religion whatever.

Let us now proceed to the border regions populated by fifty different Indian nations. They acknowledge only one God, whom in their language they call Chissemenetu, which means "Lord of Life"; to him they address their prayers and offer the first fumes of their pipes. To please God they treat themselves sometimes most cruelly; indeed their whole religion consists in these practices, some of which are too horrible to relate. They live like the very animals that they constantly pursue; their hunt provides them with food and scanty clothing, (for they go almost naked,) and it enables them to trade with the whites. In exchange for furs and game meat, they give them powder, spirits, paint to decorate their faces and silver rings for their nostrils and ears. Their appearance is frightful, and one feels almost inclined to doubt if their reasoning powers are fully developed.

I have seen several, and have conversed with them by means of an interpreter. In general, they regard priests with great respect, calling them Mecate-o-cooiijatte, which means Black Robe; they also call them Fathers of Prayer. Some few among them are Catholics and, despite the efforts made by Protestant missionaries to imbue them with false doctrine, they have constantly refused to adopt it. They object that the true Fathers of Prayer have no wives and children like Protestant ministers do, but devote themselves wholly to God and to the good of souls. Notwithstanding the difficulties attending the work of their conversion, I am convinced that, when the first obstacles are overcome, it will be almost easy.

The chief impediment is the language. It is not the same among the various tribes, though the dialects are very much alike, and the
Indians of different nations understand one another. With the help of interpreters, I have attempted to arrange their principal language according to grammatical rule. It is a difficult undertaking, as my interpreter, who knows nothing of such rules, cannot translate word for word, nor supply me with equivalent expressions for every idea; however, I have begun a small dictionary, and made some translations. The scarcity of their concepts renders their language poor in words. They are thus obliged to express themselves with the aid of paraphrase, especially on the subject of religion. As some curious person may be interested in examining a specimen of their language, I will here insert the Pater Noster as I translated it by means of circumlocution, for they have no word to express either sanctificetur, regnum, dimitte or tentatione ["hallowed, kingdom, forgive, temptation"].

Nossak Pemenke chitaapé, ceckimitouseigniá tepará quissolimé, chira debehen tamscané cecki nironan, chirah ceheckí deberetan ouahé Aposí pemenekí. Inoki micipeneh mirciáné ouné perá chiró ceckékí mero aceck chisitojanghi rapini-irá nioueniperákí cechecki meroo-aceck nivesittacu. Cattanossa deboi tarih cné meroo-aceck chechoa sitojangh. Ceckí mací meroo-aceck paquitamocalné perôi mionan. (For the Amen:) Ouajak deboataouiaakkann. They have many aspirations, they drag out the words, they gesture much and sing their speech to supply for the poverty of the language. Some of them, but not many, speak French or English. The language written out above is common to the nations of the Illini, the Pian, and the Mi, but it can be used as a key to the others.

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374 No longer extant.

375 These translations, intended for a catechism, never entered into use, as Rosati admitted years later. (Rosati to Samuel Eccleston, 22 October 1838, from Saint Louis, AAB, Eccleston papers.)

376 The text of this prayer is in a form of an Algonquian language spoken in Illinois, but which became extinct in the nineteenth century. De Andreis seems to have been ignorant of the long tradition in translating this particular prayer, such that his version is longer than most and does not include certain standard renderings of particular points. (See John E. Rybolt, C.M., "Vincentian Missions Among Native Americans," Vincentian Heritage 10:2 [1989]: 150-78.)

377 The transcription Mi should be read as We, because of the similarity of the letters in these exotic names. The “We” are more properly the Wea, another band of Miamis, and were related to the Piankashaws. The Wea were known in the Saint Louis area. (See: Frederick Webb Hodge, Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico. Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30. 2 vols. [Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911]. "Piankashaw," vol. 2, 240; "Wea," vol. 2, 925.)
Correspondence 1818

Bishop Dubourg, our worthy prelate, set foot in his diocese on the twenty-ninth of last December, the feast of Saint Thomas of Canterbury. I was then officiating as parish priest at Sainte Genevieve, a village about 60 miles from here. Accompanied by some 40 of the principal inhabitants, I went on horseback to the banks of the Mississippi to receive him. We conducted him in triumph, under a canopy, to the church, the bells ringing all the while amid the universal joy of Catholics, and even of many Protestants. After he had taken possession by a pontifical mass on New Year’s Day, we came on the feast of the Epiphany [6 January] to this capital city to perform the same ceremony. With God's blessing, everything went off admirably.

The mere presence of the bishop, (who behaves exactly the same toward us as we knew him at Monte Citorio,) his kindness, gentleness and good manners have dispelled the storm. He has dissipated in great measure every prejudice, and so captivated hearts that the plan for a cathedral, to be built of stone, has already been sketched, and will soon be begun. When this is done, we will begin to think of the other establishments; it is only right that we should begin with the church, for we have nothing now except a miserable log cabin, open on all sides and falling to pieces. The bishop has, however, bestowed upon it a splendid temporary decoration, chiefly composed of the ornaments from Europe. Since the population is half French and half English, we must exercise the ministry in both languages. The bishop has truly the donum sermonis [“gift of speech”], and has perfectly mastered both languages. I creep after him as well as I can; we have every reason to predict great things for the future, and so trust that we may soon be able to see all in unum ovile et unus pastor [“into one flock and (under) one shepherd”].

At the time we left Bordeaux, the bishop appointed me his vicar general, and he also did so for Father Rosati, to act in my absence. Called as I am, in virtue of this office, to share so largely in a pastor’s care, especially in our present beginnings and with so few candidates

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378 The bishop described it: “My cathedral, which looks like a poor stable, is falling in ruins, so that a new church is an absolute necessity.” (Dubourg to Didier Petit, from Saint Louis, 8 January 1818; cited in Melville, DuBourg, vol. 2, 508.) This was a suitable description for a building built, badly, in 1776.

379 John 10:16.
for the ministry, it will be very difficult for me to place the house that we are going to erect in a few months on the same footing as those in Italy. In this country we must be like a regiment of cavalry, or mobile infantry, ready to run here and there whenever the salvation of souls may require our presence. We make ourselves all unto all, to gain all to Jesus Christ. We came for him, to make him known, loved and served. A missionary country like this has to be an exception to general practices. Strict adherence to them would, in our case, prejudice the greater glory of God and the welfare of souls. I believe that the Congregation is for the Church, and not the Church for the Congregation. However, I will do all in my power to establish, as soon as possible, all the offices, customs and exercises prescribed by our institute. In a short time we shall all begin, according to our rule, to take our turn in the missions.

For this reason, besides the discharge of our daily duties, we are obliged to work hard to translate our sermons into French and English. Our greatest difficulty is not in writing, but in speaking and pronouncing the language. I am beginning to think that I am already a little too old to learn a language, and Father Rosati succeeds better than I do. Father Acquaroni has despaired of success in learning English after many repeated efforts. He will do an immense deal of good with his passable French. His health, however, has suffered somewhat, but Father Rosati has plenty to spare, and I am, without any comparison, better than when I was in Rome. The climate of the country is healthy, the land fertile, but things are extremely expensive. A pair of boots, fifteen scudi; ordinary shoes, three and a half scudi; and everything else in proportion. The stipend for mass is five paoli. Good Brother Blanka is well and is very special to us, but he is right to hope for some companions from Europe. I join him in asking you to send us some. At Livorno there are ships that come directly to New Orleans and thence up the Mississippi. They will reach our residence of Bois Brulé. Father Giriodi will write you about the two brothers, ut supra ["as above"]. I have given him this task.

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380 Another contemporary noted the same high prices. John Mason Peck, a Baptist minister in Saint Louis, paid $12 a month for a single room, 35 to 50 cents for a pound of butter, 30 to 40 cents for a pound of sugar, and 75 cents for a pound of coffee. (James Neal Primm, *Lion of the Valley, St. Louis, Missouri*. 2nd ed. (Boulder, Colo: Pruett, 1990), 109.)
As to the arrangement for this, Father Rosati is writing to Father Ceracchi concerning the rest .... We need whole colonies of missionaries, with considerable financial resources, to make rapid progress in these immense regions. But I remain at peace, restricting my wishes to what God has called me to do. Were they but to save a single soul or to prevent one sin, the sweat, the money, the fatigues, the study, the pains and the lives of a thousand missionaries would be amply repaid. God alone is great, and happy the one who lives just for him. With so many excellent opportunities of practicing acts of the noblest apostolic virtues, if I do not become a saint it may be truly said that I would be an inveterate and incorrigible sinner. I am more and more deeply convinced that I am, have always been, and shall always be good for nothing, unless God performs a miracle by enlightening, strengthening and sanctifying my blind, weak and perverse nature. This is my constant prayer. Do me the charity to make it efficacious by your intercession, and obtain also for me the prayers of more fervent and saintly souls. Prayers, prayers, these are what we need the most.

My respects to all and from all, and I am, with sentiments of the deepest respect and veneration for you,

your humble, devoted and obedient servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.
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Addressed: To Most Reverend Father Carlo Domenico Sicardi, Vicar General of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome.

Sketch: After the signature, the writer sketched the façade of Dubourg’s new cathedral, similar to the seminary church at Saint Thomas, Kentucky.

44. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS

Most Reverend and dear Sir Rosati,

St. Louis the 26th of February 1818.

At the arrival of M. James I received two letters of yours, which caused me to be greatly astonished on account of the motive of your complaints, and calumniating of my silence; since I wrote already four letters to you, and this is the fifth. I am sorry for so great a mischief: they were very long and elaborate, I had lost a half of my stomach in writing them; my self-love (poor fellow) was very so little, and even perhaps ever so much interested in them. Therefore the great enemy who struggles always against that poor fellow has caused them to perish. What a lost for you! What master pieces you have lost! The lost is irreparable. Do what you please either weep, or laugh. At least I suppose you shall have received the bundle of papers from M. Du Meun which will have compensate for you for so great a loss. I will non repeat any thing of what had been written in them because I think is now useless. Take this for your amusement, for I compensate your situation of being so mighty overwhelmed with classes. But I wonder that you know still how to find time, and leisure of writing everlasting letters as that to M. Ceracchi... After reflection I scarcely can express

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382  This English letter is presented as written by De Andreis, but it is now available only in a copy.
383  Probably Joseph J. James (d. 1825), head of a large family at the Barrens.
384  Probably Jules Demun, or at least another member of the Demun family, longtime French settlers in the Saint Louis area.
Correspondence 1818

the joy which you caused me to feel in procuring me the reading of that Roman letter. How many things in so few lines! I have added two sheets another of mine to M. [Domenico] Sicardi, etc.

M. Acquaroni wrote to me a letter begging leave of coming hither. I spoke about it to the Bishop, and I answered to say M. Acquaroni according what the Bishop told me: you may nominate him to accompany M. Carretti; after Easter they may find a Barge at Louisville and carrying there at all the trunks, and caisses not necessary at Bardstown they may come by and by by water, and they shall be placed in some hole here whatever, as we are all one upon another. Cheer up then, and do not fear that all our business will be settled better than we could never expect.

Let over all God be blessed for ever and ever. Be so kind as to present my homages to the most amiable man the Bishop Flaget, my compliments to the most obliging M. David, and all others as if they were nominated one after another; I am your earnestly and most humble servant

Felix De Andreis
Unworthy etc...

P.S. The building of our Cathedral is at hand. In the mean time our Bishop has clothed the old one with the spoils of Europe, covered the walls with carpets of red flammel, and thus begins to look fairly. We make twice a week instruction in this lent-time giving after it the benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. At every Sunday at morning we preach in French, and after noon at the vespers in English. Twice a week also we have the catechism for preparing children to their first communion, and they come in a great number with a great eagerness, and favour; many Protestants are disposed to enter into their mother’s womb, we are almost every day employed in hearing the confessions of many persons of every kinds, and conditions. The Indian nation of the Sacks came in whole its fashion, and deep with their chief to make a formal visit to their Bishop: they were in the number of about twenty persons giving signs of great reverence, and respect. We have

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385 This letter is not extant.
386 The writer uses John 3:4 to refer to Protestants rejoining the mother church.
established a company of musicks with voices, and instruments, etc. We all enjoy a sufficient health, pray for us. I am ut supra ["as above"]—

45. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS

My Dear and most Respect Sir Rosati,

St. Louis the 2nd of March 1818.

