honor of seeing you before she leaves. Should we not be thinking about the little furnishings she will need?

Please do not worry about the wet nurse for the infants; we do not have any of them yet. The nurse we have will be quite adequate for the time you indicate and longer.

I am, in the love of Jesus, Monsieur, your most humble daughter and most grateful servant.

L. de M.

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

292. - TO MOTHER DE LA TRINITE, IN TROYES

My very dear Mother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

This is Monsieur du Coudray, one of our Missionaries, who is coming to see you with the draft of the contract for the foundation of the Bishop of Troyes.¹ The Commander thought it advisable to

Letter 292. - The original autograph letter is at the Carmelite monastery of Troyes in Saint-Germain, 10120 Saint-André-les-Vergers.

¹As early as 1621, René de Breslay, Bishop of Troyes, with the assistance of Adrien Bourdoise and at the insistence of Mother de la Trinité had made an attempt to found a mission house in his episcopal city. In 1637, the Prelate and the Prioress of the Carmelite monastery felt urged interiorly to resume the abandoned project. They mentioned it to M. de Sillery, titular of the Commandery in Troyes, and it was decided that Missionaries would be requested of Saint Vincent. The agreement was concluded October 3, 1637, in the parlor of the Carmel, at a meeting of the Bishop of Troyes, Saint Vincent, and Mother de la Trinité. The new establishment was to open February 17, 1638, at the latest, and was to be staffed from the beginning by six priests and two brothers. Until 1641, the number of the priests could be four, if it was impossible to send more. The Missionaries were to evangelize the places in the diocese to which the Bishop of Troyes would see fit to send them and, every five years, the estates of the Commandery. The Prelate assured them an annual income of 2,000 livres and the Commander, half that amount. This contract was awaiting completion. On January 19, M. de Sillery gave the Priests of the Mission several funds and pieces of property, reserving the usufruct for his own use. Moreover, he promised to give them annually the sum of 100 livres tournois. Bishop de Breslay fulfilled his obligations on March 12 when he presented the Missionaries with a house worth 1,200 livres in revenue, situated in Paris on the important rue du faubourg Saint-Michel, and a sum of 600 livres, of which at first he gave only the interest. It was stipulated in this new contract that the Missionaries would prepare the ordinands for ten days, and would
act in this way. This is the work of your hands. It has pleased His Divine Majesty to grant you grace for it. I hope, dear Mother, that you will obtain some for us so that we may serve Him according to His plan. O dear Mother, how many beautiful precious stones you are adding to the crown Our Lord is continually fashioning for you! Their number will certainly be as great as the number of souls who will be saved by this means. But so that the sins and wretchedness of this poor, worthless Company, and especially my own, may not hinder Our Lord’s work, I entreat you, dear Mother, to ask Him either to take us out of this world or to make us such that we may render Him the services His Divine Goodness expects of us. I am not going to thank you for all this. God alone is worthy of doing so and of being Himself your thanks. I say the same thing to your holy community which has prayed so fervently and done so much penance for this project. I offer to you and to it my everlasting gratitude for the favor you have done us, dear Mother, as well as my eternal submission to your wishes, which are those of Our Lord Himself.

In His love and in that of His holy Mother, I am, my very dear Mother, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, January 22, 1638

Monsieur du Coudray has instructions to do whatever you, dear Mother, shall order him to do. Give your orders, therefore, dear Mother, and you shall be obeyed.

Addressed: Reverend Mother de la Trinité, Superioress of the second monastery of the Carmelites of Troyes

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take the pastors into their house for retreats one at a time, outside the period consecrated to the ordinands. At the time the above letter was written, the March 12 contract was still only in the planning stage; it is the one Saint Vincent had in view here. (Cf. Arch. Nat. MM 534; A. Prévost, Saint Vincent de Paul et ses œuvres dans le diocèse de Troyes, Troyes, 1896.)
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of the twenty-fourth of this month. It greatly consoled me because you are so well, thank God, and because M. Perdu has recovered from his three attacks of fever.

I was quite pleased to be enlightened about the Toul affair. I have sent M. du Coudray there with authority to settle the dispute. M. Midot is taking good care of our interests. He wants M. Colée to give a report to the chapter. If it is found that there is no abuse on our part, he hopes to have the chapter join us and to come to this town himself for the interests of their diocese. President Faberolle, who is kindly disposed towards us, has toned down a

Letter 293. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

To understand the "Toul affair," we must go back to the origin of the establishment founded in that city. In 1238, Néméric Barat, Master Alderman of Toul, had entrusted a hospital which he had just built for orphans and the infirm to the Order of the Holy Spirit, but in 1635, the only members of that order who were still in the city were Master Dominique Thouvignon and two monks. Dominique Thouvignon resigned his benefice in favor of Bishop Charles de Gournay, in exchange for a pension of two thousand livres barrois [local measure of money based on the amount of silver or gold in a coin]. The latter offered it to the Priests of the Mission and Jean Dehorgny became titular by a royal decree in May 1635. Lambert aux Couteaux and Colée were placed there and carried out the functions of their state: missions, conferences to ecclesiastics, and retreats. On June 16, by amicable arrangement, the two Holy Spirit Brothers surrendered to Jean Dehorgny all their rights to the house and the hospital in exchange for a pension of six hundred livres barrois and certain privileges. The hospital absorbed a great deal of the Missionaries' time which they would have liked to devote to the missions. At their request, it was decreed on March 17, 1637, that the Bishop, the King's Lieutenant, and the Master Alderman would administer the hospice by means of two delegates of their choice, and the Mission would receive a third of the movable and immovable goods administered by the Holy Spirit Brothers before 1635. The division was a source of numerous disputes for four or five years. (Cf. Eugène Martin, Histoire des diocèses de Toul, de Nancy et de Saint-Dié [3 voixs., Nancy: A. Crépin-Leblond, 1900-1903], vol. II, pp. 208 ff.) In December 1657, the King suppressed the Commandery of the Holy Spirit in Toul and united it to the Congregation of the Mission.

Jean Midot, Doctor in Theology, Counselor in the Parlement of Metz, Grand Archdeacon, Canon, and Vicar General of Toul, was highly thought of in the courts of Rome and Lorraine. After the death of Charles de Gournay, he governed the diocese as Capitular Vicar. According to Collet (op. cit., vol. I, p. 291, note), in the seventeenth century his family possessed several letters that Saint Vincent had written to him. Only one is known to us. Jean Midot was the author of Mémoires sur les évêques de Toul, which has remained in manuscript form.
little the intensity of the lawsuit. Had he not been obliged to leave, he might have been able to remedy the matter. I would gladly have done with it were we not obliged to prove that we are being wrongly accused of having misused those assets. Such is the thinking of M. de Cordes and M. de Sainte-Marthe. We have requested the removal, according to the wishes of the said Sieur Midot. I was told a little while ago that the Chancellor refused to place the seal on the letters. *Benedictus Deus!*

I was very pleased to receive the description of that small priory. M. des Roches told me that he wanted to give it to us, but that has not yet been done. Please be so kind as to let me know whether you were told this from another source. Blessed be God for what you say about its being able to pay the expenses for the bread and wine of the house!

I would also like to know if the Loudun coaches are up to five thousand livres; they are sold for only forty-five hundred livres by the foundation. Perhaps their price has stabilized since then.

I shall see that something is done about the building, but I would really like to know whether the fault is with the materials or the workmanship, or whether you want the height increased. A word about that, please.

That huge parish frightens me. *In nomine Domini!*

I praise God for the mission you are giving among the prisoners. I have great compassion for them. But, please be sure not to go to them fasting.

With regard to the collège that the townspeople want, *ipsi vi-

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3Release of a case from the local tribunal and transfer of the information regarding the proceedings to the Parlement in Paris.
4Pierre Séguier.
5Michel Le Masle, Prior of Les Roches near Fontevrault, secretary of Cardinal Richelieu, Canon and cantor of Notre-Dame de Paris. This last title made him collator, judge, and director of the primary schools in Paris.
6Cardinal Richelieu had committed himself by one of the clauses of the contract to have a building erected for the Missionaries and for the ordinands or retreatants to whom the former were to extend hospitality.
7The parish of Richelieu which had not yet been established. The Cardinal had promised to annex it to the Mission.
As for the nephew of that good canon, O Jésus! Monsieur, take him.

I forgot to put in an order for some altar-bread irons.

Let us talk about those who are supposed to come and see you. We are sending you three men from here and MM. [Messieurs] Codoing and Durot who are to come to you from Dauphiné, where they are now. I hope you will have them within ten days. Our Lord has greatly blessed their work in that region. The men from here are Messieurs Buissot, Benoit, and Gourrant. You may keep either Messieurs Buissot or Benoit and M. Gourrant with you in Richelieu, and send one of the former to the mission in Luçon. I think it advisable for you to use the services of Messieurs Codoing and Durot in the duchy of Richelieu.

M. Gourrant sings; M. Benoit and M. Buissot know how to intone the psalms. M. Benoit teaches catechism well. Everybody invariably agrees that the fruit of a mission stems from the catechism lessons. A person of rank, saying that recently, added that all the Missionaries took pains to preach well but did not know how to teach catechism at all. He said that in my presence and that of a good number of people. In the name of God, Monsieur, tell the Company there about this. My thinking is that one of those who are to work should teach only the catechism for the adults and the other only the children's catechism, and they should speak twice a day. Some edifying stories can be brought into the cate-

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8Let them see to it themselves.

The Cardinal was planning to endow his town of Richelieu with a magnificent collège. He presented his ideas to Louis XIII, who authorized its foundation by two declarations: May 20 and September 11, 1640. (Cf. L. A. Bossebœuf, Histoire de Richelieu et des environs [Tours: L. Péritat, 1890], pp. 321 ff.)

9Nicolas Buissot was born in Allainville (Yvelines), entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1630, and was ordained a priest in 1632.

10Benoît Becu, born in Braches (Somme), March 21, 1602, was ordained a priest in 1627 and entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 14, 1637. In 1639, he went to found the establishment of La Rose and returned a few months later to Richelieu, where he was still living in 1646.

11This name does not appear in the catalogue of personnel. It is quite probable that M. Gourrant remained only a short time in the Congregation of the Mission.
chism lesson as a source of inspiration because, as I said, people point out that all the good results originate there.

We have given a few conferences here on how to go about teaching controversial truths. It seems to me that these men understand it fairly well, at least the first three. They have also learned M. Véron's method from him. Please, Monsieur, talk these matters over together every day and tell M. Perdu to please refresh his memory on the subject so that, when they leave Richelieu, they will know that those truths must be taught humbly and familiarly. Let them keep in mind that they are not going there for the heretics, but for the poor Catholics and that, nevertheless, if on the way the opportunity to instruct someone arises, they may do so gently and humbly, showing that what they say to them comes from deep compassion and love and not from indignation. I could not offer them a better example than your own and that of M. Souffliers. A nobleman from those parts told me that you go about it just as you should, instructing the Catholics and the Huguenots through them, and edifying both. Please, Monsieur, tell them this and especially that they should never challenge the ministers, or anyone, on any occasion whatsoever.

The men will leave tomorrow on the Poitiers coach, I think, because [it] is bound to bring them within four leagues of Richelieu. However, I have given this letter to the Champigny messenger so that you may be advised of their departure and give them lodging.

You tell me that you do not have enough furniture. I shall send you a letter of credit so that you may draw up to one thousand livres in Tours; you can buy the furniture you need there.

If you have a feeling that people want to oblige you to things beyond our bulls, ask the Bishop of Chartres to allow you to

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12Word forgotten in the original text.
13Léonor d'Estampes de Valençay was Bishop of Chartres from 1620 to 1641, and was then transferred to Reims. In 1921, Marcel Langlois wrote the biography of this prelate (Léonor d'Estampes de Valençay).
notify me, if you are unable to take care of the matter right then. If nothing can be done after all, *sit nomen Domini benedictum*!

I am, in His love, for M. Perdu whom I embrace, and for you, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Saint-Lazare, January 30, 1638

God is blessing abundantly the mission being given right now in Saint-Germain,\(^{14}\) where the court is residing.

*At the bottom of the first page:* M. Lambert

294. - TO ANTOINE LUCAS, IN SOUDE, LE MESNIL, OR BERGUES

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

You were quite right, Monsieur, not to accept the offers of the Vicomte de Soude,\(^1\) and you will do well never to accept any offer to support us. That is a fundamental rule of our Little Institute.

Well now, I suppose that you will have finished before receiving this letter and will next be going to make the visits you tell me you wish to make to the places where you have been. But when that is done, Monsieur, please go and rest in Montmirail until you have regained your strength, so that you may begin your work again in the villages which depend on Montmirail and the diocese of Troyes. Then we shall see if the Bishop of Soissons\(^2\) would approve of our working in his diocese. I do not see how we can do so

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\(^{1}\)Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

Letter 294. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

\(^1\)Desbordes, comptroller. Saint Vincent said of him one day: "That man loves God more than I could tell you, but with an intense love; what is more he is a man who has a marvelous gift for settling differences."

\(^2\)Simon Le Gras (1624-1656).
in the city this Lent, because he was unwilling to assign us a church.

What can I say to you about that good but irritable boy except that I am very sorry he forgot himself so far as to speak to you the way M. du Chesne informs me that he has, which your compassion makes you conceal. Well now, I see no other remedy than to dismiss him. But what will you do for a servant? Will you not be able to find one in Montmirail or in Champagne if you pay him? Please hire one, Monsieur, if you find someone; otherwise, we shall try to send you one from the house here.

I shall write, if possible, to M. du Chesne. But here comes someone to deprive me of that possibility. Please tell him in any case, that I was greatly consoled by his letter and that I shall not fail to write to him at the first opportunity.

The mission in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where the court is residing, is moving forward and God is blessing it abundantly. I just saw what M. de la Salle wrote to M. Dehorgny — who is on call at the seminary — that without this assistance several thousand souls would be lost.

Please pray and have others pray for the Queen's pregnancy.

I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, January 30, 1638

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3At that time, Pierre du Chesne had belonged to the Congregation of the Mission only a few months. He became one of the best Missionaries of Saint Vincent, who entrusted him with the direction of the houses of Crécy (1641-1644), the Bons-Enfants (1644), the Mission of Ireland and Scotland (1646-1648), Marseilles (1653-1654), and Agde (1654). He also summoned him to attend the two General Assemblies convoked at Saint-Lazare during his lifetime. Pierre du Chesne died in Agde, November 3, 1654.

4Jean de la Salle was one of the Missionaries employed in Saint-Germain.

5At the internal seminary of Saint-Lazare, Saint Vincent had opened it in June 1637, and had entrusted its direction to Jean de la Salle, whom Jean Dehorgny was replacing temporarily. The Priests of the Mission use the name "internal seminary" for that period of formation which religious orders call the novitiate.

6Anne of Austria gave birth to a son, the future Louis XIV.
TO SAINT LOUISE

[February 1638] ¹

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Enclosed is a letter from Mother Arbiste. Monsieur de la Salle notified me of the arrival of your Sisters.² He was going to introduce them to the sisters of the Charity¹ yesterday. Madame Chaumont told him that she would give them an écu so they could buy some food. I told her there was no need, that we would provide for them from another source. Give me a word of advice, please.

Mademoiselle Hardy is still urging me to call a meeting of the Ladies who promised her they would contribute. If I do not do it, I shall hurt her feelings; if I do it, it will be against my better judgment. I doubt that it will succeed the way things are. She expects those Ladies to go to the founding home⁴ and would have everything done right there according to the order prescribed. I think it would be better to give up the capital of the established house rather than be subject to rendering so many accounts and overcoming so many difficulties, and to set up a new institution, leaving the former as it is, at least for some time. What do you think? If I thought she would agree to your suggestion of trying out a wet nurse and a goat at your house, that would be fine!

¹A locality in Aisne.

Letter 295. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

²This letter was written at the time the Daughters of Charity arrived in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, a few days after no. 290.

³Barbe Angiboust and a companion.

⁴To the Ladies of Charity in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, whose president was Madame de Chaumont. Saint Vincent frequently referred to the members of the Confraternity of Charity as "sisters."

⁵The Couche.
I have taken the affair of your Charity⁵ to heart and at times have some remorse about not having worked on it, but I cannot. The Temple business is taking up all my time and I shall be busy with it for a few more days.⁶ When I ponder the matter, I realize that Providence is not allowing it to no purpose. I see nothing more common that the bad results of things done hastily. Would you believe that a mishap has already occurred in the establishment for girls in Montmorency?⁷ They had already obtained the permission for enclosure; they have a house, a chapel, and all the rest of it. Nevertheless, people think that nuns should be called to take their place. And if it depended on me, I would do it. All this is said for you alone and not for anyone else.

⁵The establishment of the Charity in La Chapelle.

⁶The establishment of a seminary in the house of the Temple in Paris. “This fine plan,” writes Abelly (op. cit., chap. XXXII, 1st ed., p. 151), “did not have the desired effect. Although M. Vincent had been asked to take care of the matter and for that purpose had stayed some time in the Temple, he was not free to act as he wished and could not succeed as he would have liked.” “One of the first and dominant preoccupations” of the Commander de Sillery, as he himself wrote (Vie de l’illustre serviteur de Dieu, Noël Brulart de Sillery, p. 109), was “to work for the salvation of souls both by the establishment of seminaries and by regular visits to the parishes, churches, and people within the confines of the great priory of France entrusted to the jurisdiction and direction” of the Temple. With that in view, he consulted Fathers Gibieux and de Condren, of the Oratory; Father Binet, the Jesuit; Mother de la Trinité; and especially — let us allow him to speak — “a great servant of God in whom Our Lord in His goodness has given me absolute confidence. By the great esteem and reverence he has long had in his soul for the express and fundamental profession of our Order to expose its life for the defense and propagation of the Faith, he has a singular devotion to everything that concerns the good and the service of our religion. This holy individual, by all his wise advice, has continuously and strongly encouraged, exhorted, and strengthened me to consider seriously, for the glory of God, the fruit that many people will derive from this employment.” It is easy to guess that this holy individual was the Commander’s director, Vincent de Paul. The Grand Prior of France gave the Commander de Sillery the powers of Vicar General so that he might more freely bring his undertaking to a happy conclusion. But the Commander did not have the temporizing mind of Saint Vincent. He did not know how to profit as much as he should have by the lessons of experience. Opposition arose, even within his own Order, and he had to give up everything. One of his letters to the Grand Master, dated June 22, 1638, shows with what generosity and heroic resignation he accepted this painful trial. (Ibid., pp. 107-122.)

⁷Principal town of a canton in Val-d’Oise. A house had been established there to receive and bring up girls born out of wedlock. The Company of the Blessed Sacrament was interested in the work and had taken on the expense of a schoolteacher. In exchange for its generosity, it received the right to send twelve little girls there each year. (Cf. René de Voyer d’Argenson, op. cit., p. 69.)
The good Pastor of La Chapelle is supposed to come to dinner here today with his brother so as to see what he has to do about his illness, for it has now been identified as what you feared. O mon Dieu, what poor creatures we are!

The day before yesterday, Madame Goussault was running a fever which they were afraid was going to last. Take care of your health, I beg of you.

I am your servant.

V.D.

I am being compelled to rush the Temple affair which I fear will collapse in the near future. I say it and say it again, and they pass over it all the same. Humility obliges me to defer and reason makes me fear. In nomine Domini!

296. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Tuesday morning [1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am sending you back the papers. Please return them as soon as possible and see that you receive a signed copy.

If you do not have the keys, please have them picked up here. Madame Pelletier has just spoken to me about her furniture; she would like it put in some other small room. She makes no mention of putting it somewhere else. I told her we would discuss it and that we must aim at placing everything in common and at doing

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1Jean Paradis, who died in May 1646.

Letter 296. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

The sentence, "We must reflect a little on some way of preparing the Sisters to teach school," allows us to surmise that this letter preceded by a very short time no. 297, in which we find the solution proposed by Saint Louise.

2Probably some documents pertaining to the establishment of the Foundlings.
away with singularities. Well, that language seems somewhat new to her.

That good woman from Le Mans seems insecure to me. She has done a lot of stipulating and delaying.

We must reflect a little on some way of preparing the Sisters to teach school. The latter says she has taught in this town and elsewhere. We must see whether we shall give her a try.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V.D.

297. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Blessed be God that your illness is not serious! Please do whatever you can to get well.

We came to a decision on your report concerning the Foundlings in two meetings with the officers of the Hôtel-Dieu Charity. Next Sunday we shall communicate the decision, which I shall arrange in the form of a rule, to Madame Pelletier to see if she will be willing to follow it. This will take place at Madame Goussault’s home in presence of the officers. The entire company considers it essential for that house to depend on the superior of the Daughters of Charity, as I wrote you, and for you to go and spend a week or so there, if your health permits.

The Ladies are going to the Hôtel-Dieu today. Please offer their persons and their work to His Divine Majesty.

