
Spiritual Writings

Correspondence, Meditations, Advice

1991

Letters: 1652

Follow this and additional works at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/lm>

Recommended Citation

Letters: 1652.

<https://via.library.depaul.edu/lm/12>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Correspondence, Meditations, Advice at Via Sapientiae. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spiritual Writings by an authorized administrator of Via Sapientiae. For more information, please contact digitalservices@depaul.edu.

the Directress?"¹ Is the word "Directress" appropriate? Would it not be better to have the required readings once a week instead of once a month?

It would seem essential that the sisters in the parishes not visit one another except in the case of illness. Should an article be drawn up to this effect?

These are the things I have noticed, my Most Honored Father. However, in the name of God, pay no attention to either my notes or my remarks. Instead, tell us to do what you believe God is asking of us. Please add the maxims and instructions which will encourage us and keep us faithful and exact in the observance of all the points of our Rule because, it seems to me, that, as we are, we do not pay sufficient attention to our obligations because we do not look upon them as such.

Please give your blessing to all your poor daughters and ask God, for their servant, the mercy she needs to be truly, my Most Honored Father, your poor daughter and most grateful servant.

1652

Renewed outbreak of the troubles of the Fronde, defeat of Condé at the gates of Paris.

Serious illness of Louise de Marillac.

Establishment of the Daughters of Charity at Brienne and Varize.

Sending of the first Daughters of Charity to Warsaw (Poland).

L.339 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER JULIENNE LORET

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Chars

January 7, 1652

My very dear Sister,

Heartfelt thanks for your dear New Year's gifts which I did not distribute to the sisters, thinking they were your pictures from past years because they bore the same writing. This would have been out of place. As for your delicious cakes, the community will think of you while enjoying them. The "Little Sister"² does not yet have enough teeth to eat any.

-
1. Name given to the Superioress General in official documents.
 2. Louise-Renée, Louise de Marillac's granddaughter, was not yet three months old.

I am enclosing the New Year's gift that Divine Providence has chosen for both of you, as well as a little Saint Julienne that I did not want to entrust to just anyone for fear you would not get it. I think they are hard to find.

I beg you, my dear Sisters, to avoid upsetting the collector's wife and to let the Pastor decide how you should account for what you receive and for what you spend. However, be very careful not to profit from anything belonging to the poor. If you feed any animals for your own use, be exact in paying for all of the feed. If you give away a part of the milk or the eggs you get from the chickens, it would be better to sell it than to incur any expense for that. Also, be careful not to spend the money of the poor to meet expenses for caring for them or for anything else that you have done for your own benefit.

You have already spoken to me about the young lacemaker. I am afraid that she is not suitable for us. You know that much can be said about the fact that we do not live everywhere in the way we have lived until now.

Do not worry about being asked to give an account of the wheat because, if you bake for the sick poor, there are usually so few of them that they cannot eat very much. However, I think that it would be better to buy bread, if there are bakers nearby, instead of baking it yourselves. Besides, this would also relieve you of some work.

I praise God, my dear Sister, that you have lodged the Infant Jesus so well. I am certain that you both have likewise welcomed His new presence into your hearts. I pray with all my heart that He may take delight in dwelling there.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of our dear Sister Marie Le Maire who died about three o'clock this afternoon. She was with the foundlings and had a slight limp. We lose a great deal in losing her. Her life was one long act of virtue. However, we must adore the holy will of God in all His designs. There is a new sister here at the House, whom you do not yet know, who is seriously ill. Please keep her in your prayers.

Forgive me for not writing more frequently. Accept the cordial greetings of all our dear sisters. Be assured of their affection, and mine, for you and Sister Philippe.¹ I am in the love of Our Lord, my very dear sisters, your very humble and very loving servant.

P.S. Sister Ménard² was the queen. However, you have done what you have not seen done here. I beg you to be on your guard against novelties. They are very dangerous in communities. It is true that we are fearful; our sins are the cause. Let us try to amend our lives and let us pray much to God that it will please the divine mercy to appease His justice which

1. Philippe Bailly, see Letter 336.

2. Marguerite Ménard, who entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity at the end of the year 1650.

has been deservedly provoked. I thank Sister Philippe for having written to me. With the help of God, I will answer her. The good Madame de Lamoignon,¹ the President, was buried Tuesday. The poor would not allow her to be buried anywhere except at Saint-Leu.

L.340 - TO SISTER JULIENNE LORET²

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Chars

February 12, 1652

My very dear Sister,

Yes, I have been very ill with a double tertian fever that began three weeks ago, but I am better now, thank God. I am very worried about the way you fell ill and the length of time you have been in bed. I beg Sister Philippe³ to let me know all the details. I had already told you that, to avoid that illness, you had to dose yourself thoroughly. If you were able to travel, we would have already sent someone to bring you here.

When I first fell ill, I received a letter from you requesting ten pounds of prunes and two pounds of rice. They were sent to you, but you did not mention that you had received them. I am worried about it so, please, let me know as soon as possible. We are not going to send you any more until you tell us the safest way to ship them.