Lest my letters addressed to you, M. Acquaroni and M. Ferrari, which I sent lately by the post-mail be lost, as it happened to the foregoing ones, I repeat in this occasion in few lines what I wrote in them. About M. Acquaroni I consisted with the Right Reverend Bishop that he may come hither to accompany M. Carretti after Easter at the first occasion they will find at Louisvill for a boat coming to this territory, in which they may carry all the trunks, and effects not absolutely necessary to our gentlemen at Bardstown. On account of M. Ferrari, you may assure him, that the noise he wrote of has not foundation; therefore he may be perfectly at rest: others have been appointed for that; and we will wait for the Lord. We shiver here with cold, and for this account we are obliged to sing mass at home in a fire room, and many times to let a side every church’s function, because the people cannot come. There is a gentleman trading with Indians who has proposed to the Bishop to send with him a missionary to the nation of Osages fifteen days of journey from S. Louis, and he will take upon himself all the expenses of his journey, and livelihood. I offered myself to go there, and the Bishop accepted of it; however the undertaking depends upon the issue of either the war, or the peace of such a nation with others. If this project will take place all my charge will be so happy as to fall upon

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368 These letters addressed to Fathers Acquaroni and Ferrari are not extant. The mail was normally carried only once a week at the most.

369 Undoubtedly Auguste Chouteau, who had developed a trading post among the Osages, and was a long-time friend of the Church.
Correspondence 1818

your shoulders more suitable to bear its burden, than mine are; and
the[n] it will become of me whatever God pleases.

In fine we must renounce to our own judgment, and will however
wise, and prudent it may seem to us in order only to fulfill the things
God has been pleased to appoint for us from all eternity. Indeed what
a madness would it be in us did we desire to do whatever else than
what God requires of us? or to walk in a different way from that he has
appointed for us? If we acknowledge a providence disposing all things,
we must submit blindly to it in every thing. His will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.

I have here scarcely occasion to speak English, and I preached
English but twice, and very seldom I hear confessions in such tongue,
therefore I am in a danger of forgetting the little I learned of it. Pray for
me that I may die once entirely to myself: there is nothing in the world
more interesting for me than that Holy hatred, holy contempt, holy
forgetfulness of myself, and over all holy cheerfulness, which supposes
we have attained the perfection of it. I thank you of your letters. Be so
kind as to pay my poor homages to the Right Reverend Bishop
Flaget, and M. David whose bounties, and obligations I will never
forget, but God only is able to compensate.

My compliments and those of Brother Blanka to all our gentlemen.
The Right Reverend Bishop sends his blessing to all.

I am with sincere esteem and attachment, in the love of our Lord
Jesus Christ.

I am most humbly servant

Felix De Andreis

undeserving Congregation of Mission
46. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS

Saint Louis
2 April 1818

Very reverend and dear Father Rosati,

Were the mail more reliable in delivering letters I would send you and all our group news about us more often, but the Lord wishes us deprived even of this completely innocent support. May he be forever blessed. We held as best we could the ceremonies of Holy Week with the help of the prior [Joseph Dunand] and of Father [Francis] Savine with his European accouterments. The bishop planned and Brother, with a carpenter, executed the design of a sepulcher. Without exaggeration it was worthy of being in Rome for the magnificence of its adornment, the abundance of lamps and the majesty of its decoration. In front of the sepulcher, day and night, two civilian soldiers provided watch, one after the other, hour after hour. In the evening there was

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390 Letter 46. Copy, Italian, with French postscript, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.
391 Francis Saviré—the original document spells it Saviner—was the previous pastor of Saint Louis. At the time of the dedication, he lived across the Mississippi river in Illinois. Marie Joseph Dunand was the last member of the failed foundation of Trappists in the Mississippi valley. After his confreres had dispersed, he remained to do pastoral work, visiting the scattered communities, including the Barrens. His diary for the period was published by Ella M. E. Flick, “Epistle or Diary of the Reverend Father Marie Joseph Durand [sic],” Records of the American Catholic Historical Society 26 (1915): 328-46, and 27 (1916): 45-64. He returned to France in 1821.
392 “Sepulcher” was the term used for the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament was placed after the liturgy of Holy Thursday, to remain there, as in the Holy Sepulcher, until Easter.
393 That is, laity, in contrast to the Roman soldiers in the Gospel accounts. Saint Louis did not have its own voluntary police, the “St. Louis Guards,” until 29 December 1819.
vocal and instrumental music, to sing the *Stabat*[^394] and the song *Au sang qu'un Dieu va répandre* ["to the blood which a God will shed"][^395]. On Holy Thursday, besides the blessing of the oils, we had the ordination to the priesthood of good Father [Francis] Niel[^396]. In two previous ordinations he had been advanced from first tonsure to priesthood. Crowds of people attended everything. On Good Friday afternoon we kept exactly the other function of the Three Hours’ Agony. The decoration was stupendous and surprising. The bishop had gradually altered the whole inside of the church. Everything was arranged in white and red, the picture was changed, etc., but the most surprising thing was that on the Sunday after Easter we held the

[^394]: The *Stabat Mater*, a hymn on the crucifixion and on Mary's part in it, ascribed to Jacopone da Todi, O.F.M. It opens with the words:

Stabat Mater dolorosa
Juxta Crucem lacrymosa,
Dum pendebat Filius.

*A common translation reads:*

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

[^395]: A hymn by François de la Mothe Fénélon (d. 1715). This sentimental piece, with 13 verses, continued in use at least into the early twentieth century. Its first verse is typical of its form and content:

Au sang qu'un Dieu va répandre
Ah! mêlez du moins vos pleurs;
Chrétiens qui venez entendre
Le récit de ses douleurs.
Puisque c'est pour vos offenses
Que ce Dieu souffre aujourd'hui;
Animés par ses souffrances
Vivez et mourez pour lui.

*In English:*

To the blood which a God will shed,
Ah! mix at least your tears,
You Christians who come to hear
The tale of his sufferings.
It is for your offenses
That this God suffers today.
Moved by his sufferings,
Live and die for him.

(Nouveau choix des Cantiques de Saint-Sulpice avec tous les airs en musique. *Nouvelle edition* (Dole: Joly, 1822); 140-43 for text, and 16 for music.)

[^396]: Niel, ordained 19 March, was one of those who came from Europe with Dubourg. His name first appears in the baptismal register as a celebrant of baptism on 1 April.
Correspondence 1818

Reverend Donatien Olivier, C.M.
Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

function of the solemn blessing of the cornerstone of the new cathedral which, according to the contract, will be usable by next Christmas.397

The ceremony was conducted with the help of Fathers [Donatien] Olivier,398 Henry Pratte,399 Dunand and Savine, several auxiliary clerics,

397 The bishop blessed the cornerstone, 29 March 1818; De Andreis formally blessed the building, 9 January 1820. After years of disuse, it burned down 6 April 1835.

398 Olivier, a pioneer priest in the Mississippi valley, served, among others, the people of Prairie du Rocher and Kaskaskia, Illinois. In his last years he moved to the Barrens, where he died. He was buried in the seminary church.

399 Pratte, 1788-1822, the first priest born in Missouri, was pastor of Sainte Genevieve, Missouri, at the time of the arrival of the Vincentians. He went to Saint Louis to see to the repair of the bishop’s house; his name appears on the cathedral baptismal record for 19 September 1817, thus dating his arrival. He left De Andreis in charge as pastor during the interim, and returned to his parish when De Andreis moved to Saint Louis. Pratte’s last recorded baptism in Saint Louis was 7 December. (Ida M. Schaaf, “Henri Pratte. Missouri’s First Native Born Priest,” SLCHR 5:2-3 [April-July 1923]: 129-48.)
and many altar boys. Inside the stone were placed two parchments, one containing the history of the foundation of Saint Louis, and the other, the record of the placing of the stone, with the names of the bishop, the individual clergy in attendance, the committee, and also various coins, etc. I am enclosing the notice from the public papers.\footnote{A notice in both French and English from the \textit{Missouri Gazette} (10:495 [27 March 1818]: 3) may be the one to which De Andreis refers:} The bishop left the day before yesterday for the Barrens to set our seminary in order. I do not look for any results before next fall. \textit{In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras} ["In your patience, you will possess your souls"].\footnote{\textit{Luke} 21:19.} For someone who cares only for God in everything, it is a matter of indifference to be here or there, to do this or that, to go or to stay, etc.

I want to hope that at least some of the letters about the departure of Fathers Acquaroni and Caretti have arrived, and consequently we await them here each day, although I do not know how we will be able to house them since we are extremely crowded. If there were room here, it would already have been possible to open a kind of seminary. Father Niel is studying theology, and Mr. James arrived from Saint Thomas to study grammar. But since meanwhile a house should be

\textit{Saint Louis, (Missouri) March 26th, 1818.}
Correspondence 1818

built and lived in, it is unbearably uncomfortable here. We do not know where to stand, nor where to put a book or a coat or anything else without its having to pass through a hundred hands and then be moved immediately after without our knowing where it is finally going to be. I never before have found myself in such a situation. It is a great inconvenience for someone who needs to write, study and preach often. I console myself by the similarity that this situation offers us with that great example: \textit{Filius hominis non habet ubi caput reclinet} ["The son of man has nowhere to lay his head"]\textsuperscript{402}. During the day, all the beds are folded up and piled one on top of the other; in the evening they are unfolded, etc. I report this so that you might use it to calm the impatience of those who perhaps would wish to come, and to show them the absolute impossibility of being received until our Barrens house is ready. I can just imagine the bishop’s and my own worry in trying to make room for them by having them come sooner. We need time and patience to accomplish plans of such a nature.

Pray for me and thank the Lord for me for the patience with which he supports this old and incorrigible sinner. I do nothing but abuse the beautiful graces which, if they had fallen on less unpleasant fields, would have produced marvels of holiness. Give my respects to the bishop, to Father David, and give them also to Fathers Chabrat, [Stephen] Badin, etc. A cordial embrace to Messrs. Ferrari, Tichitoli, Deys, Casto, Dahmen, to the good Francis [Borawanski] and to all the fine gentlemen there who just arrived."\textsuperscript{403} I have not yet had the good fortune to meet them, especially Father [Secondo] Valezano."\textsuperscript{404} Brother Blancha\textsuperscript{405} is well enough, and he sends you his greetings, but he is impatient to see our establishment finished, since his situation is truly

\textsuperscript{402} Matt 8:20.

\textsuperscript{403} This was the group of priests, clerics and the Flemish working brothers who arrived with Bishop Dubourg.

\textsuperscript{404} This priest had joined the Congregation of the Mission in Italy, but never completed his novitiate or took vows. He left Bordeaux with Dubourg, 17 June 1817; and was in Bardstown, 2 December 1817. He joined Rosati on his trip to the Barrens in the following October, and went with Ferrari, Dahmen and Tichitoli to enter the novitiate in Saint Louis. Dubourg, however, sent him back to the Barrens, where he briefly served as pastor. This interference in Community discipline caused problems for his confreres, and kept Valezano from ever becoming a Vincentian. (Rosati, "Recollections," \textit{VH} 4:2, 112, 115.)

\textsuperscript{405} One of the many forms of the family name of Brother Martin Blanka.
critical and he needs great virtue to be able to accommodate himself. The bishop is giving him enough work for four brothers. I just hope that he will not be overwhelmed.

Take care of your health, and believe me to be, in the love of our Lord, your dear friend and humble servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

P.S. [French] Mr. James just now returned after attending his sister’s wedding. He asks me to extend his compliments to the bishop, to Father David, and to all his former fellow seminarians.

47. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS⁴⁰⁶

Saint Louis
20 April 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father Rosati,

Since I am awaiting the bishop’s return from the Barrens today after an absence of three weeks—according to what he told me in a letter—I will not finish this letter without giving you a report about what is happening at our establishment. I share your feelings, and I am disposed to write a letter to His Eminence [Lorenzo Litta] the cardinal prefect of Propaganda. In it I will dare to so push myself as to ask for a pair of statues of Saints Peter and Paul to place in the niches on the façade of the cathedral. It is being erected very rapidly, and has already reached the height of a man. Besides, I want to try to obtain some places in the college of Propaganda⁴⁰⁷ for two Indian boys. Last week I baptized two of them (children), one of whom, five or six years old, so impressed me that I would really have liked to keep him with

⁴⁰⁶ Letter 47. Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers. Cited in Ricciardelli, Vita, 404.
⁴⁰⁷ Ecclesiastical students destined for missions fell under the jurisdiction of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda Fide). In De Andreis’s time in Rome, these students lived at the Vincentian house at Monte Citorio.
me, if only I had a place to put him and the means to do so. His mother would willingly have left him with me, according to what she told me.

I wish I had time to write in both languages in order to prepare materials for the missions that the bishop has agreed to begin next year, and which I think it is very opportune to do. But the duties coming from the house do not leave me any time. I have baptisms, weddings, burials, offices of the dead, visits to the sick, catechism lessons and confessions, which are starting to become frequent. I have to preach twice on feast days in French and, on the last three, in English, since the bishop is away. Other similar things eat up my day without my noticing it.