Letter 297. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

*This letter is from the earliest beginnings of the work of the Foundlings.*
I do not expect much from the Ursulines' way of communicating with your Sisters. Please send them there, nevertheless.

I think it is better to keep that young woman with you for some time and to have Madame Goussault see her along with the one from Nogent. There is no need to send her the one from Saint-Marceau since she is already on active duty.

I bid you good day and am, in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

V. DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

297a. - TO SAINT LOUISE, IN LA CHAPELLE

[1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever! You had good reason to grumble and complain interiorly about me for not having answered or visited you. Your love will forgive me, please, and will attribute the blame to difficulties and not to affection. God knows that I lack neither.

I spoke to M. Pavillon about your son. I think it would be well for him to finish his theology, be ordained, and practice for some

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2Saint Louise's solution (mentioned in no. 296) to the problem of preparing her Daughters to teach was to have them instructed in that art by the Ursuline nuns.

3A section of Paris.


1Date imposed by the content of the letter: the situation of Michel Le Gras, still hesitant about his vocation; the presence of Pavillon in Paris or the vicinity; the availability of M. du Coudray, appointed Superior of the house in Toul that same year, 1638.
time the exercises of piety suitable for ecclesiastics. Once he has done all that, I shall make no objection to the above-mentioned Monsieur Pavillon’s receiving him. Otherwise, the young man would be useless to the said Monsieur Pavillon, and an unbearable burden to himself when he found himself in the mountains, at the farthest end of the kingdom,² doing nothing, and unqualified for any employment.

In the name of God, Mademoiselle, take my advice in this matter. I know what is involved. I hope that, if your son does what I have just said, he will never be in need of good employment. If God allows me to live, I promise you that I shall take care of him as if he were of my own blood. Be at peace then in his regard.

If he were ready for a post, I could place him tomorrow in the service of Monsieur, the King’s brother³ — I have been asked for someone for him — or have him given a canonry quite close to Lyons in a new chapter foundation being started by M. de Saint-Chamond.⁴ He has given me the task of providing him with people whom I judge suitable, up to the number of eight. In short, he will not have to wait long, be assured of that, provided he does what I am telling you.

We shall try then to send M. du Coudray to Liancourt⁵ on Saturday. Please see that there is a horse here for him tomorrow evening.

I am worried about that good lady’s illness. I am going to

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²Alet, situated in the valley of the Aude, thirty kilometers south of Carcassonne, at the foot of the Pyrenees.
³Gaston d’Orléans.
⁴Melchior Mitte de Miolans, Marquis de Saint-Chamond, Seigneur de Chevrieres. He was sent to Rome as extraordinary Ambassador and founded a collegial chapter in 1634 for which he had a chapel built in Saint-Chamond (diocese of Lyons). He died in Paris on September 10, 1649.
⁵Locality in Oise. Saint Louise stayed there several times.
celebrate Holy Mass for her intention and pray to God for you. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

V. DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras, in La Chapelle

298. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[1638]

After speaking of the intrigues in which Madame Pelletier was engaging with the ecclesiastical and judicial authorities to keep Saint Vincent and the Ladies of Charity out of the administration of the Founding Home and to remain its sole mistress, Saint Louise adds: "But I am confident that the good God will be able to derive His glory from this unpleasant experience. I implore this of Him with all my heart, asking Him also to give you good health for the same reason. I hope because of your goodness that you will make us sharers in the merit of your sufferings and holy sacrifices, since you are aware of our need."

299. - TO ROBERT DE SERGIS, IN AIGUILLON OR TOULOUSE

[Around February 21, 1638]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I cannot tell you the consolation I have received from the bless-

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6 Village then near Paris, now incorporated in the city of Paris itself. The Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity was located there from 1636-1642.


7 This letter seems closely connected with no. 297.

Letter 299. - According to Coste, the original autograph letter belonged to the wife of General Derrecagaix, 5 rue du Regard, Paris.

8 In a letter definitely dated February 21, 1638 (no. 307), Saint Vincent spoke of matters also treated in this letter. It seems reasonable to conjecture that both were written about the same time.
ing Our Lord has been pleased to grant your mission in Montpezat. But I confess that I have been and still am quite worried about your working so long and hard for three months. I am very much afraid that, if you do not take a prolonged rest, you will collapse, and so will M. Brunet. In the name of God, Monsieur, get some rest and have your bad eye and throat treated in Aiguillon or Agen, if you have not already done so. I am afraid that as soon as you arrive in Toulouse they will overburden you with work. I would really like to tell you not to go back there, but what would we say to the Archbishop? I wrote him that you would be coming to see him immediately after the mission in Montpezat.

We are obliged, from another quarter, to give a mission which Monsieur de la Marguerie founded in Angoumois for every five years; it is due at Easter. If your illness does not prevent you from going to Toulouse, please tell the aforesaid Archbishop that I most humbly ask his pardon for our not being able as yet to serve him on a regular basis and for being compelled to use you on occasions such as this one after Easter. At that time, entreat him to allow you to go and preach the said mission in La Marguerie and in two or three other small villages belonging to it. To do that, you will have to go down to Bordeaux by way of the Garonne, and from there to Bourg, between Bordeaux and Blaye. Then, from there, you will have to go to Barbezieux, which is two days away, and to La Marguerie, two or three leagues farther. But you will have to go as far as Angoulême to get the Vicar General’s permis-

2 Commune in Lot-et-Garonne, a district in Agen.
3 Charles de Montchal (1628-1651). He was one of the most remarkable prelates of the seventeenth century because of his piety, his zeal, his learning, and his firmness in defending the rights of the Church against the encroachments of the State. He died in 1651.
4 On October 31, 1633, Elie Laisné, Sieur de la Marguerie, had given Saint Vincent two hundred livres out of the town hall revenue “on condition that every five years he would send three priests and a brother to give missions for four months, round trip included, in the diocese of Angoulème.” (Arch. Nat. M 211, file 1.)
5 A locality in Charente-Maritime.
6 Principal town of a canton in the district of Blaye.
sion in the absence of the Bishop, who is with the Queen of England. He asked me to send someone to work in his diocese at the earnest request of his Vicar General, to whom you will convey my regret at our being able to work for the present only in those villages. Express to him also our great gratitude for the favor we owe him.

I am so consoled by everything you told me, that I could not refrain from mentioning it to you once again here. I sent the letter you wrote me to the Duchesse d’Aiguillon; please write to her more in detail.

I am sending you the letter — unsealed — which I wrote to the Archbishop of Toulouse. If your illness has detained you in Aiguillon, please send it to him. If it reaches you in Toulouse, please seal it and deliver it to him.

I am writing to M. Mestre to go along with some letters he received from home. Please forward them to him by some sure means. It is his old father writing to him. I shall try to do the same for M. Hopille. I am, meanwhile, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur de Sergis, Priest of the Mission, presently in Aiguillon or Toulouse

300. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[February 1638]1

Monsieur,

Sister Turgis is very upset because the sergeant of M. de Castillon’s

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7 Jacques Cardinal du Perron (1637-1646).
8 Henriette-Marie, sister of Louis XIII and wife of Charles I.
9 Vicar General of the diocese of Agen.

Letter 300. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1 It is obvious that nos. 300, 301, 302, 303, and 304 are related. No. 303 indicates that it is
company came to tell her that he will be sending soldiers to lodge in the front part of the building and in the children's quarters. They will be noisy. If you think it well, when she returns there, she can refuse to accommodate them, confident of the backing of the Duchesse d'Aiguillon or the Chancellor's wife, until you can obtain a prohibition from the Queen. If you think something else would be better, please let her know by way of this messenger, if it is not she.

I am, Monsieur, your most humble and most grateful daughter and servant.

L. de Marillac

Thursday

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

301. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[February 1638]¹

Mademoiselle,

I have just written to Madame Séguier, the Chancellor's wife. I am sending her your letter and a petition I drew up in the name of the Ladies of Charity of the Hôtel-Dieu. It is addressed to the Chancellor² and informs him that they rented a house for the Daughters of Charity and the foundlings, that the inhabitants have sent you soldiers, and that they cannot stay in your house, where there are no men, without endangering the purity of the Sisters, or without scandal. Taking these things into consideration, will he please forbid the inhabitants to send the aforesaid soldiers to your house and forbid the soldiers to go there. I am asking his wife to

¹This letter is the response to no. 300.
²Pierre Séguier.
present this to the Chancellor. And because it may be that the matter will not move so quickly that everything can be taken care of today, it would be well to send for your Pastor and ask him to use his influence, either with the people so that they will provide other quarters for the soldiers, or with the soldiers so that they will stay elsewhere — in return for a demi-écu more or less — in order to give you two days. I am going, meanwhile, to Madame Goussault’s house to ask her to send M. Grandnom\(^3\) to expedite the matter.

Your son is doing well. Did you send him the certificate? He told me that he fears the excellence of the priesthood, and that is good.

Please do something soon regarding the soldiers, through the Pastor.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am. . . .

302. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[February 1638]\(^1\)

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I have not seen Jacqueline at all since she told me four days ago that she was bringing her to you so that you might see her. I promised her I would talk to you about it.\(^2\)

I shall be on my guard with regard to that curate from Nanterre, now the Pastor,\(^3\) with regard to the girl.

\(^{3}\)Remi de Grandnom, Madame Goussault’s intendant.

Letter 302. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^{1}\)See no. 300, n. 1.

\(^{2}\)Jacqueline wanted to present to Saint Louise one of her nieces who felt called to the vocation of a Daughter of Charity.

\(^{3}\)Paul Beurrier.
Today I shall try to see the Duchesse d'Aiguillon concerning your soldiers. The Chancellor's wife was not able to do anything.

You will have to talk to Madame Goussault about that house. It would be desirable for you to be in a parish other than this one for many reasons.

Since one channel does not end because of another, see whether you can accomplish anything by means of that soldier you were thinking about, using his influence with his captain, and through him with M. de Castelnau.4

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

303. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[February 1638]1

Tomorrow morning I shall send you Monsieur Soufliers or M. Bécu for the exhortation and confession.

I looked at what you wrote2 and am going to tell Madame Goussault about it or send it to her.

The admonition not to joke about those little creatures3 seems fitting to me.

I saw the Duchesse d'Aiguillon yesterday. She told me that she had commissioned the person who guides her4 to go and see M. de

4Probably Louis-François de Gourdon-Genouillac, Marquis de Castelnau, Captain of the Scottish company; or Jacques Castelnau, who died in 1658, a Marshal of France.

Letter 303. - According to Coste, the original autograph letter was in Amiens at the house of the Daughters of Charity, 127 rue Beauvais. This house has been closed and the present location of the letter is unknown.

1See no. 300, n. 1.
2Perhaps a report concerning the establishment of the Foundlings.
3The foundlings.
4Probably M. Dauzenat, her chaplain.
Castelnau. I instructed the Sisters from the Charity\textsuperscript{5} to put pressure on the chaplain concerning the matter. If that fails, it would be better to deal with the quartermaster-sergeant. If you do not send someone to M. de Veines, I do not know whom to recommend to you with regard to this matter. I hope we shall hear from the Duchesse today, or tomorrow I shall send you a man for M. de Veines.

I really think it would be good for you to go and spend a few days in the house for the foundlings, and for the Sisters to come to La Chapelle once a month. May God be pleased to give me the time to be there.

Marie, from Saint-Sulpice, has two bed-valences made from winding-sheets, because the house is quite new and the windows do not close properly. Once the winter is over, we shall have to draw up a regulation about that. We do not have any.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

\textit{Addressed:} Mademoiselle Le Gras

\textbf{304. - TO SAINT LOUISE}

[February 1638]\textsuperscript{1}

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here comes a job for you concerning the relocation of the foundlings and the order to be maintained in their new establishment. Please work on it tomorrow, Mademoiselle, and on Satur-

\textsuperscript{5}The establishment of the Foundlings.

\textbf{Letter 304.} - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\textsuperscript{1}See no. 300, n. 1.
day send me what you have done. I told Madame Pelletier that we wish her to be subject to you with regard to the management. She told me to let her know when she was to be subject to the officers and in what instances to you. I think that, for purely temporal matters, she should be under the good Ladies; but, for spiritual matters, such as the direction of the Sisters, the wet nurses, and the little runaway children whose number will be increasing, that is when she should deal with you. To that end, she should let you know from time to time what is going on, every week for example or, at least, every two weeks.

Jacqueline came here to the house this morning without saying anything to me about her niece. She just had someone ask me for the answer to your letter of the day before yesterday. I told her that I gave it to you yesterday.

I wrote to the chaplain\(^2\) of the Duchesse\(^3\) about your soldiers. He sent me word that he would speak to the Duchesse about the matter and give me an answer. But as nothing is certain concerning things that depend upon the great, I have been told that, as a last resort, we might have to rent a room and a bed and give it to them. I shall try to go there tomorrow or the day after, if I do not receive an answer tomorrow morning. I am, meanwhile, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Thursday evening

You will see in the enclosed note from Madame Goussault her wishes concerning what I wrote to you.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

\(^2\)Dauzenat.

\(^3\)The Duchesse d'Aiguillon.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
You have not found any wet nurses at all in the country yet. That is why I think that, while waiting, you would do well to take the one being offered to you from the Hôtel-Dieu; she is so good.
It really seems to me that you need a more spacious house and that the Ladies would do well to look for another one or take the one you mentioned to me.
I cannot possibly go to the Bons-Enfants today. I hope to be there tomorrow for dinner and to come and see you from there. It would be difficult to talk to you in the midst of so many people at the collège. I shall see. If need be, I shall send you word.
Good day, Mademoiselle. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

V. DEPAUL

Ash Wednesday

306. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, IN RICHELIEU

Paris, February 20, 1638

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I have read and reread your letter of the ninth of this month with an extraordinary consolation, tempered a little by good M. Perdu’s
slight illness. I do not commend him to you, because I am sure you are doing everything you can for him. But who is taking care of your health? I am asking Our Lord to look after it Himself.

I sent on to Toul the letter you wrote to M. Dehorgny. That affair is abating somewhat. We are negotiating with M. Fleury, the nephew, who is a Doctor of the Sorbonne.¹

I am well pleased with what you told me about M. des Roches-Chamian's² little priory and about the two farms and the two houses. Since Providence has caused us to come across that good priest living there, we must allow him to take his time, to have the vines tended, and to repair that section of the surrounding wall that has fallen.

I have no doubt that the Loudun grafts cost the most. Blessed be God!

I shall be very happy to see that architect from Pontoise and the mason concerning the buildings.

You did well to give an inventory of the furniture to the Bishop of Chartres.³ You will do even better to have mugs and forks made like ours so that you can begin as soon as possible to take your meals in portions.

Oh! how moved I still am by what you told me about the kind of approbation the Bishop of Poitiers⁴ gave the contract concluded with the Cardinal,⁵ and by your telling me that you are going to Poitiers to thank that good prelate! I am also moved by what you told me concerning the goodness and gentleness with which the

¹François de Fleury of the diocese of Langres secured for himself a canonry in the diocese of Verdun. He approved the book, De la fréquente communion, and was presented by the Jansenists to Queen Marie-Louise de Gonzague on her departure for Poland to act as her chaplain. His relationship with Saint Vincent and the Missionaries sent to that country was always excellent, even cordial, as is evident from the letters of the Saint, who esteemed him highly. He died in France, early in November 1658. Part of his correspondence with Mother Angélique is extant.
²Michel Le Masle.
³Léonor d'Estampes de Valençay (1620-1641).
⁴Henri-Louis Chasteignier de la Roche-Posay (1611-1651).
⁵Cardinal Richelieu.
Bishop of Chartres has negotiated with you and with everyone. I shall thank him and tell him in good time how I thank God for the attention you have had the Company give to what I told you concerning the catechism lessons and sermons. Please remind them often of those things.

I am well satisfied with the arrangements you told me you are making for the mission: (1) in the duchy; (2) for finishing the one in Richelieu. Then you shall really have to establish the Charity. I hope to send you an excellent Daughter of Charity for that purpose. She does bloodletting, administers medicines, and gives enemas. She is the one who preferred the service of the poor to that of the great lady whom I mentioned to you. She is in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, where a Charity worthy of note is being set up. Among its members are the lady-in-waiting, the lady of the bedchamber, and the Queen’s maids of honor, who are giving service themselves with admirable fervor. They had a little trouble at that mission because of the low necklines, but God was pleased to draw no little glory from the affair.

In the name of God, Monsieur, we must be very circumspect in explaining the sixth commandment. We shall one day be in a great deal of trouble because of that. Call this to the Company’s attention often and also advise them not to do anything in the procession except that which is quite simple, as I have so often said.

As for the title you will assume for the vicarial records, how about putting down parish administrative assistant until I consult someone about it? With regard to alms, give a double to each one who asks; if he is being catechized, give him two liards more or

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6Barbe Angiboust.
7Madame de Combalet, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon, had begged Saint Vincent to send a Daughter of Charity to work in her house and for the poor of her parish. He sent Barbe Angiboust, who after four or five days returned to her previous work. She preferred to devote herself entirely to the service of the poor, not to the service of a great lady, a choice which the Saint greatly admired (cf. no. 224).
8The double was worth about two deniers; the liard about three. These coins symbolize the smallest sum or the smallest quantity.
less, according to the person’s character. But for the sick, if the Bishop does not provide the necessary funds for them, you should contribute fifteen or twenty sous a week, which you can have placed in the alms-dish of the woman taking up the collection. But what will you do with regard to remuneration for acting as pastor? I am sending you two hundred livres, which will be given to the Champigny messenger tomorrow. On the next trip, we shall give him the altar-bread irons.

M. Codoing and M. Durot are now in Richelieu. O Monsieur, how God has blessed their labors! Please embrace them and the whole Company for me, as I do in spirit with all possible humility and affection.

The mission in Saint-Germain will come to a close in four days with a very special blessing, anticipated by some little occasions for practicing patience. How valuable that will be for us and what a triumph for God! M. Grenu is also receiving special assistance from God in Gascony and M. de Sergis likewise.

The Company is doing well, thank God, and sends you greetings.

I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Since writing this letter, I reflected that it would be well for you to take the title of parish curate of Richelieu, while awaiting the union and the way it will be formulated.

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert, Priest of the Mission, presently in Richelieu
Paris, February 21, 1638

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am writing you these lines in a bit of a hurry, asking you please to take care of your health and M. Caignet’s and to get some rest after such arduous work before you begin the mission again. When you are rested, you can start working in the villages belonging to the diocese of Troyes and Montmirail.

Last Sunday, I had M. Soufliers write you a letter requesting the same thing of you at that time. I also asked you to send M. du Chesne back to us and I would send you M. Callon in his place. But, since a slight indisposition does not permit him that little satisfaction at present, he is returning to Aumale, where he will be able to do something in the surrounding area.

I went to see your brother at the Saint-Michel bridge to ask him to send the man who is lodging with M. Belin to the mission. But he told me that he was not in town, that he was still in Milly, and that on his return he would send him to Rueil. I have neither heard that he did so nor that he returned.

I am sending you a letter from the Cévennes. The Company is doing fairly well, thank God.

The mission in Saint-Germain is coming to a close with a blessing although, in the beginning, they had occasion to practice the holy virtue of patience. There are very few in the King’s household who have not gone to confession with the people, and with a devotion worthy of giving edification. The firm stand taken

Letter 307. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1Madame Goussault’s confessor bore this name; he may be the person mentioned here.

2Although he was a member of the Congregation of the Mission, Louis Callon was living in Aumale, his birthplace.

3In Paris.

4There are two localities with this name: one in Oise and the other in Essonne.
against low-necked dresses gave rise to that practice of patience. The King told M. Pavillon that he was greatly pleased with all the exercises of the mission, that that was the way one should work, and that he would give this testimony everywhere. I had great difficulty sending men to that place while the court was in residence but, since His Majesty had done me the honor of informing me that he wanted it that way, we had to surmount our difficulties. The ladies who had the hardest time in the beginning are now so fervent that they have become members of the Charity and serve the poor on their day. They also went out in four groups to collect money in the town. They are the Queen's maids of honor.

Messieurs Lambert, Perdu, Buissot, Codoing, Benoît, and Gourrant are in Richelieu; Messieurs Grenu and Savinier in the duchy of Aiguillon, in Gascony, where God is blessing them greatly, as He did M. de Sergis and M. Brunet. M. de Sergis is returning to Toulouse where the Archbishop is waiting for him with great impatience.

I close, recommending myself to the prayers of Messieurs Caignet and du Chesne. Please, Monsieur, convey our news and recommendations to Messieurs Mouton and Boucher. I hope to write to them Wednesday and to send you M. Boudet in M. du Chesne's place.

I am, meanwhile, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Please pay M. Octobre the postage punctually.