Please pray for me. I am in the love of Our Lord, my very dear Sister,
Your very humble sister and servant.

L.341 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER CÉCILE ANGIBOUST

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor of the Hôtel-Dieu at Angers

February 17 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

Your account of all the afflictions and losses that have occurred at Angers is a source of great sorrow to me because the poor will suffer as a result. I beg the divine goodness to comfort and assist them in their needs.

1. Madame de Lamoignon, see Letter 77.

2. This letter was written by a secretary and signed by Louise de Marillac.

3. Philippe Bailly, see Letter 336.

My very dear Sisters, you have indeed suffered great trials. However, have you stopped to consider that it is only right that the servants of the poor should suffer with their masters? Each of us individually deserves to bear her share of the scourges God inflicts on humanity in general. Oh, how obliged we are often to reflect upon this, my dear Sisters! Who are we, after having received from God one of the greatest gifts that He could confer on any creature regardless of condition, namely, that of calling us to His service, to presume to be exempt from difficulties? O my dear Sisters, let us be on our guard against such an evil thought. Rather, let us continually marvel that God has withdrawn us from places where we would have suffered so much, along with everyone else, and has provided us so readily with bread and has kept us safe. You must realize my dear Sisters, that such gifts oblige us to practice virtue, if we do not wish to pay for them in the next world. Let us not wait for this alternative but, rather, let us make every effort to acquire the virtues that God expects of us in thanksgiving for the graces His goodness lavishes upon us every day. I do not know if you received a letter which I sent you during the past month in which I exhorted you to the same purpose. In the name of God, Sisters, I beg you to strive to cultivate solid virtue, especially humility and gentleness. If I often speak to you on this subject, it is because I have heard for some time now that you need these virtues, and that the Ladies who visit the wards would like very much to receive a welcome. You know, Sister, how our sisters who prepare the collation do their best to please all of them.

I am aware that your other duties in the service of the sick take up all your time but, when the Ladies come, you could appoint one sister, a different one each time, to satisfy them the best she can without going against the orders of the Fathers of the Poor.¹ A good understanding among all of you would solve the entire problem.

In the name of God, Sister Cécile, overcome, to some degree, your little repugnances. Desire opportunities to practice obedience; however, desire these not in an upsetting way, but in a gentle and quiet way. Then do to others as you would have them do to you. Above all, be very supportive of them, and welcome kindly those who might find it difficult to approach you, if there are any.

Remember me to all our sisters, whom I cordially embrace. I am for them as for you, my very dear Sister, in the love of Jesus Crucified, your very humble and very loving sister and servant.

P.S. Please extend my very humble greetings to Monsieur Ratier, to the administrators, and to your Ladies if any of them do me the honor of remembering me. Sister Barbe² sends you her love. She is well, thank god, as are the friends and relatives of our other sisters.

1. The administrators.

2. Barbe Angiboust, see Letter 43.

L.342 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER JULIENNE LORET
Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Chars

March 11, 1652

My very dear Sister,

I praise God that you are better. You are acting properly in trying to eat. You must be sure to do your utmost—anything less than that and you will not know what strength you have. As for me, I almost always have a fever,¹ but it does not prevent me from eating a little bit. Even the doctor thinks it good that I take a bit of purée.

I sympathize greatly with your constant apprehension of the soldiers. We are not sending you any prunes because there are none available. I would like the beehive you speak of to be brought here. However, I do not know the precautions involved.

I have not yet seen the curate's letter, nor that of Sister Vincente.² Once I have seen it, a response, if one is required, will be sent by the earliest mail. I thank her for having written to me. All the sisters greet you and thank you for remembering them. We hope that you will continue to do us the charity of praying for us. Please believe that we are doing the same, since you know that I am in the love of Jesus Crucified, your very humble sister and servant.

L.210 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE³
Daughter of Charity

March 27 (1652)

My very dear and beloved Sister,

I was very consoled to have news from you. I praise God with all my heart for the state in which His goodness has placed you. I believe that Monsieur Vincent has answered you; he assured me that he truly desired

1. This letter was handwritten by Mathurine Guérin.
2. Vincente Auchy, see Letter 36.
3. Jeanne Lepintre, Sister Servant of the community of the hospital at Nantes.

to do so. It seems to me, my dear Sister, that it was not so long ago that you indicated to me that I had not written to you. I truly fear that our letters have been lost.

I was very glad that Providence did not permit you to send our sister to Richelieu since it is something which surely requires the approval and order of Monsieur Vincent so as to serve as an example. However, I believe, my dear Sister, that if the doctor feels that she needs a change of air, it would be appropriate for you to suggest to the administrators that they ask a lady in Nantes, with a house two or three leagues away, to allow her to go there for a couple of weeks with one of our sisters. Perhaps it would be appropriate for the sister to remain there as well.