Yet I have to admit that being occupied with God and souls is a beautiful and happy life. Et unde hoc mihi foetido peccator [“And how does this happen to me,” a rotten sinner”? Every day I discover more of the precious joys accompanying our mission in all that has happened, is happening and probably will happen. I am completely swept away and am amazed. We are always at one or other extreme, without ever arriving at port: a storm continues with its noisy waves, which jam jam tacturos sydera summa putes... jam jam tacturos tartara nigra putes [“Sometimes you think will touch the lofty stars... sometimes you think will touch the dusky deeps”]. May the Lord grant us the grace which the holy Church has asked today in the oration for Sunday: ut inter mundanas varietates ibi nostra fixa sint corda, ubi vera sunt gaudia [“that among the distractions of this world, our hearts might be fixed where true joys abide”].

Everything is progressing at this time, and the bishop has a fixed date [for completion]. The business of the Barrens is going stupendously. Soon they will begin a house, sixty feet long by thirty-six feet wide, with three stories and a storage space in the basement. It will be on a raised spot, with good weather even better than at Sainte

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408 The baptismal records of the Old Cathedral mention Joseph, “son of an Indian woman of the Osage nation, about six years old,” baptized 10 April 1818. At the same ceremony, De Andreis baptized Therese, also an Indian, born six months before on Chouteau’s Island in the Mississippi.


410 Ovid, Tristia, 1.2.20, 22. (Loeb Classical Library, 12-13.)

411 From the collect of the fourth Sunday of Paschaltide.
Correspondence 1818

Genevieve. 412 It will be near a rather copious spring, and will have 640 acres of land. The type of construction will be a mixture of log house, frame house, brick house and stone house, since it will have all of these. It will be clean and decent inside and out. There will be sixteen fireplaces. Since the new church has not yet been built, the old one will be a little distance away. To God alone is it reserved to do things in an instant; men need more or less time to bring their projects to completion. This means that you and the gentlemen there will still need more patience; in patientia vestra, etc. ["In your patience, (you will possess your souls)."] 413

The academy at Sainte Genevieve has been arranged as an establishment for the Christian Brothers. 414 Two thousand dollars has been raised by subscription to build it. Even here the thought is of starting an academy for public schoolers, but I do not know where they will get enough students to sustain it.

Some debate took place during a meeting of the people of the Barrens about where to erect the buildings of the seminary, whether near the old church or at Apple's Creek [sic], and this led to the proposal of building two places. But now that it has begun, the good inhabitants are full of good will. They want to have us among them. They have spontaneously [agreed] 415 to maintain it by giving one-tenth of the harvest and animals for two years, and after that, one-fifteenth. The bishop has already found a well-trained woman who agreed to be our housekeeper, etc. I decided to send Brother Blanca there to direct the operations on our behalf, with the bishop's agreement. At last, we have started to march here, so to speak. We have a suitable bedroom for me and Brother, and we no longer crowd one another. The

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412 A reference to an earlier proposal for building the seminary, or at least for lodging the Rosati group until the seminary at the Barrens was completed. Rosati wrote of the plan to remain there for a full six months. (Rosati to Baccari, from Saint Thomas, 29 April 1818, Archives of the General Curia, Rome, De Andreis collection, vol. I, part II.)


414 The Italian original reads ignorantelli, a term used in Rome at the time to refer to the Christian Brothers. Three of them, Brothers Antonin (Thomas F. Muraillac, born 1797), Aubin (John François Souchon, born 1793), and Fulgence (Victor Javaux, born 1789), accompanied Bishop Dubourg from Europe. Their school did not succeed, and the brothers were dispersed.

415 Word supplied.
beginnings of all great establishments are always painful, but the good results to be hoped for return with interest whatever is suffered. Is there perhaps any more blessed state, in the eyes of faith, than that which suffers poverty, discomfort, inconvenience, disturbance, humiliations, etc.? Oh, how great and exquisite is the nectar of paradise. Am I not filled to overflowing with these words of the Psalmist: *Laetati sumus pro diebus, quibus nos humiliasti, annis quibus vidimus mala* ["We rejoiced for the days in which you brought us low, for the years in which we saw evil"]?  

We cannot form an idea of what we have not experienced. God is good, good!

I wrote Father Acquaroni not to think of Detroit for now, and to make due excuses to Bishop Flaget, until circumstances *in futurum* ["for the future"] are more opportune.  

If we eat the grain destined for sowing, goodbye to the harvest. I cannot write because for the last two or three days I have had stomach problems and I have not been able to say mass.  

Instead, the bishop is writing you a long letter. Give my respects to the bishop, to Father David, etc., and believe me always in the love of Jesus Christ, your humble and devoted servant and friend,  

Felix De Andreis,  

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

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416 Ps 90:15 NAB: "Make us glad, for the days when you afflicted us, for the years when we saw evil."

417 Detroit was located in Flaget's diocese, and he was anxious to provide clergy there. He made lengthy visits to this part of his far-flung diocese. The letter referred to is not extant.

418 "Mr. De Andreis is a little indisposed: his flatulent habits frequently distress him." (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 22 April 1818. Original in SLAA, Dubourg papers.) This may have come from chronic colitis, as the numerous references to his stomach problems in these letters suggest. (See Rosati, "Life," *Summarium*, 78.)
Correspondence 1818

48. TO BARTOLOMEO COLUCCI, C.M., SUPERIOR, ROME

Saint Louis
Missouri Territory in Louisiana
27 April 1818

Very Reverend and dear father,

It would be very hard for you to imagine the consolation caused by your very polite letter of 14 June 1817. It arrived the day before yesterday from New Orleans, where we are still waiting for the crate you mentioned, which will be sent here at the first possible opportunity. Eternal thanks be to that good God who so visibly guides us, and who amid the hard conditions of our mission still furnishes us with great consolations. It is useless for me to expound on my thanks to you. I know with whom I am speaking and the spirit which animates you better than these human considerations. Thank you for the news of the common mother house of the Congregation [in Paris]. We are soon going to offer the prescribed prayers for the dead on the list you sent. I turn now to giving you news about us.

I have wanted to write a letter to His Eminence the cardinal prefect of Propaganda about various matters, but I thought that this might look like infringing the rights of our bishop. It is his responsibility to write, and so I am abstaining from it. Nevertheless, I will lay out here simply one of these plans so that you might discover the intention of Propaganda and inform me about it.

In the last several days I baptized two Indian children. One in particular, five or six years old, made me wonder whether there might

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420 This letter is not extant.

421 The new mother house opened officially on 9 November 1817.

422 See the note on these two baptisms in Letter 47, 20 April 1818.
Correspondence 1818

be a place in the College of Propaganda for some Indian students.\textsuperscript{423} That would bind these remote regions to the center of Christianity with a tangible link that would have its own advantages in the future. It would also avoid the difficulties caused by the preponderance of the huge number of heretical sects with no other focus of unity than their hatred for Rome.

Since last October I have been carrying out unworthily the office of vicar general here.\textsuperscript{424} The bishop arrived at the beginning of January and was quite well received.\textsuperscript{425} The Catholic inhabitants and the Protestants, too, were aroused by suitable exhortations, and committed themselves to contribute to building the cathedral. Plans were drawn up and the work was soon begun. We hope to see it finished shortly. Since in the drawing of the façade there are two niches, statues of Saints Peter and Paul would be very appropriate there. Underneath would be the inscription \textit{in omnem terram} etc. \textit{["Their voice went out) to all the earth"], and \textit{et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum} ["and their words to the end of the earth"],}\textsuperscript{426} since literally we are here at the end of the earth. There would be perpetual confusion for the heterodox in the inscription under the statue of Saint Peter: "S. Peter the First Pope of the Roman Church," since the Protestants really want to be called Christians, and also to be called by the name of Catholics. Yet they cannot stand the name of Rome or of the pope, and because of constant contact this plague is also attacking our Catholics, among whom there are several who do not have much good feeling about Rome. Consequently, it would be good to give to Rome a greater influence, etc.

What a great decision it would be if Rome would wish to furnish the statues, and if they embarked at Ripa Grande on the Tiber and

\textsuperscript{423} The College of Propaganda Fide ("for the Propagation of the Faith") was established in 1627, and named the Collegium Urbanum, after Urban VIII, in whose papacy it was established. The Collegium Urbanum was to train candidates from the secular priesthood to propagate the faith anywhere the pope would send them. It was closed between 1809 and 1814, but was reestablished by Pius VII in 1817. It exists today as the Pontifical Urban University.

\textsuperscript{424} That is, since first setting foot in the territory of the diocese at Saint Louis.

\textsuperscript{425} Presbyterian Stephen Hempstead wrote in his diary for 8 March: "Afternoon went to the Roman Church the Bishop preached in English a good discourse." ("I At Home," 80.)

\textsuperscript{426} Ps 19:5.
Correspondence 1818

landed at the Mississippi just a rifle shot from the façade that they would be destined to adorn. What a beautiful opportunity to immortalize in a very special way in the annals of faith the already immortal name of Cavaliere [Antonio] Canova. For this purpose I am including here the drawings of the façade in the architect’s hand.

I am overwhelmed when I think of the grace of having been called to these missions, and I really cannot explain what I feel about it. I say only that if I do not become holy I would be even worse than a demon since the opportunities to practice the most beautiful Christian virtues even heroically are so beautiful, so frequent, so urgent, so attractive, so incomparable. In our houses in Europe I would never have had opportunities like these. Everything is so convenient there, and we do not need to think about poverty, patience, humility, simplicity, meekness, faith, confidence in God, total resignation. These are the sweetest perfumes of the heavenly bridegroom, to whose odor he attracts with his love even souls like mine from the mire. Help me, please, to thank him for them, and obtain for me the grace of cooperating with them. As a result I am full of confidence in seeing great things, the great glory of God and great good of souls. Non est abbreviata manus Domini [“the hand of the Lord is not shortened”].

Help us thank the Lord for deigning to bless this mission in so many small ways, which are as so many preludes to other greater goods to come. Among Catholics, instruction and frequenting the sacraments awaken an almost dormant faith. They inflame piety and devotion, and they multiply good acts. So many children who would die without baptism, and the many sinners who would die without any help are provided with opportune assistance. Abuses are removed, the laws of the Church which had been ignored or completely bypassed are now recognized; faithlessness is losing ground, is confounded, is forced to give way to faith. The most haughty and insulting pseudophilosophy is forced to hide without being able to conceal the remorse with which it is wounded. A good mission, for which we are gradually getting ready, and which is planned to begin in the new year after we have prepared the way with suitable precautions, will, I hope, checkmate

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427 A renowned Italian sculptor (1757-1822).
429 Isa 59:1 NAB: “Lo, the hand of the Lord is not too short to save.”
Correspondence 1818

irreligion and heresy. Heretics are eager to attend our English preaching and instructions, and several whole families have been converted. The majority are awaiting only the opportunity to declare themselves completely in favor of Catholicism. The demon is not letting up on his forces, and I fear that even the Baptists are going to lay the foundation of a church not far from our cathedral.430 But I hope that Dagon will fall before the feet of the Holy Ark,431 and will not serve except for [the Holy Ark's] greater triumph.

When the mission to the Catholics and the heretics is well developed, we will think more about the question of the Indians. In other letters I wrote you from Baltimore,432 I told you that the Indian nations were almost completely destroyed. I was then in the east of America, and this was true there. But here in the west they live in much greater numbers and, not to repeat all that I have written previously, I limit myself to reflect that a great harvest is to be reaped when the time to gather it has arrived. This allows us to hope that it is not far off. The present state of these poor afflicted people offers to missionaries a set of difficulties, which, with time, patience and prayer, will diminish and will even cease. The greatest difficulty arises really from the fact that at first sight the matter of the trade that these Indian nations have with whites should be promoted. But the whites in this commerce trade intoxicating liquors and other similar things for animal skins. Hunting animals forms the only occupation of their nomadic and wild life. This trade corrupts their innocence and debauches their habits. It nourishes the vices which on the one hand serve too well the

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430 Baptist ministers James Ely Welch and John Mason Peck, with their wives and children, came to Missouri and opened a school on 1 January 1818, called the Western Mission Academy. A Baptist congregation was officially organized 18 February 1818, with eleven members. The site destined for the church was the southwest corner of Third and Market, and the deed was signed 25 April 1818, two days before De Andreis wrote this letter. This site was directly behind the “Catholic block,” which opened to the east, the cathedral being on southeast side. Today, the Old Cathedral would be on the south side, much closer to where the original Baptist church was. This church was the first Protestant church in Saint Louis, and was shared with Episcopalians in the next year. (Elva Kuykendall Norman, Biography of a Church [St. Louis, 1978].) Norman, on page 19, notes that the French Catholics treated Protestant ministers “with courtesy and respect.”