Addressed: Monsieur Lucas, Priest of the Mission, in Montmirail

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5Benoît Bécu.
6Jacques Mouton, born in Pontoise, entered the Congregation in 1632.
7Léonard Boucher, born August 29, 1610, entered the Congregation of the Mission on November 12, 1632 and was ordained a priest on September 23, 1634.
8Concierge of the Château de Montmirail.
My very dear Mother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here again is someone’s pen thanking you because you are ever giving us new reasons to do so by so many acts of kindness which the Holy Spirit continually suggests to you from day to day for our good and that of the souls in your diocese. You were not content, dear Mother, with suggesting, guiding, and bringing our establishment to completion with such care, solicitude, and almost continual labors. You added to that the offer of your house as a lodging for us and for the ordinands’ retreat.

O my dear Mother! how that touches my heart, making me see the state of a truly Christian and religious soul that has reached the highest point of perfection to which either of those states can raise a soul in the practice of true charity! To God be the glory, my dear Mother, for having been pleased to lift you up to a state of such great goodness; to us, eternal gratitude for the great good you incessantly do for us; and to you, dear Mother, a degree of glory in heaven which corresponds to the goodness Our Lord has placed in your dear soul! Here are the gratitude and the wishes that can be offered to you by the soul who is the most obliged to you in the world, my dear Mother, and who considers you his dearest and most amiable Mother.

Yesterday I saw one of the two small apartments in the front part of the Bishop’s house. It is true, it would be advantageous to have both of them because of the windows and other legal rights. However, I think the lodging we need in Troyes is still more urgent. How would we manage in regard to that one without the

Letter 308. - The original autograph letter is at the Carmel of Troyes in Saint-Germain, 10120 Saint-André-les-Vergers.

1René de Breslay, Bishop of Troyes (1604-1641), had a house in Paris on the main street of the faubourg Saint-Michel, which he offered to Saint Vincent for the needs of the Missionaries in Troyes. (Cf. no. 292, n. 1.)
assistance of what the Bishop wishes to give us! If it were being sold only at the price it is worth, that would be fine! But it is being offered for six thousand livres, although I fear it will be hard to get two hundred for it in rent; for it is not being rented. A Capuchin Father had taken it and had placed a devout woman there to make a home for a few poor people who had recently been converted. But I do not know how it is that there is no longer anyone there except that good woman and two poor girls who are leaving. On the other hand, to bargain with our benefactor, O Jésus! dear Mother, we must not do that. That is why, with all due deference, I think, dear Mother, that we should leave matters as they are.

The Commander has not deemed it necessary to ratify the Bishop’s foundation, since the said gentleman wanted that only because of the private agreement previously signed between that good gentleman and myself. He says that by his returning the original of the contract which he had, my sending ours back, and both being torn up, there is no need to ratify anything. That, dear Mother, is what I most humbly entreat you to communicate to the Bishop. I have never seen anyone give evidence of feeling more satisfaction over the action he has taken for the good of his diocese than his nephew, M. Bault. Certainly, dear Mother, the kindness with which he received me and negotiated with us is unimaginable.

Our mission at court will soon be closing. The poor Missionaries have worked at it incessantly from morning till night, preaching, catechizing, hearing general confessions from morning till night, and they are so tired that they can do no more.

We shall have those destined for Troyes rest and recuperate a little in order to go there on the eve of Passion Sunday. The Bishop thought it would be well for them to begin their work at

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2The Priests of the Mission first settled in the village of Sancey, in a house rented to Sébastien Gouault, a townsman from Troyes. As it was rather small, the Commander de Sillery bought them the house situated at the right corner of the faubourg Croncels and the rue des Bas-Clos in Troyes. They moved there on August 25, 1640.

3March 20.
that time with the ordinands' retreat. And I, who trouble my dear, good Mother too much, shall close by most humbly imploring her to offer us to God asking Him to forgive the many faults we incessantly commit in the project He has entrusted to us. I am for my dearest Mother's holy community and in the love of Our Lord, my very dear Mother, your most humble, and most grateful and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

The good doctor, whom M. Gallemant had appointed his successor in the parish of Aumale,⁴ is working on the memoirs or the life of that blessed man and another priest or two.

Paris, February 25, 1638

Addressed: Reverend Mother de la Trinité, Prioress of the Carmelite monastery in the faubourg of Troyes, in Troyes

309. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1638, around February]¹

Blessed be God for taking that little soul in a state of readiness, so that we have good reason to believe she is most happy! I am going to send you M. Bécu and someone else.

It will be hard for me to see M. Laisné.² If he approves the marriage, we must not be upset. He will show his secretary what is required, if he does not already know.

⁴Louis Callon. His notes have been drawn upon by the author of Jacques Gallemant's biography.
Letter 309. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
¹This letter was written in Madame Goussault's lifetime, after the work of the Foundlings had begun, at the time Saint Vincent was looking for a house for them. (Cf. nos. 302 and 305.)
²Elie Laisné, Sieur de la Marguerie.
I think the painting of the Virgin and Saint Joseph holding the Child Jesus by the hand is best for the little foundlings.  

Madame Goussault sent me word that she would be going to your house today to begin her retreat. If that is so, will you be away? I think it would be well for you to write her a note to find out what she intends.

I saw Madame de Herse, the President’s wife, yesterday and told her what I have told you.

I forgot to write Madame Goussault to tell her to take the meditation on death and the particular judgment after the first one. Please tell her that, and also that it would be better for her to recall the sins I mentioned to her so as to meditate on the ones she considers appropriate.

The matter of housing is often on my mind. Good day, Mademoiselle. Possess your heart in peace. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

310. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1638, around February]

Mademoiselle,

I think you would do well to have that little child buried in the cemetery and to send someone to ask the Pastor to come and see you. State the matter as it is until we find out how things will be handled. What comes to my mind now is that we should give

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This letter was written shortly after the establishment of the Foundlings. It seems to belong not far from nos. 295 and 309.

Letter 310. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

3This painting was perhaps the work of Saint Louise. The Daughters of Charity of 85 rue Réaumur, Paris, believe they possess it.
something to the Pastor and the grave-digger annually to bury all of them. For today, you will have to ask him to send his curate to get the body and instruct the grave-digger to prepare the little grave. Ask him also to tell each of them how the matter stands, and that this is an experiment we would like to try.

I feel urged more than ever to conclude the business concerning the Charity.² Ask God to give me some time to work at it. My situation is pitiful; I have no time at all. God grant me eternity!

When you are able to go to Rueil, the Pastor has informed me that he will accept the Sister I send him.

I am your servant.

V. D.

I am not saying anything to you about Madame Pelletier. I just wrote to Mademoiselle³ about the child’s death. She informed me yesterday that she would send you another one today, if it is convenient. Her letter is enclosed.

311. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I have instructed our good Brother Nicolas¹ to pass by Richelieu on his way to visit M. Grenu in Gascony. Please do not delay his going there more than a day and, if you can, write to the said M. Grenu and have everyone in the Company who can do so write to him.

I think this messenger will find you about to begin the mission

²The Charity of La Chapelle. (Cf. no. 295.)
³Mademoiselle Viole, treasurer of the Ladies of Charity.

Letter 311. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
¹Nicolas Corman, a coadjutor brother, was born around 1603, entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1633, and was admitted to vows November 13, 1643.
in Richelieu again. I entreat you, Monsieur, to recommend prudence more than ever when explaining the sixth commandment and handling the questions people ask about it. If we are not careful, the Company will suffer for it some day.

Conduct the processions without a lot of ceremony; I would even say without having the children dressed up in anything but the surplices found on the premises. People have greatly criticized both the one and the other, although the Bishop of Alet has done the first, and with regard to the second there were only a few children dressed in albs. It is God's wish that, in this way, we be brought to practice patience a little and that this proceed from a desire to bring about the memorable conversion of some outstanding souls.

I did not have the honor of seeing the Bishop of Chartres at all, and it was not desirable. I shall do so, please God, when it is time.

It would be well for you to set up the Charity and to let the Bishop of Chartres know about it so that he can find out from His Eminence if he approves of it. It would also be well for you to offer him that Daughter of Charity.

I close, recommending myself as well as the present state of the mission to your holy prayers. I greet the Company most humbly and most affectionately, being, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Vallegrand, March 3, 1638

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2Nicolas Pavillon.
3Léonor d'Estampes de Valençay (1620-1641).
4Cardinal Richelieu.
5Barbe Angiboust.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Jeanne, the Daughter of Charity in this parish, has committed many faults, on account of which the Pastor, the officers, and M. de Vincy decided today that she must be changed. I entreat you, Mademoiselle, to send us another who has a more gentle and more accommodating disposition, and do this by tomorrow morning so that she will not have the time to put together an intrigue like the others; it is inconceivable how apt she is at it. Now I think, nevertheless, that we must take her back for the Hôtel-Dieu or somewhere else, so that justice may be accompanied by mercy. Would you believe that she gave Jacqueline a slap in the face, and that she does anything she pleases, and a number of things without saying anything about them, such as treating a patient without permission? And what is worse, she informed the Lenten preacher of some of the faults of the Ladies and began to have them preached about. Well now, whom will you be able to give us without inconveniencing yourself? Take care of it.

I am, in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

Letter 312. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This letter was written during Lent, a few days, it seems, before no. 313, which obviously belongs to 1638.

2M. de Lestocq, Pastor of the parish of Saint-Laurent.
I returned from Pontoise last night. Here is the answer to your last letter. We shall really have to see about the Foundlings. A meeting is being held today at the home of Madame Goussault, the President’s wife. I would like you to attend and to write to the said lady, asking her to send her carriage for you. It is true that I think you will be asked by Madame de Beaufort, the superior, to attend the meeting at Saint-Etienne. If so, I think it would be advisable for you to go there and to let me know how you feel about M. Dieu’s suggestion, and that of M. Foucauld, to the gentlemen of the chapter. In addition, please let me know if what Madame Goussault has told me is true, that you know of a few simple, devout young women who are willing to devote themselves to the spiritual needs of the women in the Légat in place of the fourteen Ladies. I think it would be better that way; otherwise we shall always be filled with apprehension lest the aforesaid Ladies catch some disease there. Please send me your answer at Madame Goussault’s house around three o’clock.

It is true that I have been told things are going badly at the Hôtel-Dieu. It is to be hoped that your health will allow you to go and spend two or three days there. Look into it.

I sent word to Jeanne, from Saint-Laurent, to go to La Chapelle.

The Ladies of Saint-Sulpice are extraordinarily fond of their

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Letter 313. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This letter was written during the lifetime of Madame Goussault, while the Sisters had their Motherhouse at La Chapelle. The passage referring to the Foundlings leads us to favor the year 1638.

2A ward in the Hôtel-Dieu reserved for contagious diseases. It was named after Cardinal du Prat, the Papal Legate in France, who had it built around 1530.

3Fourteen ladies, chosen every three months at the time of the Ember Days by and from the Ladies of Charity, had the duty of instructing and consoling the sick at the Hôtel-Dieu. (Cf. Coste, op. cit., p. 14.)
Sister Jeanne. We shall hurt their feelings if we take her away from them. She will have to be warned of her faults.

I hope that your son's illness is nothing but an upset and that his health will be better after that little fever.

You are right in choosing Marie-Denise for Saint-Etienne. I have no confidence in that Charity because of the frame of mind of the people who have a hand in it and because there are some men interfering with it.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

314. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[March 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I have been back at the Collège des Bons-Enfants since the day before yesterday, and I intend to go to Saint-Lazare today to spend the night, God willing.

Enclosed is a letter from Mademoiselle Poulaillon which I just received this minute. What do you think of her suggestion, Mademoiselle?

I have not heard anything at all about that matter of which you are aware. I shall soon have the happiness of seeing that individual's confessor.

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4 A Daughter of Charity.
5 Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, a parish in Paris.

Letter 314. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1 This letter seems to belong near no. 313.
I find your son a little pale — that sore hand is somewhat painful. He promised M. Pavillon that he would work on the resolution he is supposed to take. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble and obedient servant.

**VINCENT DEPAUL**

Monday, at ten o'clock, at the Collège des Bons-Enfants

*Addressed:* Mademoiselle Le Gras

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**315. - TO SAINT LOUISE**

(Now 277a.)

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**316. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, IN RICHELIEU**

Paris, March 15, 1638

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of the fourth of this month yesterday, but I have not yet received the one from the King's advocate in Loudun. I am very glad that you are furnishing your house little by little. It is not the time to talk about hurrying the church. I shall not lose the opportunity to do so, because I am very sorry to see you suffering¹ in that little place.

May God be blessed for the success of your mission and that of Messieurs Buissot and Durot! Oh! how useful the success of the latter ought to be for some of us!

I am a little worried about M. Gourrant's illness and that of

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¹First wording: "sorry to see suffering those of whom we..." Saint Vincent crossed out the last four words and added "you" between the lines, before "suffering."
Bastien. Although I have perfect confidence in your care, in the name of Our Lord, Monsieur, allow me to recommend them to you.

As for what you say about M. Codoing's making a big point of explaining the sixth commandment, I beg you, Monsieur, to tell him that I ask him most humbly not to speak about it any more, in Richelieu or anywhere else, except in a very moderate way, for several reasons I shall enumerate for him, which are of the greatest importance.

I am going to Rueil and shall have someone speak to His Eminence about the Charity, so that he may decide whether he would like to establish it while the people are well disposed. Let me know, meanwhile, how many sick people there are in Richelieu ordinarily — I do not mean in August, but now.

I see that you have met our little Brother Nicolas and received my letter. He is the nephew of M. de la Quin and is presenting a very fine young man from Poitou to be a brother here. He is going to see his mother whose health is in danger and, when that is done, he will come and pay you a visit.

Once again, please give the Company to understand from me that they must be extremely prudent about the explanation and any questions concerning the sixth commandment, and must not dress the children up for the procession in any way whatsoever, not even in surplices, except for those who usually wear them. We are in trouble because of those things and it will be a long time before

2Sébastien Nodo, a coadjutor brother, born about 1603 in the diocese of Rouen. He was received into the Congregation of the Mission in 1633.

3The words "or anywhere else, except in a very moderate way" are written between the lines.

4The words meaning "the greatest" are written between the lines.

5Cardinal Richelieu.

6The words "about the Charity" are written between the lines.

7A word added between the lines.

8A word added between the lines.

9Here the Saint had added the words "In accordance with that, we . . . ," which he then crossed out.

10Nicolas Corman, a coadjutor brother.
we come to the end of it. Blessed be God that there was no complaint about the mission that recently gave rise to people's talking about us!

What you see so scratched out, I wrote to you last night when I was half asleep. Pray to God and have others pray for the Company.

I am, in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert, Priest of the Mission, in Richelieu

317. - TO JEAN BECU, IN SAINT-VICTOR

[February or March 1638]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

So you are about to depart. We are longing to see you again in good health. Meanwhile, please find out from the Pastor of Saint-Victor (if you judge him to be of good character and sufficient ability), whether he intends to become a religious of the Order of Malta, as the statutes require of those who have their parishes. If you find him uncertain, give him to understand that this is the Commander's wish and that it must be carried out. Therefore, let him reflect on the matter and inform him of his final decision within a month because, if he does not want to do it, the Com-

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12The first wording read: "everyone's."
Letter 317. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
1An unknown hand wrote near the address: "in Lent, 1638."
2Saint-Victor-de-Buthon (Eure-et-Loir).
3Commander de Sillery.
4These words were added between the lines.
mander is determined to follow the statute of the Order and give the parish to someone else. And if he wants to do it, the said Commander would like to see him and have him understand his desire concerning some preparation he wants him to make before beginning the novitiate. Please tell him this gently and prudently, and convey his intent to the Commander. Also, please go on to Champagne,5 near Houdan,6 and find out from some of the people how they feel about the priest the Commander sent them a little while ago. But if you must take the coach to Dreux, then do so; the Commander will get this information elsewhere. I send greetings to the Pastor of Saint-Victor and to M. Cuissot, and I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL


318. - TO LEONARD BOUCHER, IN MONTMIRAIL

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Last Sunday, as I was leaving for the city and from there for the country, I received your letter of the tenth of this month. As I returned the evening before last somewhat exhausted, my mind was not functioning well enough to take care of sending someone to assist good M. Mouton. I am doing so this morning and send-

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5A little place in Eure-et-Loir.
6Principal town of a canton in Yvelines.

Letter 318. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
ing you Mathieu,¹ who is filled with zeal and charity, as you know. I beg you, Monsieur, not to spare anything for him. There are apothecaries in Montmirail and good surgeons. As for the doctor, you must send to Château-Thierry for one. There is one named M. Fournier, who is a good doctor and a friend of ours. You can use his services if you have not already called in someone else. And because he would be more comfortable in Montmirail, please have him taken there. I am writing to M. Octobre, the concierge, to have him find an apartment for him. I entreat you, Monsieur, not to leave him unless he is better, in which case you can complete the mission you have begun or join M. Lucas while M. Mouton is resting.

I most humbly greet the said M. Mouton and embrace him in spirit with a heart full of sorrow and tenderness. We shall not fail to pray to God for him, as you may suppose.

I am not going to say anything to you about the rest of your letter concerning the Charities, except that I can see quite well that this is not the time to reestablish them. Our Lord will give us a more opportune and peaceful moment, if He wishes.

I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, March 17, 1638

Addressed: Monsieur Boucher, Priest of the Mission, in Montmirail

¹Brother Mathieu Régnard was born in Brienne-le-Château, now Brienne-Napoléon (Aube), July 26, 1592. He entered the Congregation of the Mission in October 1631, pronounced vows October 28, 1644, and died October 5, 1669. He was the principal distributor of Saint Vincent’s alms in Lorraine and during the troubles of the Fronde. He was a great help to the Saint because of his daring, composure, and savoir faire. His biography is in vol. II of the Notices, pp. 29-33.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Enclosed is a letter from Barbe. I did not send her the one you wrote to her until this morning. I kept forgetting it when I wrote to Saint-Germain.3

But how are you, Mademoiselle? I have been told that you are better. I praise God for that and ask Him to restore as much of your strength as you need to go to the country this spring.

Last night I visited Madame Goussault, the President’s wife. I had not seen her at all since the beginning of her illness ten days ago. She is better and wants to see good weather again and a little more strength so that she may go for a ride in the country. She did not have the fever she was expecting yesterday.

Our Brother Alexandre4 is coming to see you today.

How are your little children? A word about them, please; not in writing, do not go to that trouble, but just by word of mouth.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

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Letter 319. - Autograph letter. In 1901 the original was given to Cardinal Langénieux, Archbishop of Reims, by M. Antoine Fiat, Superior General of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission.

1The presence of Barbe Angiboust in Saint-Germain-en-Laye leaves no doubt as to the year. On the other hand, the letter is anterior to no. 320.

2Barbe Angiboust.

3Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

4Alexandre Véronne, infirmarian at Saint-Lazare.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

These few lines are to tell you two things: first, that young man from Poitou asked to join the Company after a trip he is making home to see his good mother. If you need him, it does not matter to him whether he is with you or here. Therefore, make use of him as you wish.

The second thing is to let you know that the Cardinal has instructed me to tell you to set up the Charity in Richelieu. He will give it something annually until it can support itself by means of ordinary collections. According to that, while waiting, it would be appropriate for you to give it eight or ten écus immediately, if you can.

The King's advocate in Loudun told me that the Mission's method with regard to heretics is excellent, in that it establishes the divine truths without arguing controversial points. The Huguenots are delighted with this. Therefore, please continue.

The Cardinal is of the opinion that a day of rest should be taken each week during the mission, Saturday, for example. He ordered me to see that this is done everywhere. I am asking you, Monsieur, to begin in Richelieu.

I shall send you the Daughter of Charity. Perhaps Madame Goussault will bring her to you as soon as possible after Easter.

The hurry I am in does not allow me to tell you any more, except that I shall answer those who wrote to us by the first

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**Letter 320.** - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1See no. 316.

2Lambert aux Couteaux wrote to Cardinal Richelieu on April 16, 1638, to give him an account of the good results of the mission. His letter is in the Arch. du ministère des Aff. Etrang., France, Mémoires et Documents, 830, p. 105.

3Barbe Angiboust. The departure of the Sister was delayed until October.
messenger. I embrace them all, meanwhile, and I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert, Priest of the Mission, in Richelieu

321. - TO THE DUC D'ATRI

[Around March 1638]

Monseigneur,

The Comte de Bourlemont and his son, the abbé, have done me the honor of telling me that Your Lordship would like me to give you an account of the condition of Mademoiselle d'Atri, your daughter, so that Your Lordship may determine what will be best for her. I promised them that I would do so, all the more willingly, Monseigneur, because I am indebted to a special blessing from God for the opportunity to serve Your Lordship.

