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I remain, Monsieur, your most obedient and most grateful daughter and servant.

P.S. I have no one in the world to help me in this matter and I scarcely ever have except your Charity.

1645

Establishment of the Daughters of Charity in Serqueux, Saint-Denis, Maule, Crespières.

The foundlings are placed in 13 houses on the Champ-Saint-Laurent, near Saint-Lazare.

L.113B - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTERS

*Daughters of Charity, Servants of the Sick Poor
of the Hospital of Saint-Jean (at Angers)*

(January 1645)

My very dear Sisters,

Truly it has been too long since my heart has conversed with yours that have been so kind to me and that pardon me and excuse me because they are aware of my many responsibilities. Our good sisters¹ arrived in excellent health, thank God. This continues as well as their fervor and devotion. It has been quite a while since you sent us any news of yourselves. We have received nothing since the arrival of our sisters. I beg you to write, Sister. Do not wait for an answer. Three or four lines at least once a month would suffice.

How are the sisters who have just arrived² and Sister Huitmill and her companion?³ I urge all of them to be very courageous especially in perfecting themselves in the practice of true humility, gentleness, obedience, cordiality and support for one another.

You should all be holy with the many opportunities that are constantly available to you to serve God and the poor. I believe that those sisters

1. At the end of the year 1644, Claude Brigide and Barbe Toussaint left for Paris.

2. The last three to arrive at the end of the year 1644: Marie Despinal, see Letter 458, Marguerite Tourneton, see Letter 149 and Jeanne de Chinon, see Letter 145.

3. Françoise Claire, see Letter 70b.

who have been in the house for some time will have renewed their resolutions to grow in perfection after being reminded by the newest arrivals of the happiness that is theirs, and which would be the envy of all the sisters in the Company if God did not command them to be satisfied with accomplishing His most holy will. Let us cherish this most adorable will and see it in all that holy obedience requires of us. Let us carefully avoid particular friendships and cliques which share little secrets as things which are detrimental to mutual charity. O my Sisters, pardon me for giving you this admonition. I cannot believe that such things exist among you. Therefore, I beg God to bless you with holy union and cordiality so that you may all be of one will under His guidance by means of the charitable ministry of our dear Sister Madeleine. I greet her with all my heart as I do the entire little family, from whom I would like to hear individually.

I am enclosing nine pictures. Please select one for your director, Monsieur Ratier, and tell him that I am sorry for having put off answering him for so long. I do not have time to do so now either. Remember me to all those whom I should greet. The entire family here sends you affectionate greetings. Believe me, my dear Sisters, in the love of Jesus Crucified, your very humble sister and servant.

L.116 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER MADELEINE

*Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor
of the Hospital of Angers*

March 16, 1645

My very dear Sister,

We are very concerned about the condition of our dear Sister Françoise Claire.¹ Monsieur Ratier told Monsieur l'abbé de Vaux that she is critical. My God, my dear Sister, I wholeheartedly entrust her to your loving care. Console her and help her to make good use of the grace which God is bestowing upon her by allowing her to suffer for His love and service.

I also entreat you to urge all our sisters to strive to overcome excessive spiritual sensibility. In order to do so, they must resist when at times God tries them by permitting temptation to get the better of their weakness and timidity so that they find it difficult to communicate with the person

1. Françoise Claire, see Letter 70b.

whom they are fortunate enough to have as their director. Assure them that if they overcome this temptation a few times, the little struggle will win many graces from God for them and help them to advance in virtue.

This does not mean that they cannot request an extraordinary confessor from time to time. However, this should be done only very rarely, just a few times a year. Our Most Honored Father warned us in our last conference of the danger to be found in listening to these little temptations. I spoke to him of the desire expressed by these good gentlemen to have our sisters in Beaufort. I assure you, Sister, that we cannot send anyone at the present time. Moreover, I feel that two sisters would be insufficient for all the work that must be done. Recently, we have been called upon to send six sisters to three villages and three or four to a hospital¹ near here, where as yet I believe there are no more than ten patients.

I believe that Sister Cécile² needs a good purging.

I urge you and all our sisters to practice holy cordiality and mutual support so necessary in preserving union among true Daughters of Charity; gentleness and holy affection toward the sick poor; modesty and reserve in all your actions; and obedience to the gentlemen of the administration.

I beg God with all my heart to bestow His most precious blessings upon you. I remain in His most holy love, my dear Sisters, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. All our sisters send their greetings. Thank God we are all keeping fairly well.

One of our sisters who came from Sedan to enter our Company died right after receiving Extreme Unction. She is the tall Sister Marie. Sister Marie Gonain³ has been very ill and is still manifesting somewhat serious symptoms. She is the good young woman presented by Sister Turgis. I recommend her to your prayers.

If Sister Cécile has a stone, fairly strong water would be good for her. Good-bye for now, my dear Sisters.

1. In the city of Saint-Denis.

2. Cécile Angiboust, see Letter 108.

3. Marie Gonain, see Letter 325.

L.117 - (TO MADAME, THE WIFE OF THE CHANCELLOR)¹

March 1645

Madame,

I believe that I would be unfaithful to my responsibilities if I did not refresh your memory concerning the trust which our most honored deceased wife of the President, Madame Goussault,² confided to your benevolence when she recommended to you the Company of her poor Daughters of Charity, who are and who always will be yours, Madame, if you so wish. Because of this truth, I also take the liberty of presenting the needs of the said Company to you. Moreover, your Charity has ordered me to do so. These needs continue to increase as God bestows His blessings upon it and the numbers grow. I hope that your goodness will continue to honor us with your benevolence and protection and that the continuation of your charitable donations will draw down upon you a well-merited blessing allied to our obligation to continue our little prayers for you, Your Highness. United with all our sisters, I remain in the love of Jesus Crucified . . .

L.73 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

(c. 1645)

Monsieur,

Although we have a good number of sisters, I do not think that any of them are sufficiently formed as yet to begin the service of the poor at Saint-Gervais³ (they have told me this), because I know that others are already serving them. Nevertheless, if Madame de la Porte⁴ would be willing to lend us just Sister Henriette⁵ for two weeks, I believe that we could send some between now and then. However, I believe that the Pastor and the Ladies of Saint-Gervais would have to know that Sister Henriette is just being lent to them so that they would not be offended

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1. Unsigned, unaddressed letter, perhaps a copy of the letter sent.
 2. Madame Goussault, see Letter 11, deceased on September 20, 1639.
 3. Saint-Gervais, one of the parishes of Paris.
 4. Lady of Charity of the parish of Saint-Germain.
 5. Henriette Gesseume, see Letter 76, was at the parish of Saint-Germain.

by such a rapid change in personnel. If I think of anyone else, I will let you know.

I am very apprehensive about the subject I confided to your Charity in the note I sent this morning. I fear these dispositions and have misgivings about the state of the soul. It is with difficulty that I submit to Eternal Justice in this matter. For the love of God, I beg your Charity to look into it and to believe that I am, Monsieur, your most obedient and most grateful servant.

L.118 - (TO MONSIEUR VINCENT)

Thursday (May 25, 1645)

Monsieur,

I beg our good God to grant me His grace so that my repeated requests will not overburden your charity. I ask your pardon for the trouble my needs cause you. I urge you, for the love of God, to give me one or several intentions which should be the object of my little retreat and to accord me the grace of assisting at your holy Mass tomorrow so that I may receive your paternal blessing. The great feast¹ which is approaching is a powerful reminder for me of all the special graces that His goodness granted to me some 22 years ago,² which obtained for me the happiness of giving myself to Him in the way your Charity knows. I feel within me a disposition which I cannot define, which seems to be leading me to desire to attach myself yet more closely to God. However, I do not know how to go about it. Please, my Most Honored Father, tell your poor daughter and servant what you think of all this. Do so in the name of Jesus, in whom we are to God what we are to Him. I expect great help from your prayers and ask your most honored angel to remind you of this.

1. The Feast of Pentecost.

2. Light obtained on May 25, 1623, see A2.

L.120 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

Saturday, Vigil of Pentecost (June 3, 1645)

Monsieur,

I pray to our good God that the medicine was beneficial to your health. However, I truly fear you took it too early. Several days ago I was thinking of suggesting bouillons to you; I think they would do you a lot of good. Please allow us to send you some tomorrow. I, myself, took some this week and felt markedly better as a result.

My Most Honored Father, I cannot wait any longer to tell you of the state I was in during my little retreat. I believe God does not wish me to taste fully this sweetness for I have been distracted since yesterday by one of our sick who received Extreme Unction. She is a fine girl who was at Saint-Barthélemy; her father is a merchant in Tours, and her name is Catherine de Gesse.¹ Our other sick sister, who is mentally ill, does nothing but reproach us for not wanting to tell you that she has asked to see you. We are working towards sending her away after the feast days, if God so wills it. As for me, my dear Father, what should I do tomorrow? Should I not refrain from receiving Communion until I have let you know the faults I discovered during my examen?

O good God! What great reason I have to avow and recognize that I do nothing of any value. Nevertheless, my heart is not embittered, although I have reason to fear that God will tire of showing His mercy to a soul that is constantly displeasing to Him.

Today is the anniversary of the falling of our ceiling,² and tomorrow the anniversary of our good God's revelation of His will to me. My desire for tomorrow is that His holy love give itself to my heart as a perpetual law. My Most Honored Father, please see the need for this, and perhaps give me a word of advice. Please tell me also if tomorrow I should take the Gospel of the day or the Descent of the Holy Spirit as the subject of some of my meditations; or should it be the subject for the entire day?

Forgive my importunity, although it seems to me that by this I am doing the holy will of God, through which I am, Monsieur, your most grateful daughter and most obedient servant.

P.S. For the love of God, I recommend my son to your prayers. The thought came to me to ask whether there was a large cross in his room.

1. Catherine de Gesse, native of Tours, entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity around 1641-1642. She served the sick poor in the parish of Saint-Barthélemy, then in Saint-Gervais. In 1648, she was sent to Maule. In 1655, she was in Montmirail.

2. Accident that took place in 1642, see Letter 102.

L.121 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER MADELEINE

*Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor
of the Hospital of Saint-Jean at Angers*

June 27, 1645

My very dear Sister,

I am astonished that you did not receive an answer concerning the sisters requested of you for Beaufort.¹ I wrote to Monsieur Gouin about it, and I was assured that the letters had reached Angers and you. I wrote and had someone write to you about the matter two or three times. I told Monsieur l'abbé de Vaux my response, and I ask you to pass it on to Monsieur Gouin.

My God, my poor sister, I cannot hide the pain I felt as a result of the faults you made known to me in your last letter. I thought you were above these small weaknesses. Do we think, my dear Sister, that we should never be contradicted? Do we think that everyone must give in to our wishes, and that they are obliged to find everything we do and say good? Do we think we can do as we wish without being held accountable? Is this not against the obligation we have of imitating the way Our Lord lived and acted? He always subjected Himself to others, saying that He did not come upon earth to carry out His will. He came to serve, not to be served. What have our poor sisters done all this time? Has not your example harmed them? I beg our good God to strengthen them greatly. Nevertheless, I must tell you that I do not believe things are as bad as you make them appear. Console yourself then, my very dear Sister, and do not look upon this fault with bitterness. Admire the goodness of God for having allowed this failing so that you might learn to humble yourself more perfectly than you have in the past. I believe you have not failed to humble yourself before those whom you have disedified, and that God has given you brand new courage for His service and for your advancement in the perfection He asks of you.

Have great love for our dear Sister Marie-Marthe,² to whom God has given such a loving heart for works of charity. You must believe that she gave all the service she could to our dear sisters, whom I greet most humbly with all my heart. I beg them to renew themselves in the spirit of fervor, humility and cordial gentleness, and in a very simple and true obedience. O my dear Sisters, it is not enough to be engaged in the service of the poor in a hospital, although this is a blessing which you will never be able to esteem enough. What is necessary is to have the true and solid virtues which you know are essential in order to carry out well the work

1. See Letter 116.

2. Marie-Marthe Trumeau, see Letter 102.

in which you are so happy to be employed. Without that, my Sisters, your work will be almost useless to you.

It is not that I wish to discourage those who are working a bit slowly toward their perfection, if there are any of them in your company, but it is that I want to share with you a reproach which God makes often to me interiorly for my laziness. Let all of us, then, make a powerful resolution to rid ourselves of our own judgments and desires, of our laziness, of our ungraciousness and especially of our pride, which often is the source of all our imperfections. Let us make a solid resolution to work earnestly toward the practice of the virtues contrary to these faults. My dear Sisters, you know that because of my age I have some deeply rooted habits, and that is why I truly need the help of your prayers. I ask you this for the love of Jesus Crucified in which I am, my very dear Sisters, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. Our good Sister Anne Moisson died two weeks ago Friday, at noon, after having shown great virtue. Our Sister Marie¹ from Sedan is very sick there, and Monsieur de Vinsy is near death. Pray for all these souls. Give my most humble greetings to Monsieur l'abbé and to Monsieur Ratier. I am not well enough to write to them.

L.87 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

July 19 (1645)

Monsieur,

I forgot to tell you yesterday that Madame Chavenas wants our sisters at Saint-Gervais² to be given the five sous that the Ladies who have the food prepared for the poor formerly gave to the woman who distributed it before the arrival of our sisters. She also believes that the bit of beef added for this woman should be for the sisters, along with the two loaves of bread that she gives them. Presently all this goes to the profit of the poor because Madame Chavenas collects the five sous from our sisters every day and has the rest given to the poor. This causes problems for our sisters because the Ladies ask them whether or not they are being paid, and whether or not Madame Chavenas wishes them to say that they are giving her this money. I beg you most humbly, Monsieur, to let me know what I should tell them to do, because Madame Chavenas had given me reason to hope that things would be going differently. I also

1. Marie Joly, who was in Sedan, see Letter 36b.

2. See Letter 73.

need to know whether we should try to keep Sister Jacqueline at Saint-Jacques¹ or here. She is the one who was at Saint-Leu.² I should relate to you all the difficulties in the matter, but I would not dare ask to speak to you unless I knew you would accept. Both matters are equally pressing.

How I need your charity to alleviate my misery. I can only be helped by the guidance of the will of God, in which I am, Monsieur, your most unworthy daughter and most grateful servant.

P.S. I beg you most humbly to let me know whether or not you gave some money to my son, and whether or not I may go to the Daughters of God this morning for a service to which Madame de Vertamont invited me through one of her aunts, in which case I could use her carriage.

L.123 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

July 21, 1645

Monsieur,

I felt that I must send you this letter so that you could be kind enough to look at it. I am very surprised, if the mother had it written, for I let her know how little I could do for the house, and how uncertain I was that what I could do would serve any purpose. This does not mean that if I stay there I do not wish to contribute toward and procure their well-being in any way I can.

I know well that the majority of the girls there give nothing. If what this girl says is true, she still would be able to provide a rather sizable dowry for a girl of her station, even if she only had half of what she says she has back home. I believe the good nuns placed great trust in the reasons she gave them for carrying out her plans. I most humbly beg your pardon, Monsieur, for this importunity. My intention is to let you know the state of this unfortunate affair for when your Charity goes to see these good nuns. They say they are in great need of seeing you.³

May the Divine Goodness increase your strength in proportion to the matters with which everyone is overwhelming you. In the midst of all that, please do me the charity of remembering my needs and of entrusting them to God, since this is my sole aim in carrying out His most holy will, in which I am, Monsieur, your most obedient daughter and most grateful servant.

1. Parish of Paris.

2. Parish of Paris.

3. See the following letter; these letters speak about Michel Le Gras' relationship with a young girl.

L.124 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

Feast of Saint Anne (July 26, 1645)

Monsieur,

I believe it has been quite a long time since I have taken the liberty of speaking to you, and for that reason please excuse me if I tell you that I am worried about your illness.¹ I fear that it is worse than we had been led to believe. If you were of our poor, it seems to me that our fortified water from Monsieur Desner would have cured you quickly. I also believe that any type of ointment used only heats the wound and keeps it festering.

I do not know, my Most Honored Father, if the good priest from the Daughters of the Madeleine has spoken to you. He is pressing for a decision on the departure of this person² and seems strongly convinced of her conversion. She assures him she never wants to think of the person³ to whom she is attached and that she has decided to return to her region. I remembered later that that was the resolution they had both made before their capture. The letter which I had since shown to your Charity indicates that his plan is to become a partner, after the wedding, with this girl's parents — they are wine sellers — or else to withdraw to this region and live there peacefully — as idlers. It would appear, then, that she has the idea that he will join her there as soon as she has left.

I most humbly beg your pardon, Monsieur, for speaking to you about such a matter. It remains as vivid to me as when it began, and at times, more painful than I can say. My thought that I am very near death remains with me. Although I truly wish to die, if God so wills, I would be leaving all my little affairs in a poor state of disarray, and I cannot help but suffer in this matter even though it would be the will of God. Also our little Company has never been so weak. Finally, my Most Honored Father, I do not know whether or not it is your long absence from us, but we are doing badly. I most humbly beg your Charity to remember the suggestion I made to you for a weekly conference attended by one of your priests. At the time, it seemed that you were close to a decision, and you even did me the honor of naming a priest. There would be only one sister from each parish at each conference in order to avoid

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1. Ulcer of the leg from which Monsieur Vincent suffered until the end of his life.
 2. The young girl with whom Michel Le Gras had a relationship.
 3. Her son, Michel.

inconveniencing the poor. Please give us your holy blessing, and be so good as to see me before God as I am, Monsieur, your most obedient daughter and most grateful servant.

L.124B - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

(c. August 1645)¹

The number of girls employed in the service of the foundlings is greater and must increase at All Saints in order to accommodate the number of children who will be brought there.

Is it necessary to prolong to such an extent the praises of the aforementioned girls in the line which begins: "And that which is most notable . . . ?" Would it not suffice to say that, "besides the corporal service which they give to the said sick poor, God blesses the little admonitions which they give the sick for their salvation, if they are dying, or so that they may lead a good life if they are recovering? This is most fruitful and makes it evident . . ."

I would like to name the other places where they are first, and say: "for a few days, or a little while at the Hospital Saint-Denis." I would like to name Sedan and mention that those in the countryside serve by instructing the children, caring for the sick and treating wounds.

There should be no mention at present or in the future of the goods of the said young lady.

There are a few widows who contribute, but rarely. Ordinarily none do so.

Regarding the employment of the sisters of the House, following these words: "let blood and dress the wounds of the poor who come in for such treatments," it should be added: "prepare or give medications."

The two-o'clock reading and silence is not specified, nor is the other time. Perhaps it is not necessary.

Would it not be necessary to mention that the money placed in the common purse serves to buy the necessary provisions of the house and clothes for the sisters, even those living in the parishes, where their habits are made, in order, by this means, to be always uniform?

In this article: "they shall show respect and obedience in everything regarding their conduct and the treatment of the sick poor to the said . . ."

1. This letter was Louise de Marillac's reflection on the petition text, which was to be sent to the Archbishop of Paris to obtain the approval of the Company of the Daughter of Charity (Coste II, 548).

L.325 - TO MONSIEUR PORTAIL

September 2 (1645)

Monsieur,

I beg your Charity most humbly to do me the favor of giving this letter to Monsieur Vincent. It is not intended to inconvenience or distract him. It does not even require a response from him, unless in his great charity he wishes to give one.

I also beg you to find out from Monsieur Lambert¹ whether or not he knows the response which Monsieur Vincent wishes me to give Monsieur l'abbé de Vaux on the subjects of Mademoiselle Marie Gonain's² return, the hospital in Nantes, and the poor shut-ins of the city of Angers. Several of the administrators in Angers, who spoke on the subject some time ago, are pressing Monsieur l'abbé for a response in the matter. I commend myself to your holy prayers and am in the love of Jesus Crucified, Monsieur, your most obedient servant.

L.109 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

(c. 1645)³

Monsieur,

My son's servant boy just told me that he was sent away by my son yesterday and that he does not know where he now is. You can imagine my distress. I beg your Charity most humbly to comfort and assist me in God's name, and to recommend to His mercy my son's possible present and future state. Please do me the kindness of sending someone from your house to find out what he did and whether he said anything, without revealing my apprehensions or the dispositions of which he informed you. It would be a great comfort to me to learn something. Because I fear the worst, the thought came to me that he took the furniture from his room in order to move out entirely, without my knowing where he is. I am

1. Monsieur Lambert was at Saint-Lazare.
2. Marie Gonain, a postulant from Angers, who returned with Élisabeth Turgis, was ill (nervous breakdown). It was a question of her return home to Ingrandes, between Angers and Nantes. In 1646, with her health improving, she asked to return to the Community: see the deliberation of the Council of the Company (Coste XIII, 618). It does not seem that she returned to Paris.
3. Letter concerning her son, Michel, see Letters 123 and 124.

most upset at causing you much distress, but it is impossible to look for comfort elsewhere. Not only that, but I am very apprehensive about anyone knowing my distress for fear that they will come and say something to me which will add to it. How great my pain is! If God does not help me, I do not know what I will do. Help me to keep myself strongly attached to Jesus Crucified in whom I am, Monsieur, your very humble daughter and most grateful servant.

P.S. Something I said to my son because of my great distress . . .

L.52 - TO SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE

(at Paris)

(From Saint-Denis, August 1645)

My very dear Sister,

I would ask you to send Sister Louise-Christine¹ tomorrow morning to take little Pavie to Mademoiselle de Lestang² in the suburb of Saint-Germain, telling her that this is the child about whom Monsieur Chomel spoke to her. If there is a problem with her being received because she is so badly clothed, have Sister tell Mademoiselle that she believes that the Duchess d'Aiguillon³ will provide for her little needs. There is no need to tell the little one that she is going to be confined and that Sister Louise must make sure that she does not leave. Sister shall make her devotions in this neighborhood and then have dinner with our sisters at Saint-Sulpice. Enclosed is the letter from Monsieur Chomel which she can give to Mademoiselle de Lestang.

If I am not home tomorrow, you may have conference and go to Holy Communion. However, Sister, I beg you, if any sister appears bitter or agitated, to calm her without seeming to do so, so as to maintain gentleness and cordiality.

It is not my intention at all to keep the little girl from Sedan in Paris. However, there is no need to speak to her about it until evening or the morning she leaves. I thought you would have sent the good Sister Michelle because of what I told you. I would ask you to say something

1. Louise-Christine Rideau, a sister of the Motherhouse, see Letter 149.
2. On rue du Vieux-Colombier, Marie Delpech de Lestang had gathered approximately 50 orphans whom she was raising. In 1640, she came to live near the Novitiate of the Company of Jesus. Saint Vincent oversaw this work and gave her as director Monsieur Gambart, a priest of his Conference whom he considered strong. He suggested to Mademoiselle de Lestang the idea of seeing and consulting Mademoiselle Le Gras, who possessed a high degree of talent in directing souls.
3. The Duchess d'Aiguillon, see Letter 89.

about it to Monsieur Portail. I only know that it is a matter of the white cloth belonging to little Marie; her trip will be more costly, but we shall see, nonetheless.

If Monsieur Portail finds no danger in our sister being given powder without speaking first to the doctor, give her 24 grains, eight of each kind. Monsieur Vacherot¹ finds no problem in it. When she is a bit better, it would be well for her to come to the House. Tell Sister Louise to remind Sister Antoinette² from Saint-Sulpice that the sisters must change neighborhoods at least every two weeks, and that they should balance out the number of sick so that each sister is caring for the same number. There are several other reasons also why this should be done. Sister Marie-Marthe may go to see her sick mother. The sister from Saint-Leu may not do so, because her mother lives out in the country. You may send Sister Jeanne-Baptiste,³ from Richelieu, to Issy. Also from Richelieu, Sister Louise⁴ may be sent to serve the galley slaves; although this can be a lot of work, she can handle it.

I continue to recommend the little flock to you so that forbearance, cordiality and loving gentleness may reign in it, in the love of Jesus Crucified in whom I am, my dear Sister, your very (humble) sister.

P.S. I would ask you to send the enclosed letters for Angers to Monsieur Jean.⁵ They can be given to Sister Henriette.⁶ The only dried apricots you sent me were few in number and quite ugly. I was waiting for them so that they could be distributed.

Recommend me wholeheartedly to the prayers of all our sisters. The sisters here greet you warmly and affectionately.

L.150 - TO SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE

at Paris

(August 1645)

My very dear Sister,

I believe the little girl from Sedan⁷ should be sent back Tuesday.

1. Monsieur Vacherot, the community's doctor.
2. Antoinette Labille, one of the first Daughters of Charity, seemed to have always stayed in Paris. She signed the Act of Establishment of the Company in 1655.
3. Jeanne-Baptiste, the elder, see Letter 64.
4. Louise Ganset, see Letter 11.
5. Don Jean Morisse was from Nantes.
6. Henriette Gesseume, probably at the parish of Saint-Germain.
7. Little Marie, see preceding letter.

However, speak first to the hostess of the coach to make sure that the girl will be entrusted to persons who will look out for her. Find out what she brought; she does not really need anything else. It would be well to send someone to visit the sisters at Saint-Roch¹ and to send Sister Toussainte² back to Saint-Séverin.³

The sisters must not come to stay at the House unless they have been invited. Not long ago, I spoke to Sister Geneviève from Saint-Germain. She is truly a good daughter, and I hope that God will give her the grace to surmount her little difficulties. Comfort her if you see her; she is a bit sensitive.

I am writing to Monsieur Portail⁴ for Barbe⁵ so that he can speak about her to Monsieur Vincent. He will tell you all you have to do. Also, it is quite fitting that you send someone to Saint-Sulpice. I do not know which day I shall return since we still have not accomplished anything.

Recommend us wholeheartedly to the prayers of our sisters; comfort the weak, and help those who are troubled by speaking with them individually. I beg God to give you His holy love, in which I am, my dear Sister, your most obedient servant and loving sister.

P.S. Give a warm welcome to the sister who should be arriving there tonight or tomorrow morning. Monsieur Vincent has received her.

L.143 - TO SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE

(at Paris)

(From Saint-Denis, August 1645)

My very dear Sister,

I beg the goodness of God to guide you always.

I would ask you to send this package to Mademoiselle de Lamoignon⁶ promptly, and if she is not there it should be given to Madame de Nesmond.⁷ In case Madame de Nesmond is out in the country, the package should be brought back to Mademoiselle de Lamoignon's home.

1. Parish of Paris.

2. Toussainte David did not know how to write. She signed an "X" on the Act of Establishment of the Company. In 1650, she was in Valpuseaux and in Sedan in 1659.

3. Parish of Paris.

4. Monsieur Portail, Director of the sisters, see Letter 107c.

5. Barbe Toussaint returned from Angers, see Letter 78.

6. Mademoiselle Madeleine de Lamoignon (1608-1687) rivaled her mother Madame de Lamoignon, in charity, see Letter 77.

7. Madame de Nesmond, Mademoiselle de Lamoignon's aunt, see Letter 77.

Inquire at both houses and find out if Madame de Nesmond left a paper to be sent to us. Pray for us. My sins are the reason why we still have not been assured of being able to remain here.¹ Greet all our dear Sisters. If you have something to tell me, I would ask you to do so. However, do not delay our sister too much.

I am with all my heart in the love of Jesus Crucified, my dear Sister, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. (Let me know) some news about our sick sisters.

L.129 - TO MONSIEUR L'ABBÉ DE VAUX

October 28, 1645

Monsieur,

Because I once again have reason to believe that you are not in Angers, or if you are, that you are busier than usual with your holy duties, and since I have not had the honor of hearing from you since your departure from Paris, I must beg you most humbly to continue in your desire to provide the charitable care which you know we so greatly need. I, in particular, need this care, as do our sisters at the hospital who inform me by each mail of always having the sick present and of occasionally being refused by the administrators. This leads me to believe, Monsieur, that these gentlemen are not really happy with our sisters.

I beg you most humbly to take the trouble to let me know if you know of some way to bring about order in this matter. I am writing to these gentlemen, without speaking to them about this little matter, in order to allow them the opportunity to air any complaints they might have. I believe, Monsieur, that your concerns lie more in Anjou than in Paris. Considering the interest of the glory of God, I have nothing to say about that. But, for His love, do me the charity of asking His mercy for me and for a person² very close to me who is causing me great affliction for purely human reasons, and even more because I fear for his salvation. Since this appears to be an irremediable evil, the omnipotence of God will be needed to cure it, and for that reason I have recourse to your charity, in which I am in His holy love, Monsieur, your very humble daughter and obedient servant.

1. On August 22, Louise de Marillac left to accompany Élisabeth Turgis, Marguerite Lesoin and Françoise Noret to the hospital of Saint-Denis.

2. Michel Le Gras, her son, see Letters 123 and 109.

L.344 - (TO THE SISTERS SENT TO SERQUEUX)¹

(October or November 1645)

My very dear Sisters,

God be blessed for the grace which He has given you in taking care of you during your journey. I assure you that we truly sympathize with you although many envy the service which you give to God. If Beauvais is not too far out of your way, it would be wise to go and speak to that good man at the church and learn that recipe which you shall prepare. Remember that fistulas are not always malignant, and when they are, they may be caused by other things.

I would not dare send you any more than ten écus. If you need more, borrow from Blanche and I will repay it here. I do not think you will have to change much. I would ask you to be very exact in writing down all you find and all that you distribute. I think you will have to use a large book since you do not have any paper.

O my dear Sisters, you appear consoled even amidst so much fatigue! Be of good heart! Work well toward your perfection in the numerous occasions you have to suffer and to practice gentleness and patience. Rise above rejection and any contradiction which you may encounter. Be so stout-hearted that you find nothing difficult for the most holy love of God and of His Crucified Son in which I am, my dear Sisters, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. Our entire Company greets you. I gave news of you to Monsieur Vincent today. He is praying for you. The number of our sisters is increasing so rapidly that there were 30 of them at the first table. Good evening, my dear Sisters. Sister Jeanne-Christine² and Sister Geneviève³ from Angers are at Saint-Gervais.⁴

1646

Establishment of the Daughters of Charity at Nantes and Fontainebleau.

June: *Monsieur Portail's visit to Angers.*

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1. Probably Barbe Angiboust and Perrette Chefdeville.
 2. Jeanne-Christine Prévost, a daughter of peace. From Saint-Gervais she went to Fontainebleau in 1648, Liancourt in 1651 and Sedan in 1654.
 3. Geneviève Caillou returned from Angers, see Letter 19.
 4. The establishment of the Daughters of Charity at Saint-Gervais had just taken place, see Letter 73.