431 See 1 Sam 5:3.

432 26 August 1816.
Correspondence 1818


Courtesy of the author

cruel interests of whites, and which on the other hand nullify the exertions of missionaries. Their lives would not be secure from the snares of crude avarice which, because of their [the missionaries'] efforts, would seem cheated by the filthy gains of avarice. Time will show that the Lord will himself prepare the way. He knows how.

I think that there does not exist on the face of the earth a climate more bizarre than this. One day we gasp in the heat, we sweat; then the temperature goes down. The next day a wind from Greenland, crossing the icebergs and lakes of Canada, comes to bring us cold, frost and the need to take refuge near a fireplace. We do not know how to dress in the morning since we cannot see whether north or south will govern the day. Last winter was unbelievably cold, with snow in great quantity and horrible winds that freeze your feet. Supplies here are very expensive and we cannot find cloth to make clothes after our fashion. When one of our confreres comes it would be good to bring along some length of serge to make cassocks.
Father Rosati is still in Kentucky. Father Acquaroni arrived from there last week. Since the majority of the population here is Catholic, we wear the cassock like in Italy. Our seminary is currently under construction. To maintain it, an English settlement has granted us a piece of land, 640 acres in extent, with one-tenth of their crops and animals for two years, and then one-sixteenth. A group of Flemish farmers, brought over by the bishop and formed into a religious society bound by simple vows, will farm this land. During this year I hope to go there to set foot on it, but it is 80 miles from here. We will then begin to rest a little, since we could write a book about all our adventures up to now. However, to regulate perfectly this establishment will take many more years. The works of God, as our Saint Vincent says, have their beginnings, their development and their completion. Above all, we have to keep from haste and from worldly prudence, and content ourselves with following Providence step by step without ever anticipating it. This is our preferred maxim.

It may be that the Lord has determined that I not see the outcome of the work. May he be blessed. Really I always realize that I am good for nothing, while Father Rosati promises great things. He is young, robust, holy, disinterested, full of zeal and talents, and has caused more seasoned missionaries to be amazed at his preaching in English. I have heard them exclaim about him: *Numquam sic locutus est homo* ["No one has ever spoken thus"]. Whoever knows him is taken with his holy and jovial conversation. I am certain that Rome will very quickly request him to be a bishop. God’s will be done.

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433 That is, Acquaroni and Carelli arrived together. Acquaroni mistakenly left his breviary somewhere between Vincennes and Saint Louis. He asked his guide to send it back, but this did not happen. With the $20 left in the book, the priest intended to buy Indian curios from trappers. These and other details are in a letter from Acquaroni to Mr. H. Lasselle (or LaSelle), a tavern keeper, 7 July 1818. (Original in the Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, Lasselle papers; copy in DRMA, Acquaroni papers.)

434 More precisely, the trustees of the parish purchased the land from Ignatius and Elizabeth Layton in 1818, and then sold the land to Bishop Dubourg the next year. In addition, they contributed cash and work to help in the construction of the seminary. Said to be one-fifteenth in Letter 47, 20 April 1818.

435 This group began but quickly dissolved.

436 A commonplace from Saint Vincent, found, for example, in an undated letter to Louise de Marillac, cited by Collet; see Mission et Charité 19-20 (janvier-juin 1970): 171.

438 John 7:46.
Correspondence 1818

As soon as we have set up our seminary, we will open our novitiate, since five or six excellent subjects among priests and clerics from different nations are impatiently asking to join our congregation. I have already received two firm requests for confreres to make two establishments: one in the diocese of Baltimore, which Archbishop Marechal deigned to write me about; and the other in Detroit in the state of Michigan, next to Canada, to which they have already been assigned by the bishop [Flaget]. I answered both the prelates that in time if the number of our subjects increases, I will do my duty to further their zeal. This is why it would be helpful for us to have confreres from Italy, especially brothers. But let only young men come who are strong in their vocation and eager to suffer unreservedly, otherwise they will quickly be sorry they came.

We often have to sleep fully dressed on the ground, and also sometimes out under the sky, tying our horse to a tree and using the saddle as a pillow. We eat badly, sometimes a little lard and a dab of honey on some badly baked cornbread with a little bad water. This is a gift that we have to pay a steep price for to refresh ourselves after a long trip made while fasting, freezing to death, etc. Wine is so expensive and hard to come by that we never think about it. Instead we make great use of tea and coffee. The difficulty of the language, customs and habits so different from those from Europe, especially Italy, the impossibility of having with oneself the things from our baggage which seem the most necessary, the strange things that have happened, would give much to think about for someone who for a childish wish might embark on such a sea without reflecting well on his calling. Our confreres are good, but one could do even more in this enormous mission with help, either of money or of any kind of tool, pictures, images, etc. Consequently either you or someone else could gain great merit by participating in the good of the mission if you would send something by the same means that you used to ship us the box of images. But you should be sure to send another letter to the shippers about its contents to avoid the opening of the trunk in customs.

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459 See Letter 36 to Marechal, 8 July 1817. The response to Flaget was probably given indirectly; see Letter 47, 20 April 1818.
Correspondence 1818

I have just recovered from an illness that brought me ad portas mortis ["to the gates of death"]. News of my death even spread around. The affection of these good people brings me comfort in my convalescence.

Esteemed Father Colucci, please give my best wishes and those of our confreres to our superiors and to each and every one of our dear confreres, Father [Maestro] Alimenti, etc. Especially for still visiting for us the sacred thresholds, and the basilicas.

Oh, when will we find ourselves united together again in the source of love! Veritas Deus, fac nos tecum unum in charitate perpetua ["O Truth, God, make us one with you in perpetual charity"]. I am in the love of Emmanuel,

your humble and devoted servant,
Felix De Andreis,
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission.

49. TO STEPHEN THEODORE BADIN, PRIEST, BARDSTOWN

[Saint Louis]
[May 1818]

[Mr. Andreis says, that his] parish in [Saint] Louis, on the Mississippi, is composed of 7,000 souls, blacks and whites, French and

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440 Ps 107:18.
441 A traditional name for the basilicas of Saints Peter and Paul in Rome; visiting them and praying there gained the person an indulgence.

Badin (1768-1853) was known as the proto-priest, since he was the first priest ordained in the United States. In this period, he made his home near Bardstown. His cabin is shown on the grounds of the Loretto Motherhouse, Nerinx, Kentucky.

443 A conjectural date, based on internal evidence and comparison with similar letters.
Correspondence 1818

English, Catholics and Sectarians, scattered over an extent of fifty or sixty miles, so that I am obliged on holidays to say two masses, to preach at both, sometimes in French, and sometimes in English; catechism instruction twice, one to the whites, and the other to the negroes. To sing Mass, Vespers, and to hear confessions. The hardest bone I have to pick is with respect to the French Bonapartists. As for the poor savages [Indians] I feel quite affected when I see them, which I do almost every day.

50. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, SAINT THOMAS

Saint Louis
17 June 1818

My very dear Father,

I open by asking a thousand pardons for having put off writing you longer than usual. Yet I have had good reasons for doing so, since I was waiting for the bishop’s return from his short visit to give you news about it. He has now returned. He visited Saint Charles where he gave one hundred first communions and confirmed sixty-six. He preached eight or ten times. He then went to Portage des Sioux and to Dardenne, and everywhere he did a great deal of good. Scandals were removed, and terms established for the support of the priest and the church. Father Acquaroni is getting ready to go to serve temporarily these three parishes together. They are no more than six hours by road from here. We began here this evening at the church a kind of congregation of negroes. It started with the catechism to instruct and dispose these poor people to make their first communion, and is now

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444 Rosati commented on the dedication De Andreis showed to the “instruction of the poor Negroes, to teaching them prayers and the basic elements of religion, without being repelled by their coarseness.” (“Recollections,” VH 3, 148.)
446 A reference to the problems existing at Saint Charles. See Letter 51, 26 June 1818.
going to become permanent, something like the Meeting of Father [Pietro] Monaci. A considerable number are careful to assemble there each evening.\footnote{Monaci founded the meeting at the Porteria, whose director had been De Andreis, a point he modestly overlooks.}

Since we cannot yet do all that we want, at least we do what we can as Providence grants us the opportunity. In the same way, when he began his career Saint Francis Xavier set out to tour the towns, bell in hand, to assemble the children. Providence and mercy have their own proper times to bring together patience, prayers and the labors of those dedicated to be their instruments. I have no doubt at all that the time will soon come for the salvation of Catholics, heretics and Indians. I have some small details of stories that are clearly the prelude to this. But it would be lengthy and out of place to mention them here ....

I have been struck to the point of emotion and tears at your situation of weakness and indisposition.\footnote{De Andreis is likely responding to remarks made by Rosati to him as his superior, in which he shared the state of his conscience. This practice, called “interior communication,” was called for in the Vincentian Common Rules 10:11 (1658). Michael Ryan, second ex officio witness for the canonization process, also stated: “The Servant of God was the spiritual director of Father Rosati by letter, until the time of his death.” (Rosati, “Life,” Summarium, 17.)} I am convinced that in the causes of your troubles about self-love there is some basis. Even more, could not an excess of sensibility enter in, since you have not yet been well enough established in confidence and resignation? But these two precious stones are acquired only in storm and trouble. The virtues that we acquire in calmness, said Saint Vincent, are not very solid. When one is so [illegible] little strengthened \textit{nemo misit vinum novum in utres veteres aliquin etc.} [“no one puts new wine in old skins otherwise, etc.”]\footnote{Mark 2:22.} I speak from my own experience. When we always walk calmly, we believe that it is easy to place all our confidence in God. But at the first storm, whether it comes from within or without, we seek external and merely human helps. And if they fail, as often happens, we completely lose heart. Sometimes we turn again to God, but we are hesitant about the good, as the apostle Saint James expresses it,\footnote{Probably a reference to James 1:5-8, and 23ff.} and we rely in some way on the moment and means of divine assistance. As soon as we
beg for it, we expect to be heard. A holy man once said that true confidence is not established in the heart except by a total stripping of the soul, by long trials, by repeated and multiple sorrows, and then by constant prayer. With good will and faithfulness to grace, we should hope that we will succeed one day at having this virtue, which seems to be reserved to souls when they begin to attain the height of perfection and perfect union with God. This is for the soul the most assured proof of eternal happiness, and the great vehicle of true zeal.

The bishop was jolted into action by the imminent departure of your group, and so is getting ready to leave Monday for the Barrens. He is resolved to find shelter somewhere to house the entire Bardstown group, while awaiting the building of the seminary, and thus he wants to have all of you come as soon as possible. I do hope to embrace you after such a long time of separation! When will we be inseparably united in the true center of hearts, the good God? I long for the moment of seeing the internal seminary or novitiate opened ....

As he is in the midst of various problems involved in these beginnings, the bishop cannot decide on his projects too quickly. Yet he told to me with great happiness: “I regard your establishment as the chief, the only, support of my diocese. Now, however, we have to let ourselves be guided by the same spirit, and we should enter upon the same views, and not expect to be immediately set up like your houses in Europe.” I answered him that our goal has always been the glory of God and the good of the diocese. I realize that we have a long way to go before we are set up as in Europe, but we should no longer use up the grain set aside for the sowing if we want a harvest. I realize, too, that once the establishment is complete, we will be able to do many things, but without it nothing will ever be assured.

As for me, I hate self-interest more than the devil, and I love the congregation to which I have the happiness of belonging only for the sake of God’s glory and the salvation of souls. I hope that everything will go well, but especially there must be agreement.

Father [Stephen] Montgomery had the happiness of delivering to me yesterday evening your letter, with the two enclosures, one for Father [Giuseppe] Defulgure and the other for your brother. I sealed
Correspondence 1818

the first with the second inside, and I sent it off today for New Orleans by the steamboat "Franklin," which was about to depart.451

I have not been able to answer [the other letters] at the same time, since my stomach lets me write only a few lines at a time. Perhaps you will see Father [Louis] Sibourd, the vicar general of New Orleans. He is going to Philadelphia to have a polyp removed which developed on his nose.

The construction of the church [cathedral] has been halted for a month and a half because of some problem that arose between the contractor and the building committee. "Where God has a Church the Devil must have a Chapel."452 Last Sunday the Baptists celebrated the laying of the cornerstone of their church, to be built directly across from ours. But I do not know why, when they were about to do so, they were content with delivering a sermon and collecting the money they could gather, but they did not lay the stone. They say it was because they reflected that this event would violate the Sunday obligation. A tardy scruple, and completely out of place!