I have just at this very moment received your letter of the twenty-first of this month in which you suggest that we send our sisters to Angers. I assure you, my dear Sister, that the air there is not as suitable for them as the air in Nantes. Moreover, the administrators would not find these visits good, particularly at this time, for reasons I cannot relate to you. As for you, my dear Sister, I think that you had forgotten all about the idea before I received your letter. I believe our good God is giving you courage enough to make good use of all the slander. Provided He is not offended, of what importance is it to us?

I have great compassion for our dear Sister Louise.¹ Please tell her that her mother and sisters are well. Try to determine whether her illness may be caused by some displeasure in being separated from them. I have not yet had the honor of seeing Monsieur de Beaulieu.² I assure you, my dear Sister, that it will be a great consolation for me to converse with him. I beg you to let all our sisters know that they are always most dear to us and that I see them very often in spirit, although I do not write to them individually. When you write to me, please ask each of them whether they have anything to tell me, and let them know that they would please me greatly by writing to me.

All our sisters greet you cordially. If Sister Jeanne Lepintre could stay in Nantes and come to Paris, I would surely wish her to do so. Let us always truly love the will of God, in which I am, my very dear Sister, your very humble sister and very loving servant.

P.S. I did not remember that you had asked me for books. In any event, if they are just ones containing our prayers, I think you will find some.

I beg you, my dear Sister, to send this letter promptly. Also, let me know if that man went to Nantes to rejoin his wife.

1. Louise Michel, a native of Esteville in Normandy, had a brother in the Congregation of the Mission. She arrived in Nantes in October 1650 and lived there until 1653. She returned to Paris by passing through Richelieu.

2. Monsieur de Beaulieu was a judge in Nantes. He was related to the de Marillac family.

L.343 - TO SISTER JULIENNE (LORET)

(at Chars)

(March 31, 1652)

My dear Sister,

This is just to reassure you that my health is improving, thank God. Join with me in thanking His goodness for His grace which allowed me to fulfill my Easter duties at Saint-Laurent today. Thank Him as well for the improved dispositions He has given both of you.

Thank you for your advice on your fine honeybees. I believe I told you not long ago that we received the swarm that the gentleman brought to us along with the hive. Forgive me if I do not send you the sugar you request. Pour your hot drink into a pitcher with a small opening, then pour about a finger of olive oil on top. That will preserve it for as long as any remains. Tip the courier generously.

I beg God to preserve you in His holy love, your sister and servant.

L.344B - TO SISTER JULIENNE¹

April 20 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

The good you relate to us of this fine girl you are sending here is making us keep her on for a trial period only. God willing she will be suitable to serve Him in the person of the poor!

I am sending you your pound of sugar, four pounds of brown sugar and four chemises. I truly hope, my dear Sister, that your request will be granted. However, we must await the order of our Most Honored Father. Please extend my apologies to the curate for not having written to him, and thank him most humbly for me for the trouble he took to write to me. Assure him that we will do all that we can to see to it that the girl he sent us stays.

I forgot to tell you that sugar costs 22 sols, and brown sugar 20.5. I am not sending you any fine linen because I know our other sisters have made some. I hope that the further we get into spring the more your strength will return. Praise God that you have only one patient in your hospital. That will give you more opportunities to help the sick of the

1. Julienne Loret, at Chars, see Letter 220.

area, because I do not believe you go to the surrounding villages. Please let me know if you have a good number of schoolgirls, and have those who have learned lacemaking continue with it. I believe you should have those not skilled in it learn it as well, for it is essential not to have any idle girls.

I recommend to your prayers the repose of the soul of our deceased blind Sister Nicole. Also, ask God for all that our Sister Andrée¹ from Crespière and Sister Marie Raine need; both are very seriously ill. I am struggling to regain my strength, and I am always having little relapses. I am in great need of the help of your prayers in order to become more faithful to God, in whose love I am, my very dear Sister, your very humble sister and servant.

L.210B - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE²

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Nantes

May 6 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

I shared the consolation you received from Monsieur Vincent's last letter. Our good God operates like that; sometimes He permits us to be troubled, and then He gives tranquility. It is good to recognize, as you do, that all the changes we experience within ourselves are from God, when they are good. However, we truly need to get used to letting all vicissitudes pass us by, whether they are caused by persons from outside or by our interior dispositions. We must also always be submissive to the guidance of Divine Providence.

I am very glad, my dear Sister, that there was no need to go to Angers, and that Sister Louise³ is demonstrating love for her vocation. I believe that she would tell you of any trials she had. It is not that she is unable to experience any, but, insofar as she does not complain of them, it does not appear that her trials are of the will. Rather they are at the level of feeling which she is truly trying to mortify. You do not mention our Sister Marthe.⁴ I wrote to her. Please let me know if she received my letter. The relatives of our sisters are well, thank God.