Three or four months ago, I received an order from the ecclesi-
siastical judge in Paris to visit your daughter. The Comte de Maure had asked permission to have her exorcised, according to the advice given him by several persons of deep piety. They feared that the good child was being tormented by some evil possession or obsession. The reason they had for believing this was the aversion the good child had for the things of God. It had reached such a point that she had not prayed at all for three years, from the time of her childhood when she was living in Ville-l'Évêque with Mademoiselle de Longueville, and for about two years she had been kept locked up in a room at Port-Royal without hearing Holy Mass. Therefore, that was why those good souls held that opinion and the reason why I had the happiness of visiting her. She immediately expressed her state to me with good judgment and candor, for she has a good, solid mind, far beyond that of the majority of young women, but a little melancholic. It was my opinion at once that it was just that melancholy depression tormenting her. Nevertheless, the respect I owed to those who held the opinion that there was some evil obsession caused me to submit my judgment to theirs. Therefore, when I was making my

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6Louis de Rochechouart, Comte de Maure, is known particularly for his opposition to Mazarin’s politics. When everyone was trembling before the powerful minister, he came to Court on March 20, 1649, and gave a speech before the entire Council, requesting his expulsion. He fought in the Princes’ party until the day when, wounded in the head and arm during a battle fought in Libourne in 1652, he was captured and held prisoner by the King’s men. He died on his estate of Essai, near Alençon, on November 9, 1669, at the age of sixty-seven, leaving no heirs. (Cf. Général-Comte de Rochechouart, Histoire de la maison de Rochechouart [2 vols., Paris: E. Allard, 1859], vol. II, pp. 81-88.)

7In the parish of Sainte-Madeleine de la Ville-l’Évêque, in Paris.

8Marie d’Orléans was born March 5, 1625, of Henri d’Orléans II and Louise de Bourbon. She was married May 22, 1657, to Henri de Savoie II, Duc de Nemours, and widowed January 14, 1659. After the death of her brothers, she inherited all the possessions of her family. She died June 16, 1707, leaving no children. She was, said Saint Simon (cf. Mémoires [26 vols., Paris: ed. de Boislisle, 1879-1914], vol. II, p. 225), a “very tall, extraordinary woman of great wit, who stayed very much at home in the Hôtel de Soissons, where she did not keep very good company; she was immensely rich and lived in great splendor.”

9The fact of this sequestration is so strange, that one might wonder whether the copyist of Reg. I read the text correctly. Should it not read: “she had remained” instead of “she was kept”? It might be that Mademoiselle d’Atri gave herself up to irreligious eccentricities during Mass. Given this hypothesis, there would be no reason to consider the text incorrect.
report to the ecclesiastical judge, I told him that I thought there was no objection to M. Charpentier's — he is a priest of renowned holiness in this city¹⁰ — performing a few cautious exorcisms, gently and without calling the evil spirit out, by prayer rather than by cursing. Such was the advice of the Reverend Father General of the Oratory.¹¹ It was not carried out because of the said Sieur Charpentier’s illness. In the meantime, God chose to send your daughter a rather serious and dangerous illness, during which she opened her heart. The Comte¹² and Comtesse de Maure,¹³ fearing for her salvation, persuaded her to go to confession to me. She did this by a general confession of her entire past life, with the greatest exactitude that I have ever seen; she spent three or four hours confessing on separate occasions. It was this action that confirmed the opinion I had beforehand. Since the illness had been a little drawn out and was some sort of languor, I thought she had gone back into the torment of the same depression. Now since she was cured, nonetheless, she found herself completely freed from it so that she asked to go to confession to me again and to receive Holy Communion which she had not done during her illness. She performed these actions with freedom of spirit as any other person would have done.

Some time later, she asked to be a religious and to be received at Port-Royal. As soon as she told me about it, I replied that it was not the time. She needed at least a year with her aunt,¹⁴ who should take her to get some country air before she thought of carrying out that plan. I told her the same thing as often as she and the Comte and Comtesse de Maure did me the honor of speaking

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¹⁰Hubert Charpentier, graduate in theology of the Sorbonne, was born at Coulommiers on November 3, 1565. After contributing to the foundation of Notre-Dame de Garaison, he founded two establishments to honor the Cross of the Savior: one at Betharram, the other at Mont-Valérien, near Paris. He died in Paris on December 10, 1650.
¹¹Charles de Condren.
¹²The text of the original manuscript bore the words: "... and the care of M." Coste omitted this phrase because the resulting construction would have made no sense.
¹³Louis de Rochechouart and Anne Doni d'Attichy.
¹⁴The Comtesse de Maure.
to me about it. However, that did not prevent her from secretly proceeding with her entrance into religious life or from putting forward a number of reasons, some based on the judgments of God and some on the fact that she could not stand the world’s manner of acting.

When the Messieurs de Bourlemont learned of this and informed the Comte and Comtesse de Maure that it was Your Lordship’s wish that she enter religious life, after some objection on the part of both, they agreed to it, although with great reluctance, fearing lest the good child go back into the same depression. After I had represented to the said Sieurs de Bourlemont the danger in which the good young woman was being placed, they passed over all the aforesaid objections, judging that such was your desire, and they placed her, not at Port-Royal, but in a monastery of the Jacobines.15

15Dominicans. Although she speaks more than once in her letters about the so-called possession and cure of Mademoiselle d’Atri, Mother Angélique Arnauld passes over Saint Vincent’s intervention in silence. She wrote to M. Macquet on June 29, 1637 (Lettres de la Rêvèrende Mère Marie-Angélique Arnauld, abbesse et réformatrice de Port-Royal [3 vols., Utrecht: n. p., 1742-1744], vol. I, p. 106): “Do not forget the young woman about whom I spoke to you, who is still in the miserable state in which she was.” She made the same recommendation to Saint Jane Frances on November 9: “I most humbly entreat you to pray to God for the deliverance of a poor young woman who is possessed.” (Communication of M. Gazier.) “It is the most pitiful situation in the world,” she again wrote to Saint Jane Frances on December 22, and asked her for some relics of Saint Francis de Sales to drive out the devil. (Ibid., vol. I, p. 132.) The cure came soon afterwards since Mother Angélique was able to add on February 17, 1638: “The young lady whom I recommended so urgently to you . . . was set free two hours after she placed around her neck the wooden image of the Blessed Virgin that the good Mother gave us.” The dispositions of Mademoiselle d’Atri changed so much that she felt attracted to the religious life and would have followed her inclination, were it not for the opposition of her family. (Ibid., vol. I, p. 136.) A month later, Mother Angélique recommended the greatest discretion to M. Macquet concerning this marvelous conversion: “I implore you, in the name of God, that there be no talk about this miracle of the Blessed Virgin, of which you are aware. That is the tendency of the Sisters, and it is the style to want to honor God, His holy Mother, and the saints only through miracles and discourses. . . . I was wrong to have told you about it, and I see clearly that it was not through the spirit of God, because instead of inspiring the Sisters with a renewed, unassuming, and interior trust in the Blessed Virgin, all it has done is create a stir. I am certain that not one of them prayed to her afterwards to be freed of her imperfections. It is far better for them never to speak at all than to talk even about miracles that way; the Blessed Virgin prefers their silence.” (Ibid., vol. I, p. 138.) How can Mother Angélique’s report be reconciled with that of Saint Vincent? It would seem that there were two cures;
That, Monseigneur, is what has happened in this affair. The Messieurs de Bourlemont thought it fitting for me to write to Your Lordship about it. It will be up to you, Monseigneur, to decide now what would be best with regard to the good young woman's direction. It is difficult for me to speak to you about this matter, but I thought I was obliged to do so in conscience and that you would not be offended since your daughter's salvation is in danger. If God were pleased to make me worthy of rendering you some more agreeable service, His Divine Goodness knows that I have a great desire to do so and that there is no one in the world over whom Our Lord has given you more power than over me. I am, in the love of Our Lord.

322. - TO ANTOINE PORTAIL, IN FRENEVILLE

Paris, April 28, 1638

. . . Well now, Monsieur, that is a great deal with regard to temporal matters. May it please the goodness of God that, according to your desire, they may not divert you from spiritual ones. May He share with us the eternal thought He has of Himself while continuously giving His full attention to the direction of the world and to providing for the needs of all His creatures, even down to a tiny gnat! O Monsieur, how we must work at acquiring a share in that spirit!

I am, in the same spirit, Monsieur.

one of which did not last; but it would be difficult to say which was the first. Could not Mother Angélique's wish, expressed in her letter of March 1638, have been occasioned by a relapse? Whatever the case, the cure was permanent. Later, in a letter of October 22, Mother Angélique reminded Mademoiselle d'Atri of the grace she had received.

Letter 322. - Files of Turin, copy made by Antoine Portail.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of May 3 and understand from it: (1) the difficulty of continuing the mission to the soldiers; (2) the rumor going around concerning Saint-Lazare; (3) that fault is being found because no one wrote to anyone in the city to recommend the Company.

Now I shall tell you with regard to the first, that the unsettled state of the poor people would probably hinder them from reaping any benefit from the mission. We must patiently await the time of the ordinands in order to give the retreat there, if the Bishop of Troyes approves. If not, it would be well to go and give the mission in the other places belonging to the Commander. If indeed you do work with the ordinands, I shall send you M. Baudet, whom I have purposely detained here for that work, but you must notify me ahead of time.

As for the rumor going around about Saint-Lazare, what shall we do about it? We must put up with such rumors patiently. Our Lord will bring about their disappearance since they have no foundation.
I wrote to tell you how the Commander and Father de Gondi feel about the third point. It is better to be at fault with the advice of those two good men than to take the matter upon ourselves. I shall talk to them about it again and shall send them your letter. It would be well for you to notify me of all that has to do with us and to do so by every messenger. Please write to the Bishop of Troyes concerning the ordinands, not as though you are questioning the matter, but to find out from him if there will be many ordinands.

Since the young man he sent us has no desire at all to be a member of the Company, and because it is to be feared that there might be some danger of his causing dissatisfaction on the part of the other students, all of whom wish to join the Company, we decided to place him at the Collège du Cardinal. We shall willingly pay his board there and hear his lessons sometimes, so that it will be as though he were with us, there being only a wall between that college and ours. Please inform the Bishop of Troyes of this, Monsieur. Tell him also that we shall take special care of him and shall see to the payment of his board without there being need for him to pay anything else. It will be sufficient that he be provided with clothing.

I am to leave this morning for Brie-Comte-Robert. From there I shall be able to go and pay a visit in Fréneville, so that I can be back on the eve of the Ascension.

I send heartfelt greetings to MM. du Chesne, Savary, and our

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6Collège du Cardinal Lemoine, separated from the Collège des Bons-Enfants by a joint wall.
7Locality in Seine-et-Marne, thirty kilometers from Paris, where the Missionaries and Saint Vincent himself preached. The Commander de Sillery founded a mission there which was to be given every five years.
8Hamlet in the commune of Valpuiseaux (Essonne). The Congregation of the Mission had a farm there, where on several occasions Saint Vincent spent more or less prolonged periods of time.
Brother René, and I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur Dufestel, Priest of the Mission, in Sancey

323. TO JEAN BECU, IN MARCHAIS

[May 20 or 21, 1638]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Since you are having so much difficulty in the country, I entreat you, Monsieur, to go and give the mission in Montmirail. You will have to give the morning sermon. M. Abeline, who is with the

9Pierre du Chesne, Pierre Savary, and an unidentified coadjutor brother of the Congregation of the Mission named René. Pierre Savary, Priest of the Mission, was born in 1606 in Neuville-Vitasse (diocese of Arras). He entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1637 and was stationed at the Seminary of Troyes.

Letter 323. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1A small locality in Aisne.

2On the side reserved for the address the following words are written: "Tuesday or Wednesday before Pentecost, May 1638."

3Better known as Abelly. Louis Abelly was born in Paris in 1604. From the earliest years of his priesthood he took part in Saint Vincent’s apostolic labors. The Saint recognized his worth and spoke so highly of him to François Fouquet, Bishop-elect of Bayonne, that he appointed him his Vicar General. His stay in Bayonne was not long. He accepted a simple village parish near Paris and shortly afterwards (1644) was given charge of Saint-Josse, a parish in the capital, where he formed an ecclesiastical community. He later became director of the Sisters of the Cross (1650), chaplain of the general hospital (1657), and Bishop of Rodez (1662). In 1666 he resigned from his See for reasons of health and retired to Saint-Lazare, where he spent the last twenty-five years of his life in recollection and study. We have almost thirty of his books of devotion, history, and theology. The best known are Sacersdos christianus (Paris, 1656); Medulla theologica (2 vols., Paris, 1652-1653), which earned for him from the author of the Lutrin the nickname “Moelleux” [from the French for medulla - moelle]; and above all, La Vie du Vénérable Vincent de Paul. He is not merely the sponsor of this work, as has been asserted, but is truly its author. His task was greatly facilitated by Brother Ducournau, who collected and classified the documents. He made a donation to the house of Saint-Lazare of some property he owned in Pantin, which became the country house of the students. Abelly
Bishop of Bayonne,⁴ will teach the adult catechism, and M. Le Breton,⁵ who is also with him, will perhaps teach the children’s. He has never been on a mission, but he is learned, quite devout, and has very good sense nonetheless, which makes us think that he will do well. I shall discuss it with him. If he does not do it, then M. Boucher or M. Cuissot will. Inform M. Lucas of this. They can leave tomorrow in order to be in Montmirail by Saturday. It would be well for you to go and arrange some accommodations. I am writing a note about this to M. Octobre, the concierge.⁶ If it is necessary at times, you can have M. Lucas help you with the morning sermon. If the Bishop of Soissons⁷ sends someone for the octave of the Blessed Sacrament, take a rest. You will have to attend to the arrangements to be made and call a meeting of the Ladies of Charity. I shall send you a brother to serve in Montmirail—Gallemant⁸ or someone else—but you will have to give some attention to the food.

I most humbly send greetings to the Company. M. Abeline is a very good man, very prudent and discreet, and M. Le Breton, very fervent. I entreat the Company, for the love of Jesus Christ, to give them good example and show them great charity and respect. One of them is soon to be the Vicar General of Bayonne. In the name of God, Monsieur, may they leave the Company edified. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Please be sure to give the postage fee for the letters to M. Octobre and to arrive in Montmirail early on Saturday so that you

died October 4, 1691, and was buried, according to his wish, in the church of Saint-Lazare, under the Saints-Anges chapel. (Cf. Collet, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 5 ff.)

⁴Francois Fouquet.
⁵A priest of the Tuesday Conferences.
⁶Of the Château de Montmirail.
⁷Simon Le Gras (1624-1656).
⁸Jean Gallemant, a coadjutor brother, was born in 1608 in Conteville (Seine-Maritime) and was received into the Congregation of the Mission on April 3, 1638.
can have the accommodations arranged and welcome M. Abeline and M. Le Breton.

Addressed: Monsieur Bécu, Priest of the Mission, presently in Marchais

324. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Around May 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

The proposal you made about Madame de Herse seemed complicated to me at first. Nevertheless, we shall have to look into it.

I am going to the city and hope to see you in La Chapelle tomorrow. However, if the carriage is going to pick you up, please do not fail to go, and arrange things at your house as you think best.

I praise God for what you told me about Madame Turgis and beg Him to increase His grace in her.

I do not understand what you told me about Isabelle and Barbe; explain it to me. There was one word I was not able to read concerning the matter.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

Letter 324. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

*This letter seems to belong with no. 325.

Elisabeth Martin.

Barbe Angiboust.
325. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[May 24, 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

You will see before God, I hope, that you did the right thing in sending away that good young woman. You will do well to be satisfied with the payment of two hundred livres for her board and to allow Isabelle\(^2\) to go to Argenteuil.

My little fever will not permit me to speak to your Sisters this week.

Enclosed is a note with a gift of the Holy Spirit, sent to you from Sainte-Marie.\(^3\)

In the name of God, Mademoiselle, take care of your health. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your servant.

V. DEPAUL

Monday

You can send Barbe to Saint-Germain\(^4\) whenever you wish. Mademoiselle de Chaumont feels that she is necessary there and Madame Goussault does not think there is any need to send her to Richelieu. But without asking for it, however, she would like us to be able to send three to the hospital in Angers.\(^5\) I sent her word that we would talk about it when she comes back.

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Letter 325. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1The return of Sister Barbe Angiboust to Saint-Germain-en-Laye could have taken place only in 1638. Reference to the Holy Spirit and the mention of Monday after the signature prompt us to believe that this letter was written on Pentecost Monday, thus enabling us to assign the month and day.

2Elisabeth Martin. She was a native of Argenteuil (Val d'Oise).

3Visitation Convent.

4Saint Vincent had recently recalled Barbe Angiboust from Saint-Germain-en-Laye to send her to Richelieu, where she did not go until later. (Cf. no. 320.)

5Saint-Jean Hospital in Angers. The Daughters of Charity went there at the end of the year.
The officers of the Hôtel-Dieu Ladies are coming here to the house tomorrow. See if you have any advice to give me.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras.

326. - TO JEAN BECU, IN MONTMIRAIL

Paris, June 2 [1638]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Blessed be God for all that you wrote to me! I shall inquire about a schoolteacher, if there are none to be found there and if you let me know what her salary will amount to. It is very dangerous for girls and boys to go to school together.

The direction of the Charity belongs to the Prior. If there are any funds, there will be no harm in using them to have the chapel set up.

I am a little suspicious about that poor woman's fondness for arranging her hair. You must try to make her change. If she is unwilling to do so, in nomine Domini. What you are suggesting to her seems reasonable to me.

I wrote to the Bishop of Soissons about the two gentlemen, Abeline and Breton.

It would be well to have some restitution made or an alms given for the release of that prisoner.

Please tell M. Cuissot that his good brother has come to see me several times and that he is living and working with a goldsmith.

Letter 326. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1This letter was written in the same year as nos. 323 and 329, both of which bear exact dates.

2Jean-François Delabarre, born in Chateau-Thierry, named Prior of Montmirail in 1636. He resigned from his parish in 1646 and died in 1647.

3Simon Le Gras.
Tell him also that I have forgotten his name and do not know how to send him the letter he intends to write to him. He seems good-natured to me.

We had sixty ordinands or thereabouts. They did very well, thank God. The Archbishop\(^4\) came to see them and went away quite satisfied, thank God; and with good reason, by the mercy of God.

M. Mouton no longer has a fever. Everyone is well. Only good M. Fouquet, the father,\(^5\) is worse and in critical condition. Please pray and have others pray to God for him. He is one of the most upright men I know. I am, for M. Abeline and M. Le Breton and for the entire Company, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur Bécu, Priest of the Mission, in Montmirail

327. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1638 or 1639]\(^1\)

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

\(^4\)Jean-François de Gondi.

\(^5\)François Fouquet, Vicomte de Vaux, was born in Brittany in 1587 and died in Paris on April 22, 1640. He was a shipowner when Richelieu called him to the Council of the Navy and Commerce. He became a Counselor in the Parlement, Master of Requests, and Ambassador to Switzerland. He had twelve children by his wife, Marie de Maupeou. Five daughters entered the Visitation: Nicolas, the most famous of his children, was Superintendent of Finances; François occupied the Episcopal Sees of Bayonne, Agde, and Narbonne; and Louis took his brother’s place as Bishop of Agde.

Letter 327. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^1\)This letter was written after the work of the Foundlings had begun (January 1638) and before Madame Goussault’s last illness (July 1639).
I shall try to go and serve that good young woman Saturday at the usual time.
I am stunned by the death of so many of those little creatures; I think there may be something to what you say. Please let me know what Madame de Herse told you about it. We shall really have to think seriously about what we should do in this situation.
I already wrote to Madame Goussault, I believe, that I was praising God for letting her think of inviting you to go to Grigny. I say the same thing to you. You will find there M. Pavillon and two priests from the house here; one of them has just left the seminary and the other is still in it. There is also a nephew of the Pastor of Saint-Gervais, who lives at Saint-Nicolas. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

V. D. P.

Thursday, at four o'clock

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras.

328. - TO NICOLAS MARCEILLE

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I thank you most humbly for taking care to send us so promptly all that I asked of you in my last letter and I entreat you, in the name of Our Lord, to take care of your health. M. de la Salle

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3Hear her confession.
1A parish in Paris. The Pastor of Saint-Gervais was at that time Charles-François Talon, Doctor of the Sorbonne, former Advocate General in the Parlement of Paris.
2The seminary of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet.
Letter 328. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
1Nicolas Marceille, Priest of the Mission, born in Pont-Sainte-Maxence, was received into the Congregation of the Mission in 1635. He was Procurator of the house of Saint-Lazare.
wrote me that you seemed a little unwell. I beseech you, Mon-
sieur, to get some rest and have yourself purged and bled.

I shall be upset if you did not allow the Prior\textsuperscript{2} to have his say in
the lease executed for the farmer from Le Bourget.\textsuperscript{3}

You must not have the hay cut while this rainy weather lasts, no
matter what the workers tell you. It would be well to write to
Bertrand Denise in Villepreux for me and ask him to send you that
good man he sent to Saint-Lazare to toss and separate the hay.
Send him here, giving him some money for that purpose. Jour-
dain\textsuperscript{4} knows where the people in Villepreux live and will be able
to send the letter with a trustworthy person. The owner of the
meadow opposite the church in La Chapelle knows how to take
care of it. When you find out that he is having his own cut, you
can have ours cut, and not any sooner. Bertrand Denise is Father
de Gondi’s farmer on his Villepreux farm. It would be well for you
to contract by the day with the good man he sends you and send
him here to us.

My little illness is still with me; nonetheless, I think I glimpse
some slight improvement. I intend, with God’s help, to be purged,
unless something absolutely requires my return.

Well now, I close, recommending myself to your prayers and in
spirit to that good and holy man, your father. I am, in the love of
Our Lord, your servant.

V. DEPAUL

Fréneville, octave day of the Blessed Sacrament\textsuperscript{5}

If you need little Pasquier, you may keep him; we shall do

\textsuperscript{2}Adrien Le Bon.

\textsuperscript{3}A locality near Saint-Denis in Seine-Saint-Denis. There was some property there that had
belonged to the priory of Saint-Lazare since the twelfth century. (Arch. Nat. S 6651.)

\textsuperscript{4}Jean Jourdain, a coadjutor brother.

\textsuperscript{5}An unknown hand wrote near these words: June 17, 1638. The person who wrote that date
did not realize that in 1638 the octave day of the Blessed Sacrament fell on June 10 and not June
17. In June 1638 Saint Vincent was in Fréneville, and ill, which leads us to conclude that the
year and the month are correct.
without him here. Pierre is doing what he used to do. Please have M. Boudet bled and purged, unless he has had it done since his return. I send him my humble greetings. Please send our Brother Louistre's letters to the place they are addressed in the direction of Mantes on Saturday morning. The messenger leaves Paris that day.

_Addressed_: Monsieur de Marceille, Priest of the Mission, at Saint-Lazare

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329. - TO JEAN BECU, IN MONTMIRAIL

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Last night, in Fréneville, I received the letter you wrote me on the fifth of this month. I am rather worried about your little indisposition and am asking Our Lord to restore you to complete health.

You would do well to give twenty sous to the vergers and half an écu to the gardener.

You can do only what you have done, which was to send those two adulterers away secretly, unless one of them comes back. In that case, it would be wise to do what you can to persuade them to separate. The woman will perhaps be more disposed to do so.

The matter of the schoolteacher is to be handled by Father de Gondi, since he is right there. He will also handle the reimbursement of the Charity's funds.

I do not doubt that the mission is moving slowly, with the present confusion of minds due to the way things are nowadays.

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Letter 329. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

7The landowner of the locality.
The division with the Prior is probably a contributing factor as well. You must not take sides in the matter; only neutral people can reconcile minds.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during octaves is not customary everywhere. When in Rome, you must do as the Romans do and accept the local customs, if they are not immoral.

The notary, who wrote as the parties directed him to do, did his duty by warning them before writing and, although he was aware of the contrary, he was, nevertheless, obliged to believe the contracting parties. He is there as a judge who must give more credence to what the parties prove to him than to what he has seen to the contrary. So much for the first case.

As for the second, I doubt that the person who bought the meadow, with the possibility of its being repurchased within three years, is in good faith, because it was not sold for a fair price. There is a loss of about sixty livres. The man would do well to release the seller from the obligation of the clause stating that it cannot be bought back after three years, or else give him sixty livres over and above the hundred for an unconditional sale. That way he will be buying the meadow at five percent, which is the fair price for a commoner's property. Also, that type of contract, which carries the obligation of the clause above, is contrary to good morals when the just price is not given.

There you have, Monsieur, what I can tell you from Fréneville, where I am with my little fever by Alexandre’s order. Many people here are asking about you. Brother Hubert is doing incomparably well. Madame de la Grange is critically ill; she is hemorrhaging from the lung. She will be a great loss to this parish. I recommend her to your prayers and send most humble greetings to

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3Jean-François Delabarre.
4First name of Brother Véronne, infirmarian of Saint-Lazare.
4Hubert Bécu, Jean Bécu’s brother, was born in Braches (Somme) around 1607, entered the Congregation of the Mission in July 1629 as a coadjutor brother, and was admitted to vows February 24, 1645.
M. Abeline, M. Le Breton, and the rest of the Company. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL.

Fréneville, octave day of the feast of the Blessed Sacrament,⁵ 1638

Addressed: Monsieur Octobre, concierge of the Château de Montmirail, to be given, please, to Monsieur Bécu, Priest of the Mission, in Montmirail.

330. - TO JEAN DEHORGNY

[June 1638]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am sending this messenger expressly to tell you that that good man from Osny, about one league beyond Pontoise, never arrived. I do not know whether it is his fault or the doorkeeper’s. Please send someone tomorrow morning to the Courcelles² farmer to tell him that I am asking him to send me one of his sons-in-law. He can leave late that same day, spend the night at Saint-Lazare, and set out early the next morning so as to be here Tuesday evening. The season for sowing the farmer’s oats is growing short. He only has fifteen more acres left to do.

Also, please send for the farmer’s eldest son, the married one in La Chapelle. Find out from him how M. Bienvenu, our farmer in

⁵June 10.
Letter 330. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
⁶On the side reserved for the address someone has written: Fréneville, 1638. This letter seems to belong between nos. 329 and 331.
²Courcelles did not cover a large area. Its land is included today in the commune of Levallois-Perret. (Cf. Lebeuf, op. cit., vol. I, p. 429.)
Gonesse, had him harrow twice at the same time the wheat-field in which the Prior had his sainfoin sown — the one behind the barn. It seems to me that the first time the harrow was turned over on one end, and the other time through the field the harrow was not turned over but used in the usual way. I entreat you, Monsieur, to find out about this from that young man or, if he does not remember, from the said Sieur Bienvenu, and write and let me know.

I did not go on to Limouron because, in addition to finding enough to keep me busy, I was not feeling too well the first day and neither was Jean Besson. We signed a contract for the repairs to be made and for the garden wall for about one hundred écus. This morning we are to conclude the contract for the farmer’s sheep; he wanted us to have them present.

If I can, I shall leave for Limouron soon. That place belongs entirely to God. O Monsieur, how admirable is the effect of His goodness on those people!

I doubt that I can be back in Paris before Thursday or Friday. Please send the messenger back with the man who is coming to do the sowing. Assure the latter that we shall remunerate him.

Meanwhile, I send greetings to all of you, to the Prior, and to the whole house. I am your servant.

V. DEPAUL

_Addressed:_ Monsieur Dehorgny, Priest of the Mission, at Saint-Lazare

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3Principal town of a canton in Val-d’Oise.
4Adrien Le Bon.
5Limoron, a district in the commune of Villamblain (Loiret). Adrien Le Bon was titular of the Priory of Limoron.
6Jean Besson, a coadjutor brother, was born in Carisey (Yonne) on November 30, 1611, entered the Congregation of the Mission, December 8, 1635, and was admitted to vows October 21, 1646.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I came back from Limouron quite late yesterday and have as yet been able to read only your letter and M. Marceille's. I am sending you that good young man from Mespuits; I found him here because M. Portail failed to send him to you. Have him make his retreat at once, please. I am keeping little Jean until tomorrow.

By the grace of God, I am in good health since my journey. It is astonishing that, while I have been here without doing anything, I have found myself almost as I was in Paris and the great number of concerns has all but taken away my illness entirely. If I continue to be as fit as I am, I shall return around the end of the week, God willing.

Meanwhile, what can I tell you concerning the Prior? If there is some reason for going to see him, either you or M. de Marceille should do so. However, I do not know if he spoke up at the latest leasing of Le Bourget. I was surprised by someone's telling me that I had said to have it concluded during my absence, because I think I did not make myself clearly understood. It seems to me that I had said to put off the farmer until my return, for I was well aware that there was something I had to get approved by the Prior. Doubtless M. de Marceille understood otherwise. I know, however, that I spoke to the Prior about the farmer's offer the day before my departure. He told me that it would be better to accept his offer rather than the one being made by someone else.

I beg you, Monsieur, never to allow one of our doorkeepers to leave the door for any reason whatsoever; see that there are always two of them.

Letter 331. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1A small commune in Essonne.
2Adrien Le Bon.
You did not tell me who is taking care of the prisons and who has the keys to them.

What shall I say to you about those individuals who are asking to become members of the Company? Nothing, except that I shall abide by your decision in their regard. The young man from Caen, who is fearful of his father's affection, must be under consideration for a longer time, especially if his father is poor and the boy has nothing really worthy of commendation.

I am writing this just after getting out of bed. This letter can serve for M. de Marceille as well. I ask him to give eight hundred livres to Alexandre for the fabric and to try to stretch out what he has left. On my return, we shall see what can be done in order for us to have enough to live on. I earnestly entreat him to take care of his health — and Alexandre of his — and to send Henri to Saint-Denis to get the fabric.

If he is hard up, M. de Marceille could tell M. de Vincy that I shall consider the request he made for a boy. But as for our Brother Besson, we must not even think of him. I greet him most humbly. Also, assure the Prior of my obedience if you go to see him, and give my regards to M. Cosin.

Good day, Monsieur, I am your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

A butcher from around Limouron, who is the brother of the Mother Superior of the Sisters of Charity at the Place Royale,\(^3\) will be bringing his flock of sheep to spend the night at Saint-Lazare. Please make arrangements with the farmer to lend him the stables. Lodge the gentleman and his servants in our house and treat them cordially on their way both to and from the Saint-Denis fair.

I shall send little Jean back to you tomorrow. M. de Marceille

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\(^3\)A hospital for sick women had been in operation since 1629 near the Place Royale (now the Place des Vosges), on the corner of the rue des Tournelles and the rue des Minimes. It was confided to the Hospitalières de la Charité Notre-Dame. (Cf. Lebeuf, *op. cit.*, p. 359.)
will make an agreement with the haymaker from Villepreux and will send him here only when we notify him.

June 14, 1638

Addressed: Monsieur de la Salle, Priest of the Mission, at Saint-Lazare, in Paris

332. - TO DENIS DE CORDES

[1638]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am leaving for Rueil. We have some urgent business. I most humbly entreat you to offer our apologies to M. Guillotin of Etampes who is supposed to come and see you this afternoon about the farm in Fréneville and conclude, or rather sign the contract, if you find it acceptable. M. de Marceille will bring you the money and specify the conditions if need be. The price is twelve hundred livres out of which the sum of fifty livres revenue at eight and one third per cent must be retained on the one hand and ten livres on the other. It would be wise to procure the papers he has and to have the number of acres of land specified. There are said to be 150, a great number of which are lying fallow.

Pardon such great importunity, Monsieur. I am your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Monday morning

Addressed: Monsieur de Marceille to be given to Monsieur de Cordes, Counselor of the Châtelet

Letter 332. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1An unknown hand added 1638 after the words Monday morning.
Monsieur,

I have just been told that there is contagion in the house where the Sisters from the Hôtel-Dieu are living. Please let me know whether we should take them out of there or whether, while allowing them to stay, we should advise the ladies not to go there. And should we ourselves go there— I mean the Sisters from here? Is there any harm in our taking them some preserves for the Hôtel-Dieu?

You have forgotten the critical situation that I told you I had to discuss with you. I do not know what our good God is trying to make me understand, but I hope you will enlighten me, since I am, Monsieur, your most humble daughter and most grateful servant.

L. de M.

I am not saying a thing to you about my acting so amiss with regard to the Sisters. I await whatever directions you may choose to give me.

July 2 [Probably 1638]'

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

334. - TO JEAN DE FONTENEIL, IN BORDEAUX

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I thank you a thousand times for the alms you gave poor Beyrie and I beg God to be his patience and your reward.

I sent your package to Châlons and have received no answer

Letter 333. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

'The year during which the plague raged with exceptional violence in Paris. Saint Vincent thought it wrong to interrupt the serving of the collation during that time.

Letter 334. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

'This name is found quite often in the old Catholic registers of Saint Vincent's native village. Could this Beyrie be the son of one of the Saint’s sisters?
concerning it to send to you. If you wish to write another letter, I shall give the woman who owns the coach, who is a friend of mine, the special responsibility of delivering it.

I am, moreover, infinitely consoled by the blessing God has been pleased to give your holy community and I am asking Him to bless it more and more. It seems to me that you should in no way be sorry for having spent so much time honoring the hidden life of Our Lord nor should you have any scruples, in the spirit of humility which I think Our Lord has shared with you, about beginning to manifest the dawn of that day on the horizon of events.

You are a source of help for us in Bordeaux on every occasion that arises. I beg you, Monsieur, to forgive me if I make use of it too freely.

We are bringing M. Grenu back here. Perhaps he will stop at your house and be able to meet with Messieurs de Sergis and Brunet or even with M. Boudet, who is going from Brittany to Toulouse. If any of them need exchange money, please give them some, Monsieur, and I shall repay you at the appointed time.

I send regards to the gentlemen of your company with all the humility and respect in my power, and I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, July 20, 1638

Addressed: Monsieur de Fonteneil, Canon of the Chapter of Saint-Seurin, in Bordeaux
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Would you take a foundling brought here yesterday by some well-to-do people who found him in a field belonging to our house? He is only two or three days old and was baptized yesterday evening at Saint-Laurent. Since he is a foundling, there is nothing to be said against this, unless it be that you are not taking him from the Couche or from the Hôtel-Dieu. If it is thought necessary to take care of that formality, we shall do so. In the meantime, I beg you, Mademoiselle, to take him in and entrust him to a wet nurse.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

V. D.

Tuesday morning

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

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**Letter 335.** - Archives of the Mission (Paris), original autograph letter.

1This letter is subsequent to the foundation of the work of the Foundlings (1638). After 1639, Saint Vincent would have written “Tuesday morning” at the beginning of the letter, not at the end.

2Saint Vincent appears to be asking Saint Louise either to accept a foundling who had not first been placed in one of the institutions designated by the city (the Couche and the Hôtel-Dieu), or to circumvent established regulations. This would be a new approach in his concern for abandoned infants.
Monsieur,

Enclosed is a letter. I feel that it is necessary to do something about this poor young woman immediately. She has so won the hearts of the inhabitants that rumor has it that, if she is removed, no other Sister will be accepted. For a long time now, she has been recommending herself to everyone, especially to some old bachelors named Messieurs de la Noue. She has been obtaining little delicacies from them and has been living well, receiving bottles of wine and pâtés. I most humbly entreat you, for the love of God, to consider the consequences of this unfortunate situation of which I feel I am the cause. Please ask our good God to pardon me, Monsieur, your most humble and most grateful daughter and servant.

L. de M.

Tuesday

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

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337. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1638]

Do not be astonished at seeing the rebellion of that poor creature. We shall see many more like her, if we live on; and should we not suffer as much from our own as Our Lord did from His? Let us be truly submissive to His good pleasure in the situation of the moment. We must try to get her to come here, either by my writing to her myself, or by sending the founding Lady or a priest


1This letter was written after no. 289 and before the departure of Barbe Angiboust for Richelieu.


1This letter is a reply to the preceding one.
from this house, for we really must withdraw her. You shall see
the letter she wrote me. *O bon Dieu*, how that poor creature
deceived me!

Please let me know your thoughts on the matter. Would Barbe\(^2\)
be more apt to win her over, or would your health permit you to
take little Jeanne\(^3\) there and settle her in the place?

If it is in Nogent that she wishes to live, Madame de Brou,\(^4\) M.
de Vincy’s cousin, is in charge there.

**VINCENT DEPAUL**

338. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1638 or 1639]\(^1\)

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I have had M. de la Salle write again to the Pastor in Saint-
Germain, requesting him to send that Sister back. Madame de

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\(^2\)Barbe Angiboust.

\(^3\)Jeanne Lepeintre, whom Madame Goussault, her mistress, had sent to the Daughters of
Charity. Saint Vincent says elsewhere that she was “a very fine girl, wise and gentle.” Both he
and Saint Louise had great confidence in her because of her intelligence and organizing ability.
She was first employed at the school of the Charity in Saint-Germain-en-Laye (1642). In the
spring of 1646, after installing the Sisters in the hospital of Le Mans, she returned to Paris
where she was put in charge of the Motherhouse while Saint Louise was establishing the house
in Nantes. Jeanne then became Superior in Nantes (1647) where great difficulties were being
encountered. In 1654 she headed the foundation in Châteaudun and then in 1657, in Salpêtrière
(cf. *Écrits spirituels*, L.64, n.1). In the manuscript, *Recueil de Pièces relatives aux Filles de la
Charité* (p. 24), we read: “During the lifetime of Mademoiselle Le Gras, she appeared to be a
hypochondriac. Moreover, she could not be made to do what she did not like, nor would she
accept other opinions than those of her own mind.” She was reprimanded more than once by
Saint Vincent because of this fault. Her last years were sad ones spent at the Nom-de-Jésus, to
which she had to be committed because she was no longer rational.

\(^4\)A Lady of Charity.

Letter 338. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph
letter.

\(^1\)This letter belongs to the period between the foundation of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and the
death of Madame Goussault, September 20, 1639.
Chaumont just wrote to me about the matter at the request of Mademoiselle Chemerault who told her about it last night. We shall have to do what we can about the case but, in the end, we shall have to yield to the pressure if influential people get involved.

Madame Goussault is satisfied with Barbe's sister. I think you would be wise to hold on to her. Her brother is about to return home.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

I instructed Madame Goussault to send you Madame Chaumont’s letter which I just sent to her.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

339. - TO ROBERT DE SERGIS, IN ANGOULEME

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received the letter you wrote to me partly in Plassac and partly in Angoulême on the feast of Saint Martha. I understand from it, I think, that the difficulties people had put in your mind have subsided; I always believed that would be the case. All I have

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2One of the maids of honor of the Queen, Anne of Austria. She participated in the schemes of Cardinal Richelieu against the Queen.

3Cécile-Agnès Angiboust rendered great service to the Community, especially at the hospital of Angers, where she was Superior from 1647 to 1657. “Sister Cécile is invaluable,” said Saint Vincent after seeing her at work.

Letter 339. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1A small locality in Charente.

2July 29.
to ask you on that point, Monsieur, is that you work at ridding yourself of the esteem you have had up to now for the glitter and sparkle of virtue and the vain applause of the world, which Our Lord so assiduously avoided and so often recommends us to shun, and that you labor in earnest to acquire true and solid virtues.

I am a little upset that M. Brunet left without you, contrary to the rule which obliges us not to separate. In the name of God, Monsieur, let us be very exact in observing all that has been prescribed for us, and Our Lord will bless us. The contrary leaves everything to be feared.

I am very glad that you are pleased to have M. Boudet, and indeed you have good reason to be, for he is a holy soul. I hope you will consider him as such. However, that will not prevent you from continuing as director until you receive an order to the contrary. I have written to the Archbishop of Toulouse about that.

I would be very happy if you would visit the Charities in Saintonge and take with you that good priest from Plassac, until you meet M. Boudet in Bordeaux. He has been told to go there as soon as possible.

Moreover, I am very glad about the opportunity you have of getting some money in Agen. I shall have it returned here by a bill of exchange. There are still one hundred livres left to pay according to the account and your receipts, which the Vicar General sent me yesterday. I shall have the money dispatched to him today. He has received seven hundred livres from us, and you, eight hundred from there. Is that correct?

I think it would also be well for you to visit the Charities established in the diocese of Bordeaux. M. Fonteneil will give you the names of the places. When you pass through Bourg, however, visit the one there; it is on your way back to Bordeaux. Bourg is on the Garonne between Blaye and Bordeaux. I am, in the love of

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3Charles de Montchal.
4Principal town of a canton in Gironde.
Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, August 14, 1638

Addressed: Monsieur de Sergis, Priest of the Congregation of the Mission, presently in the service of the Bishop of Angoulême, in Angoulême

340. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[Around 1638]

Monsieur,

I am going to send your answer to Madame Pelletier by Sister Turgis. I am so wicked as to have wished that those instructions about her returning soon had not been in it.

Monsieur de Liancourt stopped here yesterday. I did not see him, but he left word that his wife was very upset about my return.

My little bloodletting yesterday helped me to perspire all night, giving me great relief, thank God. As a result, I have gotten out of bed. Since I do not have sufficient strength or health to come and visit you, considering the bad weather, and since I need to talk to you, I had word sent to the brother at the door, asking you to take the trouble to come here. I am taking this liberty because of the confidence you have given me in this regard before, since I believe myself always to be, Monsieur, your most humble and most grateful daughter and servant.

L. DE M.

Sunday

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent


The presence in Paris or in its environs of Madame Pelletier and of Sister Turgis requires this approximate date.
341. - TO NOEL BRULART DE SILLERY

[Between 1634 and 1640]

Monsieur,

I have never experienced such an amiable goodness as yours and, if I had as many graces as you, I would offer you one of the most beautiful thank-you's that you have ever received. Since Our Lord has not given me that ability, may He Himself be my power to thank you and to reveal to your good heart the esteem that our whole Congregation and I myself in particular have for you, and the constant and most tender affection it has pleased His Divine Majesty to give me for your worthy person.

I wish I had the words to express my gratitude for the charity and gifts this poor Little Company is continually receiving from your generosity. May Our Lord be your reward and may He enhance the crown He has prepared for you in Heaven while you do your utmost to establish His empire in souls on earth.

342. - TO JEAN BECU, IN AMIENS

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am more consoled than I can tell you by the news I learned from your letter, which I have just received. I thank God and good M. Pecoul. O mon Dieu, how obligated we are to that great servant of God! Please give him my most humble regards and assure him of my gratitude.

I think that you should not even consider suing the King's

Letter 341. - Vie de l'illustre serviteur de Dieu Noël Brulart de Sillery, p. 126.

"It was between these two dates that Noël Brulart de Sillery lavished his favors on the Congregation of the Mission.

Letter 342. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
attorney. You would only make him twice as antagonistic and you do not need that.

Starting tomorrow, I shall work on obtaining the letters necessary for your nephew. There is no need for you to stay there, or to commission any friend to attend to the confirmation of the letters. It will be a long, drawn out affair and I do not know whether it is advisable to pursue it hastily at the present time. Criminal affairs need to mature so that they can be resolved more easily. Present all the written statements from here that you can. It would be well for you to seek the advice of one or two well-known lawyers in Amiens to see how you are to proceed, and meet with both of them together for that purpose. When you come here, we shall do the same thing here. Please bring their advice in writing.

We shall be most happy to send what you mentioned to the good niece of your benefactor. I send him my regards and am for him, for M. Leleu, and for you, Monsieur, a most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, August 29, 1638

Since receiving your letter, I reread the previous one and noticed that we need some documents from there in order to obtain the royal letters. We shall postpone working on this until your return. In fact, right now we would not know what to go on.

Addressed: Monsieur Antoine, organist-chaplain of Notre-Dame, residing near Saint-Remy,¹ to be delivered to Monsieur Bécu, Priest of the Mission, in Amiens

¹A church in Amiens.
I praise God, Monsieur, for the grace He has given you to overcome yourself as you did when you were requested to go to the country. I beg Him to make you absolute master of yourself so that you have only one and the same will with God always and in all things, which is indeed the perfect state for anyone in our vocation.

But the consolation my soul has received in that regard has been tinged with sorrow because of your illness. In the name of Our Lord, Monsieur, do all you can to regain your health and take good care of it so that you can serve God and the poor for a longer time. This moderate care does not preclude the obligation we have of generously risking our lives when the salvation of our neighbor is concerned. O Monsieur, how earnestly I beg God to animate all of us with such generosity!

344. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Mademoiselle,

I shall try to come to La Chapelle or to send for your Sisters on Saturday. I no longer have my slight fever, it seems to me, or very little. Be assured, Mademoiselle, that I shall take greater care of my health, if anything can be added to the care I am taking, because you bid me to do so.

I beg Our Lord to bless your trip and you yourself, and to
multiply His blessings on your soul and that of Madame Goussault. Please be very cheerful with her, even though you should have to lessen a bit that somewhat serious disposition which nature has bestowed on you and which grace is tempering by the mercy of God. I am, in His love. . . .

Paris, August 30, 1638

344a. - TO CHARLES DE MONTCHAL
ARCHBISHOP OF TOULOUSE

[September 1638]

Your Excellency,

I most humbly beg your pardon if I do not have the honor of seeing you this afternoon. I promised the Bishop of Grasse, the Bishop of Bayonne, and Monsieur Pavillon that I would spend this afternoon with them, even though I am in retreat. I also promised Commander de Sillery that I would speak with him late today. I am ashamed, Your Excellency, that I am obliged to treat you in this way. Your charity, which has no limits in our regard, so it seems, will forgive me.

I just wrote to the Bishop of Beauvais this minute, and I assure you, Your Excellency, that at least half the letter is about you and what Our Lord is accomplishing through you.

Letter 344a. - According to Coste, the original was in the house of the Daughters of Charity, 14 rue de la Ville-l'Évêque, Paris. This house has since closed and the present location of the letter is unknown. Originally no. 272, the placement of the letter has been altered to comply with a date correction supplied by Coste in vol. XIII.

1This letter was written after the appointment of Antoine Godeau to the bishopric of Grasse and of François Fouquet to that of Bayonne, before the consecration of Nicolas Pavillon, and during the month in which Saint Vincent was accustomed to making his annual retreat.

2Antoine Godeau.

3François Fouquet.

4Augustin Potier.
I am, in the love of the same Lord, Your Excellency, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: The Most Reverend Archbishop of Toulouse

345. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[September 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am late in answering you; the difficulties I have had since your letter are the reason for it. I praise God for the satisfaction you must have received from your son and beg Him to grant him the grace of carrying out his resolutions.

As for the young man, I have no fault to find, if you have spoken to him about it, except that I cannot help but be afraid that, by doing more than you are able, something may happen. Nevertheless, please pay no attention at all to what I say about the matter.

I have been to Saint-Germain. Madame de Liancourt is feeling better. I told her about your offering to come and take care of her, to which she replied: “O mon Dieu, that would be just like her!” She spoke about you several times and about how satisfied she is with her schoolteacher for the girls.

The Charity in Richelieu really needs Sister Barbe now because of the great number of sick people. What do you think,

Letter 345. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1On October 1, 1638, Saint Vincent announced to Lambert aux Couteaux the departure of Barbe Angiboust and Louise Ganset for Richelieu. This letter is of an earlier date. Since it mentions the grape harvest, it must be placed in September.

2Saint-Germain-en-Laye.
Mademoiselle, of sending her to help those good people in this necessity? Their illnesses are not contagious. In that event, could you not give us Sister Louise for here?3

Madame de Chaumont thinks it advisable for you to go to Saint-Germain to see the company4 in a body and for Madame Goussault to go with you. It is true that people are now in the midst of the grape-harvest. We shall have to see about it in a little while.

I am, meanwhile, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

346. - TO MADAME GOUSSAULT

Saint-Lazare [Between 1636 and 1639]1

Madame,

I would have been consoled to see you today, Madame, but it will have to be some other time. Mademoiselle Le Gras spoke to me about hearing her confession tomorrow morning along with those of her Sisters in La Chapelle. She would very much like you to be able to lend her your carriage for that purpose, but I do not know how you can do so since you have so many concerns at present.

I entreat you, Madame, to send her word not to come, in case you have to come here tomorrow morning. What I wanted to tell you does not require you to hurry on my account. In the meantime, I bid you good day and am, in Our Lord. . . .

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3For the parish of Saint-Laurent. She accompanied Sister Barbe to Richelieu.
4The Confraternity of Charity.


1Dates of the Sisters' arrival in La Chapelle and the death of Madame Goussault.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

If you think that Henriette\(^2\) can teach school, fine; try her at it. The experiment would have been better somewhere else; however, do as God inspires you to do. I do not feel that Perrette\(^3\) has a good mind for that sort of work.

It would really be good for you to assemble the Ladies of the Charity, if the Pastor approves; I mean the ones from the town.\(^4\) Madame de Chaumont will be hurt if you and Madame Goussault do not visit her. Ask her not to talk about it to the Queen’s\(^5\) maids of honor.

If your health allows you to stay there seven or eight days, do so, and longer if need be. Meanwhile, put Madame Pelletier in charge of the house\(^6\) and give her the regulations she is to maintain. Madame Goussault can return two or three days later and come to get you.

Please tell Madame Goussault that it would be advisable for her to see Madame Souscarrière\(^7\) or Madame Traversay in order to let

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**Letter 347. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.**

1. This letter fits naturally between nos. 345 and 348.
2. Henriette Gesseaume.
3. Perrette Chefdeville.
4. The Charity of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, referred to here, was made up of maids of honor or ladies-in-waiting to the Queen and of ladies from the town. Saint Vincent is asking Saint Louise to assemble the latter only. Nevertheless, he urges her to visit the president, Madame de Chaumont.
5. Queen Anne of Austria.
6. Madame Pelletier was a Daughter of Charity whom Saint Vincent was suggesting as head of the Motherhouse in Saint Louise’s absence.
7. Marie du Tremblay, widow since 1627 of Maximilien Grangier, Seigneur de Souscarrière, Master of Requests, intendant of justice in Lyons, then State Councillor for ordinary affairs. Her daughter, Marguerite, married Antoine Goussault, the eldest son of Madame Goussault. In 1639, Madame de Souscarrière succeeded the latter as president of the Ladies of Charity. She died in September 1670.
the Hôtel Dieu know that the snack\(^8\) will be discontinued. Tell her also that I forgot to mention the house and that I shall speak to Father Sirmond\(^9\) at the first opportunity.

Courage now! I beg Our Lord, meanwhile, to bless your trip and I am, in His love, your servant.

V. D. P.

Sunday morning

*Addressed:* Mademoiselle Le Gras

348. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[September 1638]\(^1\)

Mademoiselle,

Early tomorrow, therefore, we shall have to send for Sister Barbe and, today, we must send for Henriette\(^2\) and put Nicole in her place. But it would be wise for you to get her word that she

\(^8\)In speaking of the Ladies of Charity, Abelly writes *(op. cit.,* vol. I, chap. XXIX, p. 136):

"After dinner, around three o'clock, they brought a snack for everyone: namely, white bread, cookies, preserves and jelly, grapes and cherries in season, and during the winter, lemons, stewed pears, and sugared fruit. . . . Wearing aprons, four or five together would take turns each day going to distribute this snack. They would divide themselves among the wards and go from bed to bed serving these little sweets." The expense increased with the number of the sick and the Ladies soon had to omit the bread, cookies, and lemons. Several times, especially in 1638 and 1649, they discontinued the snack, either because of contagious diseases or for economic reasons. The 1638 interruption lasted twenty days and was caused by the plague, which obliged the Daughters of Charity employed at the Hôtel-Dieu to leave their lodgings. (Cf. Coste, *op. cit.,* p. 11.)

\(^9\)A renowned Jesuit, born in Riom in 1559. He first taught in Paris, then was called to Rome to serve as secretary to the Superior General. He became the confessor of Louis XIII in 1637 and died in 1651. We are indebted to him for a collection of the old synods of France. He also edited some works of the Fathers and ecclesiastical authors.

Letter 348. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^1\)This letter seems in place near no. 347.

\(^2\)Henriette Gesseume.
will come back every time that she is recalled. The trip to Notre-
Dame-des-Vertus\(^3\) may enable her to obtain some grace from
God.

I am, in His love, your servant.

V. D.

_Addressed:_ Mademoiselle Le Gras

**349. - TO SAINT LOUISE**

[1638]\(^1\)

Mademoiselle,

That good young woman arouses my compassion, as she does
yours, but what can we do? No religious community will take on
that financial burden. Would it not be better to send her back to
her native place? If you think it advisable to talk the matter over
seriously with Mademoiselle Musnier and to keep her for two
weeks, that is fine.

This morning I wrote to Madame Traversay and told her to fill
up to seven of the little children's vacancies, taking some from the
Hôtel-Dieu and some from the Couche, until you have another wet
nurse, a goat, and a cow.

Barbe\(^2\) could never come so early in the morning that I would
not be able to talk with her.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

_Addressed:_ Mademoiselle Le Gras

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\(^3\)In Aubervilliers.

Letter 349. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph
letter.

\(^1\)This letter certainly dates from the early days of the work of the Foundlings, i.e., from
1638. The presence of Barbe in Paris indicates that it was written in early October at the latest.

\(^2\)Barbe Angiboust.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am very glad that your son has returned and is at the collège. He is better off there than here because the majority are in retreat and the others either ill or at the seminary. I would be quite pleased, however, for him to come and spend a couple of days here after they come out of retreat, around Wednesday of next week.

I am writing to you hurriedly. You would ease my mind by sending me word concerning the condition of your health, the state of your Sisters, and the situation at the Hôtel-Dieu. You knew that M. Lavocat felt that we should not begin again until after the feast of Saint Denis, and someday you shall know that I am more than I tell you, in His love, your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

Letter 350. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1The similarity of content in this letter and in nos. 333 and 347 seems to indicate the year 1638. Reference to the feast of Saint Denis (October 9) suggests that the letter was written in September.

2At the Collège des Bons-Enfants.

3At Saint-Lazare.

4At the beginning of the constitutions of the Augustinian nuns we read the following which will acquaint us with him: "These present constitutions were drawn up by M. François Lavocat, priest, councillor, chaplain to the King, Abbé of Notre-Dame d'Humblières and Canon of the Church of Paris, who was entrusted by the gentlemen of the aforesaid Church with the office of visitor of this hospital (Hôtel-Dieu). He exercised this duty for twelve years with unbelievable charity and assiduity, reviving devotedness and enthusiasm in the hospital for the sick. While carrying on these sacred duties, he was struck down by the fever of which he died on January 15, 1646, at the age of forty-eight. His body rests in Notre-Dame before the altar of the Virgin and his heart, near the main altar of the Hôtel-Dieu." He was also chamberlain of the chapter and, therefore, responsible for the administration of the capitular finances.

5This refers perhaps to the distribution of the snack at the Hôtel-Dieu, mentioned in no. 347.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I had told you I would come to see you today and I expected to do so, but a little indisposition has come upon me and is depriving me of that possibility. I beg you to excuse me, Mademoiselle, and because of this difficulty to send word to the Sisters not to come to your house today.

I am sending you fifty livres; please give them to Barbe and Louise for their trip. It would be well for them to take the coach to Tours and there to inquire about a man who usually escorts those who wish to go to Richelieu. They should engage him and hire a donkey or a little cart to go to Richelieu which is ten leagues away. There they shall do what they can for the sick poor according to the orders of M. Lambert or whoever takes his place. Enclosed is a letter I wrote to him.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

The price of the coach to Tours is twelve livres per person. I shall tell one of our people to reserve a place for them on the first one to leave.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

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Letter 351. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

*The letter to Lambert aux Couteaux (no. 352), mentioned in this letter, bears the date October 1, 1638. It is reasonable to assume that this letter to Saint Louise was written on the same date.*
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here are two Daughters of Charity coming to see you about relieving the Ladies of the Charity and assisting the sick poor. Both of them know how to teach little girls. We shall be able to leave you one of them for that purpose when there are fewer sick people, and the other one will return home. The Duchesse d’Aiguillon sent me word that she would write to M. de Grandpré about arranging lodgings for them. I hope that she, or else His Eminence, will also give orders regarding their maintenance. I beg you, however, to provide them with what they need as far as food is concerned.

I am worried about your illness and about that of Messieurs Codoing, Durot, and Buissot. If M. Codoing has quartan fever, as he told me he suspected, we shall have to find a way of bringing him back here, by cart as far as Tours and from there by coach, if his attacks are not too violent.

In the name of God, Monsieur, do all you can and spare nothing for the sake of your health. I am praying to God and having others pray that He restore you completely.

In ten or fifteen days, I shall send you two or three men from the Company and perhaps M. Boudet will come to Richelieu from Bordeaux. He is in Bordeaux a little indisposed. M. de Sergis left him there for treatment because he had to leave for Toulouse. If he comes to Richelieu, I commend him to you. If Abbé Olier is correct, good M. Boudet is a saint. He was with him in Brittany where he recognized his virtue. He wrote to me about him in terms expressing quite well the opinion he has of him. I am the only one who is a miserable sinner, who does only harm on earth.

Letter 352. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.

1Sisters Barbe Angiboust and Louise Ganset.
2Antoine-François de Joyeuse, Comte de Grandpré.
3Cardinal Richelieu.
I must hope that God will be pleased to take me from it soon, as I trust from His goodness, and that He will be merciful to me.

I was arranging the time schedule for my trip so that I could come and see you when the Archbishop gave me a mandate to visit a religious house in the city. It will take me a rather long time. I had asked him to excuse me from doing it, and he had in fact done so; but, as he was leaving for Anjou, he sent me word that he had to take back the dispensation he had been pleased to grant me for some special and important reasons which he would tell me on his return. Well now, I am a child of obedience. I think that if he ordered me to go to the ends of his diocese and stay there all my life, I would do it as if Our Lord were giving me the order. The solitude or the work that he gave me would be an anticipated paradise since I would be carrying out the good pleasure of God.

I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Saint-Lazare, October 1, 1638

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Richelieu

353. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[October 2, 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am not writing to you with my own hand; I had a bloodletting

*The trip was postponed. Saint Vincent was back from Richelieu before the middle of December.

Letter 353. - Archives of the Mission (Paris), original or seventeenth century copy.

*The content of this letter connects it closely to nos. 351 and 352. No. 351 is probably the
this morning for a slight ailment which is preventing me from going to see good Madame de Liancourt. I think that you are not able to bear the fatigue of being around her and that would upset her.

There is no harm in allowing Sister Louise to go and visit Monsieur de Bezay,² or in your telling her to defer settling her affairs. I gave orders today for two [places] to be reserved and for a deposit to be put down on the coach for Tours. This evening I shall know the day, the time, and the place of its departure. I think it would be wise to give the role of superior to Sister Barbe³ until other arrangements can be made. It seems to me that it would be very good for them indeed to avail themselves of their little work when there are no longer many sick people.

I praise God for the greater satisfaction you are receiving from your son.

I forgot to write to Monsieur Dehorgny⁴ about the little boy. Just send him a note by the boy himself, in case I forget.

Sister Elisabeth⁵ can make her confession to anyone else you consider suitable. As for Jacqueline, you have no choice but to send her back.

I am very glad that you kept Sister Marguerite and are having her make a retreat.

Do you think, Mademoiselle, that the two Sisters in this parish can assist the sick while teaching school? If so, which I doubt, it would be well to send Sister Jacqueline to Saint-Jacques parish in Sister Marguerite's place. But, if you do that, you will have to say something beforehand to the Pastor and the officers of the Charity in the parish.

²Perhaps Antoine du Deffand, chevalier, Seigneur du Tremblay, Fontenay, Sementron, Bezéc, and other places.
³Barbe Angiboust.
⁴At that time director of the Collège des Bons-Enfants.
⁵Elisabeth Martin.
I wrote you the enclosed letter yesterday, but was not able to send it to you.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Saturday, at eleven o'clock

354. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[October 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Most willingly do I pray Our Lord to give His holy blessing to our dear Sisters and to grant them a share in the spirit He gave to the holy women who accompanied and cooperated with Him in assisting the sick poor and instructing children. Bon Dieu, Mademoiselle, what happiness for those good Sisters to be about to continue the charity Our Lord exercised on earth in the place where they are going! And who would think, seeing them together, those two headpieces,² in the coach, that they are departing for a work so admirable in the eyes of God and the angels that the God-Man found it worthy of Himself and of His holy Mother?

Oh! how Heaven will rejoice at seeing that and how admirable will be the praises they will receive in the next world! They will go to judgment day with their heads held high! Surely, it seems to me that crowns and empires are as mud in comparison with the diadems with which they shall be crowned.

Letter 354. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

¹The month and year of the departure of Sisters Barbe and Louise for Richelieu.
²Allusion to the headdress of the Daughters of Charity. "The first Daughters of Charity, almost all natives of the environs of Paris, had kept the dress commonly worn by the women of the lower class, namely, a gray serge dress and a little coif or kerchief of white linen called a toquois, which hid the hair." (Cf. Baunard, op. cit., p. 297.)
All that remains is to advise them to comport themselves in the spirit of the Blessed Virgin on their journey and in their actions. Let them often see her as though before their eyes, in front of or beside them, and act as they imagine the Blessed Virgin would have acted. Let them contemplate her charity and humility and be very humble before God, cordial among themselves, charitable to everyone, and a source of disedification to no one. Let them carry out their little spiritual exercises every morning, either before the coach sets out or along the way. Let them take along some small book to read now and again or, at other times, recite their chaplet.

Let them share in the conversations pertaining to God, but by no means in those concerning the world, and still less, in indecent talk. Let them be rocks against any familiarity that men might wish to take with them. They shall sleep in a separate room which they shall first request at the inns, or in a room with some upright women, if there are any on the coach. If there are no separate rooms in the coach inns, let them lodge nearby, if they can find such accommodation.

When they arrive in Richelieu, they shall first go to greet the Blessed Sacrament and visit M. Lambert, receiving his orders, which they shall try to carry out with regard to the sick and the children who will attend the school. They shall observe the little daily exercises they now practice and go to confession only once a week if there is no special feast during the week. They shall try to do good to the souls of the poor while taking care of their bodies, and they shall honor and obey the officers of the Charity and have great respect for the others, encouraging them to love their holy occupation. If they continue in this way, God will judge that they have led a very holy life and, from being poor young women, they shall become great queens in Heaven. This is what I ask of God, in Whose love I am, for them and for their dear Superioress, a most humble servant.

V. D.
Please let me know if the little boy gave you the fifty livres I sent you by him, and pray to God for good Madame de Liancourt who has grown much worse. 3

355. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Around October 1638]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I shall tell you about your son's state of mind with regard to Orders. I do not know if I shall be coming to La Chapelle soon. If I do not come, comply with the wishes of Madame de Marillac 2 and her son. 3 Send for the carriage whenever you wish. It would be better to do it tomorrow, Sunday, since you will have to sleep there because of the fast day. But what is the trouble with that good gentleman and with his wife's pregnancy? I do not know who communicates such an eager interest in them to me, but that family seems to move my heart with tenderness.

I am awaiting the safe-conduct for which the Chancellor 4 gave us reason to hope. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Saturday morning

3 Words scratched out: She sent me word to go and visit M. Martinot . . . I begged her to excuse me . . . because . . .

Letter 355. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1 The information about the impending birth of a child to Michel de Marillac, Saint Louise's cousin, and Jeanne Potier permits us to assign a date for this letter. This child, René, was baptized February 18, 1639.

2 Marie de Creil, widow of René de Marillac.

3 Michel de Marillac, Counselor in the Parlement of Paris, grandson of the Keeper of the Seals who bore the same name.

4 Pierre Séguiier.
I received your note this morning after writing the above letter. In response, I shall tell you that your son told Monsieur de la Salle that he was entering into that state of life only because you wished it, that he wished he were dead because of it, and that, in order to please you, he would take the Minor Orders. Now, is that a vocation? I think he would rather die than wish your death. Be that as it may, whether it springs from nature or from the devil, his will is not free to make a decision in a matter of such importance and you must not wish him to do so. Some time ago, a good young man in this city took the [sub-diaconate] in a similar state of mind and was not able to go on to the other Orders. Do you want to expose your son to the same danger? Allow God to lead him; He is more his Father than you are his mother and loves him more than you do. Allow Him to guide him. He will be quite capable of calling him some other time if He wants him, or of giving him the occupation which is proper for his salvation. I remember a priest, formerly in this house, who took Holy Orders in a troubled state of mind such as that. God knows where he is now!

Good day, Mademoiselle. Belong wholly to Our Lord and conform yourself to His good pleasure. I am, in His love, your servant.

V. D.

Please make your meditation on Zebedee's wife and her sons. As she was ardently seeking the establishment of her children, Our Lord said to them: "You do not know what you are asking."7

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

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3First wording: "that he wished you were dead and himself as well."
6Saint Vincent wrote: "sub-deacon," but it is evident that "sub-diaconate" is the correct term. With the reception of the sub-diaconate one obliged himself to celibacy and the recitation of the Divine Office for life.
7Mt. 20: 20-23.
I most humbly entreat you, Mademoiselle, to let me know whether you think I should come and see you this afternoon to talk to your Sisters or whether I should wait until tomorrow morning. Let me know also if there will be any others besides your own. In the meantime, I wish you a good day and I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

V. DEPAUL

Sunday morning

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I thank God a thousand times that you look so well and beg Him to keep you in perfect health. I agree with your good Pastor that you should receive Communion at home. It does not matter that you do not feel so great a desire to do so. Our Lord is doing this purposely, I trust, so that you may have the merit of obedience joined to that of the love for which you will do it, and which I hope His goodness will grant you.

I did indeed see your son yesterday and I love him more dearly than I can tell you, but I do not like you to allow the overaffection-

Letter 356. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1After 1639, the words "Sunday morning" would have been written at the beginning of the letter.

Letter 357. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
ate thoughts you have in his regard. They are contrary to reason and consequently to God. He wants mothers to share their goods with their children but not to deprive themselves of everything. Courage, we shall talk about it as soon as I can come to see you, which will be after the feast.

Oh! how I would like to be able to tell you everything that was said here yesterday at the conference concerning the reasons we have for worthily celebrating this feast and the means for doing so! To be sure, I am quite consoled by it and ask Our Lord to impart it to you Himself.

I am sending you the book on condition that you read or have read from it only two or three sonnets a day, at different times spaced far apart; you would become too engrossed in it.

I am angry with M. Dehorgny for going off to the country without sending you any money. Let me know if you need some. I have the key to the safe but not the spare time to go and get it.

I have never been more busy, or more your servant, in the love of Our Lord.

V. D.

Please take that young woman from Lorraine in order to try her out in the meantime.

*Addressed:* Mademoiselle Le Gras

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**358. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, SUPERIOR, IN RICHELIEU**

November 1, 1638

... M. Fouquet, the President,\(^1\) has been cured of dropsy by using half a glass of chervil\(^2\) juice mixed well with an equal amount of white wine and strained through a cloth. It is taken

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\(^1\)François Fouquet. On June 2, Saint Vincent wrote that he was extremely ill.

\(^2\)An aromatic herb of the carrot family.
fasting, without eating for two hours afterwards, and without drinking any more than half a pint of liquid at each meal. One of our brothers at the seminary was cured of the same illness by the same means. Please have N. make use of it and continue it for some time. It is a very efficacious and easy remedy.

359. - TO SAINT LOUISE, IN LA CHAPELLE

[Between 1636 and 1639]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received two of your letters or rather one in two parts, and saw and spoke to your son afterwards, without letting him be aware that I knew anything about what happened yesterday. Now, he told me very calmly and soberly that he had seen you and that you had been feeling somewhat ill.

After that, I spoke to him about his vocation and whether he was persevering in it. He told me quite emphatically yes, that he was going to the Sorbonne\(^2\) for that purpose, and that he was determined to do well. That is why I thought there was no need to talk to him, or even suspect what you fear. Therefore, please be at peace about it. And what is more, even though the things you fear come about, you should still adore God's Providence in his regard and believe that the journey or the change of state would contribute to his salvation and perhaps to his greater perfection.

Alas! Mademoiselle, if all those who have left their parents were in danger of being lost, where would I be? Oh, well! remember that everything helps the predestined to reach their goal

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Letter 359. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^{1}\)Before 1636, Saint Louise was not in La Chapelle; after 1639, the Saint would have begun his letter with the words that end it: "Collège des..."

\(^{2}\)Probably to study theology there.
and that I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DE PAUL

Collège des Bons-Enfants, at eleven o’clock

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras, in La Chapelle

360. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Between 1633\(^1\) and 1639\(^2\)]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
Thank you for looking after me and please take care of your own health and do not do so much.
As for the matter you mention, assure those good religious that I shall talk to the Dean about the preservation of their community, but I do not feel that you should speak to the ladies in favor of keeping that individual. It would be useless and harmful, as would recourse to the Cardinal.\(^3\) But with regard to the former, it is up to them to take the required steps; they will not take your advice in any case.
As for your Sisters, after this we shall be at your service and theirs. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your servant.

V. D.

Saturday morning

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

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Letter 360. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
\(^1\)The date of the foundation of the Daughters of Charity.
\(^2\)After 1639, Saint Vincent would have written “Saturday morning” at the beginning of the letter.
\(^3\)Cardinal Richelieu.
361. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
A warm welcome to you and praise to Our Lord for the health He has given you. In the name of God, Mademoiselle, take care of it. If I can, I shall come and see you tomorrow, or at least the day after.
Enclosed is the reply to the Duchesse de Liancourt. Please send it to her.
Your son has just left here. He seems to have changed his mind or to be willing to change it, although I said only two words to him.
Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

362. - TO MADAME GOUSSAULT

[November 1638]

Madame,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
Thank you for taking care of me and my journey and for the prayers you will offer for those intentions. Please excuse me if I do not wait for you; I promised to leave this morning.

Letter 361. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
Letter 362. - The original autograph letter is at the house of the Priests of the Mission, via San Nicola da Tolentino, Naples. There is also a manuscript copy of the letter in the Archives of the Mission in Paris.
Reference to Saint Vincent's impending departure for Richelieu and to Marie-Marthe Goussault's suitors suggests the date for this letter.
You must recommend those new proposals to God with the gratitude and courtesy customarily extended to people in such cases. Is it not well for you to know definitely your daughter’s wishes? The last one mentioned to you is a fine man with an excellent mind and exceptional judgment for his age. But, considering what you know, Lotin seems preferable, I think, although less well off. However, you will need marvelous courtesy to act that way towards the last man proposed. Under the circumstances, you can cite the family’s wishes and the long negotiation. I shall recommend the matter, your health, and your whole family to Notre-Dame-des-Ardilliers with a very special affection and a like tenderness. God knows to what extent He has filled my heart with this fondness for you and how much I feel it now as I speak to you. I who am, in the love of Our Lord, Madame, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Monday morning

I am on my way to say good-bye to Mademoiselle Le Gras and shall tell her about this.

Addressed: Madame Goussault, the President’s wife

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2Marie-Marthe Goussault. Madame Goussault had five children: Antoine, Sieur de Roquemone, Master of Accounts; Guillaume, made Counselor in the Parlement on May 27, 1653; Jacques, a priest, Doctor of the Sorbonne; Marie-Marthe, married to Nicolas Lotin on January 10, 1639; and Michel, husband of Elisabeth Compaing.

3Nicolas Lotin, Seigneur de Martilly, was the son of Guillaume, Vicomte de Vaux. He was appointed to the Great Council on December 17, 1631, Master of Requests on July 7, 1642, and President of the Great Council on April 11, 1644. He died December 25, 1650, leaving one child, who soon followed him to the tomb.

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

You never tire of doing good things for us and do, I am afraid, more than you are able. I thank you most humbly, Mademoiselle, and beg you not to act in that way any more. It is enough for us and we shall always be indebted to you, no matter what we do to serve your son. Allow us then to serve him without any consideration other than our indebtedness to you and our eagerness to serve you and him as well.

Your letter seems fine to me and you would do well to send it to him. I pray Our Lord that it will be effective in causing him to make up his mind once and for all. I am sending his letter back to you with the one you wrote to him and shall try as soon as possible to have a little fireplace built for him in one of the small rooms. From now on we shall be having the ordinands at the Bons-Enfants and the room in which he now lives is needed for them.

If the weather is good and you can do so without any inconvenience, you may hear Holy Mass every day of your retreat. If not, honor the solitude of Our Lord completely, as Saint Magdalen did.

Please read the small [book], the *Imitation of Christ*, the book *On the Love of God* by the Bishop of Geneva² — around the sixth,

Letter 362a. - The original autograph letter formerly belonged to the Daughters of Charity in the Parish of Saint-Projet in Bordeaux. It is now in the keeping of the Priests of the Missions at the Berceau, near Dax, and a photograph is filed in the Archives of the Mission (Paris). The letter, published in the Annales (1928), pp. 253-254, was reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, p. 18. The latter text has been used for this edition.

¹Reference to the retreat for ordinands at the Bons-Enfants (December 1638 — cf. no. 364) prompts us to assign this date.

²Saint Francis de Sales.
seventh, or eighth book, at your choice — and some life of a saint according to your devotion.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

(On the reverse Saint Louise wrote: From Monsieur Vincent speaking of a retreat and of my son.)

363. - TO BERNARD CODOING, IN RICHELIEU

December 12, 1638

I am quite consoled on seeing the goodness of your heart in accepting the Luçon proposal against your own liking. 1 O Monsieur, that is what being a good Christian and a good Missionary is, overcoming one's own inclinations in that way! God has granted me today a very particular fondness for requesting of Him that same virtue of ever choosing the worst and that which is contrary to my own liking. But alas! Monsieur, how unfaithful I am to that practice! Please ask God to make me more exact to it in the future.


1One of the clauses in the contract signed January 4, 1638, by Saint Vincent and the Cardinal-Minister, the former Bishop of Luçon, concerning the establishment of the Missionaries in Richelieu stated that three of the priests residing in the house were to give missions in the diocese of Luçon "four times a year at the most appropriate seasons and spend six weeks at this work each time." (Cf. no. 287, n. 3.) After due reflection, it was decided to establish a separate house in Luçon. Bernard Codoing, sounded out about being its Superior, accepted. But it may be that, for reasons of health, he did not take possession of his office. As a matter of fact, his name is not mentioned anywhere else in connection with Luçon. If he went there, he stayed a very short time; since on October 6, 1640, when Jacques Chiroye was sent to that town to direct the establishment entrusted to the Congregation of the Mission, it was to replace Gilbert Cuissot.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here I am, back from Richelieu. I received one of your letters in that district and another here. Both of them reveal to me the blessing of God on your labors and the last one mentions the illness of Messieurs Renar and Mouton and how you were leaving for Joigny. I thank God for all that and pray that He will restore those gentlemen to perfect health.

We need Monsieur Mouton here. If his health allows, please send him back to us after the feast.

I saw the letter you wrote to the Commander,¹ which was also a great consolation to me, but I am not sure whether you have completed the mission in Cerisé.² The Commander is complaining that you have not. Please let me know how matters stand. The letter you wrote to Monsieur de la Salle also gave me great comfort, especially what you told him about continuing the discipline he maintained with the seminary during the mission they gave recently. That is where the backbone of the mission lies. I pray to God, Monsieur, that He will grant you the grace to act the same way.

But mon Dieu! Monsieur, how are Messieurs Pavillon, Renar, and Perrochel? Please take good care of them and of the health of the whole Company. You must not fail on Thursdays to give them some rest and some pleasant recreation, as far as can be done inter privatos parettes.³ I most humbly greet those gentlemen and the whole Company and I am forwarding to M. Perrochel a package which was sent here for him. Please tell him that on his return we shall discuss what the nun who writes to him has told him.

Letter 364. - Files of Turin, original autograph letter.
¹The Commander de Sillery.
²Near Alençon, in Orne.
³In private.
Father de Gondi told me that all is not well with the Charity in Joigny. I entreat you, Monsieur, to ask Monsieur Pavillon to try to restore it to the best possible condition. He is experienced in the proper way to go about making a success of it, and he possesses the grace of God.

We have about seventy retreatants, five or six of whom have degrees and are very learned men, although in the Sorbonne complaints have been made about the method prescribed and the obligation for people of such status to take part in the exercises. M. Hopille explains the Pontifical and M. Hobier gives the morning talk. Messieurs de la Salle, Dehorgny, Souffliers, Cuissot, and some of our young theologians are helping with the retreat. It is being held at the Bons-Enfants where things are working out better than we had dared to hope.

The rest of the house is well with the exception of M. Portail and M. de Rien who are beginning, however, to feel better.

The same thing is being done in Richelieu where I was greatly consoled on seeing the good which has come about in the town. I have never seen a people more attentive and devout at Holy Mass and they receive the sacraments often. There is no one leading a scandalous life. The townspeople seem to be living in peace and without division as they were before. The taverns are less frequented, almost not at all, especially during services and on Sundays and feast days. The Charity is doing very well. It has treated

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4The ordinance of the Archbishop of Paris dated from 1631 and had been put into effect for the first time during the Lenten season of that year. It prescribed that anyone wishing to be ordained in the diocese was to make a retreat with the Priests of the Mission the ten days preceding ordination. (Cf. Abelly, *op. cit.*, vol. I, chap. XXV, p. 119.)

5M. Hopille was the Vicar General of Agen. The Pontifical is the liturgical book which contains all the rites and ceremonies pertinent to a bishop. Knowledge of various details contained in it is necessary for priests as well.

6He translated the life of Agricola by Tacitus (1639) and Tertullian's treatises on patience and on prayer (1640). Balzac wrote to Chapelain on August 30, 1639, after reading the first of these works: "How much wisdom and common sense there is in M. Hobier! How well-regulated and pure his diction is! It seems to me that the definition of *Vit bonus dicendi peritus* [a good man, skilled in the art of language] is made for him." (Cf. *Lettres familières de Monsieur de Balzac à Monsieur Chapelain* [Paris, 1856], p. 375.)
sixty sick people since Easter without any of them dying except one young woman; before, there was no escaping it. The two sister servants of the poor whom we sent from here are working wonders there, one with the sick and the other teaching the girls.

I do not know whether we could station two of them in Joigny. Is Marie of the poor, who used to serve the poor of the Charity, still alive? Do all the little girls go to the school of the Sisters of Notre-Dame? What makes things more remarkable in Richelieu is that the people form a new group, the majority having been banished from their localities because of misconduct.7

There you have, Monsieur, all that I can tell you for the present, except that I ask you to write me every week concerning the state of the Company and its works. My most humble greetings to the pastors and to all who do me the honor of remembering me. I am in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DE PAUL

Paris, feast of Saint Lucy,8 1638

Addressed: Monsieur Lucas, Priest of the Mission, in Joigny

7Words scratched out: M. Lambert was telling me that there are a great number of them.
8December 13.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

The day before yesterday I received your letter of the seventh of this month in which you informed me: (1) of M. Durot’s arrival; (2) that you are afraid you displeased me; (3) that I should answer everything you ask me in your letters; (4) that they want you to give the examination in Saint-Michel; (5) that they had you hear confessions in the suburbs; (6) that you are to be sent those who have dimissorial letters; (7) that you want a small piece of the true cross which you left here; and (8) you told me you had bought an alarm clock. Here are the answers to all that, in the order presented.

(1) I thank God for M. Durot’s arrival, and ask you to take care of his health and help him by word and example to arrive at the perfection of a Missionary. With that end in view, I ask both of you to observe the Little Rule without departing from it for any reason or under any pretext whatsoever. A prelate did me the honor of telling me that he saw you, with a larger collar than ours and a coat with big buttons, acting in a spirit of self-sufficiency and with less humility than the other Missionaries. If that is so, Monsieur, please adapt yourself in all things to the Little Rule, to our little observances, and to our manner of dressing, and honor more than ever the humility of Our Lord. Everyone says that the Missionary spirit is one of humility and simplicity; take hold of it. The spirit of meekness, simplicity, and humility is the spirit of Our Lord; that of pride will not last long in the Mission.

Letter 365. - Files of Turin, seventeenth or eighteenth century copy.

1Saint-Michel is now part of the city of Toulouse. It appears that M. de Sergis had been requested to administer the examinations prescribed for ordinands before ordination.

2Dimissorial letters are statements giving a subject permission to be ordained by a bishop other than his own Ordinary (bishop). Exempt religious cannot be ordained by any bishop without the dimissorial letters from their own major Superior.
(2) Have no fear of having displeased me. I know you well. I am sure that you will never return a second time to the failings about which I have warned you and shall warn you hereafter. You are neither infallible nor incorrigible. You will fail less if you abide by what I have told you and shun the splendor and spirit of the world. *Nemo potest duobus dominis servire.* I would like you to see the humility and simplicity Our Lord is diffusing among our seminarians and how shocking anything contrary to that spirit is to them.

(3) I promise you what you request in the third point, that from now on I shall answer all your questions, which you will please put down in list form.

Here are the answers to the fourth and fifth points. More perceptive people often tell me that we must hold to the practice of not preaching, catechizing, or hearing confessions in the cities and suburbs where there is an archbishopric or a presidial. Besides, you know that our Bull is quite explicit about that point. Those who might have some inclination to the contrary, seeing that they wish to do it, will be more edified in the course of time.

I do not find any difficulty at all in your seeing those whom the Bishop will send to you about dimissorial letters when you are in Toulouse, and I think you did well to buy an alarm clock.

A mishap which occurred in the Company has made it clear to me that I need to examine the accounts of expenses and receipts. I examined and closed them in Richelieu, from which I have just come. Please send me yours, Monsieur, or if you have not kept any account of your expenses and receipts, begin to do so for the future, so that one and the same order will be observed every-

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3No one can serve two masters. Mt. 6:24.
4A type of tribunal created by Henri II in 1552; it was an appeals court between a local court and a higher court or parlement.
5"But in towns and cities which have the title of archbishopric, bishopric, parlementary, and bailiwick, the clerics and priests of the said Congregation shall perform no public function of their Institute." (Cf. *Bull Salvatoris Nostri* of January 12, 1633, vol. XIII, no. 81.)
6Charles de Montchal (1628-1651).
where. You may be assured that I recognize your fidelity and
distrust my own more than yours.

I am on my way to tell M. de Marceille to look for and send to
you the relic of the true cross you requested, if it can be found.

Well now, Monsieur, that is all. It remains for me to tell you
that I would have taken good care to come and see you in
Toulouse, or to ask you to come to Bordeaux, if I had gone there.
O Jésus! Monsieur, I am most anxious to have the consolation of
seeing you. You know how much my heart treasures your own
which is so dearly lovable. I promised M. Pavillon that I would
come to Alet immediately after his arrival there. If Our Lord
grants me the grace of seeing him, it will be then that I shall have
that consolation. But if an opportunity that I foresee does not
induce me to make a trip to Gascogne, I shall have the pleasure of
seeing you sooner. In the meantime, I greet you with all the
affection in my power. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur,
your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur de Sergis, Priest of the Mission, in
Toulouse

365a. - G. PLUYETTE TO SAINT VINCENT

Monsieur,

Since I cannot come to Paris, please give the six . . . owed to me by
reason of the scholarship received as a favor from cousin Etienne Plu-

7Nicolas Pavillon, although named Bishop of Alet in 1637, was not consecrated until August
22, 1639. He did not go to his diocese until September 1639; therefore, Saint Vincent was
unable to keep his promise.
8This journey did not take place.
Letter 365a. - Autograph letter. The original is in the Arch. Nat., M 105 (Collège des Bons-
Enfants). This edition follows the text published in Mission et Charité, 19-20, p. 17.
yette; they fell due on Christmas Day. I shall be much obliged, I who am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

G. Pluyette

Fontenay, December 25, 1638

366. - TO PIERRE DU CHESNE, IN SANCEY

[January 8, 1639]

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I cannot tell you how much the consolation which your letter gave me has allayed the pain of hearing about good Monsieur Dufestel's illness. I thank God for both pieces of news, certainly not without rebuking my miserable feelings which are revolting against the acceptance I wish to give God's adorable Will. I am writing to him and asking him to do all he can and to spare nothing for his medical care. I entreat you, Monsieur, to be sure that he does so and, for that purpose, see that the doctor visits him every day and that he lacks no remedy or nourishment. Oh! how I hope the Company will provide for his needs with a holy extravagance! I would be delighted if word were sent to me from somewhere that someone in the Company had sold chalices for that purpose.

And what shall I tell you about the mission in Saint-Lyé? Postpone it, with the Bishop's consent, until he is entirely cured and restored to his former health. There will be no harm, however,

Letter 366. - Collection for the process of beatification.

1 The Missionaries' place of residence in the diocese of Troyes.
2 The copy from the process of beatification is not dated. We cannot accept the date suggested in the Avignon manuscript (January 8, 1649) because in 1649 François Dufestel was no longer a member of the Company. The content of this letter and particularly its close relationship to no. 368 lead us to conclude that it was written in 1639. For the day and the month we can trust the Avignon manuscript.
3 A small place in the arrondissement of Troyes.
4 René de Breslay, Bishop of Troyes (1604-1641).
in your going to visit the people and having them approve the delay until the mission can be given conveniently.

Well now, so you are worried like Martha, on account of the love you have for Monsieur Dufestel and the whole Company. I pray Our Lord to watch over and work with you in recovering the health of this servant of His.

I send my regards to good Monsieur Savary and our Brother René, and I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur du Chesne, Priest of the Mission, in Sancey

367. - TO PIERRE DU CHESNE, IN SANCEY

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Last night I received your most recent letter in which you told me about the state of Monsieur Dufestel's illness and what orders the doctor gave for him. I thank you most humbly for being so mindful to let me know about it so promptly and exactly, and for

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5Pierre Savary was born in Neuville-Vitasse (Pas-de-Calais) and entered the Congregation of the Mission on August 16, 1637, at the age of thirty-one. He left, then returned, and made his vows in Annecy in 1659.

6There were two Brothers in the Congregation of the Mission named René: René Bisson and René Perdrea. The former was born in Nantes in the diocese of Sées around November 1, 1600. He entered the seminary in Paris on November 5, 1636, and pronounced his vows October 18, 1646 (Notices, vol. V, p. 66). René Perdrea was born in 1592 in the diocese of Maillezais and entered the seminary in Paris on November 9, 1637 (Notices, vol. I, p. 494). Letter 367. - Collection for the process of beatification.
all the care you are giving him. I beg Our Lord to be your reward and the perfect healing of our patient whose illness is not serious, I hope. But I entreat you, Monsieur, as always, to spare nothing for him. That type of illness does not need remedies so much as patience, gentleness, and cheerfulness of mind. I hope Our Lord will give him a share in all those virtues and that he will make good use of them.

If the doctor thinks it might be necessary to give him some remedies that would require his presence more frequently than he can give them to him in Sancey, could you not get him a room in the suburbs? And that being the case, would he be better cared for there? I do not think his type of sickness is that kind at all. In any case, look into it and confer with the doctor with whom M. Dufestel thinks it would be proper. Finally, Monsieur, please do for him what you would want to do for Our Lord. In fact, the goodness and charity you have in his regard, you are showing to Our Lord and, at the same time, to our whole Little Company and to me in particular, who am suffering in him as Our Lord knows. I embrace him in spirit with all the affection in my power and most humbly greet good Monsieur Savary. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, [January 28, 1639]¹

Addressed: Monsieur du Chesne, Priest of the Mission, in Sancey

¹This is the date suggested by Brother Chollier in his deposition at the process of beatification. We prefer it to the one given by the copyist of the letter (January 28, 1634), because in 1634 Messieurs du Chesne and Savary were not yet members of the Congregation. M. Dufestel was not a priest, and the Priests of the Mission had no residence in Sancey.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here is the answer to three of your letters, one dated the fourth, another the ninth, and another the seventeenth, which I received two or three days ago. The first did not give me any indication that you wanted an answer so quickly, nor it seems did the second; the third undoubtedly did.

I shall begin then by telling you, with regard to your good relatives, that I sent someone purposely to visit them; they are all well and recommend themselves to you and your prayers. Therefore, please be at peace in that regard.

The prelate I mentioned to you did not tell me anything else except the three things about which I wrote to you and of which I have forgotten the third: about your collar, the buttons on your coat, and, if I am not mistaken, the third was your way of acting, which was not quite in keeping with the simplicity and humility of a Missionary. I am sending you a collar; you can have yours altered to match it. However little we may wish to follow the world as regards our clothing, such things show that we have some small fragment of this desire in our hearts and, if we are not careful, we shall let ourselves be carried away by the spirit of the world. To say that we shall be taken for others — it is pride and vanity of spirit to change our appearance because of that. O Monsieur, those who would truly know Jesus Christ crucified would be very glad to pass, as He did, for the least of men, indeed for the worst, not only as regards personal actions, but even with respect to those of our state! Why, what good will it do us to possess humility with regard to our person if we take pride in our state! O Monsieur, who will grant us the grace to put ourselves in the last

Letter 368. - Archives of the Mission (Paris), original autograph letter.

1 An unnamed prelate mentioned in no. 365.
place among men and to keep ourselves there according to the condition of our person and our vocation! If we wish to prefer ourselves to others and to have things which distinguish us from them, be assured, Monsieur, that Our Lord will allow us to fall into such confusion that we shall be a subject of contempt both for them and for everyone. I believe this truth just as I believe that I shall have to die.

I am telling you this in answer to something you wrote me shortly after your return to Toulouse. I have perfect confidence that you will think well of it and hold firm to the little practices and maxims you have seen here. I take care not to ask anyone whomever how you act or what you look like. I want everyone to know I still have the good opinion of you that I had when you were assigned to the duty Providence has given you. And what is more I believe, as I told you above, that, even though you thought differently than we about some little matter, the same angel who made Saint Francis Xavier so exact in the observance of what he had seen in the Company and so careful about learning anything new that was introduced here, so as to do the same thing there, the same angel, I repeat, will do the same for you. Oh! I consider that as beyond doubt.

What you told me, Monsieur, about good Monsieur Durot is true but, since he has a good heart and sound judgment, I trust he will be a very fine Missionary someday. He has a gentle spirit. Please, Monsieur, treat him the same way. I made a journey with three Discalced Carmelites without being able to tell which one was the Superior, until I asked about it after being with them for three days, because the Superior so truly lived with the others in goodness, gentleness, condescension, and humility, and the others lived with him in confidence and simplicity. O Monsieur! who will grant us such a spirit!

As for the confessions in the suburbs, I think that, although we are not permitted to hear confessions there, we could do so a quarter of a league from there if there were a chapel, even though the penitents were from the parish in the suburb.
You may be assured, Monsieur, as regards the expenses, that it has never entered my mind that there was any fault to be found with you. O Jésus! never has that thought occurred to me, much less become part of me. What I said to you about it was said to preserve order and assure the Company’s carrying out of the practice for centuries to come. The method, as M. Durot can tell you, will be the one M. Codoing used to follow. If you think it is too time consuming, put down fewer details. Moreover, I think a superior does well to have a companion relieve him of temporal matters.

As for the journey to Toulouse, I am committed to making it when the Bishop of Alet goes there, but he is not ready to do so. Neither he, nor fifteen or eighteen other appointed Bishops have received their Bulls as yet. As soon as he receives them, however, he intends to leave.

It will soon be three months that I have been working at the mission in Joigny with M. Perrochel. Monsieur Renar was there, too. He came back ill with M. Mouton.

I praise God that the end of the mission in Vernon² was more to your liking than the beginning, and I pray that He will grant you the grace to hold to the spirit of gentleness and humility Our Lord has given you. Bitterness has never served any purpose but to embitter. Saint Vincent Ferrer says that there is no means of profiting by preaching if one does not preach from the depths of compassion. Bon Dieu! and what a way to conquer spirits such as you describe — by the same spirit! If we combat the devil with a spirit of pride and self-sufficiency, we shall never overcome him, for he has more pride and self-sufficiency than we. But if we act against him with humility, we shall conquer him, because he has none of those weapons nor would he know how to defend himself from them. That is what Saint Dominic told some doctors from Spain who had come to his assistance against the Albigenses,³ with

²Vernon-lès-Joyeuse, in the diocese of Viviers.
³A sect, centered in Albi, France, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries, which
whom they were behaving in a spirit of self-sufficiency. I truly pray to God that He will grant you the grace to act in that spirit in Muret where you are going. As for the Charity you intend to set up there, here is the rule customarily used in the parishes of Paris; you can give it to the towns. For the villages, please hold on to the one that has been used up to the present. I set aside the one you sent me; its author has withdrawn and is now the Pastor in Etiolles.4

M. Codoing is on a mission; he would not be able to have his sermons copied for you. You will have to wait for the summer when he comes home, at which time you can have them copied and perhaps printed just for the Company.

The Penitentiary5 feels that neither case of conscience which you submitted is permissible and Father Rebardeau is of the same opinion with regard to hearing the confessions of penitents from the dioceses surrounding the mission area. I do not remember the second case at all; I submitted it only to the Penitentiary whose judgment, as I told you, was in the negative.

Here is my answer to your last letter. You may give an écu or two to the Charity in Muret if you establish it. As for the manner of conferring with the priest in Muret according to the Archbishop's wish, M. Durot can tell you the method M. Codoing followed for the meetings in Dauphiné. As for the topics of the conferences, you could suggest none more useful than those for the ordinands — which you have — for example, with regard to censures: (1) say that it is important for priests to know the teaching concerning censures; (2) what the teaching is on censures; and (3) the means to be used to release people who have incurred the said censures. Now, you could divide the second point into several conferences as, for example, censures in general and then each

professed heretical doctrines about the divinity of Christ and the means of salvation. The attempts of the Church to combat this heresy gave rise to the Inquisition.

4In Essonne.

5A priest whom a bishop has vested with power to resolve special cases normally reserved to the bishop alone.
one in particular. But in order to do that effectively, the person who presides, or you, should state the teaching and the others should repeat what you have said or, at least, some of them in turn. True, to do it well, it would be advisable for each one at the meeting to have your writings or, at least, every two. That not being the case, you will have to let them study the topics you present and give back as best they can what they remember — unless you have some better method.

That is really it this time; I have written this letter in three or four different sittings.

Our little news is: first, that M. Dufestel and his family in Troyes are working with great blessings, but he recently became ill. Messieurs Pavillon, Renar, Perrochel, and six men from the Company [have been working] in Joigny since Advent. They are now in the villages where it will take them about another month. Three or four men are about to leave for the parishes belonging to Malta in the grand priory of France. Commander de Sillery has given a fund of three thousand livres income for them and one thousand for Troyes. Messieurs du Coudray and Boucher have forty poor people, some sick, some others who are healthy, to whom they minister in their house, although it is small, because they have no hospital. They also attend to 150 outside the city, all of whom they feed and assist with a charity that brings tears to the eyes of those who hear of it. However, it is greatly to be feared they will collapse. The former enjoined me, after I had sent him word to take care of his body and the little bit of money we sent him, either to help him, recall him, or let him die with those poor people. If I can, I shall send you the letter M. Boucher, in his simplicity, wrote to me about the situation.

Our young men are asking to do what you and I did. I think the seminary is made up of more than twenty, although we withdrew ten or twelve of them either to study Theology at the Bons-Enfants

*He was Superior at the house in Toul at that time.*
or to work on the missions. Our good Brother Alméras, who is an outstanding subject, has done as we did and is about to go to the Bons-Enfants to study.

Such is the news from us at present. I hope to have some from you often [and] more time to write to you; I shall do so as often as I can. In spirit I embrace good Monsieur Durot, whom I ask to forgive me in case I cannot send him an answer. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Paris, February 3, 1639

God has taken M. Durot’s mother. Please take an opportune moment to tell him. I just ordered some Masses said for her intention. I beg Our Lord to be the solace for his heart’s suffering.

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7René Alméras, Madame Goussault’s nephew, was born in Paris on February 5, 1613. A Councillor in the Great Council at the age of twenty-four, he left everything, his family, position, and hopes, in spite of the opposition of his father, who was to follow him later, to enter the Congregation of the Mission, where he was received December 24, 1637. He was ordained a priest at Easter, 1639.

Saint Vincent entrusted important positions to him, such as Director of the Seminary and Assistant of the house. He admitted him to his council and often relied on his prudence to deal with people on the outside in delicate matters, and he also gave him charge of the retreatants. So much work ruined René Alméras’ health. The Holy Founder, convinced by personal experience that a change of air could contribute to restoring a person to health, sent him in 1646 to visit several houses in France and Italy. When he reached Rome, René Alméras was notified that he had been appointed Superior of the house. He stayed there until 1651. On his return to France he took over the direction of Saint Charles Seminary. In 1654 we find him engaged in distributing relief to the poor of Picardy and Champagne. He again visited several houses of the Congregation and once again became Assistant of the Motherhouse, in which position he remained until the death of Saint Vincent. He was also Visitor of the Province of Poitou. He was in Richelieu when the Saint, realizing that his death was near, begged him to return to Paris immediately. René Alméras was ill, but he came, carried on a stretcher, and had the consolation of receiving a last blessing from the Saint. Appointed Vicar General by Saint Vincent, then Superior General by the Assembly of 1661, he wisely governed the two Communities, the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity, until September 2, 1672, the day of his death.

In this letter, Saint Vincent calls M. Alméras “Brother,” the customary title given to clerical students.
I thought it would be better for you to tell him and for me not to mention it to him at all in my letter.

Addressed: Monsieur de Sergis, Priest of the Mission, in Toulouse

369. - TO PIERRE DU CHESNE, IN SANCEY

[Around February 1639]

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

You cannot give more consolation to my soul by anything in this world than by the charity you exercise toward good Monsieur Dufestel. I thank you most humbly for the frequent news you give me of him and beg you to continue for the love of Jesus Christ Who impels you. Well, we must wait, Monsieur, for nature to free itself slowly of the disturbance oppressing it. I must confess that I agree with the doctor attending him. That type of illness cannot be hurried. I trust that the Divine Doctor Himself will be his cure, if not overnight, at least little by little. I embrace him in spirit with heartfelt tenderness.

I am writing Monsieur Gouault2 that, according to the wish of the Bishop of Troyes,3 I am trying to sell his houses and shall lose no time.

I wrote to Messieurs Lucas and Perceval4 asking them to go and see you as I told you I would.

Letter 369. - Collection for the process of beatification.

This letter is closely connected with nos. 366 and 367, which it must have followed by a few days. M. Pémartin dates it February 15, but his reason for doing so is not known.

Sébastien Gouault was a middle-class gentleman of Troyes. He lent his house in Sancey to the Priests of the Mission, who lived in it for almost two years.

René de Breslay.

Guillaume Perceval, born in Saint-Guillain in the diocese of Cambrai, entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1635, was ordained a priest in 1637, and left the Company in 1644.
The Bishop of Beauvais, realizing the importance of the ordinands’ retreat, has requested the neighboring bishops who will be conferring orders to send back to Paris those from the other archbishoprics who studied there, so that they might profit by the retreat here. Accordingly, I think the Bishop of Troyes would do them good were he to act likewise with regard to the externs. In that case, if his Excellency were notified, perhaps he would do the same. Act as you and Monsieur Dufestel judge proper and send us that good woodcutter and vinedresser, if he has completely made up his mind. The men from Champagne give us great cause for satisfaction.

I embrace good Monsieur Dufestel and I am for Monsieur Savary, René, and him the most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur du Chesne, Priest of the Mission, in Sancey

370. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I do not know if I told you the day before yesterday that the Bishop of Beauvais is supposed to come and get me this morning. I am going to Beauvais for a week or so. I commend myself, meanwhile, to your prayers. Please take care of your health and preserve it for His holy service. I am going to pray to Him to do so

Augustin Potier.

This might be Edmond Picardat, a coadjutor brother born on April 23, 1613, in Rumilly-les-Vaudes (Aube). He entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 5, 1639, and made his vows on January 1, 1643.

Either Brother René Bisson or Brother René Perdreau.

Letter 370. - Archives of the Mission (Paris), original autograph letter.
until you are able to send your little Sisters to work at the Charity in the country.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

371. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1639]¹

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here are three poor people from Lorraine who arrived yesterday evening. One woman has a child. We shall have to try to get her placed at the Refuge² and perhaps the old woman, too. Please send them to Madame de Herse after you have seen them, if she approves of their staying at the Foundlings in Saint-Victor in the meantime. I am a little rushed and cannot write to her about it.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Tuesday, at ten o'clock

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras, close to Notre-Dame

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¹After 1639 the Saint would have written the words “Tuesday, at ten o'clock” at the beginning of the letter, not at the end. Also, according to Abelly (cf. op. cit., vol. I, chap. XXXV, p. 164), it was precisely in 1639 that he began to look after the poor of Lorraine, who had been driven from their homes by war and poverty.

²The Refuge was ordinarily a place of involuntary shelter for women and girls who were judged to be living a disorderly life.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I praise God for everything you told me about Saint-Nicolas. I shall submit the matter concerning the galley slaves to the wife of the Keeper of the Seals, and to Madame Goussault the business concerning the house, and I shall give you an answer about them.

As for Catherine, I feel you do not know her well yet. We shall talk about it.

Today is the day I am going to La Chapelle after dinner with Mademoiselle Poulaillon and three or four other people. It is better to wait until next Saturday when I have to go there for the wife of the Keeper of the Seals.

May God be blessed that you have a great deal of money! He will give us other young women when He chooses.

Marguerite from Saint-Paul came here yesterday to tell me that her Pastor sent for her and asked how they live, what their spiritual exercises are, and who directs them. He wants to direct them, wishing them to depend entirely on him. She added that she is nonetheless quite ready to leave everything whenever we wish. I
told her to tell him everything, to conceal nothing from him, and then we shall see.

It will be very difficult to keep these individuals in the state necessary for things to go well. The ones at Saint-Sauveur, since their rebellion, are no longer as zealous and complain a great deal. In time they will realize the harm they are doing.

I see the evils I do and do not mend my ways. Please pray for that intention.

I am, in His love, your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

373. - TO SAINT LOUISE

I got ready to come and see you this morning and shall do so if I can, but in case I cannot and you can get the carriage you mentioned to me, please stop by here tomorrow morning around eight o'clock, if your health permits. If not, send me word and I shall come to visit you at your house.

I see very well that Madame Goussault did not make clear to you what I told her about your son. I told her that the Pastor of Saint-Nicolas received him without a title, which is an exceptional favor, and for fear that some difficulty might arise on that account, it is wise for you to have him ready. However, your son has in no way changed his mind, as far as I know.
We really need to meet as soon as possible about the Sisters at Saint-Sulpice.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

374. - TO THE COMMUNITY
OF SAINT-NICOLAS-DU-CHARDONNET

Saint-Lazare, April 29, 1639

Monsieur,

The Missionaries accept Monsieur Bourdoise's proposal with all possible humility and respect and offer him what he requests, on the one hand, with great embarrassment because they are unworthy of the grace Monsieur Bourdoise is conferring on them by his presence and, on the other, with confidence that he will bear with their faults and be of infinite benefit to them by his good example. They also ask him, for the love of Our Lord, to receive one of their Company into the Community of Saint-Nicolas for a period of time, under whatever condition he may choose.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Letter 374. - Coste published this letter according to the text given in Pémartin (vol. I, pp. 247-248) who, without indicating his source, had extracted his material from ms. 2453 of the Bibliothèque Mazarine: La vie du vénérable serviteur de Dieu, Messire Adrien Bourdoise. . . . The text of the manuscript was later published in the Annales (1952), pp. 230-231. Although there is little variance in the three versions, the manuscript bears the additional words: "Drawn up at Saint-Lazare the next to last day of April, one thousand six hundred thirty-nine. Vincent de Paul." Furthermore, Coste indicated Adrien Bourdoise as the recipient of the letter, citing Pémartin. However, this present edition follows the indication given in Mission et Charité, 19-20, p. 20, and cites the letter as addressed to the Community of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet.

1Adrien Bourdoise had undoubtedly asked to come and make a retreat at Saint-Lazare.