I send my compliments to you and to all those whom you know, and with the care you know. I would send you some mass intentions if we had enough, but the devotion of the faithful does not furnish enough for every day. They are only small portions of one or two or three [masses], and very rarely more. Besides, they ordinarily determine the day and the hour with you since they want to attend the mass. I have had several of our books [copied?], especially since I found several offices of Saint Vincent. I found that several books were missing from my trunk. I believe that you have the missal of the archbishop of Bordeaux, the Petit Carême [Lenten Series] by Massillon,453 the two volumes of English meditations, two volumes of Bence on the New

451 The same steamboat would bring the Sacred Heart nuns on its return trip. See Letter 52, 11 July 1818. The boat, built in 1816, sank near Sainte Genevieve in 1819. Despite its short life, it was one of the earliest vessels of its type to make the regular run to Saint Louis from New Orleans or from Louisville. (See E.W. Gould, Fifty Years on the Mississippi, or, Gould's History of River Navigation [Saint Louis: Nixon-Jones, 1889].)

452 This sentence is in English.

453 Jean-Baptiste Massillon (1663-1742), Petit carême, many editions; e.g. (Paris: Renouard, 1802).
Testament, a little Turin breviary containing the parts for winter and spring, and I don’t know what else. I received the books you sent me by Mr. [Thomas] Whitstanly all mixed up and ruined, since they had been allowed to get wet, as if they had been pulled out of the Mississippi after perhaps a month or more. I had the two books of Genesis and of the gospels rebound. The rest of the writings are horrible to see … patience!!!!

The day after tomorrow I am going to be godfather, for the first time in my life, for a Jew who is about to be baptized. He has a very curious and romantic history. If there were space here it would give you a lot of enjoyment. Meanwhile the matter must be kept secret, so that no one doubts this man’s Catholicism. These things could happen only in this country. A thousand best wishes to our candidates. It does me good to see you with them. Father Acquaroni is going to leave shortly. He has delivered a sermon here, [which caused] a little worry, but sufficiently [daring … (?)]. I must stop. They are waiting for the letter. Goodbye.

In the love of our great meeting place, Our Lord Jesus Christ, the lover of hearts, I am
your very humble servant,
F. De Andreis,
priest of the Congregation of the Mission

P.S. Father Caretti is up, but he is not yet cured, and there is little hope that he will ever be. I send his best wishes to you, to all, etc.

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454 Jean Bence (1568-1642), Commentaria in omnes Beati Pauli et septem Catholicas Apostolorum Epistolae …, many editions; e.g., 3 vols. (Louvain, 1763). Also: Manuale in sanctum Jesu Christi Domini nostri Evangelium (alt: Manuale in quattuor evangelia) [Lyons, 1626; 1682].
455 Bishop Dubourg baptized Jean [John] Daniel Levy, 30 years old, on 20 June 1818. Neither his parents nor his Judaism were mentioned in the baptismal register. Since De Andreis identified the baptismal date as the “day after tomorrow,” this probably means that he began the letter on one day (the 17th, the date at the beginning of the letter) and wrote this portion on the next (the 18th)—a common occurrence. De Andreis was the godfather; the pious Mrs. Marie Maguire, who had followed De Andreis from Baltimore, was the godmother. (See Letter 86(a), 15 November 1820.)
456 Acquaroni’s name appears in the baptismal register from 24 May to 14 June.
Very Reverend and Dear Father,

On the evening of the twelfth of this month I received your letter and, although bathed in sweat because of the excessive heat, I am quickly taking up my pen to respond. When I read in your always very affectionate letters that you find consolation in news from me, I would like to put everything down in writing to offer you support. But what support can I offer you equal to that which I receive in the outpouring of your heart, which happens before our Emmanuel in the blessed sacrament? I agree perfectly with you that besides heavenly consolations in this vale of tears, we also need legitimate earthly ones coming from true and holy friendship. We also need to try to scorn them. Quite far from urging you to disapprove of your feelings and conduct in this matter, I can only share them. You know well the obligations that I profess to you, which have been afforded me very opportunely, when in fact I have very great need of them. But I am sorry because sometimes I lose letters. For example, yesterday, if I am not mistaken, I received back one very long letter in English that I had sent to you on the second of March, but may God’s will be served in everything and through everything.\textsuperscript{458}

\textsuperscript{458} Letter 45, 2 March 1818.
Correspondence 1818

A thousand congratulations to Father Ferrari for his apostolic works. I thank God that he grants them [the missionaries] the capacity to preach easily in English. I do so in French, but I have not risked preaching in English, except once for a certain fervorino. The little knowledge that I once had of that language has, by disuse, constantly shrunk.\(^{459}\) To go to preach in English I need a longer period to prepare myself and since I lack this time, the bishop nearly always preaches in English, although also *in comparatione siliginis illius furfur noster contemnitur* ["in comparison with his wheat, our bran is condemned"].\(^{460}\)

The American ears in Saint Louis are so tender that the least mistake in pronunciation offends them very strangely. The majority are Protestants, or, to say it better, are indifferentists who believe in nothing. It is the slaves who give us the greatest consolation. They are always anxious to be instructed and make their first communion, which many people, even the elderly, have not yet done. And how many whites have not made it and do not even think of doing so. But the young people make up abundantly for the insensibility of the adults. We have already celebrated several ceremonies of first communions to the great satisfaction of all.

In my last letter, which I had delivered by hand, I told you something about the baptism of a Jewish man, which took place at the sacred font.\(^{461}\) He is thirty years old, a talented young man with very good will. His life up to the present, according to his written report that we have of it, is very admirable. Besides, it is a masterpiece of

\(^{459}\) A few lines of an English poem that he wrote in 1819 have survived. They show that, despite his protestations, his knowledge of the language was very good.

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\(^{460}\) Based on Gregory the Great: "ad comparationem siliquins illius nostrum furfurum non quaeratis." Ep. 10, 16.

\(^{461}\) Letter 50, 17 June 1818.
Correspondence 1818

grace, and gives us much to hope for. During the baptism itself, a remarkable phenomenon took place, which I had never seen. A swarm of bees came to rest over the church right during the baptism, and disappeared immediately after. A crowd of boys started yelling and making noise to chase them away, but they remained until the end of the baptism. *Quis putas homo iste erit* ["Whom do you think this man will be"]?462

To our great grief, the day before yesterday, on the feast of Saint John the Baptist, we had to see for the first time the public parade of the Freemasons, each one with his apron and instruments preceded by a large band. Several times they circled the town in triumph and they concluded with a dance at night right behind our rectory. Oh, what motives for laments! The lament is the last resource of zeal when no other possibility remains.463

The bishop has resolved to take Saint Vincent, our father, as the secondary patron of the cathedral and for this reason has ordered a double office of the first class with an octave.464 The building of the church has been resumed after about two months of inactivity because of a lawsuit that arose between the committee and the contractor. This was terminated by a decision reached by two magistrates who decided in our favor. The Anabaptists are building their church a few feet behind ours.

The bishop hopes absolutely to have you arrive this coming autumn even though the seminary might not be ready at that time. In the

463 The Freemasons of Saint Louis were organized as a lodge in 1804, lasting to about 1812. After a time of inaction they built, in 1816, a new lodge, and a second one in the following year. A public lottery was held to raise funds, lasting until mid-1817. "The only observance of which any public record remains occurred Dec. 27, 1819, on which occasion there was a procession from the lodge room to the 'long room of Bennett's Hotel.'" This date marks the feast of John the Evangelist, a traditional Masonic observance. De Andreis's own account adds a further event to that list. (See Frederick L. Billon, "Early Organized Masonry in St. Louis," [a set of newspaper articles from Missouri Freeman, begun 27 September 1913, and gathered into a volume in the Missouri Historical Society, Saint Louis, Missouri; unpaged]. Also, Missouri Gazette 9:459 [19 July 1817]: 4.)
464 De Andreis omitted saying that the bishop had received a notable relic of the saint in Paris from Father Charles Verbert, the vicar general. (Refer to Letter 70 (a) for details.)
Correspondence 1818

meanwhile a place here or there will be found to house you. And so I
do not say that your sufferings will cease, but at least they will partially,
since we have to suffer one way or another. Also if there were nothing
left to suffer there would be nothing left for us to live for here below, a
place of sufferings and not of enjoyments. Everything is the road toward
the goal, to keep us from losing sight of it, and we should profit from
everything to advance. But we have to go either by level paths or deep
gorges. The least easy way is to go by the road which shortens the
journey and which leads us more quickly to the end. The less we see
the road on which we are being led, the more we are right to say ut
jumentum factus sum apud te et ego semper tecum ["I have become a beast
of burden for you, and I am always with you"].

Brother [Blankal] is well. Father Acquaroni is at Saint Charles. Father
Niel is better. Father Caretti remains the same and sends his
most affectionate embraces to Father Ferrari, Messrs. Dahmen and
"Take it all" [Tichitolil] and all the others there, Fathers John Baptist
David, Chabrat, Badin, Nerinckx and Derigaud etc., and I am most
cordially in the love of Jesus Christ,

your most humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

In another hand: 1818, June 26, Mr. De Andreis, St. Louis.

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465 Ps 73:22-23.

Rosati notes that Acquaroni contributed to putting an end to an enduring problem
that had arisen at Saint Charles. Some parish trustees and their pastor, probably Dunand,
had quarreled violently. Dubourg had worked to pacify them, and Acquaroni continued
the reconciliation. (Rosati to Nervi, from Barrens, 8 December 1818, original at Collegio
Brignole-Sale, Genoa, Rosati letters; copy in DRMA. Also, Gilbert J. Garraghan, Saint
Ferdinand de Florissant. The Story of an Ancient Parish [Chicago: Loyola University Press,
1923].)
Most Dear and Respected Sir

St. Louis
11 July 1818

In spite of the most excessive heat which overwhelms and keeps me as if it were in a continual state of agony, in spite of great many occupations to which I am not able to satisfy altogether, I will not omit to address you with few lines in order to comply with the desire you have witness of it. We are waiting here from day to day the arrival of M. L'Abbé [Bertrand] Martial with several Nuns called Jesuitesses (the ladies of the Sacred Heart); the priest will remain here for the direction of an Academy, and the Nuns will go to St. Charles where all is ready for their receipt. Mr. Niel will be appointed curate of St. Charles and chaplain of the Nunnery established for the education of young girls, and Mr. Acquaroni will confine his ministry to La Portage des Sioux, et La Dardenne. Sundays are for me almost intolerable for the burden of preaching always many times, and singing without interruption the whole time of Mass and Vespers because there is no body who can sing, at least without me, there is no organ, no pian-forte to give me a respite; therefore I long after your arrival that I may be released from such a burden unfit to my shoulders and the Divine Worship may be performed more decently. I have undertaken the translation of that famous Catechism, which gave me so much trouble at translation from

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468 The Religious of the Sacred Heart. The first superior, Saint Philippine Duchesne (1769-1852), looked forward to being with De Andreis. She wrote to her sister Marie-Ameile, Mme de Mauduit: “We are going to live in the same place as the holy Lazarist, Father de Andreis. He may be our confessor. He is at the head of the seminary and so is stationed in one place.” (Louise Callan, *Philippine Duchesne* [Westminster, Md.: Newman Press, 1957], 221; from Bordeaux, 18 February 1818.) The sisters, Philippine Duchesne, Octavie Berthold, Eugénie Audé, Catherine Lamarre, and Marguerite Manteau, landed 21 August 1818, aboard the “Franklin.” French text in Chantal Paisant, ed., *Les années pionnières* (Paris: Cerf, 2001), L. 18, p. 92.
Italian into English, and I am almost half way.\textsuperscript{469} It will serve as a canevas ["outline"] for a course of instructions. We will endeavor to solemnize the best we can the feast of S. Vincent our Founder [19 July], and the Patron of our future Seminary. I have requested Mr. Niel to preach the Panegirik [sic], the Bishop will invite some other Priests to make the solemnity more conspicuous. Would to God that we may be fully invested with his Spirit to make him known more by the example, and virtues of his children, than by barren and fruitless praises, who do not agree with the behaviour of those, who glory on his name. 

[Mr. Acquaroni]\textsuperscript{470} has declared the most absolute aversion to live with us in community. I foresaw it! He wishes to live entirely at his

\textsuperscript{469} The writer refers to a catechism that he had written and endeavored to publish in 1814. His biographer Bozuffi (\textit{Il servo di Dio}, 79-81) blames the envy and jealousy of other Vincentians for the fact that it was never published. Among his writings is a notebook, Volume VI in the Archives of the General Curia, with materials taken from other catechisms, probably intended as material for his own work. Rosati describes the affair in detail (Rosati, "Life," \textit{Summarium}, 50-53), as does Ricciardelli (\textit{Vita}, 100-63.) Further, his willingness to leave Italy might have reflected this period of contradictions in his life.