Monsieur de Beaulieu⁵ took the trouble to come to see us. However,

1. Andrée Guilmine, see Letter 211.

2. Jeanne Lepintre, see Letter 64.

3. Louise Michel, see Letter 210.

4. Marthe Dauteuil, see Letter 165.

5. Monsieur de Beaulieu, see Letter 210.

I had taken some medicine so I spoke only briefly to him. He promised me that he would return another time. I truly hope he does. I beg the goodness of God to dispose your souls to receive the graces of the Holy Spirit profitably, after you have made the necessary preparations. These preparations consist in willingly ridding yourselves of all earthly satisfactions in order to follow in spirit Our Lord in His Ascension.

My dear Sisters, with all my heart I beg all of you to whom I am speaking to believe me to be in His most holy love, your very humble sister and servant.

L.353 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER BARBE ANGIBOUST¹

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Brienne

(June 11, 1652)

My very dear Sisters,

I truly ask your forgiveness for going so long without writing to you, although I sent you a letter since you asked us for sugar and a few other drugs. Madame de Brienne² took the trouble to inform me that she was sending them to you. I shall not fail, with God's help, to tell her what you tell me. I do not think that it is safe to send you money along with the tamarinds. I will send two gold coins to the Countess and ask her to send them to you.

In the name of God, my very dear Sisters, do not be impatient with your trials, and at seeing yourselves as receiving no other consolation but God's. Oh, if we only knew God's secrets when He places us in this state, we would see that this must be the time of our greatest consolation. In fact, you will see a great amount of misery that you cannot relieve. God sees it as well and does not want to give those who suffer greater abundance. Share their trials with them; do all you can to provide them with a little assistance and remain at peace. Perhaps you share in this need; in that is your consolation because, if you had plenty, your hearts would be troubled to use it while seeing our lords and masters suffering so. Since God chastises His people for our sins, is it not reasonable for us to suffer with the others? Who are we to think that we should be exempt from public evils? If the goodness of God does not expose us to the worst miseries, let us be truly thankful to Him for this, and let us believe that it is due solely to His mercy and is in no way merited.

1. Barbe Angiboust was sent to Brienne to aid war victims. She was 45 at the time.

2. Madame, the Countess de Brienne, see Letter 86.

Monsieur Vincent, our Most Honored Father, and Monsieur Portail are well, thank God. All our dear sisters are well, too. Most of them, in the area of Paris, have been forced to take shelter; however, thanks to Our Lord, they have until now experienced no evil or distress.

The messenger will tell you about the beautiful ceremony which was held today for the procession of the reliquary of Saint Geneviève.¹ Oh, how good it is to be faithful to God, who bestows so much honor upon His good servants as a sign of His eternal love. What He asks of you at the moment, my dear Sisters, is great union and great support for one another. He also asks that you labor together at God's work with great gentleness and humility, and that what goes on between you remain there so that everyone may be edified. Since you are already old and exhausted, I beg you, Sister Barbe, to get help for Sister Jeanne² when you see her with too much work and you cannot relieve her; we cannot send any help. We are constrained to do the same in this city. There are parishes here in which there are 5,000 poor to whom we give soup. In our parish 2,000 are given soup—not counting the sick. We are sending you a twenty-three-pound, four-sol louis coin. It is not much, but the fear of its being lost, leads us to risk no more. If you are aware of a very safe route, let us know about it.

Pray for us, my dear Sisters, and believe me to be in His holy love, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. The tamarind is unnecessary; we are not sending you any. It is not a purgative. Please read this letter to Sister Jeanne.

L.214 - TO MY DEAR SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE³

July 1 (1652)

My very dear Sisters,

I received your letter and was greatly consoled to learn the news about you and all our dear sisters. I am asking Sister Anne⁴ to inform me about each one's health—I believe you will appreciate this bit of relief. I believe that our Most Honored Father has given you a full response. If you knew the great amount of work he has as a result of the charitable activities

1. The reliquary of Saint-Geneviève was ceremonially carried to Notre-Dame in the midst of an immense crowd which begged for an end to public suffering (Coste IV, 401).
2. Jeanne Henault would rejoin Barbe Angiboust in Châlons; she would then go to Montmirail in 1654.
3. Jeanne Lepintre in Nantes, see Letter 64.
4. Anne Hardemont, see Letter 110.

being carried out in behalf of the poor refugees, you would pity him. However, his Charity does not complain and never wearies. It is essential, my dear Sister, to pray and to have others pray for the preservation of his health.

Let us know the dispositions of this fine girl of whom Monsieur Chesneau and you have written. However, you must be careful to point out to her that there is a great difference between the life and work of our sisters in the houses in the parishes of Paris and the countryside and the life of those sisters working in the hospitals. I believe, my dear Sister, that you will see to it that no one tells her tales if she is frequently going to be spending entire days at your house. To that end, in your little conferences, urge the sisters to think of the example they are obliged to give her. Test her well so that we are not constrained to send her back.

I beg you, my dear Sister, to greet your good and virtuous Ladies for me. All our sisters greet you affectionately and cordially. Our good Sister Perrette,¹ the elder, has been reduced to staying in bed as the result of her infirmities. I recommend her to your prayers. It is really sad that we have gone so long without news of each other. Only the submission we owe to Divine Providence serves to console us, as well as the holy obedience for which the Son of God died. It is in His most holy love that I am, my dear Sister, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. You will find that this letter was written some time ago. The relatives of our sisters are well, in particular Sister Françoise Ménage's² father and mother. Please have her write to them.

L.348 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

(July 1652)

My Most Honored Father,

This alarm³ truly frightened all of us. Several of our sisters would very much like to make their confession today, and I fear a priest from Saint-Laurent will not be available to us. If that be the case, I beg you to do us the charity of sending us one this afternoon.

I do not think that we can go to buy any wheat since there is none in the surrounding villages, and there is the danger of losing the money if

1. Perrette was a widow when she entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity. In 1642, she was in Saint-Germain and in 1649, Issy. She died in July 1652.
2. Françoise Ménage, see Letter 363.
3. The enemy troops, who were being followed by the King's army, passed near to Saint-Lazare on July 1, 1652.

we go further. I informed Mademoiselle de Lamoignon¹ of this, and she told me, regarding the matter, the same thing she told your Charity. I told her that your feeling yesterday was that we should obtain it at La Grève.² I also informed her that the city administrators judge it safe to have it delivered by several archers whom we would pay for their trouble. I do not think there is any other way to prevent these poor little children from dying of hunger.

The majority of the people are moving out of this quarter. Shall we not follow their example? However, it would be a great undertaking for us. If there were fears for our young sisters, we could send them here and there to various parishes. If we could, we would send them food. As for me, it seems I am awaiting death and cannot keep my heart from being upset every time there is a call to arms. It seems that Paris is abandoning this district. However, I hope that God will not abandon it and that His goodness will have mercy on us. We hope that your Charity will request this for us, and with all our hearts, we ask for your blessing. I am, my Most Honored Father, your very humble and most grateful daughter and servant.

P.S. I fear that the man from Bicêtre was not able to get across. What will we do with Sister Geneviève,³ who is truly needed there to reassure our poor sisters? I ask your Charity, please to let us know.

L.408 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

July 11 (1652)

Monsieur, my Most Honored Father,

Madame de Varize came here yesterday to have the honor of seeing you, and to propose to you the desire of those in charge of the hospital in Châteaudun⁴ to have two of our sisters. She indicated to me that she could give up the two we gave her for Varize, and that she thinks it most useful to send them there. I am well aware, Monsieur, that it was quite a long time ago that they asked us for sisters for this place. However, until now there has always been some problem.

Madame, accompanied by another Lady, came also to ask your Charity for two of our sisters to serve the poor of Saint-André. I pointed out to them the necessity of sending sisters to Étampes and to the parishes of

1. Mademoiselle de Lamoignon, see Letter 143.

2. At City Hall, located on the Place de Grève.

3. Geneviève Poisson, who was at Bicêtre.

4. The sisters were not sent to Châteaudun until July 1654.

Paris, in which most of our sisters are ill. Yesterday evening we buried our good Sister Perrette,¹ mother of a Carthusian; and they tell me that one² of our best daughters, who is serving the sick poor at Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas, had to have Extreme Unction administered last evening. Another is dangerously ill at Saint-Sulpice. Finally, Monsieur, it must be believed that my sins are making a desert of the Company of the Daughters of Charity. When I perceive the faults I have committed through the idleness of my spirit, I am greatly ashamed. If I am to have some response to give Madame de Varize in these two matters, I beg your Charity most humbly to inform me, to give me your blessing and to do me the honor always of believing me to be in the love of Our Lord, my Most Honored Father, your most obedient daughter and most grateful servant.

P.S. Our sister serving the galley slaves came to me in tears yesterday because she cannot get any more bread for her poor men, since she owes so much to the baker and bread is so expensive. She borrows and begs for them everywhere with great difficulty. To add to her sorrow, the Duchess d'Aiguillon³ wants her to make a list of those she thinks are to be put out. I raise three serious objections to this. First, she can only guess, from the way they treat her whether they insult her or praise her; this being so, she could commit an injustice. Second, some bribe the captain and the building superintendent, who are already quarrelling about her and accusing her of being the source of the disorder. Third, those who remain chained will blame her for it. And you know, my Most Honored Father, what these men can say and do. I told Sister to delay drawing up the list until I could find out from your Charity what she is to do.

L.135 - TO SISTER CLAUDE⁴

at the Hôtel-Dieu of Saint-Denis

(July 1652)

My very dear Sister,

I am very grieved by Sister Geneviève's⁵ relapse. I beg you to do the

1. Perrette, see Letter 214.

2. Élisabeth Jousteau, see Letter 421.

3. The Duchess d'Aiguillon, see Letter 89.

4. Claude Brigide, see Letter 114.

5. Geneviève Vigneron had two sisters who were Daughters of Charity: Avoie and Marie. Geneviève was sent to Brienne from Saint-Denis in 1659.

best you can for her. Cordial waters are most suitable for her. Add half a piece of hyacinth compound to an eighth of a liter of water and, from time to time, give her a spoonful or two of it outside of mealtime.

I am truly distressed not to be able to send you one of our sisters; however, it is absolutely impossible. We have so few of them that there is never anyone at work in the Motherhouse, and several are so infirm that, if they were elsewhere, they would soon fall ill. You have not let me know how many sick you have, nor have you given me any other information. I beg the goodness of God to keep you, and I am in His most holy love, my dear Sister, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. My most affectionate regards to our dear sisters and to our sick one, whom I beg, for the love of God, truly to love the state in which Divine Providence has placed her.

L.349 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER JULIENNE LORET

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Chars

July 14, 1652

My very dear Sister,

I was sure that the goodness of your heart would cause you and, I believe, all our dear sisters who are far away to be disturbed because you are afraid that we are suffering greatly.¹ Let us praise God, my dear Sisters, that to this point we have only been frightened, and through His mercy have not been harmed. It is true that I was so cowardly that I allowed myself to persuade our sisters to come to the city to stay in a room we had rented. However, most of our sisters stayed where they were, as did all the sisters and nurses of the small children. Our Most Honored Father, who is still slightly incapacitated, did not move; neither did Monsieur Portail nor the rest of the household.

I am greatly distressed by our dear Sister Philippe's² illness, both for your sake and hers. I am likewise dismayed at not being able to send anyone to relieve you because, apart from the difficulty of the roads, we have never had so few sisters and been so pressed to send them to various areas. We just cannot furnish sisters because of the soup we are distributing everywhere. Here, nearly 2,000 bowls are served to the bashful poor. The same is being done in all parts of the city.

Three or four of our sisters are very ill: Sister Madeleine Raportebled³

1. See Letter 348.

2. Philippe Bailly, see Letter 336.

3. Madeleine Raportebled, see Letter 430.

and another you do not know, at Saint-Sulpice; Sister Élisabeth¹ from Angers at Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas; and at Saint-Denis, Sister Geneviève,² Sister Avoie's sister. I recommend all of them to your prayers. I also ask you to pray for the repose of the soul of our dear deceased Sister Perrette,³ the elder, who died in the care of our sisters at the Hôtel-Dieu, a week after she was taken there because of her apprehension at staying here. God bestowed many graces upon her at her death, after she had been suffering greatly for several years. I beg you, my dear Sister, to tell Sister Philippe to do her utmost to get well. We will try out Sister Charlotte⁴ again for a while. She is a poor girl for this work, but rather pious. Several years will be necessary to train her to serve the poor.

All our sisters greet you and your dear patient, whom I pray will raise her mind to God from time to time and offer her sufferings to Him for the public afflictions, in honor of those experienced by Jesus Crucified. I am in His holy love, my very dear Sisters, your very humble sister and servant, etc.

P.S. We received the 26 pounds.

L.350 - TO MONSIEUR VINCENT

July 19, 1652

Monsieur, my Most Honored Father,

The President, Madame de Herse,⁵ came here to request some of our sisters for Saint-André. I was greatly distressed that I could not send any strong sisters to help our sisters working in the parishes. I was also greatly disturbed that I could not send any to this good woman. Nonetheless, Monsieur, if it is not necessary to send anyone to Étampes or Poland, as Mademoiselle de Lamoignon⁶ believes, an effort must be made to satisfy her, provided your Charity judges it appropriate, and there is nothing to criticize in the conduct of the parish priests.

I beg your Charity most humbly to remember that I await your order for my return. I have not made any visits because of some slight ailment

1. Élisabeth Jousteau, see Letter 421.

2. Geneviève Vigneron, see Letter 135.

3. Perrette, the elder, see Letter 214.

4. Charlotte Moreau. After her seminary, she was sent to Châteaudun. She did not persevere in the service of the poor and left the Company of the Daughters of Charity in October 1657.

5. Madame de Herse, see Letter 196.

6. Mademoiselle de Lamoignon, see Letter 143.

which has kept me in bed. However, thank God, I do not believe that I will remain as ill as I feared.

I had asked a sister to find out from your Charity whether I should send for Madame de Bouillon's¹ carriage in order to visit her according to the desire she has expressed to you. She made a mistake in the message she gave you. It seems to me that it is necessary to be more ceremonious with this Lady than with others.

Honor me always with the belief that I am through the will of God, my Most Honored Father, your very humble daughter.

P.S. At present the priests of Saint-Sulpice are sending for four girls from the refugee center² to help our sisters. Should they be allowed to do so, or would it be more fitting for the convalescent patients to come for their own meals? There are six of our sisters, although two are ill. I fear that this mixture will create confusion and much harm, and that it will come from our sisters themselves.

L.351 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER JEANNE LEPINTRE

at Nantes

August 24 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

I am truly astonished that you have gone so long without receiving our letters. It must be the war which prevented them from reaching you because I have been faithful in writing to you very often. May God be blessed! His goodness leads us to hope for calm, in the belief that He will soon give us peace. I shared your dear letter with our Most Honored Father, according to your wishes. He is of the opinion, my very dear Sister, that you should send the girl without any further testing if you judge her sufficiently strong in mind and body. She must be ready to return at her own expense in case she is not suitable; this would be even more unfortunate if she had been tested at your house by the order and with the consent of the persons you mentioned. As for Sister Renée³, I was very surprised by what you told me of her. I have never heard any complaints from her except about her bad leg. The cause must be what you touched on without really letting me know about it. Perhaps that would not have been appropriate. Our Most Honored Father finds no other remedy for this situation than to send her to Hennebont. I hope

1. Madame de Bouillon, see Letter 67.

2. Some girls driven away by the war and taken in at Paris.

3. Renée Delacroix, see Letter 275.

you will give us news on this subject before this order can be sent to her.

I beg you to greet all our dear sisters most affectionately. I praise God for the better health He is restoring to Sister Anne.¹ I will write to her when she is better. I would ask you to let Sister Marthe² know that I took great joy in the news you gave me of her. Please tell Sister Louise³ that I urge her to be at ease concerning her relatives; her mother, sister and other relatives are well, thank God, as is the good lady for whom she worked, who sent the rest of her belongings to her mother. I beg her to give herself wholeheartedly to her work and especially to the observance of her Rule.

I am sure, my dear Sister, that you remind the most recent arrivals of the cordial respect they owe the older sisters. This is something so necessary that there would be great disorders in the Community if we did not pay attention to it. Young minds must be formed in submission and interior mortification. Otherwise, there would be only confusion, and the older sisters would have reason for discontent if they were misunderstood. I do not know why I am telling you this, my dear Sister, because I have never had a single complaint about this. It must be the problem we have noticed here.

I was thinking of giving myself the consolation of writing to Sisters Henriette⁴ and Françoise,⁵ but a visit prevented me from doing so. I beg them to excuse me, and I ask all of you to pray for us, my dear Sisters. We have great need of prayers for the many sick in all the parishes and among our sisters. I beg Our Lord to be your strength and consolation, and I am in His most holy love, my dear Sisters, your very humble and very loving sister and servant.

L.262 - TO SISTER CLAUDE BRIGIDE⁶

October 22 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

I greatly wish to see you, but I do not dare tell you to come to see us, although they tell us there is no danger on the roads. I urge you to send me news of yourself.

-
1. Anne Hardemont, see Letter 110.
 2. Marthe Dauteuil, see Letter 165.
 3. Louise Michel, see Letter 210.
 4. Henriette Gesseaume, see Letter 76.
 5. Françoise Ménage, see Letter 363.
 6. Claude Brigide, see Letter 114, was in Saint-Denis.

Enclosed is a receipt so that you may receive from Monsieur de Francière,¹ 70 pounds for a year's support for our three sisters.

I beg God to keep you, and I am in His most holy love, my very dear Sisters, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. I ask to be remembered to our dear sisters and inquire about their health.

L.354B - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER BARBE ANGIBOUST

Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor at Brienne

October 26 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

It bothers me that I cannot find an opportunity to write to you. I am sending this at the risk of its being lost. If it reaches you, I urge you to send us news of yourself as soon as possible. We have so many ill everywhere that it causes me to be concerned about your health.

You told me, my dear Sisters, that butter is inexpensive and that you could have some melted for us. I urge you to find out how much it would cost to have it delivered here. If you think it will cost only six sols a pound, you would be doing us a favor by sending us as much as you can, 100 pounds or more.

I do not believe I told you that Divine Providence has finally called three of our sisters² to Poland for the service of the poor. We still do not have news of their arrival, but we heard from them half-way there. You know that it is always perilous on the sea, and that leads me to recommend them to your prayers. I ask you to pray for me as well. I am in the love of Jesus . . .

My very cordial and very affectionate greetings to Sister Jeanne.

1. Monsieur de Francière, administrator of the Hôtel-Dieu in Saint-Denis.

2. Marguerite Moreau, Madeleine Drugeon and Françoise Douelle left for Poland in September 1652.

L.377 - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTERS¹

Daughters of Charity at Richelieu

(c. October 1652)

My very dear Sisters,

I beg God, in His goodness, to continue to bestow His holy graces upon you, especially love for your vocation, which you will know that you possess if you are faithful to the observance of your Rules, insofar as the service of the poor permits. Above all, my dear Sisters, be exact in retiring at nine o'clock so that you will be able to rise at four. Thus, you will have time to accomplish everything. If you have developed the habit of allowing outsiders, even the sick, to come when they please, rid yourselves of it little by little and have the poor come for what they need at the appointed hours, because I believe that only this can interfere with your obligations.

As for visits, I do not think that you permit any that could turn you away from your duty. Above all, I am certain that you do not receive men, of any social class, unless it is for a very serious matter, which must then be handled in a few words. Our Most Honored Father recommended this to us in recent conferences. He went so far as to say that we should not receive even him in any of the parishes or at this House where he comes only in case of illness, for serious matters, or to give a conference. I beg you to consider what must be done in other cases.

I also urge you, my dear Sisters, to remember very well that you are to make no visits except to the poor or the sick; that you are never to eat anywhere other than in your own house; and that you are not to relate what happens in the house to anyone except the director, and then only what he needs to know. If your infirmities sometimes require you to take a little wine, oh, let it be done rarely, in small amounts and for a clearly recognized need.

Gentleness, cordiality and forbearance must be the practices of the Daughters of Charity just as humility, simplicity and the love of the holy humanity of Jesus Christ, who is perfect charity, is their spirit. That, my dear Sisters, is a summary of what I think I should tell you about our Rules until such time as Divine Providence permits you to have the entire text.

How happy I am when you send me detailed news of yourselves. Once and for all, I would like to know all about your manner of acting in the areas I have asked you about. Do you love your way of life? Do you esteem it as more excellent for you than all the hermitages and religious

1. Charlotte Royer and Françoise Carcireux, see Letter 254.

convents because God has called you to it? Do you believe that you have been assembled together for your sanctification by a secret action of Divine Providence? Does the stronger support the weaker lovingly and cordially as the need arises? Do you often recall the counsel our Most Honored Father gave us in a conference when he said that we, as well as religious, have a cloister, and that it is as difficult for faithful souls to leave it as it is for religious to leave theirs, although it is not a cloister made of stones but rather one constituted by holy obedience which must govern all our actions and desires? I beg Our Lord, whose example has enclosed us in this holy cloister, to grant us the grace never to violate it.

Our newest arrivals got here safely and are in very good health, thank God. It was a bit tiring for Sister Françoise but she is over that now. I beg you to give news of them to their relatives and to send us news of their families. Also please send the 40 pounds I already mentioned to you. Sister Jeanne, to whom the money belongs, met, here in Paris, the man who had donated this sum and he assured her that it had been received. Please have this man speak to Monsieur du Chesne if he is still in Richelieu. Greet Monsieur du Chesne¹ for me with all the respect I owe him and assure him that I have written to him two or three times. I also send my very humble greetings to Monsieur Cuissot² and the other priests. All our sisters greet you in the love of Jesus Crucified, in which I am, my very dear Sisters, your very humble sister.

P.S. I sent your letters to be held in Beauvais. Sister Charlotte's parents are well, thank God, and ask for her prayers, particularly her mother.

L.356B - TO MY VERY DEAR SISTER BARBE³

(at Brienne)

December 14 (1652)

My very dear Sister,

I do not remember there being anything of importance in your letter, so you may give it to anyone you please to read. I thank you with all my heart for your flax. If it was a bit expensive for you to buy there, it reaps a real profit here. Your grapes are perfectly beautiful. You know that I do not have any teeth to eat the small ones; thank you for them. I beg

1. Monsieur du Chesne, see Letter 154, was going to leave to visit the houses in Brittany.
2. Monsieur Cuissot, entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1637 at 30 years of age. The Superior of Cahors since 1647, he came to Paris in July 1651 for the General Assembly. He returned to Cahors in January 1653.
3. Barbe Angiboust in Brienne, see Letter 43.

you to recommend us and the entire Company to our good God.

Monsieur Portail received your letter, and I think he answered you. Monsieur Vincent, our Most Honored Father, is apparently still in good health. We have great reason to ask God to keep him for many years, and I am sure you will do so. All our sisters are well, thank God. I do not know if we informed you of the death of our dear Sister Marie-Marguerite, who was at the Hôtel-Dieu. Her patience in her illness and her submission to the will of God were a great example to us.

I rejoice that Providence has chosen you to serve so many souls and so many sick poor. I beg God to watch over you so that you may continue this holy employment for a long time. I beg you, my dear Sister, to have this letter given to the parents of Sister Barbe,¹ and to remember us to Sister Jeanne.² Her great work, I am sure, increases her zeal for her vocation. Send some news of her, I beg of you, and believe me in the love of Jesus Crucified, my dear Sister, your very humble sister and servant.

P.S. Our dear Sister Cécile³ wrote to us a short while ago. She asks for your prayers and rejoices that God has given you the grace of using you so profitably in His holy service. A short while ago, one of your relatives, or a man from your region, came into this city to learn news of you and to assure you that all your relatives are well.

1653

January 31: *Death of Monsieur Lambert in Warsaw.*

February: *Monsieur du Chesne's visit to Angers.*

September-October: *Monsieur Alméras' visits to Angers and Nantes.*

Aid to the regions devastated by the war: Châlons, Sainte-Menehould.

Foundation of the Hospice of the Saint-Nom-de-Jésus.

1. Barbe Bailly, born on June 1, 1628 in Vitry-le-François, entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity on October 8, 1645. After having served the foundlings, she went to the Motherhouse as infirmarian and as Louise de Marillac's secretary. After Louise's death, Barbe was sent to Poland (1660-1668). Upon returning to France, she was named Superior at the Invalides. She then went to Alençon where she died on August 21, 1699.

2. Jeanne Hénault, see Letter 353.

3. Cécile Angiboust, see Letter 108.