\textsuperscript{470} The name has been scratched out, but it is known from the context, and Acquaroni is specifically mentioned on the same topic in Letter 53, 3 September 1818.
Correspondence 1818

ease, and liberty. I have endeavoured and scarcely obtained from him to defer \[sic\] the demand of demission from the Congregation: he tried to obtain it from me. Otherwise he was in a resolution of getting it from Rome. I appeased him now granting him whatever he pleases in order to avoid worse evils.471

Brother Blanka seems to be tired of so much intrigues. He complains that he cannot live according to the rules of our Congregation, and he would be very glad to repair where he was [Italy]. I scarcely can appease him with future hopes. I assure you that all these things though they cause me some small trouble for a moment, however I have so great a confidence in God's mercy, and Providence that all things will succeed happily, that I rely entirely, and blindly in God's conduct. Notwithstanding I deem it necessary to consult with you as my Counsellor and partner of all trials that we may be always of one mind. Give me your opinion.

I believe that we must remain both together in one seminary until some of our novices may be sufficiently formed ... for the rest: God is our leader. "He is our Lord. Let him do that which is good in his eyes."472 Mr. Carretti is always decaying ... pray for us, and especially for poor sinners ... be my interpreter to all those gentlemen so [?] you know ... I am hastening with the most perfect attachment and respectful corddality \[sic\] in the bowels of the merciful Lord.

P.S. [French] A monstrous ignorance raised to the highest degree of pride and presumption—this is the enemy against which we have to prepare ourselves to combat with limitless patience.

Your most humbly servant

Felix De Andreis, I.p.d.I.C.d.I.M.

["Unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission"]

In another hand: 1818 June \[sic\], Mr De Andreis, St. Louis.

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471 Acquaroni continued to have problems. In an undated letter to Louis Sibourd, vicar general in Louisiana, he stated: "My prophecy has come true. One day or another, it will be necessary to write to Rome: Father, we have no establishment here, the truth cannot be hidden." As he threatened in the same letter, he returned where he had come from. (Acquaroni to Sibourd, Italian, 1 page, no date, no place; copy or original, in Archives of the Roman Province, Rome, Baccari letters.)

472 1 Sam 3:18.
Correspondence 1818

53. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME

Saint Louis
3 September 1818

Dear Father,

Up to now I have received only a small excerpt from your much-appreciated letter, contained in a letter from Father Rosati written from Kentucky. I received it this morning, because he did not wish to expose your original to the risk of being lost, as often happens to the mail in these immense forests. We regard the letters from Rome here as if they were a kind of relic. Since a steamboat is leaving tomorrow on the Mississippi for New Orleans with one of our priests, I did not want to miss the chance to send this present letter to that port for its trip to Rome. In my joy I cannot yet bring myself to read the letter bringing the news from over there, because I realize that our good confreres remember us poor men, now half Indian. The consolation is very opportune, since we do not lack trouble from every side. I congratulate you here, since I have not had the honor of seeing you in person after your election to the office of vicar general. I humbly thank God, a

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Francesco Antonio Baccari (1747-1835) worked with Sicardi in Rome beginning in 1816. In 1821, Pius VII named him vicar general for the Vincentians outside France.

474 He was probably not a Vincentian, but more likely a Saint Louis priest. The steamboat was the “Franklin,” scheduled to leave 4 September.

475 After the French Revolution, the Congregation of the Mission was officially disbanded in France. One vicar general was appointed for France, and another for other countries. Having two temporary heads of the Congregation occasioned many problems, as De Andreis discovered in Bordeaux. Baccari, the recipient of this letter, became provicar 4 October 1817, remaining in that post until a superior general came into office, 16 January 1827.
Correspondence 1818

quo factum est istud ["by whom this has been done"],476 and I make my reverence to you with all humility and submission.

I begin by thanking you for the part you played in the favorable outcome of our mission. I assure you that the news about sending two young students477 in the company of Father Grassi has enlivened me, and has consoled both me and our bishop, who regards our foundation as the primary object and soul of all his undertakings. Ostium magnum apertum est, et adversarii multi ["A great door opened up, but I have many enemies"]478 There are bones hard to chew. Irreligion supported by ignorance or the most shameless presumption causes huge sufferings, and renders useless all the efforts of zeal armed to ruin it. But may infinite thanks be given to the great Lord, cuius est totum quod est optimum ["From whom alone comes all that is good"],479 and who still gives us great consolations. Father Acquaroni and I gave a retreat to about fifty young people, to dispose them for first communion.480 I have never seen such emotion, such weeping, or such beautiful dispositions. Above all, I am very consoled to see the poor blacks. They did not even know what religion was, to say nothing of Christianity. They have become full of fervor and are eager for instruction, for the sacraments, and to edify their masters and friends. I have also received several heretics into the Church, and the future promises immense good, especially after we have set up the missions according to our rule. We have to do a little bit of everything. The day before yesterday I was in a place a little distance from here to place the first stone for a church that is soon to be built.481 The cathedral here is

476 Matt 21:42.
477 Samuel Cooper had written that two students might come with Grassi. (Cooper to Rosati, from Emmitsburg, 30 September 1818; in SLAA, Cooper file.) He must have been referring to the group of four (Cellini, Vergani, Potini, Brother Bettelani) who had already departed for Philadelphia.
478 1 Cor 16:9.
479 From the collect of the sixth Sunday after Pentecost in the calendar of De Andreis's time.
480 Acquaroni's name appears in the baptismal register for 18 August, which helps to date the retreat.
481 This was the first chapel for the town of Carondelet, dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Since it was a wooden building, De Andreis perhaps meant that he had presided at the placing of the first post. No resident priest lived in Carondelet until 1825, although the parish dates from 1821. Clergy visited from Saint Louis in the earliest days. De Andreis himself returned to celebrate two baptisms, 29 December 1818, according to the Old Cathedral baptismal records.
Correspondence 1818

progressing well. The demons are causing another temple for the heretics to rise directly behind ours,482 but the rod of Moses swallows up that of the sorcerers,483 and will force them to confess.

I am here with the bishop, and temporarily filling the office of vicar general, pastor, missionary and a little bit of everything. To put it better, I am ruining all these occupations, since I am convinced that I am good for nothing. Father Rosati remains in Bardstown, ten days away from here, and he heads our still traveling seminary. He does marvels, he is big and fat, and I am impatient to embrace him after the last ten out of eleven months when our duties have kept us apart. In a few days now he will be here, along with his group. Father Acquaroni is temporarily attending three parishes on the Missouri river. I arranged for the bishop to send him there to subdue his will, which he wants to use to be his own boss. But I do not know if I will be able in the future to let him remain separated like this once our house is established. He is disposed rather to request a dismissal than to remain in community. I have done what I could to accommodate him. I believe it expedient for his own and others' peace that he remain by himself. I await your judgment to know whether in conscience I can leave him in a parish, as if in a perpetual mission; or whether you decide that he should be granted his dismissal in case he does not wish to live as a missionary according to our rules and customs.

We have here four or five excellent postulants. I think that, according to the faculties received from Father Sicardi,484 I should have them begin the novitiate and internal seminary, but I have some concerns as to when they should take vows and be incorporated into the Congregation. Since the basis of the establishment [the Barrens] has not yet been set, because the various circumstances inseparable from a mission of this type, and different plans keep being made and then changed according to the diverse circumstances and diverse roads which Providence lays out one after another, I can postpone finishing the work even for some years. Consequently I ask you to clarify this, and also to obtain for me the faculties to receive titulo missionis [“to the

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482 This was noted in the “Missouri Gazette” for 11 and 18 September 1818.
483 A casual reference to Exod 7:12, which states that the rod of Aaron swallowed up those of the sorcerers.
484 Sicardi was Baccari’s predecessor as pro-vicar general.
Correspondence 1818

title of a mission”] those who, through a special indult granted to the bishop, have been ordained *titulo missionis*, as others have already been ordained priests in Europe.⁴⁸⁵

Since other groups are going to be set up here, our establishment will most probably not be in the place indicated in my other letters, “the Barrens,” but it will be here, close to the capital city of Saint Louis to be better able to help the bishop and to exercise the functions of our institute.⁴⁸⁶ We will direct the major seminary, the public church, missions, retreats, etc. Yet all of this will demand time and money. Meanwhile the road to paradise, let us hope, is being built and is advancing. The reason for this change is that the bishop does not want us to leave his side, but wishes that either Father Rosati or I, in turn, should always stay with him. But this would be impossible with our establishment, since we are so few, and since I am ill so frequently, not to say always. Sometimes, too, I am laid low by my stomach troubles and am unable to do anything. These are reasons why we need to have subjects and especially brothers, like Brother Blanca. He is good at everything, although he has suffered much and is as thin and pale as a corpse, but still does the work of four men. Four postulant brothers have left us. One left us in Genoa,⁴⁸⁷ another in Baltimore,⁴⁸⁸ and two others are still with us but do not want to become brothers.⁴⁸⁹ We agreed with the bishop that as soon as possible we would start a tour of missions, and we will go around together all over upper Louisiana.

We will thus begin to undertake the cultivation of the Indians of the Shawnee nation. They are not more than a day’s journey from the present site of the current seminary.⁴⁹⁰ The great difficulty is the

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⁴⁸⁵ Every priest needed a “title,” that is, some firm basis on which he would be able to live. For diocesan and religious priests, the title was normally their diocese or congregation. For missionaries, the concept of ordination for the mission had been developed. De Andreis was asking for permission as vicar general of Saint Louis, not as the superior of the Congregation of the Mission, to receive into the diocese those priests with this special designation.

⁴⁸⁶ As De Andreis and others often noted, this offers another instance of Dubourg’s constant vacillation. Further, since the building had already begun, it would be proper to wonder what would become of it.

⁴⁸⁷ Antonio Boboni.

⁴⁸⁸ John Flegifont.

⁴⁸⁹ Medard Delatre and Francis Borawanski.

⁴⁹⁰ He refers to the Barrens, where the seminary had been, up to that time, planned.
Map of southeastern Missouri, with detail of the Barrens and local roads.

Collection of the De Andreis-Rosati Memorial Archives
language, but *gutta cavat lapidem, et dimiduum facti qui bene caepit, habet* ["A drop hollows out a stone;" and, "well begun is half done"].

I have received the box of images from Father Colucci, and I send him a thousand thanks for them. How precious they are in these regions! We celebrated the feast of Saint Vincent with great solemnity, with music and a panegyric, with his picture at the high altar, the only altar in the cathedral. He has been recognized as its secondary patron, with a double feast of the second class with an octave. We are very busy translating our sermons into French and English, or rather, composing them anew, since that is easier than translating them.

Here we live in a state of the most complete poverty as regards providing the house with books and linens. Everything is very expensive here. The minimum expense is fifty bajocchi. A pair of badly made shoes costs us from one scudo to four and a half, and so we receive from the charity of benefactors whatever can be used in a house and church for missionaries whenever there is an occasion for someone to come. The bishop has already brought a huge quantity of items of every type, but there are so many people here to distribute them to, that what seems commonplace in itself becomes scarce when it is distributed.

Two superiors of the Daughters of Charity in Bordeaux have written me. They are eager to come to make an establishment here, but I do not think it opportune just now, since there is lacking here the primary purpose of their institute, the poor. Here we have, so to speak, only one type of person: they are all "Messieurs and Gentlemen." There are no peasants. In their place are the black and mulatto slaves, the responsibility of their owners, and so a bajocco of alms can be given only to some wandering stranger. Tailors, shoemakers are lords, as are the others who practice trades, and they demand the same respect as a gentleman. The spirit of this great country is great liberty, equality, independence and openness. As a result we need great respect in the ministry: always to proceed sweetly, to suffer humbly, to know the right time and place for using zeal softened with great prudence. This spirit, common to everyone, is found in its greatest rigor among the Indians.

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*Cited from Ovid (Epistulae ex Ponto, 4.10.5) and Horace (Epistula 1.2.40).*

*These letters are not extant.*
They look on themselves as the only truly free men, and consequently much freer than other men. All this presents an obstacle to our ministry among them. But there is some good in this since they have a strong reverence for priests, but a great indifference to the Christian religion, which they deem to be only for us, not for them. They have a kind of natural religion, or rather, superstition. With the gift of miracles all these Indian nations would be converted in a moment. God is the master. *Non est abbreviata manus Domini* ["The hand of the Lord is not shortened"]. He has his own times of mercy. It is not our task to give the law to him. We must humble ourselves greatly and bear with the *sustentationes Dei* ["trials from God"]. I never stop repeating that we have not come here for this or that, to do what Saint Francis Xavier did. We are unworthy even to mention his name. But we are to do whatever God determined *ab aeterna* ["from eternity"] that we should do.

There is immense good to be done, and I firmly hope that the time will come to do it, *tempus faciendi* ["time for acting"]. Saint Vincent used to say that the works of God have their beginnings, their progress and their completion. Above all we should guard ourselves from wanting to hurry too much. A thousand years to God are like yesterday come and gone. The smallest thing done steadily pleases self-love less. Although it looks like nothing, it is no less meritorious.

They are asking me for the letter to put it in the packet and so I have to stop. I place myself in spirit kneeling at your feet to beg you warmly to pray often for us, and to have others pray, since I assure you that I have a greater need of prayers than all the rest. Above all, through the holy sacrifice of the mass may the priests [there] be transported in spirit [here] across these wastes and exercise their zeal with their groans and promises, begging the goodness of him who disposes the hearts of men as he pleases. Perhaps just one more prayer might complete that quantity to which is reserved the grace of the conversion of so many souls of Indians, heretics, unbelievers and nominal Catholics, who

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493 Isa 59:1.
494 Sir 2:3.
495 Ps 119:126 NAB: "It is time for the Lord to act."
496 A commonplace from Saint Vincent, found, for example, in an undated letter to Louise de Marillac, cited by Collet; see *Mission et Charité* 19-20 (Janvier-juin 1970): 171.
Correspondence 1818

pierce our hearts with knife cuts without our being able to help. Please convey my best wishes to all, and I am, in the deepest esteem and veneration, in the love of our Lord,

your most humble, devoted and obedient servant

Felix De Andreis

unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

Addressed: Father Baccari, Priest of the Congregation of the Mission, Superior and Vicar General, Monte Citorio, Rome.

54. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS

Saint Louis
18 November (1818)

Very Reverend Father and Dear Friend,

Just yesterday I received your very dear letter of last 26 October. My blood ran cold at the news I received about the accident to your thumb. I hope that it will not turn out badly. I recall that I had forgotten to send you thanks for the large pictures of Saint Vincent, the atlas, etc., etc. On another occasion I will do so. I cannot write more here. Our Gethsemani is ready. In order to begin, we are awaiting Mr. Tichitoli.

The bishop's change of Father Valezano for Father Ferrari is still pending. The satisfaction we will have in [finally] seeing and embracing each another is the same thing. You should know,

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The addressee is known from internal evidence, since no name appears on the letter itself.

*49 The internal seminary (or novitiate).

*499 For some reason, the writer never recorded the bishop's ordination of Michael Portier, a diocesan priest, in Saint Louis, 29 September 1818. Portier later became bishop of Mobile, Alabama.

*500 That is, at the Barrens or in Saint Louis.
Correspondence 1818

however, that Father Caretti is still in statu quo ["in the state in which he has been"]. Brother [Blanka] will see when it will be [ready?] here, and through him I will write and will send [a letter].

I am completely yours, in the love of Jesus Christ, the common center of our hearts.

Your most humble servant
F. De Andreis, C.M.

In other hands: 1818 Nov. 18. Mr. De Andreis, St. Louis.
1818 18 9bre. Mr. De Andreis S. Louis.

55. TO JOSEPH ROSATI, C.M., PRIEST, BARRENS

Saint Louis
23 November 1818

Very Reverend Father and Dear Friend Rosati,

Today at last, please God, we will begin our retreat. We have had to postpone it from week to week and from day to day until now, for one reason or another. Immediately after, we will begin the novitiate, and on this point I have firmly put my foot down. I am not at all ready to compromise because of any circumstances, except for something accidental. As to the remaining details aut sint ut esse debent aut potius non sint ["either they are as they should be, or else they are not"]. I would love it if you could see our little Gethsemani, for at first glance you might actually imagine it to be the novitiate of Rome, Naples or Genoa, since we tried to imitate them in every way. The dividing curtains,502 for example, are cut from the same type of material and we have the same type of cleanliness, poverty and simple elegance. We have room for three, but no more. Besides Father Valezano, another excellent subject, whom I believe to be the best among those of the

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501 Letter 55. Copy, Italian, in SLAA, De Andreis papers.
502 The dormitory curtains traditionally hung between the beds of the novices.
established new ties with the glorious apostle of the Indies. Two different events affected us. Just as I had predicted to him, our good Father Caretti passed to another life, the first fruits of the missionaries of upper Louisiana. He was sent to heaven at the same time as our Gethsemani was being opened through the act of clothing three candidates, the first fruits of the Congregation in America. He died about 9:00 P.M., a quarter of an hour after I had left his side to perform that function. I willingly leave to Father Ferrari the task of describing this sad event, but I keep for myself the task of telling you something of our grief.

Our good deceased certainly went to possess the fruits of his long and frenzied sufferings, with all the proofs of being predestined. He told me several times that if the Lord preserved his life he wanted to enter the Congregation, and he wanted to leave the little that he could dispose of to the Lazarists. For good reasons I urged him to leave his estate to the mission, that is to say, to the bishop's disposition. He could well have said: *transivimus per ignem et aquam, et eduxisti nos in refrigerium* ['We crossed through fire and water, and you brought us to a place of refreshment']. Everything became painful for him: eating, sleeping, etc. His purity of conscience, of which he reached a high level, caused him to analyze every thought, every intention, every word, *usque ad purum* ['to the nth degree']. This mystic fire purified him interiorly, and disposed him for union with him who is purity itself. He received viaticum several times, and communion often. Twice he received the last anointing, and twice the plenary indulgence. In his last days I was almost continually at his side since he wished to be prepared with prayers for his great journey. He was in his right mind to the end, and made the sacrifice of his life with the most beautiful resignation. Tomorrow we will have his solemn funeral. The choir is decked all in black, and he will be buried in the sanctuary of the new cathedral. Today his body is on view, clothed in priestly vestments,

514 Saint Francis Xavier, often proposed by De Andreis as a model missionary; his feast was celebrated 3 December. In his spiritual notes for the day, he noted that he had "said mass in the novitiate in the presence of the relics of the great saint and apostle of the Indies." (Ricciardelli, *Vita*, 468.)

515 Ps 66:12.

516 The present location of his remains is unknown.
in his room next to ours. Many people are coming to visit him and to pray at the foot of the coffin.

I will ask the bishop for the book you asked me about, *History of the Holy Bible*, and I will send it with the rest at the first opportunity.

Our internal seminary promises much good, if I, miserable as I am, do not spoil God's work, and if health helps us, since, with the exception of Father Ferrari, the other two are *sub jugo medicinae* ["under the yoke of medicine"]. I do not know how I will be able to addere oneri jam opprimenti ["to add the already burdensome weight"] the directorship [of the novitiate] and the theology class. I hope that God will help me, through the intercession of Saint Vincent.

I have reflected on your plan to have theology classes offered to the novices, and I am not far from agreeing with your idea after some months, once the cycle of the exercises of the novitiate has assumed its proper rhythm. I assure you that I am doing it like a Swiss, "Get back, behind the wall!" Yet I have to act in the greatest possible order, I who am disorderly by nature and unaccustomed to it. Pray that the Lord will strengthen me in truly not trusting in myself, and all will go well.

Concerning Brother [Blanka] I think that, overall, it would be better to keep him here *usque donec* ["until such time"]. Sometimes a disappointment produces an opportunity, and I think we are in that situation here. His case is truly pitiful. I do not know what I would do were I in his place. He is unable to share it as he should. This house is constantly like a stormy sea that cannot be calmed. It would take cold blood, even frozen blood, not to be disturbed. Only in the arms of him

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518 Dahmen and Tichitoli. The latter did not remain long in the internal seminary (or novitiate) because of his weak lungs and fear of consumption or tuberculosis. Though a novice for less than two weeks, the bishop ordained him a priest on 15 December, and sent him immediately to Assumption parish, Bayou Lafourche, in lower Louisiana. He returned to the Barrens where he took his vows 26 July 1821.

519 Based on 1 Tim 6:1: "under the yoke of slavery."

520 "Swiss" is the name given to the ushers in some European churches responsible for good order during mass, processions, etc. Here De Andreis sees himself as a guard, keeping worldly distractions away.
Correspondence 1818

cui venti et mare obediunt ["whom winds and sea obey""]\(^{521}\) can one find a safe haven.

[In another hand: About books he (Rosati) requests]

About the second encyclopedia, I think that the money would have to be minted for it, since we are honoring the immense treasures of divine providence, as Saint Vincent would say, trusting without human considerations. If one were content with a change of heart there would be fire enough to bake bread, and it would be more tasty and nutritious.\(^{522}\) I am speaking foolishly. God knows better than I.

*Post factum lauda* ["Praise after the fact"]. I was just about to place a reverent kiss upon his [Jesus's] breast which encloses a heart so well made, when I read the tender comment about the impression which the arrival of our confreres\(^{523}\) at Father Badin's could make at Saint Thomas.\(^{524}\) I think that I have reflected on this, but the bishop [Dubourg] spoke to me about it afterward. But I have written to Father David with an imported ink (I should not say it) of humility and thanks for everything; I believe that the bishop [Flaget] has thought of us. How greatly those hearts please me. *Deo gratias, Deo gratias* ["Thanks be to God"]\(^{525}\)

[Written in the margin: Say two masses for my intention. I enclose some money for them.]

Write me often. We are all well, except the two I mentioned and Mr. De Neckere who has a tertian fever.\(^{526}\) I recommend the novitiate to your prayers and to those of the seminary. I am completely occupied with this responsibility as director. I am missing the manuscripts of

\(^{521}\) Matt 8:27.

\(^{522}\) This is the writer's way of saying that he had no money for the purchase, and that Rosati should be content with the little he has.

\(^{523}\) This was the group led by Francis Cellini, which numbered Philip Borgna, Anthony Potini and Brother Bartholomew Bettelani. They arrived from Livorno in Philadelphia on 28 September 1818, according to shipping records.

\(^{524}\) Badin made his home at or near Saint Thomas.

\(^{525}\) In this confusing paragraph De Andreis means that he wrote to David with what he believed to be unaccustomed humility and thanks for the hospitality shown the new group of Vincentians.

\(^{526}\) He might have been regarded as a postulant; he was teaching at the Saint Louis Academy. A tertian fever was one that occurred every 48 hours; the expression was used to refer to malaria.
Correspondence 1818

the conferences. I am seeking to supply them as well as I can. I greatly love your frankness in having concealed nothing from me. May you be blessed for it. Nothing in the world would do me more honor than having that disposition added to such a beautiful virtue, and this is what I recommend above all else to the novices. Let us wish one another well in the Lord. Oh, how sweet it is to find ourselves inspired together here in the sanctuary of love in the most sacred heart of JESUS! Oh, bonum est nos hic esse ["It is good for us to be here"] Haec sequatur me in seculum seculi ["May this follow me for ever"]. It is necessary to find everything there within, as in a general store (pardon the expression) where are found ornaments, and encyclopedias and dictionaries, and whatever cannot be found in Saint Louis, and which the bishop protests vigorously that he does not wish to provide and give: quid mihi est in caelo etc. ["This is for me in heaven."] We can do with less, but we need God. Do not think, however, that I am in need, since I am using all my diligence at least to finish covering the dirty seminary table with a longer towel, when a tablecloth is not available. That’s enough. I will never finish ....

Believe me to be, with respectful affection and affectionate respect your most humble and devoted servant,

Felix De Andreis,
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission

PS. We will celebrate the Christmas Novena sumus [?] tunc ad [illegible].

In other hands: Letters of Father De Andreis.
1818 4 xbre. S. Louis. Mr. De Andreis.
1818 Dece. 4. Mr. De Andreis. St. Louis.

Addressed: Rev. Mr. Rosati Superior, of St. Mary’s Seminary, Barrens.

527 Probably a reference to some talks which De Andreis wrote, but which did not arrive.
528 Mark 9:5.
529 Ps 23:6.
530 Ps 73:25 NAB: “Whom else have I in heaven?”
Correspondence 1818

57. TO FRANCESCO ANTONIO BACCARI, C.M.,
PRO-VICAR GENERAL, ROME

Saint Louis
7 December 1818

Very Reverend and Dear Father,

Some time ago I already answered your much-appreciated letter before I received the original. Now that I have it actually in hand and can read its contents, and since our situation has changed greatly, I am obliged to add hastily the following details before sailing which probably leaves tomorrow on the Mississippi for New Orleans. Your letters can be sent to the brother of our bishop, Bishop Dubourg, a resident there in that city, or even better to the bishop himself. "Right Reverend Louis William Dubourg for the Rev. Mr. De Andreis."

At long last Father Rosati with all our mobile seminary has moved from Bardstown, Kentucky, to Louisiana, eighty miles from here in a territory called in English, Barrens, which means sterile or deserted land. Our house, or external seminary, is being built there. It is sixty feet long by thirty-seven wide, with three floors and stores beneath. There we have been given a piece of land sufficient to maintain the house. In particular, they are the most religious people in the whole diocese, and they have willingly imposed a tithe on themselves. They all are English Americans, a good and industrious people.

It has been more than a year since I had the consolation of seeing Father Rosati, mentioned above, and I do not know when I shall have the opportunity again since each of us is bound to his place with bonds too strong to let us leave.

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532 3 September 1818.

533 That is, a seminary for diocesan candidates.
Correspondence 1818

I attended one of the companions who came from Europe with us during his long illness of consumption. Two days ago we buried him with great ceremony. He was a virtuous and excellent priest about twenty-eight years old, formerly a canon of Porto Maurizio, named Joseph Caretti. He told me more than once of his desire vita comite ["during life"] to become our [confrere].

He died on the feast of Saint Francis Xavier, our great protector, at the very moment that I had left his side to receive as our novice his worthy companion, the priest Andrew Ferrari, also from Porto Maurizio, along with two others: the German deacon Mr. Francis Xavier Dahmen and the subdeacon from Como, Mr. Joseph Tichitoli. The first and third are 26, and the second 29. They have all been fine subjects for more than a year. After the usual retreat they were admitted to the internal seminary or novitiate on that same memorable day. According to the usage of American missionaries, who give a biblical name to pious places, we have named our seminary or novitiate Gethsemani, which in Hebrew means oil press. We know that we will never lack either the press of troubles or the oil of graces, and since Gethsemani was for our Lord the prelude of his passion so ... etc. This novitiate consists of one room of about 16 feet long by 11 wide, free standing and made of stone and brick. Inside is a passage, two wardrobes, a little altar, an adequate library, three beds separated by curtains of blue cloth like those separating the beds of the novices in Rome and in other novitiates. Each one has his own tiny table, chair, crucifix, Rodriguez,535 Bible (New Testament), Roman Catechism536 and Thomas à Kempis.537 I have translated into French a summary of the seminary rules; it has all the essentials.

Many other excellent subjects from various nations are eager to be admitted, but the space there is too small for more than three and for now it is impossible to have a larger area. Poverty exists there instead

534 That is, a small building, separated from the others on the property known as the Bishop’s Block. It had been specially built during the summer or fall for use as an internal seminary (or novitiate).
535 Alphonsus Rodriguez, S.J., The Practice of Perfection and the Christian Virtues. This work formed part of the reading required of novices, beginning in the time of Vincent de Paul.
536 The Catechism of the Council of Trent.
537 The Imitation of Christ.
Correspondence 1818

of decoration, and fervor so reigns that I am overwhelmed and embarrassed. We observe absolutely the same order of the day as at Rome and elsewhere, and all the other little practices down to the last detail: rising at 5:00, meditation, reading, visits, chapters, conferences and discussions, asking penances, [interior] communications, an exact silence, genuflections on entering and leaving, office in common, corporal exercises, etc., and everything in the same strict form as in Italy, reading at table, etc. I have more need of bridle than spur. Too, I am there like a Swiss Guard with his halberd, eyes closed, and I cry out to everyone who comes in: Stand back.538 “Such, O God,”539 since I am anxious that the plant not spoil in its development in a plot of land where one has to count doubly on the quality of the tree. Saint Vincent is beginning to be known, and is doing good here.

I am worried about the new colony of the four confreres sent from Italy.540 Father Cellini, two clerics and the brother, whom I learned had arrived in Philadelphia without any money. A good priest541 lent them a sum of about 400 or 500 scudi to continue their trip, and he obliged us to pay him in masses (here the stipend is fixed at five paoli). Poor men! They left on foot from Lancaster for Pittsburgh, where they will have from ten to fifteen days of travel through wooded mountains, forests, terrible roads, rivers, cliffs, etc. From Pittsburgh they will still have more than 700 miles to go by water down to Louisville. There a good priest will receive them and keep them with him until spring, and then they will come to the seminary, where Father Rosati is awaiting them with open arms. I am surprised at not receiving any letters from them. Were the journey not so lengthy, expensive and of dubious success, I would send someone to meet them, but where? The Lord and Saint Vincent will help them.

538 That is, he tries to keep away any influences that could harm his novices.
539 That is, these novices should be models for those who come afterward.
540 Francis Cellini, Philip Borgna, Anthony Potini and Brother Bartholomew Bettelani. They arrived at Saint Thomas in Kentucky on 3 December 1818, and at the Barrens on 5 January 1819.
541 Louis Sibourd, Dubourg's vicar general, in Philadelphia for medical attention. Dubourg records that Sibourd gave them $300 to be paid through celebrating 825 masses. (Dubourg to Rosati, from Saint Louis, 14 November 1818; original in SLAA, Rosati papers; copy in DRMA.)
Correspondence 1818

Meanwhile I must remain here beside the bishop, and I do not know when I will be able to get away. There is apparently no way to find someone to help me. I am good for nothing. I am nearly always sick, and I do not know how to act to accomplish the little I can do. I have almost the entire responsibility of the cathedral on me. I am the director [of novices], and I teach a class in theology to seven or eight clerics who are giving classes in the public high school, called here an Academy. At least I have not begun this latter duty. I have a great need of being helped by prayer to die to myself like the grain in the gospel, in order to be able to bear fruit. The state of religion is constantly improving, and it makes me hope much more for the future. Once our establishment has been consolidated, and once the front line has been drawn up, I expect that we will see marvels. Meanwhile the good being done is not small although, to my embarrassment, I have to admit that in fact I am nothing but a sterile tree, et igni devoranda, parturiens mons et nascetur ridiculus mus ["to be devoured in the fire;" "bringing forth a mountain, but only a funny little mouse is born"]. ... Soli Deo honor et gloria, nobis autem confusio ["To God alone be the honor and glory"; "but to us be the shame"].

Father Acquaroni is ministering to two small parishes. The people love him and he is doing much good there.

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542 This statement contradicts what Baccari chose to report to his confreres in his letter of 2 February 1819:

Three years have already passed since the departure of the first missionaries, and it has been two years since they have been working at the price of the most difficult fatigues. Despite the extreme rigor of the cold that they have had to endure and are still enduring, despite a life full of pains and sufferings, God has always helped them and kept them in good health. This is not without a certain miraculous nature in the person of Father De Andreis. During his time in Italy, because of the weakness of his constitution, he was subject to frequent illnesses. Today, as he has written several times, he enjoys perfect health.

(Recueil, 2, 354.)

543 This was the Saint Louis College, which began 16 November 1818, under the direction of Father Niel.


545 Horace, Ars Poetica, 139.

546 1 Tim 1:17.

547 Bar 1:15.
An Indian interpreter fell ill and I went to visit him. He made his confession, gave himself completely to God, and now frequents the sacraments. I engaged him to work with me to translate the catechism into the Indian language. This will help us greatly on the apostolic journeys that we will make in the future. But the harvest is great and the laborers are very few throughout a land such as this diocese, equal in size to all of Europe. We are only a few priests, almost all responsible for forming the other clergy who have arrived from Europe. There are about forty of them. We are also to restore the Catholic faith. It has been reduced for the most part to just a name only, since so many here are advanced in age and still know nothing about God or religion. They have never made their first communion. They live in concubinage and give no sign of being Christians. I found some who do not know what the Sign of the Cross is, nor the Our Father, nor anything else. They have confused ideas, believing that there are three gods, that Jesus Christ began to exist as God when he was born of the Virgin Mary, and other similar things, especially in moral matters. Several times they wanted me to baptize the sick without water, blithely believing this was possible. A very large number here, especially of Anglo-Americans, call themselves Nullists, that is, they claim to follow no religion. Others are always floating, never deciding on anything. These are sometimes won over, especially at death, or in one way or another.

Although we are here like men totally dead to the world, buried in loco mortis et vastae solitudinis ["in a place of death and great loneliness"], yet we do enjoy from time to time receiving news about our dear confreres in Italy. Funes ceciderunt mihi in praecaris ["For me the measuring lines have fallen on pleasant places"]. It is truly a wonderful fate to be responsible for working in the most abandoned portion of the flock of Christ, in a thankless land which brings together all the inconveniences of bitter cold and great heat, and which does not produce the great relief such as everyone enjoys over there. No wine, no grapes, no figs, no oil, no vegetables, etc. Viewed with the eyes of faith, all this is so very precious and elicits our gratitude. If we only baptized someone about to die without baptism and gathered up

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548 Deut 32:10.
549 Ps 16:6.
Correspondence 1818

a soul lost in the darkness of ignorance and vice, we would be well rewarded for all our privations and sacrifices. Through God’s mercy these frequent events console us greatly.

I received the first chest with the images sent by Father Colucci, and I gratefully await the second one that he promised, the one with the rosaries and crucifixes. I assure him that these things do great good here, since not only are there none here, but the people have never seen them. We could use entire shops full of them, since they produce such abundant fruits. They make religion known, and cause the acts of religion to be practiced with the great results that stem from them, but the country is so huge that they cannot satisfy everyone. I still await, by means of our good confreres who are yet to arrive, the pictures that you kindly promised me. They will help to adorn our house and church at the Barrens. I am edified and embarrassed at the humility and diffidence in self emerging from your letter, a spirit so proper to our institute. Please also add prayers to your example, so that I might become a worthy imitator of our great Saint Vincent.

We are very aware of the remembrance, love and interest that you and our other Italian confreres show for our poor Indians. We cannot repay you for it except by praying in the adorable heart of Jesus Christ, the shrine of charity, unity and truth, that we all be united in spirit where we repose, where we take our delight, where we find everything omne bonum et pignus vel ipsum vita, vel ipsum vitae aeternae [“every good and a pledge itself either of life or of eternal life”]. It is only to make known this hidden treasure, to make known, loved and served this good lord and good God to someone for whom it was impossible to do so. For this we have left the ease of Italy, sailed the great ocean, crossed the immense deserts from east to west in North America, and have sacrificed ourselves here. This alone makes us undergo shipwrecks on a sea of consolation which exsuperat omnem sensum [“surpasses all understanding”], and which makes each of us cry out et unde hoc mihi [“and how did this happen to me”]. If the Congregation is

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550 DRMA has a crucifix said to have been given by De Andris to a young girl on the day of her first communion. It was passed down in her family and then given to the Vincentian community. The Old Cathedral in Saint Louis also has a crucifix that had belonged to him. It was probably given to Ann Lucas Hunt at his death.

551 Phil 4:7.

established here solidly, as we firmly expect and which seems certain
to all of us, our successors will do immense good, since the field is
unbelievably vast and keeps on growing because of the constant
emigrations from all parts of Europe. People come here in such droves
that the population doubles yearly, especially here in the capital. It
is so full that it is impossible to live. Everything is immeasurably
expensive. What in Italy costs one, costs here 30 or 100. Since business
is done ordinarily only in scudi, and in Saint Louis living expenses are
double those in other areas, we are in bad straits. And so we will always
need to receive help of every sort from our Italian benefactors.

Through long disuse my Tuscan language is getting wrinkled,
shrinking because of the English and French that I speak, so that now
it is neither one nor the other. Please pardon my misery of having such
a limited spirit. We are satisfied with our good bishop. He really has
been a very loving father to us. He is truly the man needed for this
region. Pray for him, since the good of our establishment depends on
him, as well as the good of this limitless diocese, which could form
several empires.

Please convey our sentiments to Fathers Sicardi, Ceracchi,
Giordana, Colucci, and all the others nominatim [“by name”]. We bear
them all in our hearts marked with signs of sincerest affection, esteem
and veneration. I will also write, or rather respond, to Father Colucci
but please obtain a dispensation for me from it since the sailing leaves
tomorrow, and I still have three other letters to respond to from France,
and I do not know how I will do it.

Enough. In paradise we will have time to enjoy one another at our
leisure in the very center of love and charity. O aeterna veritas, o vera
caritas, o cara aeternitas, tu es ipse Deus meus, ad te suspiro die ac nocte [“O
eternal truth, O true charity, O dear eternity, you are my God, for you I
long day and night”]. In God, with God and through God, God
alone and nothing else.

Excuse my wandering, and believe me to be completely penetrated
with the deepest respect and admiration for you,

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553 Saint Louis was the capital of the territory of Missouri from 1812 to 1821.
554 Perhaps Letter 62, 9 February 1819.
555 Based on Augustine, Confessions, 7, 10.
Correspondence 1818

your most humble and obedient servant,  
Felix De Andreis
unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission