yesterday. As for their expenses, since they do not spend much on food, I think the little that people give to one of them will help support the other; and they will work to earn the rest. For, although she had a lot of work and sick people at Saint-Germain, she still did laundry for others and earned something.

I was thinking, Monsieur, if you approve, of giving her our big Sister Claire. She is the one who went to see you at Sainte-Marie about being received—her mother brought her there. She has a rather docile disposition, and I think they will get along well together.

I most humbly entreat you to take the trouble of letting me know if you want it this way and the day they can leave, and whether I should have their place reserved in the coach.

I am very sorry to bother you during your illness, which I entreat our good God to cure. I am, Monsieur, your most humble daughter and most grateful servant.

L. DE M.

February 9, 1641

The Sister I am suggesting to you to go with Sister Marie Joly knows how to read, and she does not; she could teach school to the poor little girls. If you should think of another Sister, please tell me her name, and so, by this means, give our good Sister Marie a companion.

513. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[February 9 or 10, 1641]¹

Mademoiselle,

I approve of your idea with regard to sending two Sisters,
provided the second knows how to teach school, and that is something I doubt. It would be good for you to instruct her. I have some other objection as far as their maintenance is concerned. If that Sister does not teach school, would it not be better to send someone else who is less necessary in this city?

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am feeling better, thank God, and am your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

514. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[February 10, 1641]

Here is the copy of the letter I wrote to the Duchesse de Bouillon and to the Reverend Capuchin Father, in Monsieur de Rozière's absence. See if there is anything to be added or deleted.

I forgot to tell you, as far as the money is concerned, that, if you give them the twenty écus Marie brought, I think that would be fine, but most of it should be in gold and they should fix a place for it in their clothes.

Send these letters back to me within the hour, please.

Letter 514. - According to Coste, the original autograph letter was at the hospital of Bon Secours in Metz. The present location of the original is unknown, but a photograph of the letter is preserved in the Archives of the Mission, Paris.

1Because of the mention of the twenty écus and Sister Marie Joly, this letter must have been written shortly after no. 512.

2Eléonore-Catherine Fébronie de Bergh was the daughter of Frédéric, Governor of Frise and Françoise Ravenel. On February 1, 1634, she married Frédéric-Maurice de la Tour d'Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon, and died July 14, 1657, at the age of forty-two. She was one of the first Ladies of Charity and, by her liberalites, contributed to the establishment of the Daughters of Charity in Sedan for the care of wounded soldiers.
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I most humbly thank you for the care you take of me. I am feeling fine, thank God. M. Delorme saw me yesterday and prescribed a dose of medicine for me; I took it today. I have no more fever, and almost no more swelling in my cheek, so that, by the grace of God, it will depend entirely on me whether I do penance for my faults. It seems the Lord has been pleased to give me the time for it.

I reserved and paid for two places in the Sedan coach. It leaves tomorrow at ten o'clock. Have our Sisters ready to leave at nine o'clock, please. I am quite disappointed about not seeing them. Assure them that I will see them with the eyes of my spirit and that, tomorrow, God willing, I hope to say Mass for their intention.

I wrote to the Duchesse and the Capuchin Father who is there, according to what you told me. One difficulty remains: I have been told that people are afraid there may be some prohibition concerning communication with that town. That is why I wrote to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon and asked her to let me know if there is any danger in sending these Sisters. I am waiting for her answer, and because she may perhaps not have the time to see my letter I requested one of the Chancellor's servants to find out from him and send me word.

Letter 514a. - Original autograph letter, Archives of the Berceau, near Dax. This letter was published in the Annales (1928), pp. 256-257, and was reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, pp. 25-26. This edition uses the latter text.
1Date imposed by the establishment of the Daughters of Charity in Sedan (February 1641) and by comparing the contents of the letter with that of nos. 512, 513, 514, 517, 518, and 519.
2The Duchesse de Bouillon.
3Pierre-Séguyier.
Nevertheless, have them ready to leave at the time I said, please.

I am sending a priest from here to hear that good young woman's confession. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, you most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

515. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[Before 1650]

Our good God has been pleased to add to the consolation His Goodness has bestowed on me through your charity by showing me, in another individual, that His Providence does not disdain sinners. He sent me Madame de Marillac to tell me that she believed I was short of cash. She begged me to speak to her freely, so that she might give me the support her mother had offered me, which was a certain sum every year. I admitted to her quite frankly the difficulty I was having and that I would not need anything if my son had some occupation.

She wanted to see you about the matter but you had gone out, to find out from you, Monsieur, how the Bishop of Beauvais had received the suggestion she had made to him, and his opinion on this subject. Because she does not know how she ought to talk to him about it, and since he is supposed to leave tomorrow or the day after, she and I most humbly entreat you to take the trouble of writing her a note about the matter, I mean to Madame de Marillac, if you think

Letter 515. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Date of the marriage of Michel Le Gras, Saint Louise's son.
2Wife of Michel de Marillac, a Counselor in the Parlement.
3Or rather, her mother-in-law, Marie de Creil, the widow of René de Marillac; she had become a Carmelite.
4Augustin Potier.
it advisable. She wished you to do that for fear that you might have to tell me something that might sadden me.

I do not know if it is my pride that makes me sorry for the trouble I cause other people. I should be better, since I have the honor of being, Monsieur, your most humble daughter and most grateful servant.

L. de M.

516. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saturday morning [Between 1639 and 1641]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

It would be well for you to continue with the usual meditations and to give a special one to that fine young woman concerning her entrance into the married state:

(1) Reasons that a wife has to live well with her husband, on which subject you will quote her three authorities. The first, what Saint Paul said, that the husband is the head of the wife and, therefore, that it is up to her to have the same dependence on her husband that the members have with regard to the head; (2) what the same Saint Paul said to women, that is, that they are to obey their husbands; (3) that God said a woman must leave father and mother to follow her husband.

The second point is namely in what the good life of a woman with her husband consists. Now, it consists in loving

Letter 516. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1The position of the words “Saturday morning” at the head of the letter indicates that it was not written before 1639. On the other hand, after 1641, the Sisters were no longer in La Chapelle.

2Eph. 5:22-33.
her husband more than anything after God; in the second place, in pleasing and obeying him in everything that is not sin.

The third point is some means for a woman to obtain the grace to live well with her husband: (1) to ask it of God; (2) not to allow in her heart any thought that might lessen her esteem for him; (3) never to say or do anything that might displease him; (4) to propose to herself the example of some married woman who lives well with her husband; (5) to have devotion to honoring the marriage of Saint Joseph and the holy Virgin.

You do not trust enough. Have confidence that Our Lord will do as He pleases with your son.

You must carry out what you promised for Angers, although it is contrary to your feelings.

If I can do so, I shall go to La Chapelle tomorrow or send someone there. Good day, Mademoiselle, I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

517. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saturday, at noon [February or March 1641]¹

Madame de Chaumont² just left here. She spoke to me about an actress who wishes to give up her way of life and return to her region. She wants to buy a piece of land there,
as she has earned enough money to do that. But this good lady would like a retreat of seven or eight days for her beforehand. I led her to expect this charity at your house. Do you want to do it, Mademoiselle?

This good lady has taken a young woman from the Ursulines, whom she had placed with them and who lived with them for six years. She knows that those good Sisters give lessons, excellent ones, in tapestry work. It occurred to me that she could perhaps be useful to the Sisters in La Chapelle for two or three months, especially to show them how to teach school. What do you think, Mademoiselle? A word in reply to all that. The young woman is not this good lady’s daughter nor is she inclined to devote herself to the Charity; she wants to be a nun.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

518. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Wednesday morning [February or March 1641]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I do not think you should fear what you told me about that young woman. That is why I am asking you, with all due deference, to write to Madame de Chaumont to send her to you, or to tell her concierge verbally. For that is what I wrote to her in case you would agree: if she left the young woman in the city, we would send for her. If not, I think it would be

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3This convent was founded in 1612, in the parish of Saint-Jacques, by Mademoiselle Lhuillier, the widow of Claude Le Roux.


1This letter preceded no. 519 by four days.
well for you to tell the concierge to send her your letter in
Saint-Germain. And as far as her board is concerned, you
could tell the Marquise\(^2\) that you will accept whatever she
chooses to give.

Here is a letter from Madame Le Roux who hopes to come
and make her retreat at your house on Monday with Madame
Lotin. Will your health permit you to be there, Mademoiselle?
My catarrh seems to be letting up a little and allows me to
hope for a way of being present at the meeting next Friday,
which I entreat you to offer to Our Lord. In His love, I am
your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

519. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Sunday morning [February or March 1641]\(^1\)

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I have many things to tell you here; I do not know if I shall
remember all of them. The first is that our Sister Maurice, of
Saint-Sulpice, has left the Charity; her mother went for her
yesterday. These are the effects of our Sister Marie. The

\(^2\)Madame de Chaumont.

Letter 519. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph
letter.

\(^1\)One sentence in the letter leads to the belief that it was written during Lent, while the
text in its entirety can belong only to 1641.
Duchesse cried out in my presence when she learned of it, for I saw her yesterday. She said that it was the bad treatment those Sisters were receiving from their parish and she wanted to give up everything herself. Oh well! we must attend to it. In the name of God, Mademoiselle, see whom you can give her, starting today. One of those remaining is ill and there is only one who can work. I entreat you, Mademoiselle, to do all you can about this matter. She spoke to me again yesterday about establishing those Sisters and I told her we would talk about it in two or three days.

I think you would do well to send Jeanne to Saint-Germain.

Mesdames Le Roux and Lotin are insisting on beginning their retreat tomorrow at your house. What do you think, Mademoiselle? The latter is accustomed to eating meat. It would be difficult for me to go to your house because of my little ailment; they will have to come here.

Do what you can for Saint-Jacques and for the galley-slaves.

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2 The Duchesse d'Aiguillon, President of the Charity established in the parish of Saint-Sulpice.


4 Jeanne Lepeintre, whom Madame Goussault, her mistress, had sent to the Daughters of Charity around 1638. Saint Vincent said 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, at the Salpêtrière. (Cf. Ecrits spirituels, L. 64) 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 days were sad ones spent at the Nom-de-Jésus, to which she had to be committed because she was no longer rational.


6 Parish of Saint-Jacques-de-la-Boucherie in Paris.
I shall hurry M. Lambert with regard to the Sisters.

As for the Angers affair, I forgot to speak to M. de Cordes about it yesterday; we shall see. You could use my little indisposition as an excuse, as far as the papers are concerned.

We must keep on praying for the house; I am not so worried about it as about the way to set you up right now in a rented lodging. *O Jésus!* Mademoiselle, your concerns do not depend on a house, but on the continuation of God's blessing on the work.

I am going to ask Monsieur du Coudray whether he knows any suitable young women from Lorraine, and will have letters written everywhere on this subject. This is an avenue that just occurred to me now.

Let me know as soon as possible how you feel about those good ladies and their retreat.

Good day, Mademoiselle, I am your servant.

V. D.

I just wrote to Madame Le Roux to postpone the retreat.

*Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras*

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520. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Tuesday, at two o'clock [After 1639]¹

Mademoiselle,

I thought it advisable to have the Angers papers copied and checked; that will be finished in two days.

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¹Date the Daughters of Charity entered the hospital in Angers.
I would like to see the letter Abbé de Vaux wrote to you.
I am feeling fine, thank God, and am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

521. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[After 1637]¹

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I am feeling well, thank God, with the exception of my little fever. I took some waters yesterday and intend to continue, with God's help, if I can find some. I think they will do me good, as they have always done.
And you, how are you feeling? If I can, I shall see you soon. In the meantime, I am sending you two letters from Richelieu. We shall talk about them.
I am, meanwhile, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

V. D. P.

522. - A PRIEST OF THE MISSION TO SAINT VINCENT

1641

It is unimaginable how much our past labors are now bathed with

Letter 511. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
¹The house in Richelieu was founded in 1638.
consolations that our good God is sending us to give us courage. These souls in Poitou, who seemed hard as rocks, have caught the sacred fire of devotion so intensely and with so much enthusiasm that I do not think it will be able to be extinguished for a long time.

523. - TO SAMSON LE SOUDIER, IN LUCON

Paris, Palm Sunday, 1641

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am very much ashamed of having taken so long to answer you. I ask your pardon as humbly as I can, hoping that I shall mend my ways.

Your good brother has his title and dimissorial letter and will receive the first sacred Order at this ordination. I hope Our Lord will give him a great share in His spirit, and I am asking Him to grant you the grace to continue your preaching and catechism lessons. In the name of God, Monsieur, take heart in this, and do not be discouraged. Although you do not have so many talents, Our Lord will increase them for you, if He chooses, in the spirit of humility and charity in which I am convinced you live both within and outside the house. О Monsieur, how I beg God to perfect you in this spirit! I hope for it from His Goodness and am going to ask Him for it right

Letter 523. - Archives of the Provincial House of the Daughters of Charity, Turin, original autograph letter.

1March 24.

2Jacques Le Soudier.

3For ordination to Major Orders candidates must have a canonical title, which is the guarantee of permanent and proper maintenance. Dimissorial letters are statements giving a subject permission to be ordained by a bishop other than his own Ordinary.
now at the Holy Sacrifice. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Le Soudier, Priest of the Mission, in Luçon

524. - TO MONSIEUR PERRIQUET, IN BAYONNE

Paris, Easter Sunday,¹ 1641

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I received your letter with consolation and learned with admiration of the blessings Our Lord is bestowing on you. I offer most humble thanks to His Divine Majesty and ask Him to continue sanctifying your dear soul more and more.
I have been thinking for a long time about the matter you did me the honor of setting before me, namely, whether you would do better to continue the service you are rendering to God in those districts, or to return to the place where Providence seems to be summoning you, namely, to your benefice. Now, I must tell you in the simplicity of my heart, that I think you would do better to remain in Bayonne: (1) because the same Providence, which never contradicts itself, called you to Bayonne first; (2) because it is blessing you there beyond measure; (3) because I doubt you would be as effective

Letter 524. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original autograph letter. Coste published a more complete text in the second supplement of vol. VIII, pp. 551-552, no. 524. The editors followed this text.

¹March 31.
here as in Bayonne; (4) because Our Lord has granted you the dispositions you need to serve Him, without expecting any other reward than that of heaven; (5) because, not only do I believe you are useful to the Bishop of Bayonne, but also necessary, especially in the situation in which he finds himself. What would you answer to God, Monsieur, if, for want of your assistance, this good Prelate who holds you in such high esteem, were to abandon his dear spouse?

The poor ideas I am suggesting to you and submitting to your own, I would dare mention to only a few priests because it seems to me that there are few among them whom God has predisposed with the grace of attaching no importance at all to temporal interests; and you are, I think, one of the most disinterested men that I have ever seen. What makes me believe I am not mistaken is that I have been thinking about this for a long time. The Bishop of Bayonne can bear witness that, although he told me about it when he was here, I could not decide then to tell you what I am telling you now. And so, I can assure you, as I do before God, that no human reason is making me say this to you, but rather the thought of God alone and of the good of His Church. However, because I am a poor plowman and a swineherd and, what is worse, the most abominable and detestable of all the sinners in the world, I beg you to take no account at all of what I am saying to you, if it does not seem to you in conformity with God's Will. In His love and that of His holy Mother, I am, Monsieur, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Perriquet, Vicar General of the Bishop of Bayonne, in Bayonne

2 François Fouquet.
525. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Tuesday, at noon [Between 1641 and 1654]

Here are your papers, Mademoiselle. We shall discuss what you told me about the room for Madame Lhoste (?). Brother Pierre Rogue left without saying good-bye; he has not been here for a month.

Do what you please concerning the papers of our Sister Marie, from Sedan. I shall write to her and reply to Madame Forest.²

They are asking for five hundred livres from the house, and I, for your prayers. I am your servant.

V. D.

526. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[1641]¹

Monsieur,

Here is a letter from the mother of Sister Aimée from Troyes; her brothers did not want to take her away. I most humbly entreat you to take the trouble of letting me know when that good lady whom she mentions is going back and whether I should give her any money,

Letter 525. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
¹Duration of Sister Marie Joly's stay in Sedan. The year 1641 seems the more likely date for this letter.
²A Lady of Charity whom Saint Vincent directed. At the process of beatification of Saint Vincent, twenty-seven letters which he had written to Madame Forest were submitted to the tribunal. All these letters have been lost.

Letter 526. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
¹This letter was written while the Motherhouse was still in La Chapelle, after Sister Barbe Angiboust was recalled from Richelieu, and when Marguerite de Turenne had just come to the Motherhouse.
both for her expenses and for her place in the coach, and how much.

The opportunity, which I think God gave me today to speak to you, made me see similar faults that I often commit, but also, most honored Father, I think it must make you aware of my need for assistance in doing God's most holy Will. Besides, you should not expect anything at all of me except that which you do me the honor of commanding me, for in that regard I think our good God does me the kindness of remembering me.

One of the most pressing matters for me is to ask your direction on how to behave towards our good Sister Barbe and to tell you that she has a great need to speak to you. She believes that, until she does, she will not be satisfied. If you could go to La Chapelle on Saturday, it would be a great service for us.

I am afraid our Sister Marguerite, the demoiselle,² may go astray in the end. If it were convenient for you to allow me to speak to you beforehand, I would be very glad.

Would your charity please remember the paper you promised me to help me speak to our Sisters two or three times a week in order to try and encourage them? I think I deserve great punishments for all their failings. Ask God for someone who can serve them better. I entreat this of you with tears in my eyes, what with God's having, for so many years, done me the kindness of speaking to me through you and with my being such as I am! Please ask Him for mercy for my poor soul, which He has placed in your hands to be forever, Monsieur, your most humble and most grateful daughter and servant.

L. DE MARILLAC

Thursday

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

²Probably Marguerite Deshaies de Turenne, a relative of the Pastor of Saché. She did not persevere in the vocation of a Daughter of Charity.
I think, Mademoiselle, you would do well to give what is necessary to your good Sister so that she can return. Direct her to Madame Gouault, who is with her son the merchant on the rue Saint-Honoré.

It is impossible for me to see to our Sisters before the end of next week. We have meetings every day from now until Wednesday. I shall speak to Barbe at that time. We have to give that young woman something to do elsewhere, things being the way they are. As for that good demoiselle, what do you have in mind for her?

I shall speak to M. Guilloire about Mademoiselle Constance. It would be good meanwhile to give Madame Belot some direction; however, do you not think that Madame Turgis could act as a substitute? It would be well, if you think it fitting, for you to give her some title among the Sisters.

And as for you, in the name of God, Mademoiselle, excuse me for not speaking to you sooner. I will do so as soon as I can. I am in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

V. D.
528. - TO SAINT LOUISE

That good Sister has finally decided to go to Saint-Côme, although in her wavering mood she says that she will not be there for long. That is fine; her uncle was just like her.

M. Dehorgny sent me word two or three days ago that they are not satisfied with our Sister Jeanne who is with the galley-slaves. It was the Pastor of Saint-Nicolas who spoke to him about it. That being so, it behooves you to remove her as soon as you can. I do not know whether that service would be beyond the strength of our Sister Barbe Angiboust.

I hope to see you tomorrow, God willing. I praise God, meanwhile, that you are feeling well.

I continue to be very edified by that good demoiselle from Arras. When will she begin her retreat? She is very contemplative. I do not know if she will be given enough to action; Our Lord will supply for her want.

529. - TO SAINT LOUISE

It seems to me, Mademoiselle, that our dear Sister Mar-

Letter 528. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1It was at this time that Sister Barbe Angiboust went to serve the galley-slaves.
2A parish in Paris.
3Georges Froger, Pastor of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet. It is a known fact that the clergy of Saint-Nicolas had charge of the chaplaincy for the galley-slaves.
4As everywhere, she became known for her great charity and unalterable patience. Sometimes, when the galley-slaves were dissatisfied with their food, they would throw it on the floor. Then Barbe would stoop down, pick up the bread and meat and, after cleaning the food, would hand it to them again with the same smiling face.

Letter 529. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Marguerite de Turenne took the habit of a Daughter of Charity on or around
guerite, from Saché, is a little too vacillating or less determined. Speak to her and, if you are satisfied, you can admit her. It is to be feared that, if we refuse her, it may be a greater subject of temptation for her. The girl from Liancourt, who has been in Nanteuil, must be put off, I think.

I told Jeanne not to think of that kerchief for the coiffe when she goes to church. I think we will have to bear with her in this attachment. She will be able to get over it with time. It is a pity; she is a fine young woman.

At eight o’clock, I will go down to celebrate Holy Mass. God knows with what pleasure I hope to say it for you and your Sisters, and how affectionately I recommend myself to your prayers and theirs.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

530. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Blessed be God, Mademoiselle, for all He has been pleased to accomplish in you during your retreat and for having deprived me of the consolation of seeing you then!

I am feeling well enough, thank God, and [am] able to offer you to Our Lord tomorrow in the new exterior and interior

Pentecost Sunday in the year 1641. (Cf. letter from her mother preserved in the Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity.) Reference in this letter to her acceptance into the Company prompts us to assign this date for this letter.

2Small commune in Indre-et-Loire, near Chinon. Marguerite de Turenne was one of five women from Saché who had entered the Daughters of Charity in 1641.

3Possibly Françoise Noret, from Liancourt, who spent a great part of her life at the Motherhouse. In 1645 she was sent to Saint-Denis and accompanied Saint Louise during her journey to Nantes in July-August 1646. On August 8, 1655, she signed the act of establishment of the Company of the Daughters of Charity. Her sister, Marguerite, was also a Daughter of Charity.

4Nanteuil-le-Haudouin (Oise).

5Jeanne Lepeintre.

Letter 530. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
state to which Divine Love has disposed you. He compensates for and accomplishes in a divine way what men are not able to do in a human way. Perhaps He deliberately permitted my not having seen you so that I might not put my sickle into His harvest. I pray that He may animate you completely with His Spirit and your two Sisters also, as well as your sick.

You would do well to send back that good young woman from Angers as soon as possible after the feasts. After that we shall consider Our Lord's work in you; and tomorrow heaven will behold you wearing the exterior habit of repentance that has so long filled your spirit and her spirit, by His mercy, in whose love, I am your . . .

V. D.

I will find out what you want to know about M. Le Gras.

530a. - TO SAINT JANE FRANCES, IN ANNECY

Paris, June 9, 1641

My very dear and most worthy Mother,

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1Sister Barbe Bailly, secretary to Saint Louise in the 1630s, stated in her notes that Saint Louise put on the habit of the Daughters of Charity one Pentecost Sunday and became so ill from doing so that she had to return to her previous headdress. Although 1639 has been mentioned as the year this took place, we believe 1641 is more reasonable. It is very doubtful that Saint Louise had any Sisters native to Angers in her Community before the Daughters of Charity entered the hospital in Angers. In her correspondence and that of Saint Vincent, Sisters from Angers are never mentioned before December 1, 1640. Moreover, in a letter to the Abbé de Vaux, June 6, 1641, Saint Louise asked him in a post script "to speak to those good Daughters about the change of habit." (Cf. Écrits Spirituels, L. 45.)

Letter 530a. - The original autograph letter is in the Monastery of the Visitation in Sault-de-Navailles (Pyrénées-Atlantiques). Coste published an incomplete copy (no. 539), which had been presented at the beatification process of Saint Jane Frances de Chantal.
The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received today the letter you wrote me in care of our Mother in the faubourg. In answer to it I shall tell you, dear Mother, that I thank God for all the graces He is giving our poor Missionaries through the communication you allow them to make to you. I beseech Him to render them worthy of the continuation of the same grace by the good use I sincerely hope they are making of it. In the name of Our Lord, my worthy [Mother], continue to do them this same charity.

I shall try to obey you with regard to the faubourg as far as the visitation is concerned, and shall follow the order you indicate to me, if you obtain from Our Lord for me a share in the gentle firmness He has bestowed on you. Oh! how your good angel would help us in that regard, if you, dear [Mother], were to ask him fervently.

This is how that affair is going—the one about which a certain prelate had complained to the person who you said wrote to you concerning it. There is no need for me to mention here the troubles of your dear daughters who are at the Madeleine. Some of the professed nuns, fearing that our

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The complete original was published in the * Annales* (1954-1955), pp. 621-628, and was reprinted in *Mission et Charité*, 19-20, pp. 27-29. This edition uses the latter text.

The certain date on the original necessitates the change in the placement of this letter, a change Coste had recommended in his corrections in vol. VIII.

1 Anne-Marquerite Guérin was the Superioress of the second Monastery of the Visitation, in the faubourg Saint-Jacques, from May 24, 1640 to May 21, 1643. She had entered the Visitation Order at the first Monastery, in the faubourg Saint-Antoine (founded in 1619), and was sent to the second Monastery when it was established in 1626. She was later put at the head of the Monastery in Rouen and then of the third Monastery in Paris (founded in 1659). She died there on January 24, 1669, at the age of seventy-seven.

2 In 1640 the Missionaries had established themselves in Annecy to preach missions and to receive the ordinands of the diocese. Saint Vincent recommended that his confrères there make their internal communication to Saint Jane Frances: they had recourse to the Superioress of the Visitation in their spiritual anxiety and in actual fact entrusted to her the direction of their souls.

3 The Monastery of Sainte-Madeleine (a house for penitent young women) had been
Sisters might withdraw and that the malcontents might get the upper hand, found a way to write to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon themselves and asked her, without the Superior's knowledge, to come and see them. This she did, because she is charitable and is a benefactress of the house. They complained to her in such a way that the lady spoke of it to that good bishop and asked him to settle the matter. When she saw that the affair was being drawn out, that the smoldering continued and was increasing more and more, and that it was being fomented by the boldness they assumed because they were being upheld by the said bishop, that good lady sent him word, beseeching him to settle the matter or she would complain about it. This made him extremely angry and set him strongly against your dear daughters, saying that the trouble came from them—which it did not. I assure you they had no part in . . . .

Would that I were in a position to tell you the circumstances of this affair, worthy Mother, and you would see that they are innocent. He himself admitted to me some time ago that he did not believe it, but that they were, at least, the cause of his being ill-treated. The house is doing well for the present. That was a little storm which has passed and has produced a greater calm than ever in those spirits. There is reason to praise God in this, and to assure you, dear Mother, that the affair was dealt with

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Anne-Marie Bollain was born September 30, 1599. She presented herself to Saint Francis de Sales in Paris, in order to be received into the first Monastery of the Visitation. Her mind was so mature, even in the novitiate, that Saint Jane Frances moderated various articles of the Custom Book in accord with her advice. In 1629 she was sent as Superior to the convent of Madeleine, which she left in 1633, summoned to the first Monastery by the votes of the Sisters who wanted her at their head. Three years later she resumed her place at the convent of Sainte-Madeleine, from which she again departed in 1664 to govern the community in Chaillot for six years. The first Monastery asked for her again in 1673. She died there on January 15, 1683, having served God in the cloister for sixty-three years. Saint Jane Frances said of her that she was "a very fervent and virtuous soul who went straight to God." (Cf. Année Sainte, vol. 1, pp. 360-375.)

*The manuscript is torn here.*
according to the advice of the brother and sister of that good bishop, in a spirit of respect and submission, and nothing contrary to that.

Another slight unpleasantness concerning the same subject occurred a little while ago. It caused fresh complaints, but I can assure you, dear Mother, that it was no fault of theirs. Well, Our Lord is permitting your good daughters to be tried in this way. Blessed be God that there are no grounds for it! Charity is patient, says Saint Paul. Does not the great work of charity they are doing require that they suffer to try their patience? Never is a work of God done for God where one is not paid back in this coin.

Our dear Mother in the city seems to have the spirit of God in her way of directing. Our dear Sister Angélique lives amidst her infirmities with a humility and cordiality toward the Sisters that edifies me. Oh! how I desire this same blessing for all Orders. How admirable this harmony is in the eyes of God and what an edification to those who see them!

Good evening, dear Mother!

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1 Cor. 13:4.

Mother Louise-Eugénie de Fontaines, who had just been chosen, May 16, 1641, Superior of the Visitation of the rue Saint-Antoine (first Monastery).

Louise-Eugénie de Fontaines was born in Paris, March 13, 1608, of Huguenot parents and was received into the first Monastery of the Visitation in 1630, seven years after her abjuration of heresy. She soon became Mistress of Novices there. After her election as Superior in 1641, she was reelected so often that the convent had her at its head for thirty-three years. In 1644 she went to the Abbey of Perrine, near Le Mans, to establish the reform there. On her return, the Archbishop of Paris requested her to work on the rule of the Abbey of Port-Royal. Saint Vincent, who observed her at work in certain difficult situations, stated "that an angel could not have comported himself with more virtue." (Cf. Sainte Jeanne-Françoise, vol. VIII, p. 446, note.) She died September 29, 1694, at the age of eighty-six, leaving the reputation of a holy religious. "God always blessed her leadership and her undertakings," says the book of professions (Arch. Nat. LL 1718). Her biography was written by Jacqueline-Marie du Plessis, Vie de la Vénérable Mère Louise-Eugénie de Fontaine, religieuse du monastère de la Visitation de Sainte-Marie (Paris: n. p., 1696).

Marie-Angélique Le Masson, or Hélène-Angélique Lhuillier, or yet some other religious of the Visitation.
I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

If I am not able to write on this occasion to M. Codoing, I shall do so at the first opportunity. I hope this letter finds M. Dehorgny of our Company, in Annecy where he has gone to see our Missionaries. However, worthy Mother, please tell M. Codoing that I gave four hundred livres to Monsieur de Menthon for the July quarter.

Addressed: Most worthy Mother de Chantal, Superior of the First Monastery of the Visitation of Annecy, in Annecy

531. - TO JEAN DES LIONS

July 20, 1641

Monsieur,

I received the letter you kindly did me the honor of writing to me. I did not send you an answer as soon as I received it, because of the difficult situation in which I found myself. Pardon me, please, and kindly allow M. Duchesne to give you

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8A Savoyard nobleman living in Annecy.

Letter 531. - Reg. 1, f°21 v°. The copyist notes that the original was in Saint Vincent's own handwriting.

1Jean Des Lions, born in Pontoise in 1615, had become Dean and theologian of Senlis on September 11, 1638, and received his doctorate from the Sorbonne on June 5, 1640. He became involved in Jansenist ideas and persevered in them despite Saint Vincent's efforts to win him back. This was all the more unfortunate in that he was virtuous, very learned, and esteemed by all who knew him. He was passionately attached to the ancient practices of the Church and anxious to restore them. He wrote several highly appreciated works. He died in Senlis on March 26, 1700.

2Jérôme Duchesne, a Doctor of the Sorbonne and a member of the community of
the response verbally. He is coming to see you with the Dean of Saint-Frambourg about the matter in question. I most humbly entreat you, Monsieur, to assist him with your good advice and your protection.

If you judge before God that our poor, weak Company can render some small service to His Divine Majesty in your fine city, the said Dean and he will tell you the state of affairs. And I, for my part, humbly entreat you to accept here the renewal of my offers of obedience. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur....

532. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

Monsieur,

Here is a letter from our good Sister in Sedan. I entreat you to take the trouble of reading it and of being so kind as to give her some consolation. I read to our Sisters everything that might encourage them from her example. To me, they were like soldiers are said to be when they hear the alarm, especially Sister Henriette. Although she is on retreat, [she] would rather leave today than tomorrow.

If you think it advisable for me to write to Madame de Bouillon, as she wishes, please let me know. I hope you will also give me the pleasure of being able to speak to you, Saturday or Sunday at least, so that I may prepare myself to begin my fifty-first year—which I shall enter on Monday, the feast of Saint Clare, if God grants me the grace of being alive.

Saint-Nicolas from 1612 on. In 1621 he had given a mission with Saint Vincent in Montmirail.

Today it is called Villers-Saint-Frambourg. This parish had had as Dean, since April 2, 1637, Philippe Robin, a Councillor in the Presidial of Senlis.

Letter 532. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

Marie Joly; she had left for Sedan in February.

Henriette Geseaume.

August 12.
The Pastor of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois sent word asking if a lady could come here to make her retreat. I do not know whether it is at your house that her husband is to make one. According to what I have been told, they are people who have suffered great distress, but I do not know their name. I sent him word that I would give him an answer tomorrow, after talking it over with you. Please take the trouble of letting me know what I should tell him and of remembering that I am, Monsieur, your most humble and most grateful daughter and servant.

L. de M.

Wednesday, August 7 [1641]

There are five good Sisters on retreat: Henriette, Marguerite from Saint-Laurent, the relative of the Pastor of La Gêve; Claude Lauraine, who looks after the little children; and the one from Angers. They will be able to make their confession Friday morning or afternoon, some a general one, and the others for four or five years. Please decide, Monsieur, when it will be.

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

533. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[August 7, 1641]

Here are just two or three words because I am in a hurry. I am consoled by what Sister Marie wrote to you. It is

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4Pierre Colombet.
5It was on August 12, 1641 that Saint Louise entered her fifty-first year.
6Marguerite Lauraine.
7The foundlings.
8Sister Marguerite Deshaies. She did not persevere in the vocation of a Daughter of Charity.

Letter 533. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
9This letter replies to the preceding one, and is written on the back of the original.
dangerous to write to her. Let us wait a little while until I have seen the Comte's chaplain.

I do not think there is any objection to your receiving that lady, after she has told you her name and titles. I know nothing about her husband.

It would be difficult for M. Souliers to hear your Sisters tomorrow. I shall ask M. Dehorgny or someone else to do it.

I am leaving for Nanterre tomorrow morning, God willing, and hope to be back here Sunday evening. After that, we shall have the happiness of seeing you.

Let me know what the Marquise de Maignelay [saying] about a schoolmistress for that place.

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

534. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Tuesday morning [1641]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I do not know what to tell you about little Jeanne, except that something must be said to her about the temptation of that kerchief and that, in fact, we shall deal with the situation when she is here for this feast.

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1Marguerite de Gondi.
2A word was forgotten here in the original letter.

Letter 534. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This letter appears to belong near no. 537. It dates from the time when the Sisters still had their Motherhouse in La Chapelle.
2Jeanne Lepointre.
3The costume of the first Daughters of Charity, almost all natives of the environs of Paris, was the one they were wearing when they presented themselves to Saint Louise to become members of the Little Company. Those who came from farther away used to dress, for the sake of uniformity, like the village women of the area surrounding Paris.
As for Anne, I think you would do well to write to her in a rather warm way about her sadness. With regard to Perrette, I think it would be good for you to write her a note, pending the time when you will see her.

I hope to go to La Chapelle on Thursday, if you send word to Madame Caregré, the daughter of M. de la Bistrade, that she can take you in her carriage. You can tell her that I shall go there between two and three o’clock on the same day, about which I left her in doubt. I am your most humble servant.

V. D.

535. TO SAINT LOUISE

Thursday morning [Between July and September 1641]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Their habit was similar to that worn by the Sisters until 1964; however, the dress was gray, the collar shorter and only a toquis or toquet (small brimless hat) covered the head. In the mind of the Holy Founder, the Daughters of Charity were, and were to remain, village girls. He wished them to be laywomen and not religious, and, consequently, intended that they be dressed as “ordinary women,” according to his own expression. However, since the toquis gave poor protection from the weather, in 1646 the Saint allowed the more delicate among the Sisters, and in particular Sister Jeanne Lepeintre, who suffered from eye trouble, to add to their headpiece, as did many village women, the white cornette, an unstarched piece of material raised up in front and falling on both sides. The use of the cornette became generalized, and in 1685 Edme Jolly, the third Superior General, made it obligatory in order to remedy what might be shocking in a Community, a disparity of headdress. During the second half of the eighteenth century, the cornette became larger and, in the nineteenth century, starching was allowed to give it more consistency. Saint Louise did not dress like her Daughters. With Saint Vincent’s permission, she wore the usual costume of devout widows.

4Anne Hardemont perhaps.
5Probably Perrette Chevedille, niece of Sister Henriette Gesseau.

Letter 535. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This letter belongs between the arrival of Sister Elisabeth Martin in Richelieu (July
I am back,² by the grace of God, whom I thank for your health.

Isabelle¹ is perfectly well physically, but she is not pleased to find herself in a house where there is no observance.⁴ Her companion is a pathetic creature.⁵ I do not know if there is a way to find her some employment; she has only four or five girls⁶ and does not take care of the sick.

What mortifies Isabelle, our dear Sister, even more is that she has not gone to the sick for some time since she has been occupied with the arrangements for forty or fifty ordinands. I spoke to M. Lambert about this, so that he will not make use of her that way any more. This good Sister seems to be longing for her return here or to Angers.⁷ Nonetheless, she will do out of virtue what we ask of her.

The Duchesse d'Aiguillon told me yesterday that she likes the suggestion Madame de Lamoignon⁸ made to her about

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¹Saint Vincent had just returned from Richelieu.
²Saint Vincent had just returned from Richelieu.
³Elisabeth Martin.
⁴The house in Richelieu.
⁵Perhaps Louise Ganset who had been sent to Richelieu with Barbe Angiboust at the time of its foundation. On October 26, 1639, Saint Louise wrote, "My daughter, place a little constraint on your feelings. What good does it do you when you pay visits and go on pilgrimages without permission and want in everything to live according to your own will? . . . I think that what causes most of the faults you commit . . . is that you have money and have always liked having it." (Cf. Écrits spirituels, L. 11.)
⁶In her school.
⁷She was Superior in Angers before going to Richelieu.
⁸Madame de Lamoignon, born Marie de Landes on September 28, 1576, had married, on June 10, 1597, Chrétien de Lamoignon, President à mortier in the Parlement of Paris. Of this union were born the renowned Guillaume de Lamoignon, who became First President [Chief Justice] of the same Parlement; and a daughter, Madeleine de Lamoignon, well-known for her piety and her dedication to the unfortunate. The mother, according to Saint Francis de Sales, was one of the holiest women of her time. Probably after the death of her husband in 1636, she joined the Ladies of Charity. Her admirable qualities of mind and heart led to her election as their President on the retirement of Madame de Sourcareire. She held this post from about 1643 till her death on December 30, 1651, at the age of seventy-five. One of Saint Vincent's best supporters, her name deserves to be placed beside those of Madame Goussault and the Duchesse d'Aiguillon.
putting the forty-five thousand livres in an annuity and renting a house in the meantime. We shall be seeing one another along with the Lady officers Saturday afternoon. Please notify them about this and postpone the Sisters' meeting until next week, because of the excessive work this return has given me. And with regard to yourself, I shall have the happiness of seeing you as soon as possible. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

536. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Wednesday morning [August or September 1641]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I think it is good to answer the woman who wrote to you concerning the Sisters of Saint-Roch, that we cannot send a single one of them.

I am supposed to receive an answer from Madame Maretz today. If she wishes to give us the house for twelve thousand livres, we shall give her six thousand of it in cash and the rest in an annuity.

When the Saint was seen entering her house, people would say, "The Father of the poor is going to see their Mother." She always assisted at the Divine Office. One day, when she had fainted, it was discovered that she was wearing a hair-shirt and a belt with iron spikes, which was hurting her terribly. On her death, the poor of her parish would not allow her body to be taken away to the Church of the Franciscans of Saint-Denis, where her husband was buried. (Cf. Bibl. Nat., ff. 32.785.)

9To make of it the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity.


1This letter preceded by just a few days the purchase of the new Motherhouse of the Sisters, near Saint-Lazare.

2Wife of Jean du Maretz, owner of the house.
I shall try to see you one of these days for your communication.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

537. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[September 6 or 7, 1641]

I am a little worried about your illness, Mademoiselle. I most humbly entreat you to do what you can to get better. We shall have to deal, then, with those Sisters in the way you suggested to me, and either you or I shall have [to speak] plainly to our Sister Jeanne Lepeintre.

I shall try to come and see you tomorrow, and your good Sisters, too.

The Pastor of Saint-Germain-en-Laye did speak to me highly of Sister Perrette yesterday, but I do not know how that can [be done].

We finally have the contract of purchase [for the house] and the money has been paid. Please let me know how many

3Saint Vincent inadvertently added "Monsieur" here.

Letter 537. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Mention of the contract of purchase for the property of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity enables us to assign this date.

2The original is damaged here and in several other places.

3Because of the way she wore her coiffe.

4The bill of sale between Jean de Maretz, bourgeois of Paris, and Marie Sadot, his wife, on the one hand, and, on the other, the Congregation of the Mission represented
rooms there are. We shall announce the purchase tomorrow in the homily.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am your servant.

V. D.

538. - TO ETIENNE BLATRON, IN ALET

September 9, 1641

Mon Dieu! how consoled my soul was with all that M. Dehorgny told me and wrote about you! But then, I was grieved in the same measure by your illness and the difficulties you are having in some encounters with that person you know. In the name of God, Monsieur, take care of your poor life. Be content with consuming it little by little for Divine Love. It is not your own; it belongs to the Author of life, for love of whom you must preserve it until He asks it of you, unless an opportunity arises to offer it, like a good priest, eighty years of age, who was just martyred in England after

by Vincent de Paul, Antoine Portail, Antoine Lucas, Jean Dehorgny, François Souffliers, Léonard Boucher and René Alméras, was signed on September 6, 1641, before the notaries Guillaume Le Roux and Etienne Paisant. It involved "two adjoining houses, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis opposite the church of the aforesaid Saint-Lazare, on the main street. One building consisted of a cellar, two low rooms, four bedrooms, two next to each other on the second floor and the other two upstairs in the attic, a stable, a courtyard enclosed by walls and a well common to both houses in the said courtyard. The other house consisted of a low room with adjoining kitchen, a large bedroom, two upper rooms and an attic above, covered with tiles, and a carriage gateway serving as an entrance to both of the said houses. Right inside the entrance, was a small lodge, like a pavilion, with a slate roof, common to both houses, with the garden in the back. The entire property was enclosed by walls." The Saint paid the sellers 6,600 livres in cash, and contracted to pay the remaining 5,400 livres in an annuity of 300 livres each year. The Sisters' new house was enlarged over the years. Saint Vincent resold it to Saint Louise in 1653. (Cf. Arch. Nat., S 6.608.)

Letter 538. - Reg. 2, p. 263.

1Probably Antoine Lucas.
cruel torture. When he was half strangled, his heart was torn out; and when they told him, before executing him, that, if he were willing to renounce his religion, they would save his life, he replied that if he had a thousand lives, he would most willingly give them all for the love of Jesus Christ, for whom he was dying. I am telling you this with tears in my eyes at the thought of that holy priest's happiness and the attachment I still have for my miserable carcass.

539. - TO SAINT JANE FRANCES

(Now 530a.)

540. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

Monsieur,

The desire good Mademoiselle Chamillac expressed to me that you would pray to God for her brings me to entreat you most humbly to assist her in the greatest need she has ever had. I have just been told that she is dying. I believe I can say in truth that it is God's love which has put her there so soon. I am losing a great deal in this beautiful creature, except that this is entirely the most holy Will of God, to which I wish to be wholly submissive. With this in view, I most humbly entreat you to do us the charity your goodness has led us to expect, since we are greatly in need of it. Occasions that have prevented you from doing this will always be bound to come up, unless you do us the honor of disregarding them.

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2William Webster, alias Ward, put to death in London on July 26, 1641. More information about the death of this martyr can be found in M. de Marays, Histoire de la persécution présente des catholiques en Angleterre [n.p., 1646].

Letter 540. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.
Forgive me this liberty. It is the fear I often have, which might seem to be directed by Divine Providence, that is keeping this benefit from us.

I entreat God with all my heart to preserve for us what He has given us in you. I am, Monsieur, your most obedient and most grateful servant.

L. DE M.

September 11 [1641]¹

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

541. - TO BERNARD CODOING, SUPERIOR, IN ANNECY

Paris, September 15, 1641

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I thank God for all the graces He has given you, and beseech Him to bless you, your dear Company, and your works more and more. Assure our very dear and most honored Mother de Blonay that I have accepted with respect and entire submis-

¹Date written on the back of the original.


¹Marie-Aimée de Blonay was born in Saint-Paul (Haute-Savoie), the daughter of Claude de Blonay and Louise de Livron. She took the habit of the Visitation at the first Monastery in Annecy on January 25, 1612. She was Superior successively in Lyons (1622-1628 and 1631-1637), Bourg-en-Bresse (1638), and, at the time of this letter, of the first Monastery of Annecy (1641-1647). She died in Annecy on June 15, 1649, at the age of fifty-nine. She was one of the first spiritual daughters of Saint Francis de Sales and highly esteemed by this great Saint and by Saint Jane Frances de Chantal. Miracles have been attributed to her. (Cf. Année sainte, vol. VI, pp. 368-369.) Charles-August de Sales, Bishop of Geneva and nephew of Saint Francis de Sales, wrote her life in 1653.
ission the reasons she brought forth for the prompt return of our worthy Mother, and that it will not depend on me that the Bishop of Geneva and she get the satisfaction they desire in that matter and in all things. I greet her with all the humble respect in my power and recommend myself to her holy prayers.

We have given three hundred livres for the October quarter, fifty écus to M. Châtillon and the other fifty to M. Monnellet, and we shall send the rest in the manner you specify, since you informed us that we should act in this way.

M. Dehorgny has delighted us with consolation in the account he gave us concerning the fine and pleasant state of the Company and the great fruits it is producing. O Monsieur, how I most humbly thank God for all that and beseech Him to continue the same grace for you!

I still persist in the thought that it is advisable to accept only priests or individuals who are in Orders, and that we should not teach them the sciences, but rather the use of them, in the way we do with the ordinands.

What you wished of Rome has been done, by the grace of God. His Holiness has allowed us to rent or buy a house, to live there, and to exercise our functions with regard to the people and clergy according to our Institute, on condition that we depend on the Cardinal Vicar General and the Vice-Gerent with respect to our functions concerning the neighbor and, as far as the discipline of the Company is concerned, on the General of the said Company. This permission is given in recognition of the good work of M. Lebreton, to whom God

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2Saint Jane Frances de Chantal.
3Juste Guérin.
4He had just finished a visitation of the house in Annecy.
5Substitute for the Cardinal Vicar; at that time, it was Giovanni Battista Altieri, brother of the future Pope Clement X (1670-1676). Giovanni Battista later became Bishop of Todi (1643-1654) and was also named Cardinal (1643). He died in Narni on November 25, 1654. He was one of the Saint's most powerful protectors in Rome.
is granting great blessings. We are getting ready to send two or three members of the Company there this October. I entreat you, Monsieur, to help us thank God for all of this.

I most humbly greet your dear Company and very humbly recommend myself to your prayers and theirs.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

We shall send you the Missionary you requested, at the first opportunity.

Addressed: Monsieur Codoing, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Annecy, in Annecy]'

542. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Wednesday morning [Between 1639 and 1641]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here are some letters for the good Sisters from Saché. If I can do it, I shall go to La Chapelle this afternoon.

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6A document, dated July 11, 1641, gave permission to the Congregation of the Mission, through Louis Lebreton, to be established in Rome. (Cf. vol. XIII, no. 86.)

7The section in brackets is that added from the original to the Pémartin text given by Coste.

Letter 542. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1A small commune in Indre-et-Loire, near Chinon. Saint Vincent is not referring here to Daughters of Charity stationed in Saché, but to Sisters native to that locality. There were five of them in Paris on September 17, 1641: Louise Rideau, Marguerite Deshaies de Turenne, Andrée Gulline, Perrine and Renée, whose family names are unknown.
I see clearly from the Pastor's letter\textsuperscript{2} how much those good Sisters mean to him, and that it is advisable to speak to them sometimes. I shall do so, who am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and obedient servant.

V. D.

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543. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[1641]\textsuperscript{1}

It is true that good Madame Caregré has expressed to me her wish that I see her now and then, but that does not mean you should not deal with her as with any other person—I mean in everything; in short, give her the exercises yourself, as if I were not to see her. She has complete confidence in you.

I had a note put in the sacristy this morning to have prayers offered to God for that good child. Please let me know how she is this morning. I am begging Our Lord to preserve her.

I shall soon be leaving to begin the visitation at Sainte-Marie in the city,\textsuperscript{2} God willing.

544. - TO SAINT LOUISE

I am sending you Madame N.'s resolutions, which are good,
but they would seem even better to me if she came down to particulars a little. It would be well to train the women who make their retreat exercises at your house to do that. All else is merely a product of the mind, which, because it has found some facility and even some sweetness in the consideration of a virtue, flatters itself into thinking that it is quite virtuous. Nevertheless, in order to become soundly virtuous, it is advisable to make good practical resolutions concerning particular acts of the virtues and to be faithful in carrying them out afterwards. Without doing that, one is often virtuous only in one's imagination.

545. - TO ANTOINE PORTAIL

October 5, 1641

Saint Vincent de Paul gives Antoine Portail news of Saint-Lazare and the other houses of the Company.

546. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Sunday, at four o'clock [October 1641]

Mademoiselle,

I was very pleased with the note you sent me yesterday
evening concerning the Lady with the galley-slaves. It was
decided yesterday that I should see M. Accar in order to find
out from him more in detail what duties he requires of this
Lady. I sent M. Dehorgny and am awaiting his answer. I did
not go myself, because I intended to make a little retreat for
the Jubilee and began it today. I commend it to your prayers.

I received a letter today from the Marquise de Maignelays
who is waiting for the Sisters. When are you sending them to
her? You will have to reserve seats in the Soissons coach.\(^3\)

I forgot to speak to the gardener’s wife about your door.\(^4\)
I will have someone tell her, as I sent word to her this morning
not to give the empty room she has to anyone; in that case,
Madame Lhoste could be put there.

A man from Fontenay\(^5\) told me wonderful things yesterday
in praise of your poor Sisters. After the retreat, we shall discuss
the way they can go about gaining the Jubilee,\(^6\) and you, also,
for whom I am, in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

V. D.

*Addressed:* Mademoiselle Le Gras

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\(^2\) Administrator of the house of the galley-slaves.

\(^3\) For the Sisters destined to go to Nanteuil-le-Haudouin.

\(^4\) The door of the new Motherhouse on the rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis.

\(^5\) Fontenay-aux-Roses.

\(^6\) On October 15 Saint Vincent gave the Sisters the conference he is announcing here
(cf. vol. IX, no. 7).
548. - NICOLAS PAVILLON, BISHOP OF ALET, TO SAINT VINCENT

Alet, October 20 [1641]

I shall begin answering the letter you did me the honor of writing to me on September 9 by most humbly entreating you not to make any sort of excuse to me any more for not letting us hear from you as often as we wish. I am well convinced that this deprivation, which we feel deeply, will never arise from any want of your charity in our regard, but rather from a lack of leisure on your part, and because I have rendered myself unworthy in the past. This obliges me most humbly to ask your pardon, as for an infinity of other faults that I have committed against you, and to entreat you to assist me by your holy prayers to improve in the future.

I am greatly obliged to the charity of those who have reported to you something good about me, and especially to His Lordship of Bourlemont² and Monsieur Perrochel,³ but I can assure you that, because of my wretchedness and laziness, I am in a state more worthy


¹This date is dictated by the mention of the diplomatic posting of the Marquis de Brezé.

²Claude d'Anglure, Prince d'Amblise, Marquis de Sy, Comte de Bourlemont, Vicomte de Forest and Baron de Busancy. He had married Angélique Diacette, daughter of Anne d'Acquaviva d'Aragon, Duchesse d'Atri.

³François Perrochel, born in Paris, October 18, 1602, was M. Olier's cousin. He was one of the pious and zealous priests who gathered around Saint Vincent to be animated by his spirit and to work under his direction. He gave missions in several places, especially in Auvergne, in Joigny, and in the faubourg Saint-Germain. He was a member of the Tuesday Conferences and was present at the meetings in which the retreats for ordinands were organized. As Bishop-elect of Boulogne, he was invited to give the conferences for the ordinands at the Bons-Enfants and was so successful that the Queen wished to hear him. Moved by his words, she left generous alms for the Saint to help him defray a part of the expenses incurred by the retreats. François Perrochel was consecrated bishop in the church of Saint-Lazare on June 11, 1645. The episcopate of this holy prelate was one of the most fruitful and glorious known to the diocese of Boulogne. When, worn out by age and infirmity, the Bishop of Boulogne saw that he could not govern his diocese
of compassion than envy. I hope, nonetheless, in the midst of all this, that, since the Divine Goodness considers more His own love than my offenses, He will grant me mercy if you deign to remember me now and then and ask for it in my favor.

My cousin Bourdin still has not spoken to me about the plan for his retreat. I did not think I should begin the conversation, but should wait until he made the overture, so as to leave the matter entirely in his hands. After all, who am I to say anything about his releasing himself from such a long captivity and so much weariness which I am causing him to endure on my account?

I am very thankful to you for remembering my father's affair in order to speak of it to the Duchesse. I hope that, if God does not allow him to receive the offers of that recommendation, He will give him the strength to endure and to make good use of the loss. However, that would not make me less confident in having recourse to this same influence you have with her for an undertaking that concerns this poor, miserable diocese. I have learned that the Marshal de Brezé is coming to Catalonia as Viceroy. I would hope that, since we shall have the honor of being in his district, places there belonging to our diocese will also enjoy the advantage of being protected from fighting men. We might hope for this through some letter of grace that the Duchesse could send us to give to him. I can assure you, Monsieur, that if we do not experience some effects of the divine protection, we are in danger of being very soon reduced to beggary from the way things seem to be going in this region, and it is this that obliges me to engage your intercession.

If I were not afraid of troubling you too much, I would remind you of the hope you were pleased to give me some time ago, of mentioning our need to His Eminence, when an opportunity of seeing him arose, with regard to reducing our taxes which, as I see it, are the highest in the province. They have been set at one thousand

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properly, he resigned; this was in 1675. He crowned his career on April 8, 1682, by a death worthy of his life. (Cf. Van Drival, *Histoire des évêques de Boulogne* [Boulogne-sur-Mer: Berger Frères, 1852].)

4The Duchesse d'Aiguillon.

5Marshall Urbain de Maille, the Marquis de Brezé, brother-in-law of Cardinal Richelieu, had fought in the Piedmont campaign, was Commander-in-Chief of the army in Germany, served in the capacity of Ambassador in Sweden and Holland, and governed Calais and Anjou. He became Viceroy of Catalonia in 1641, and died on February 13, 1650, at the age of fifty-three.

6Cardinal Richelieu.
écus, and the Bishop of Narbonne, who has five or six times as much revenue from his bishopric, pays only two thousand. You see the proportion, and this at a time when this diocese is the poorest and most afflicted, not only in the province, but in France. Oh! may God be forever blessed, who gives to us and takes from us when and as He pleases!

Oh! to be sure, I esteem Messieurs Blatiron and Lucas, whose charity I am testing in putting up with my weaknesses! I beg Our Lord to be their reward. I am not saying anything to you concerning them, since they have taken it upon themselves to render you an account, except that they are striving toward the perfection of their state according to the measure of God's grace and the different ways in which He is leading them by His hand. I cannot tell you how obliged I am to you for being willing to add to this number several others—whom you are so kindly preparing for us—with the competence and virtue required to cultivate this field. I am searching for some suitable place to put them and, when everything is ready, I shall give the word to have them go.

The extreme ignorance of those aspiring to Holy Orders and the slight hope there is of their becoming more adequate in the future have obliged me to summon them to Alet and to keep them as long as necessary in order to teach them the little required in order to admit them. I am using Monsieur Blatiron and some other priest we have at hand to assist in this little plan, which is only, in a manner of speaking, a simple attempt that I recommend to your Holy Sacrifices. I shall give you an account of the outcome.

I think I told you that I had selected the pastorate of Alet with the intention of associating it to the Mission, according to your good pleasure, when it would be in my power. The way to do this would be to have the archdeaconry entirely at my disposal. Now, Monsieur de Saint-Martin, by reason of an indulgence, has a claim to it and has always told me that he would dispose of it to our advantage. However, a few days ago, he wrote me the letter I am sending you, in which he seems to be asking for compensation. One word from you on the first remark will make him give an explanation of this. He is already burdened with a pension for the chaplain of M. des Noyers, and the one who . . . purposely would wish to give up his

7Claude de Rebé (1628-1659).
8Antoine Lucas.
9François Sublet, Seigneur de Noyers.
alleged right only for some compensation. Consider, Monsieur, whether I could satisfy so many people. I fear he was urged to make this request, not so much by any thought of his own as by that of M. Le Camus, as he informed me. Mon Dieu! Monsieur, pardon me so many importunities.

I bless God with all my heart for all the progress you have been pleased to report to me concerning your dear Company, and I beseech Him to enable me to share in the precious services you render Him, in order to make up for my negligence. I remain always in His love, Monsieur, your most humble and most affectionate servant.

NICOLAS, Bishop of Alet

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, at Saint-Lazare

549. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[October or November 1641]

I forgot to tell you that Madame Traversay sent me word to remind you about the galley-slaves' paper to be brought to the Attorney General, and that one of the Sisters who are to make their Jubilee confession today is from Normandy, from the district of a poor little man who is in the seminary. In his great goodness and

Letter 549. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Period within which Saint Jane Frances de Chantal was in Paris.

2Anne Petau, the widow of René Regnault, Seigneur de Traversay and Councillor in the Paris Parlement. She was the sister of President Méliand and one of the Ladies of Charity most devoted to Saint Vincent and his works. She founded the Monastery of the Conception, rue Saint-Honoré, and was responsible for the Daughters of the Cross after the death of their foundress, Madame de Villeneuve.

3Blaise Méliand (1641-1650).

4Julien Guérin, born in Lacelle (Orne), had spent some time in the army before beginning his preparation for the priesthood. The entrance of his brother, Jean Guérin, into the Congregation of the Mission, November 7, 1639, left free the parish of Saint-Mauvieu, which he (Julien) administered for three months. He left it, at the age of thirty-five, to come to Saint-Lazare, where he was admitted January 30, 1640. In 1641, he went to assist the unfortunate populace of Lorraine. His health failed and he was sent
simplicity, he has sometimes had her make resolutions, and told her, the morning of the day before yesterday, to come and talk to him. I did not dare allow her to do so without your permission. He also gave her some pictures, but I think it was because he could not keep them. I am holding them, awaiting your instruction.

I most humbly entreat you, Monsieur, to pay heed to what Abbé de Vaux told me concerning the establishment of the nuns of Sainte-Geneviève. Would it not be advisable to suggest to the Administrators that they ask the Bishop of Angers to sanction the service and residence of our Sisters in the hospital, excusing themselves for not having spoken to him about it until they had given it a try, and had done this for fear the Fathers might get the idea of wanting to make them nuns? I am afraid, now that our Sister Elisabeth is no longer there, that the rest might easily be convinced of this.

Please take note also that there are now only six Sisters on duty, the seventh being ill, and that neither the gentlemen nor the Sisters are asking for another, not even Monsieur de Vaux.

Would you also please let me know what I should tell him about good Madame de Vertus? Today is the day the messenger leaves and I am, Monsieur, your most grateful daughter and servant.

L. de M.

Saturday morning

Would you please let us know what time our Sisters should go to La Chapelle? I was fortunate enough to see Madame de Chantal.

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to Richelieu, where he made his vows June 14, 1642. The missions he gave in the diocese of Saints in 1643 and 1644 were very successful, and it was he who was chosen by Saint Vincent in 1645 to lay the foundation of the Mission in Tunis. It was there that this valiant Missionary died on May 13, 1648. His biography has been published in volume III of the Notices, pp. 57-82.

5Claude de Rueil (1626-1649).
6Elisabeth Martin.
7Catherine Fouquet, the widow of Claude de Bretagne, Comte de Vertus and de Goëlo, first Baron de Bretagne, State Councillor, who died in Paris August 6, 1637. She died in that city May 10, 1670, at the age of eighty.
8Saint Jane Frances had arrived in Paris on October 4 and left on November 11. She died a month later, December 13, 1641.
yesterday. I do not know what our good God will do with me; I am so unfaithful to Him and filled with sins.

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

550. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[October or November 1641]

(1) I shall give the paper to Madame Traversay.
(2) That priest from our house is new and does those things in simplicity; you did well to hold the pictures.
(3) I do not think it is necessary to do anything about the establishment of Sainte-Geneviève. It is, however, desirable that the Bishop of Angers approve of those Sisters, if he can approve of any of them.
(4) Those good gentlemen are probably expecting the return of our Sister Elisabeth.
(5) I would not be able to be of service to that lady, nor know whom to recommend to her. She would do well to get a Jesuit.

I hope to be in La Chapelle at two o'clock.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

Letter 550. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This letter is the answer to no. 549. Saint Vincent wrote it in the space left by Saint Louise at the top of her letter.

2Claude de Ruell.

3The Administrators of the hospital of Angers.

4Madame de Vertus.

5The Sisters, therefore, had not left La Chapelle in October 1641. This is understandable, given the work that had to be done on their new house.
Monsieur,

Today, five or six Sisters began their little retreat. Nevertheless, almost all say that they are ready to make their confession. Sister Barbe\(^2\) also wanted to make hers in order to fulfill her Jubilee this week, because she was not in good enough spirits last week. Please let me know if you think it advisable for all of them to come to La Chapelle and you can receive the ones you judge fitting, or if I should send all those who say they are ready and let the others stay here. It is necessary, I think, for me to speak to you, before sending word to Mademoiselle du Mée.\(^3\)

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

L. DE M.

All would prefer to come rather than not be able to go to you some other time.

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

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**Letter 551.** - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^1\)Between 1636 and 1641, the period during which the Daughters lived in La Chapelle, there were only two Jubilees, one in 1636 and the other in 1641. The mention of Mademoiselle du Mée leads us to prefer 1641.

\(^2\)Sister Barbe Angiboust.

\(^3\)A Lady of Charity who dedicated herself to the work of the Foundlings.

children, our good Gentlemen of the Mission, who keep on doing better and better and winning more and more souls for heaven. To be sure, Monsieur, I shall not cease to admire the guidance of Divine Providence on this poor diocese, since He has sent us these fine workers through you. Therefore, I shall not cease thanking Him for this, and you likewise, for I would be extremely ungrateful if I did not do so.

Alas! to our great regret, we have lost Commander de Sillery, our great benefactor.

553. - TO N.

It is a maxim of ours to work in the service of the people, with the good pleasure of the pastors, and never to act contrary to their wishes. And, at the opening and closing of each mission, we get their blessing in a spirit of dependence.

554. - TO SAINT LOUISE

I thank God for your improved health, Mademoiselle, and beseech Him to strengthen you more and more. If I can do so, I shall have the honor of seeing you today, or else tomorrow.

That good young woman from Lucé,¹ who came the day before yesterday, seems fine to me, if she has the health to match. Her father says that she is not sickly. Deal with her as you like.

I am your servant.

V. D.
My very dear Mother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter and was embarrassed because you attribute praises to me that render me guilty before God. However, I was quite consoled by the trust with which you spoke to me of your needs; I most humbly thank you. I beseech Our Lord to be Himself your provider and your provision and to make me worthy to render you some small service. I tried to begin by writing a note to our dear Mother, the Superior of the first monastery in our city. She replied that she would try to do what she could for your dear house and that, as a matter of fact, she already has a hundred livres promised to her. As soon as she receives them, she will send them to me, and I shall not fail to send them to you immediately, as well as whatever more she can manage. Her heart is entirely filled with charity. Were it not for some financial difficulties in this house, you may believe, dear Mother, that she would send you some money from their monastery.

In the meantime, I am beseeching God, dear Mother, to provide for all your needs and to make me worthy of being, in His love and that of His holy Mother, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

1Nothing in the content of the letter indicates a precise date. There is reason to believe that it belongs somewhere between 1639 and 1650, the period during which Saint Vincent was engaged in repairing the ruins left by the armies in Lorraine during the Thirty Years’ War, and when he was writing his own letters without the assistance of a secretary (before 1645).
2Saint Vincent inadvertently added “Monsieur” here.
I almost forgot to tell you, dear Mother, that, if I could do so, I would set something aside for you from what is sent for the poor in Metz; however, we are allowed to give that only to those poor people who are begging, in order that we might help them and keep them from dying of hunger.

Addressed: Reverend Mother Superior of the Sisters of the Visitation Sainte-Marie of Metz, in Metz

My very dear and most worthy Mother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter with so much respect and affection that I cannot express it, and ever in the spirit of recognition of all the obligations we have towards you. And to render you an account of the matter about which you kindly did me the honor of writing to me, dear Mother, I shall tell you that, as soon as I received your letter, I wrote to our Mother in the faubourg the (our worthy Mother was there and two days previously the Superior from Rouen) that I was still thinking about it. I asked her to speak to our worthy Mother concerning the matter I was writing to her about, and concluded my letter by telling her that in the kingdom of charity, one prefers to suffer some inconvenience rather than inconvenience the neighbor.

Letter 556. - The original autograph letter is at the Carmelite Monastery of Troyes, now transferred to St-Cermain, St-André-les-Vergers. The first monastery in Troyes was destroyed during the War, in 1940.

1Anne-Marguerite Guérin.
2Saint Jane Frances de Chantal.
3Anne-Thérèse de Préchonnet.
In reply to this, she said that our worthy Mother had advised the Mother Superior of Rouen to lay this dispute before their friends and the said Mother from Rouen had acquiesced in this and had left with that determination. She also noted that this good Mother had told her that the Carmelites saw into their rooms and their garden just as they saw into those of the Carmelites; that she wished to give you every possible satisfaction in this regard; that, in truth, you are her good Mother and she would write to you.

That, dear Mother, is what has happened. Would to God that I were worthy to render some small service greater than this to your holy Order. His Goodness knows the affection I bear for it and the reverence He has given me for my dear Mother whom I cherish beyond compare and would like to see return to her old home, were I not afraid of wishing something contrary to the Will of God, who is directing you by His very special Providence. What causes me to moderate the too tender attachment I had for this is the reading done recently in our refectory. It reported that a Spanish Jesuit Father, who had grown old in many great and remarkable services which he had rendered to God in the Indies, entreated his superiors to allow him to return to die in his native land and to do nothing else there but prepare himself to die well. This was granted him and he returned home. One day, while he was at the foot of the crucifix in prayer, he was reproached interiorly and so harshly for having done wrong in abandoning the new Church he had gone to help found, that he had no rest until, after several requests made to his superiors to send him back to the Indies, they finally did send him back. Once there, he began to work again as earnestly as his infirmity allowed, and finally died as he had lived, in the odor of sanctity. And that, dear Mother, is what has brought me to

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4 Probably Paris, where she was born and spent the first years of her religious life. She remained in Troyes until her death in 1647.
offer God the disposition of your person for the places and in the manner He finds most expedient for His glory.

We have been told that the good Bishop of Troyes is ill. Mon Dieu, dear Mother, how that has touched me and how wholeheartedly I beseech Our Lord to preserve this holy prelate and to sanctify him more and more. I make the same request of Him for you, my very dear Mother, to whom I commend this poor wretch and the greatest of all sinners. I do the same for this poor Little Company, I who am, in the love of Our Lord and His holy Mother, my very dear Mother, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: My very dear Mother de la Trinité, Superior of the Carmelites of the town of Troyes, in Troyes

556a. - TO SISTER JEANNE LEPEINTRE,
IN SAINT-GERMAIN-EN-LAYE

November 8, 1641

Dear Sister,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I ask your pardon for having failed to write to you. It was not due to a want of esteem and affection; God knows that I have for you as much as I can of both. But the excessive work I have is partly the cause of this. Also, I did not have your

5René de Breslay. He had died on November 2, 1641.

Letter 556a. - Manuscript of the Chambre des Députés, Manuscript 20 (AF, 64), pp. 137-138. This manuscript is now preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Assemblée Nationale, from which a photocopy was recently obtained. On the copy, the date appears as 8e 9,REV 1641 or November 8, 1641. Coste evidently misread this by distraction as October 9, 1641. The November date required a repositioning of the letter.
letter in hand, as Mademoiselle Le Gras kept it a long time.

I am, to be sure, quite consoled about the good I am hearing of you and the blessing God is giving your way of acting, for which I thank Him. May it please His Divine Goodness to grant you the grace of preserving and increasing the unity of our Sisters; of encouraging them in the observance of the little Rule, the practice of the virtues, the love of their vocation; and, finally, in serving Our Lord well in the person of the poor! In order to do that, dear Sister, have great confidence in Him. Beseech Him to accomplish those things Himself, and to be always in your heart, your words and your actions [so that you may be in good repute at home and abroad]. Ask Him also to let everyone recognize that you are His beloved daughter. This is the grace I ask of Him.

I am, in Him...
Barberini2 and Lenti3 wept for him, as did also the Vice-Gerent of Rome.4

He had obtained permission to establish himself in that city in the hope of working with the ordinands there. We still think we should send someone to make the establishment there, and it seems that Providence is looking to you to do it. I say this just between us, without telling anyone else. I shall send you the appropriate instructions. Ah! Monsieur, what good reason there is for hope, if God be pleased to have us entrusted with the tasks promised to Monsieur Lebreton, in whom, according to the world, we have lost much! But, to be sure, I think that holy man will do more in heaven than he was able to accomplish on earth. He will be like a host offered to God and consumed for His Church, who will intercede for us in heaven and obtain the blessings necessary for this undertaking. If I can, I shall enclose in the package a copy of the permission for our establishment. The difficulty will be the language, which he knew as well as French. However, God will give you the grace, if He wishes, to make yourself understood by foreigners, just as he gave it to Saint Vincent Ferrier [sic],5 if the sins of the most wicked of the Vincents and of all the men in the world do not hinder this.

2The Barberini family had at that time three of its members in the College of Cardinals: Antonio, a Capuchin monk, brother of Pope Urban VIII; and Antonio and Francesco, his nephews.
3Marcello, Cardinal Lenti, Bishop of Palestrina (1629), of Tusculum (1629-1639), of Porto (1639-1641), and of Ostia (1641-1652). He died on April 19, 1652.
4Giovanni Battista Altieri.
5Saint Vincent Ferrer, a Spanish Dominican, was born in Valencia on January 23, 1350. He is noted for his labors to terminate the Great Western Schism, a period when there were two lines of claimants to the papal throne (1378-1417). He traveled throughout Europe preaching the need for repentance and reform. By his personal influence and constant direction, he was able to prevent enthusiasm from degenerating into fanaticism. Miracles in the order of nature and grace accompanied his preaching. He died in Vannes on April 5, 1419. Pope Callistus III canonized him on June 3, 1455.
558. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Between 1641 and 1654]¹

Here are our Sister Marie's letters, which I judged advisable to open. After you have read them, please put them in an envelope and write a few lines to the Ladies in your own hand, stating that I opened them because it is the custom for us to see the letters that the Sisters write and that are written to them.

The Lady officers will come on Monday. I shall try to see Madame de la Pompe when I go to the faubourg Saint-Germain this afternoon.

I shall do what I can for that good lady and shall speak to Madame de la Pompe about her, but I do not know how to go about that matter.

Good day, Mademoiselle; take care of your health. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your servant.

V.D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

Letter 558. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

¹Dates of the period during which Marie Joly was working in Sedan.
Your Excellency,

I most humbly thank you for the favor you have done your Missionaries in receiving them with so much kindness. I beseech Our Lord to thank you Himself and be your reward. May He make both them and me worthy to serve you according to the extent of your desire.

Your Officialis may have written you that the Chancellor3 indicated to me that he was very pleased that you are working with such fervor in your diocese. He said there would be no need, Your Excellency, for you to come back here. He will not grant to those who are trying you anything that might give you cause to have to come to prevent it. In truth, the offer they are making to reimburse the fee in question and to pay the province off in ten years seems reasonable to him, because it is so advantageous to the region. Not having foreseen the response to that, I deferred giving him any until I was more knowledgeable, as I shall be. I shall discuss it with the one you did me the honor of asking me to tell, so that I can attend to it at the proper time and place.

I also purposely visited M. de Vertamont3 concerning the matter of your Officialis. I have not seen the latter since to tell him that the Sieur de Vertamont kindly promised me that he would treat your said Officialis justly and that he wished

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558a. - TO SYLVESTRE DE CRUSY DE MARCILLAC,1 BISHOP OF MENDE

Paris, December 6, 1641

Letter 558a. - Signed original, given in 1936 to St. Mary's Seminary, Perryville, Missouri, USA, where it is still preserved in the Seminary Archives, 091 AA-4. A photocopy can be found in the Archives of the Mission, Paris. The text had been published in the Annales (1927), pp. 235-236, and was reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, pp. 29-30. This edition uses the latter text.

1Sylvestre de Crusy de Marcillac, born in 1571, was Bishop of Mende from 1628 to 1659, the year of his death.
2Pierre Ségurier.
3Probably François de Verthamon, Councillor of State.
to discuss the matter with M. de Morangis,\footnote{Probably Antoine Barillon, Sieur de Morangis, Master of Requests.} who gave the indulg to his party.

I add to that, Your Excellency, the most humble request I address to you to have five écus given there to M. Savinier,\footnote{Annet Savinier.} for clothing for himself and M. Le Sage.\footnote{Jacques Lesage was born around 1614 in Auffray (Seine-Maritime), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 7, 1639, and made his vows on November 26, 1645. He embarked for Algiers in January or February 1648 and gave himself entirely, without regard for hardships and dangers, to ministering to the poor slaves. After a visit to the plague-stricken, he was attacked by the terrible disease, from which he died on May 12, 1648.} I shall pay them back here to your Officialis. I was not able to deliver them, because I have not seen him for a long time, and I do not know at what other address to send them to you. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: His Excellency the Bishop, Comte de Mende and Comte de Gévaudan, in Mende

559. - TO BERNARD CODOING, SUPERIOR, IN ANNECY

December 7, 1641

You sent me word that you are going to place the money in an annuity in the hands of the Comte de N., which gives me cause to tell you, Monsieur, that I am a little sorry about that. I think it would have been more advisable to buy or have a house built with it. I am well aware that there is something
to be said against even that but, if you had written to tell me what you meant to do and your reasons, I might have weighed them before God, as I tried to do those of the contract, but too late. It would have been well for you to have sent me both proposals and then the reasons for and against, on which to base my judgment. I had a hard time consenting to a few unduly difficult clauses in the contract. That is why I beseech you, Monsieur, never to do anything like that again without writing to me about it. It would even have been advisable for you to have let me know the way you wished to act with regard to the seminary you have begun. I think you had been advised to send me the draft before signing. That is what everybody in the Company has always done everywhere and what is done in every well-regulated Company. You will object that I take too long, that you sometimes wait six months for an answer that can be given in a month and that, meanwhile, opportunities are lost and everything stands still. To that I shall answer, Monsieur, that it is true that I take too long in answering and in doing things; still, I have never yet seen any affair spoiled because of my delaying, but everything has been done in its time and with the necessary foresight and precautions. Nevertheless, I intend in future to answer you as soon as possible after receiving your letters and weighing the matter before God. He is greatly honored by the time we take to weigh with mature deliberation matters having to do with His service, as are all those with which we deal. Please, then, correct yourself of your hastiness in deciding and doing things, and I shall work at correcting myself of my slowness.

I entreat you once more, in the name of God, to inform me of everything, with the pros and cons of the matters under consideration. Beware of adding, dropping or changing anything in our way of life and of doing anything important without writing to me about it and receiving my reply. Oh! how perfectly good Monsieur Lebreton practiced this and how God blessed his leadership! Shall I dare to tell you something
without blushing, Monsieur? There is no help for it; I must do so. It is that, reflecting on all the principal events that have taken place in this Company, it seems to me, and this is quite evident, that, if they had taken place before they did, they would not have been successful. I say that of all of them, without excepting a single one. That is why I have a particular devotion to following the adorable Providence of God step by step. And my only consolation is that I think Our Lord alone has carried on and is constantly carrying on the business of the Little Company. In the name of God, Monsieur, let us take refuge in this, trusting that Our Lord will bring about what He wishes to be done among us. I hope for this from His goodness and from the attention you will pay to the most humble and most affectionate request I am making of you in this regard for the love of Our Lord.

560. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, SUPERIOR, IN RICHELIEU

December 14, 1641

I think we are rather exact in observing the recommendations from your visitation, to the point that we have read them every month since your departure. I have tried to keep them myself with regard to the language of your native district, although I have failed in that two or three times, as also in going to see two sick men we have in the infirmary. You would not believe how devoted I am in recommending often the obligation we have to be exact to these regulations.

1Lambert aux Couteaux was from Picardy.
Monsieur,

Here is my third letter in about a month. I am writing it to you with the sorrow you can surmise from the esteem and devotion Our Lord had given me for our worthy Mother and about which I have spoken to you. We shall do all we can so that this holy nun may be returned to her monastery. I have already prevailed upon His Lordship de Chavigny, the Secretary of State, to accept working on it. He is supposed to come to the monastery today for that purpose. I beseech you, Monsieur, to assure our dear Mother de Blonay of this, as I have already assured the Bishop of Geneva in the letter accompanying this one, and all our dear Sisters of both monasteries, that our dear Sisters from this one will do all they can to the same end. It pleased her worthy goodness, I mean our worthy Mother, on the occasion of the last two

Letter 561. - The original autograph letter was communicated by M. Heudre, a Priest of the Mission. A photocopy of the original is in the Archives of the Mission, Paris.

1Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, who died a holy death in Moulins on December 13, a month after she had left Paris.

2Léon Bouthillier, Comte de Chavigny and de Besançais, a relative of Jean-Jacques Olier, was born in Paris on March 28, 1608. Although he had been appointed by Louis XIII himself to be a member of the Council of Regency for Louis XIV during his minority, Mazarin pushed him aside. During the troubles of the Fronde, he sided with the Princes against Mazarin. His sincere piety was allied to his love for pleasure. He died in Paris on October 11, 1652. His wife, Anne Phelippeaux, was an ardent Jansenist.

3The body of Saint Jane Frances was embalmed and lay in state for two days in the chapel of the Visitation of Moulins. It was then transferred, secretly, to Annecy and placed near the body of Saint Francis de Sales, according to the wish expressed by the Saint during her lifetime.

4Juste Guérin.

5The two monasteries in Annecy.
trips, to grant her heart to this monastery. Our Mother is sending His Grace a copy of the will she dictated, fully confident that he will confirm the intention of our worthy Mother, I entreat you, Monsieur, to speak to him about it.

My two preceding letters will have shown you the need Providence has of you in Rome and how we are disposed to send you there. I shall send M. Dufestel and M. Grimal to replace you. I shall have a great number of things to say to you about this, in addition to everything else I have told you; this I will do at the first opportunity. I am, meanwhile, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur Codoing, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Annecy, in Annecy

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6In 1636 and 1641.

7Saint Jane Frances had at first refused, out of humility, to give her heart to the first monastery of Paris; she thought her heart was not worth preserving. But when it was brought to her attention that the presence of her heart in Paris and her body in Annecy would contribute to the union of the two monasteries, she agreed to draw up the act of donation. This document was published by Henri de Maupas, op. cit., p. 240, and appears in this volume as Appendix 1. In 1874, the original belonged to the Comte d'Hauterive, a former department head of a division in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (Cf. Mgr. Louis-Emile Bougaud, Histoire de Sainte Chantal et des origines de la Visitation [8th ed., 2 vols., Paris: Poussielgue, 1874], vol. II, p. 461 and p. 462, n.)

8Louise Eugénie de Fontenay, Superior of the first Monastery in Paris.

9The wishes of the Saint were not carried out. The Duchesse de Montmorency would consent to give the body to the first monastery in Annecy only on condition that the heart remain in Mouins. The precious relic was placed on an altar in the Saint's room, quite near the bed on which she had died. (Cf. Bougaud, op. cit., vol. II, p. 584.)

10First draft: “to send you there to represent us in Rome.”

11François Grimal was born in Paris on March 6, 1605, began his internal seminary on June 6, 1640, and made his vows on October 9, 1646. He rendered outstanding services to his Congregation, whether as Superior of the houses of Crécy (1645-1646), Montmirail (1646-1649), Jurs (1654-1655), and Agen (1650-1651); as second Assistant to Saint Vincent (1652); or in more humble positions in Fontainebleau and elsewhere. The introduction of vows into the Company corresponded to his desires. He willingly accepted this measure and made every effort to have it accepted by those around him. Although he made his vows in 1646, he renewed them on October 3, 1656, in the presence of M. Portail.
Monsieur,

The day before yesterday, I received the letter that responded to what I wrote concerning Rome. I shall tell you in reply that I find the reasons you sent me with regard to postponing the trip until after Easter quite significant; however, there is a disadvantage in putting it off so long. The Pope, Cardinal Lenti, Dean of the Cardinals, and another good and virtuous priest, who is mindful of the ordinands, could die during that time; and, if that were to happen, a good work would be lost or in great jeopardy. I shall try to send you M. Dufestel or M. Grimal as soon as possible, with a second man, so that you can instruct them for a week and a half or two weeks, and I shall have the others leave as soon as possible to wait in Marseilles.

Let me tell you, however, Monsieur, that I doubt the advisability of giving your seminarians handwritten texts to study. There are enough unabridged and abridged books for that purpose. They do not write at all in class in the collèges in Spain. The most important thing is to recite well what has been taught. The best method I have found for that is to take a book of casuistry, explain to them by heart a chapter or two at a time, and have each one repeat a lesson, learnt by heart, to one of the others. When this has been done several times, the matter is firmly fixed in the mind and remains forever, and the difficulties that may come up are explained. We have
acted this way here with cases of conscience and controversies; it has been marvelously successful for us. Moreover, written texts are rarely reread. And, the bad thing is that people rely on these written texts and do not train their memory enough to retain things. What use, I ask you, are a doctor's writings to him after he has completed his studies? None, certainly, except to refer to them when necessary. Now, there are so many authors at present who have such well arranged tables of contents, that one need only have a good book of casuistry to consult when needed. Therefore, I entreat you, Monsieur, to see how you can initiate the method I have just mentioned to you.

You can imagine how deeply pained I was by the death of our worthy Mother. Nevertheless, God was pleased to console me by the sight of her reunion with our blessed Father, and of both of them with God, as soon as I heard the news. This happened following an act of contrition I made immediately after reading the letter in which I was told of the advanced stage of her illness. The same thing was shown to me, I think, at the first Mass I celebrated for her after the news of her death. Let this be for good Monsieur Codoing only, please, and for our men. I embrace all of you in spirit with the greatest affection and humility in my power.

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2Saint Francis de Sales.
3Saint Vincent left, in his own handwriting, an attestation of the vision that he mentions here (cf. vol. XIII, no. 34).
The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Yesterday I wrote to your Mother in the faubourg that to my mind, although I honor the thinking of the Bishop of Sens and have not changed my opinion, it would be well to have a funeral oration given for our worthy Mother, and that I would be mortified if it were not done.

I think, nevertheless, in order to guard in some way against those who object to it, that it would be good to hold a council meeting about it. However, although we are assuming the opinion of the Bishop of Châlons, we need to discuss the matter with the Archbishop, as it should be. Unless his good niece from the faubourg earnestly entreats him, he will refer the matter to his Council; and indeed she may still perhaps write to him about it. Consider, dear Mother, whether there is any danger in having that good young woman write to him about the matter, or whether it is advisable for you and your

Letter 562a. - The original of this letter has been lost; however, an authenticated copy can be found in the Archives of the Visitation, 68, avenue Denfert-Rochereau, Paris. The Archives of the Mission, Paris, also possess a photocopy.

1Louise-Eugénie de Fontaines was elected Superioress of the first Monastery of the Visitation in Paris on May 16, 1641.
2Anne-Marguerite Guérin was Superioress of the second Monastery of the Visitation, faubourg Saint-Jacques, from May 24, 1640 to May 21, 1643.
3Octave de Saint-Lary de Bellegarde.
4Saint Jane Frances de Chantal.

5Félix Vialart, Bishop of Châlons, was the son of Madame de Herse, one of the most generous and dedicated collaborators of Saint Vincent. He was born in Paris on September 5, 1613. As early as 1640, when he was still in his twenty-eighth year, he was chosen to succeed Henri Clausse in the See of Châlons. He established a seminary, reformed the clergy, organized missions, and went to the aid of the unfortunate. But, like Nicolas Pavillon, he allowed himself to be won over by Jansenist ideas and this was an unfortunate stain on an otherwise full and fruitful episcopate. Félix Vialart died on June 10, 1680. (Cf. La vie de Messire Félix Vialart de Herse [Utrecht, 1738].)
6Jean-François de Gondi.
dear Mother from the faubourg to ask Monsieur Le Blanc\textsuperscript{7} to speak to him about it and to let you know what you should do. And you must not forget to send word for the same thing to be done in Bourges and Nevers. Nonetheless, I submit my poor thinking to your good judgment and that of our dear Sister . . ., whom I greet, God knows how warmly. In His love and that of His holy Mother, I am, dear Mother, your most humble and obedient servant.

\textbf{VINCENT DEPAUL}

\textit{i.s.C.M.}

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563. - TO MICHEL DUPUIS, IN SAINT MIHIEL

Paris, January 12, 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Your good man, who delivered your letter of December 30 to me, arrived just yesterday evening. The letter greatly saddened me when I considered your sufferings, and consoled me with the hope of seeing you soon. Everything you told me being taken into consideration, it is expedient for you to come back as soon as possible, whether we send you someone to replace you or you give the order you suggested to me. I shall present the matter to those good Ladies and send the answer back to you by your messenger as soon as possible. Meanwhile, keep your spirits up. Please thank the Rector for the letter he so kindly wrote to me and make my excuses for being so

\textsuperscript{7}Denis Leblanc, Vicar General of Paris.

\textit{Letter 563.} - According to Coste, the original autograph letter was at the house of the Daughters of Charity, 12, rue des Greffes, Nîmes. The Sisters of this house have been relocated at 5, boulevard des Bruxelles, but the present location of the letter is unknown.
wretched that I cannot write to him at present. Oh! if you have any advice to give me about abandoning the city entirely with no one to replace you, do it as soon as possible. What you told me about your absence saving sixty livres a month for the poor, touched me. However, God knows how moved I shall be when I embrace you on your arrival and how I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Dupuis, Priest of the Mission, presently in Saint-Mihiel to assist the poor

564. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Are you not annoyed with me because you have not heard from me since your return? The constant pressure of business in which I find myself has prevented me from coming to see you. I had intended to do so today when I went to see Monsieur Villecot, but, as the time was pressing me to go on to Sainte-Marie,¹ I could not do it. Well then, I hope, nevertheless, that you will excuse me and let me know how you are.

I wish you, meanwhile, good day and am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

¹Convent of the Visitation.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here at last is Monsieur Dufestel. I entreat you, Monsieur, to instruct him well and apprise him of everything. God blessed him greatly in Troyes.¹ I hope He will continue His mercies to him in Annecy, if the abominations of my past life, part of which I just mentioned at repetition of prayer, on this feast of Saint Vincent, do not prevent Him from doing so. When that is done, you will leave in seven or eight days at the latest, because Providence is offering you a favorable opportunity to go by sea with the secretary² being sent to the Ambassador in Rome.³ I shall have those who are going with you leave in seven or eight days at the latest. You will have news of them at Sainte-Marie de Bellecourt.

This morning, I sent 350 livres to M. Lumague's⁴ representative in Lyons. He will give you the money; it is for the present quarter in Annecy. Have it picked up. As far as the money for Rome is concerned, I shall follow the method you suggested to me in your last letter, and because I am in a hurry to finish, I shall write to you more fully [later].⁵ I am,

¹He had been Superior there.
²Jean de Montereil or Montreuil, Canon of Toul and secretary to the Prince de Conti, had just accepted the duties of secretary to the Marquis de Fontenay-Mareuil, Ambassador to Rome. From there he went to England as ambassadorial secretary and shortly after was appointed resident in Scotland. He became a member of the French Academy. Some of his writings have been published. He died on April 27, 1651, when he was barely thirty-seven years old.
³The Marquis de Fontenay-Mareuil.
⁴A renowned banker.
⁵The original letter is damaged here.
meanwhile, as I most humbly greet the Little Company, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

I shall also write to the Bishop of Geneva. M. Dufestel will deliver to him 140 livres that I have collected for his retreatants. I am in the love of Our Lord.

566. - TO FRANCOIS DUFESTEL, IN ANNECY

January 22, 1642

... I embrace the entire house in spirit with a heart filled with the realization of my unworthiness to serve them in the position I hold, and yet, filled with affection...

567. - A PRIEST OF THE MISSION TO SAINT VINCENT

[Between 1639 and 1643]

O Monsieur, how many souls go to Paradise by means of poverty! Since I have been in Lorraine, I have assisted at the death of more than a thousand poor, who all appeared to be perfectly well disposed for it. That makes a great many intercessors in heaven for their benefactors.

Letter 566. - Excerpt quoted in the deposition of Brother Pierre Chollier, witness 102 at the process of beatification of Saint Vincent.


1It was between 1639 and 1643 that several groups of Missionaries went through Lorraine to seek out the needy and distribute assistance. After 1643, Saint Vincent made use almost exclusively of Brother Mathieu Régnard to carry the alms. (Cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. II, chap. XI, sect. I, p. 388.)
Tuesday morning [1642]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Since I was not able to come and see you this morning as I was thinking of doing, here is my reply. I gave Monsieur Portail the responsibility of writing to our Sister Marie Joly in Sedan and to do so in my name. I shall look over his letter this evening and send it to you tomorrow.

The Chancellor's wife¹ spoke to the Chancellor about the business of Mademoiselle du Mée. He promised her that he would have it mentioned to Monsieur de Chevreuse.² It would be good for her to see her herself.

I told Mademoiselle de Lamoignon³ yesterday that the meeting⁴ would be held today at Sainte-Marie in the city, where I have necessary business.

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¹Reference to the panegyric preached in honor of Saint Jane Frances enables us to assign the date for this letter.
²Madeleine Fabri, Madame Séguier, was born November 22, 1597, and died in Paris, February 6, 1683. She assisted Saint Vincent and Saint Louise with her influence and her fortune.
³Claude de Lorraine, Duc de Chevreuse.
⁴Madeleine de Lamoignon was born in Paris on September 14, 1608, of Chrétien de Lamoignon, President à mortierat the Parlement of Paris, and of Marie de Landes, who initiated her from childhood in the practices of the Charity. Mother and daughter competed in their dedication to the unfortunate. They often went to visit them in their homes, dressed their wounds, cleaned their rooms, made their beds, gave them clothes, linen, food, and money. Saint Vincent used to say of Mademoiselle de Lamoignon that she moved so quickly with her charitable works that nobody could keep up with her. She supported all the works founded by the Saint and took an active part in them. She died on April 14, 1687, at the age of seventy-nine. Her life was written by Pere d'Orelans (Vie de Mademoiselle de Lamoignon, Bibl. nat., ms. fr. 23895) and by Mademoiselle Louise Masson (Madeleine de Lamoignon [Lyons, 1846]). Abbé Carron gave her a place in the Vie des dames françaises qui ont été les plus célèbres dans le XVIIe siècle par leur piété et leur dévouement pour les pauvres (2nd ed., Louvain, 1826).
⁵Meeting of the Ladies of Charity at the first monastery of the Visitation nuns.
You will have many other disputes on the part of the officers of the Charity, if you live, as I trust you will. Yesterday, we were told, in the funeral oration of the late Madame de Chantal, that one of her nuns spoke to her in an insulting way for twenty years. O Mademoiselle, how much it costs to do good in the spirit of Jesus Christ!

Good day. I am your servant.

V. D.

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

569. - TO BERNARD CODOING, IN ANNECY

Paris, the last day of January of the year 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Since I was not able to write to you fully through Monsieur Dufestel, here is the supplement to that letter by way of special messenger. I asked M. Lumague to send it to you through his representative in Lyons.

So now, M. Dufestel is coming to take over from you, along with M. Guérin. Both are very good servants of God. Please

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6The orator was Bishop Henri de Maupas du Tour, who had just been named Bishop of Puy and later became Bishop of Evreux. He would later write Saint Jane Frances's life. This same prelate preached a funeral oration in honor of Saint Vincent on November 23, 1660.


1Jean Guérin was born in Lacelle (Orne) in 1594, and entered the Congregation of the Mission on November 7, 1639. He made his vows in Annecy on August 4, 1642, was named Superior there the following month, and continued to direct this house until his death on March 6, 1653. Some days after his death (March 23, 1653), Saint Vincent wrote: "God has always blessed the leadership and works of this servant of His, to the satisfaction of those within and outside the family." His biography was published in vol. III of the Notices, pp. 23-28.
give the former the letters concerning his position as Superior, which I am sending him, and assure the Bishop that he is a wise Missionary, a good living and pious man, who has a very special attentiveness in the service of prelates and a spirit of obedience toward them. The good late Bishop of Troyes honored him with his kindness to an inexpressible degree. In the same way, you will assure the Community that he governs with gentleness, charity, and wisdom, and, nevertheless, with firmness regarding the end toward which we are striving. He has directed the family in Troyes so well that both at home and abroad he is praised more than I can tell you. And you will tell him, please, that I am asking him to accept your arrangement concerning the seminary, with regard to written texts and M. Escart, and with regard to all things in general, until he receives some other order from us concerning the difficulties that will arise. I ask him to let me know about such matters and entreat him to change nothing without doing so.

I have considered the reasons for which you told M. Dehorgny you did the things you did. Although I know very well that you did nothing apart from those reasons, I still think it advisable, Monsieur, for you to inform us of the principal matters before you do them, not only with respect to the essentials, but also as regards the circumstances, ut simus unanimes in eodem spiritu. And I entreat you to do this, in the name of Our Lord, and to trust that God’s affairs do not usually deteriorate because we take more time to consider

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3Juste Guérin, Bishop of Geneva.
4René de Breslay.
5From 1639 to 1642.
6Dictations in class. (Cf. no. 562.)
7So that we may be unanimous in the same spirit. Phil. 1:27. “Conduct yourselves, then, in a way worthy of the gospel of Christ. If you do, whether I come and see you myself or hear about your behavior from a distance, it will be clear that you are standing firm in unity of spirit and exerting yourselves with one accord for the faith of the gospel.” (NAB)
them and recommend them to Him; on the contrary, everything [only goes better].

I was able to find only forty-six and two-thirds écus for the Masses of the men the Bishop of Geneva wants to send to your house to make retreat. I am sending them to M. Mascar[ini] and M. Lumague in Lyons. They will give them to you to send to the said Bishop. He will dispose of them as he pleases and we shall see whether we can get some elsewhere to send him. I entreat you, Monsieur, to assure him of my respect and that I have followed his orders, which you sent me. I shall support him with our very dear Mother Superior of the Visitation with regard [to the heart] of our most worthy Mother. I told the Mother Superior here yesterday that she would give more glory to that blessed soul by placing herself in the sentiments of her all-loving and all-lovable heart than by pursuing the possession of that same heart. I shall always speak to her that way, because that is what is in my mind and heart, since the Bishop of Geneva is the interpreter of God’s Will in this matter and such is his opinion. Those good Sisters are having a little difficulty accepting this and would like the said Bishop to share this treasure. His all-holy and paternal Providence will know how to attend to that. I trust that, so long as the persons presently in authority hold firm, they will restrain themselves; but I am afraid that, with time, this house will not leave things at that.

Since I began this letter, Monsieur Lumague has come to inform me that Our Lord has taken our Holy Father the Pope. That news had me perplexed for six hours, wondering

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7Although the original letter is damaged for a length of several centimeters, there is no difficulty reconstructing the text.
8Bankers of Lyons.
9Louise-Eugénie de Fontaines.
10Saint Jane Frances de Chantal.
11We have already remarked that the heart did not leave Moulins where the Saint had died (cf. no. 561, n. 9).
12It was a false rumor. Pope Urban VIII died on July 29, 1644.
whether we should have the Company leave for Rome; however, afterwards, we decided to do it. Therefore, the men will be leaving the day after tomorrow, the third of February, in order to be in Lyons ten to twelve days later and around the seventeenth in Marseilles, where the secretary of the Ambassador in Rome is supposed to be. I earnestly hope that you will arrive at the same time, so that you can leave with him; that would be no small advantage. In the name of God, Monsieur, do your best to get there.

The men we are sending are Monsieur Germain and Brother Martin. Both are very devoted and completely attached to their vocation. The first is gentle, interior, obedient, regular, frank, pleasant, and rather simple; he sings well and has studied only philosophy. The other is candid, simple, gentle, obedient, regular, and has studied philosophy and theology in which he successfully defended his thesis just three days ago. He is good at teaching catechism, preaches well, and has a gift for the ordinands, although he is only twenty-two years old. In addition, we are sending you a Brother, who is good, docile,

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13The letter is dated January 31. Saint Vincent finished it on February 1.
14Jean de Montreuil, secretary to the Marquis de Fontenay-Mareuil.
15Jean Martin, born in Paris on May 10, 1620, was not yet twenty-two years old. He had belonged to the Congregation of the Mission since October 9, 1638. It is written that Saint Vincent had sent him to the mission of Saint-Germain-en-Laye as a catechist and that the Dauphin was among his listeners, but that is not so, because the mission of Saint-Germain took place a few months before he entered Saint-Lazare. He was ordained in Rome on April 25, 1645, and that same year was sent to Genoa to begin a new establishment. Saint Vincent had, perhaps, no Missionary better gifted for drawing crowds and converting souls. In 1654, Jean Martin was recalled to France and placed in Sedan as Superior and Pastor. In 1655, Saint Vincent sent him to Turin to direct a new establishment founded by the pious Marchese di Pianezza, Prime Minister of State. There, as in Genoa and Sedan, the zealous Missionary won over the most hardened hearts. He earned the title "Apostle of Piedmont," and his confreres received the name of "Padri Santi" (Holy Fathers). In 1665, René Aiméras offered him the direction of the house in Rome. It was a very painful sacrifice, but Jean Martin resigned himself to it. In 1670 he was sent to Genoa, in 1674 to Turin, in 1677 to Rome, in 1680 to Perugia, and in 1681 to Rome again, each time as Superior. It was in this last-named city that he died on February 17, 1694. We have a manuscript account of his life (Archives of the Mission, Paris), written by a contemporary. It has been published, with some changes, in vol. I of the Notices, pp. 269-372.
and regular, although he has not been in the Company very long. I am not sure whether I shall also send you a priest and a cleric, who are likewise of considerable virtue: the first is very interior, a good catechist and a rather good preacher; the second is regular, interior, simple, and philosophical. We shall see whether we can send them to you.

I shall have the January quarter paid to M. Delorme here, if it has not already been done as I ordered. There is some difficulty about the letter; however, we will get around it by means of a receipt from that good man, who is ill and almost paralyzed in his bed.

I am sending you 105 livres—part of which was given to me in alms—which you shall draw from M. Lumague in Lyons and send to M. Dufestel to give to the Bishop of Geneva for his retreatants—and forty livres, which I am also sending to the said gentleman to be delivered to you in Lyons for your trip to Marseilles; you will have to deduct from that what has been given to the express messenger bringing this letter. In Marseilles, you will speak to the Bailiff de Forbin, Lieutenant General of the Galleys, who will send you to where the Company will be lodging. And, if they have departed, because they have found the wind favorable and the opportunity I mentioned, he will help you locate some vessel and, if necessary, give you some money to make the voyage, if you need any.

That, Monsieur, is all I can tell you at the moment, except that I embrace you, M. [Dufestel] and the whole Little Company as well, with the greatest tenderness and humility in my power. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and very obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

I am so rushed that I cannot write to M. Dufestel; he will pardon me, please.
Addressed: Monsieur Codoing, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Annecy, in Annecy

569a. - MADAME DE VILLENEUVE TO SAINT VINCENT

Live Jesus Crucified

Reverend Father,

Have you decided before God to let His work perish because of the unworthiness of her who is occupied with it? If God is thus inspiring you and has appointed you for that purpose, I am willing to join you. As soon as His Goodness granted me the grace to begin it, I made your Reverence the proposal of abandoning it if you so commanded me. You did not deem that fitting, but merely ordered me to bring to bear certain circumstances which, by the grace of God, I have observed to the letter while collaborating in this blessed work which has successfully gone along the path laid out for it.

And here we are at the point of its perfection and accomplishment. Will you deny us the favor of crowning the work with your advice, as you began it? No, I do not believe you have the courage to do that. You have always assisted me just at the right moment in my corporal and spiritual extremities. God allowed you to perceive the excess of my sufferings and you were willing to relieve them. Perhaps it will be the same on this occasion. Come then and see, my very dear Father, whether things are as I think. Is it possible that our good God would have allowed me to deceive myself and that, up to now, I have not been working for His glory in the way He would wish?

Letter 569a. - A copy of this letter is found in one of the volumes for the process of the beatification of Saint Vincent de Paul. (Cf. Archives of the Congregation of Rites.) Coste placed it in a supplement in Vol. VIII, no. 3298, p. 322, and dated it February 4, 1648. Since he later assigned 1642 as the date in his three-volume Life and Works of Saint Vincent de Paul, Eng. trans., vol. I, pp. 311-312, and since the Annales (1937) listing of new letters also indicated the date as 1642 and suggested that the letter become no. 569a in vol. II, we have placed the letter here in vol. II.

1The Society of the Sisters of the Cross.
No, I cannot believe that, unless you absolutely tell me so, after having recommended the matter to God. In His name, I entreat your Reverence to come as soon as possible to assure me of His holy Will and to help me accomplish it to the exclusion of all that is not of Him.

That is the sacred desire, by the grace of God, Reverend Father, of your most humble, grateful, and insignificant servant and daughter in Our Lord.

MARIE Lhuillier
of the Society of the Cross

From our seminary in Paris, February 4, [1642]

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent, Superior of the Reverend Fathers of the Mission, at Saint-Lazare

570. - TO BERNARD CODOING, SUPERIOR, IN ANNECY

Saint-Lazare, February 9, 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Here is a letter from Cardinal Mazarini, recommending us to Cardinal Antonio, the nephew of His Holiness. Yesterday

Letter 570. - Original autograph letter, Library of the University of Amsterdam (Schenkings Diederichs, ms. 59 Ap). Coste published a text from a slightly defective copy. The Annales (1953), pp. 250-253, published the original, which was later reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, pp. 31-33. This edition has used the latter text.

1At this time, Jules Cardinal Mazarin was residing at the French Court without a well-defined function. After the death of Cardinal Richelieu (December 4, 1642), Mazarin was named his successor as Chief Minister of State (December 17, 1642).

2Antonio Cardinal Barberini, nephew of Pope Urban VIII (1623-1644), was only twenty when he entered the Sacred College of Cardinals in 1627. He had been placed in charge of several legations and had earned a good deal of influence in the Papal Curia.
I received your letter from the mission site where you took your seminarians. Oh! how consoled my soul is by everything you told me about it, as also by the proposal for the purchase of that house, if it is in the town of Annecy, or close enough to town to be used for lodging! But it is impossible for us to help you with those seven thousand florins. M. Dufestel will therefore try to manage with the thousand ducats, which is part of the sum placed in annuity.

You did well to advise me not to go to His Eminence's plan; otherwise, I would have written tomorrow to M. de Chavigny in Lyons to tell him about it. Your presence in Rome will be a great help with the Ambassador in that regard. I shall have his good friend, M. de Liancourt, write to him about it—and in the best style he can.

Good M. Thévenin, the Pastor of Saint-Etienne in Dauphiné, has written me several letters, all dealing with working on the creation of a priests' seminary for parishes and other benefices. He beset me with many reasons and even with the judgments of God. He has seen you in Dauphiné and Annecy, and us here. I would like you to take the trouble of seeing him as you pass through and of delivering my letters to him. Among them is a letter of exchange so that he can draw from Messieurs Mascarini and Lumague in Lyons 250

When the steps he took to prevent the election of Innocent X (1644-1655) were unsuccessful, he came to France, obtained the bishopric of Poitiers in 1652, and became Archbishop of Rheims in 1657. He died in Nemi, near Rome, on August 3, 1671.

Cardinal Richelieu.

Juste Guérin. Cardinal Richelieu was not in sufficient favor at the Court of Rome for his intervention to be of any use to the Bishop of Geneva.

Léon Bouthillier, Comte de Chavigny, filled various important administrative and diplomatic posts.

François Du Val, Marquis de Fontenay-Marville, was French Ambassador in Rome from 1640 to 1650; he died in 1665.

Doubtless, Saint-Etienne de Saint-Geoire (Isère).

Bernard Codoing had previously given missions there.

Bankers in Lyons.
livres, which he told me he spent coming to see us. He is urging me to give up our undertaking [of the missions] in order to pursue the one he is suggesting, which I would have no difficulty doing if this were pleasing to Our Lord. But the Company has been approved by the Holy See, which is infallible with regard to the approval of the Orders God has been pleased to institute, according to what I have heard the late M. Duval say; (2) and since it is the maxim of the saints that when a matter has been decided in the presence of God after many prayers and the seeking of advice, we must reject and consider as a temptation whatever is suggested to the contrary; (3) and finally, since God has been pleased to give universal approval to this good work [of the missions], so that everyone everywhere is beginning to take to it and work at it, and since God's mercy is accompanying this work with His blessings, I think it would almost take an angel from heaven to persuade us that it is God's Will for us to give up this work to take up another which has already been undertaken in various places and has not succeeded.

And because, nevertheless, the Holy Council of Trent recommends seminaries, we have given ourselves to God to serve Him also in that regard wherever we can. You have begun; the Bishop of Alef is doing likewise; the Bishop of

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10André Duval, renowned Doctor of the Sorbonne, author of several learned works, friend and trusted advisor of Saint Vincent, was born in Pontoise, January 15, 1564, and died in Paris, September 9, 1638. The Saint never made an important decision without having recourse to his learning. He asked his advice before accepting Saint-Lazare (cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. I, chap. XXII, p. 97) and before establishing vows in the Congregation of the Mission (cf. letter of October 4, 1647, to Antoine Portail [vol. III, no. 993]). The humble Doctor got upset one day when he saw his portrait in one of the rooms at Saint-Lazare. He insisted so much that Saint Vincent had to remove the picture. (Cf. Robert Duval, Vie d'André Duval, docteur de Sorbonne, ms. [Robert Duval was the nephew of André Duval]; J. Calvet, "Un confesseur de Saint Vincent," in Petites annales de Saint Vincent [May 1903], p. 135.)

11The Decree Cum adolescentium aetas, published at the twenty-third session (July 15, 1563).

12Nicolas Pavillon had begun his seminary a short time after his arrival in Alef in 1639. He received young people and even priests ordained without having learned a word of
Saintes\textsuperscript{13} has the same goal; and we are going to try one in this city with twelve seminarians, with the help of a thousand écus from His Eminence.\textsuperscript{14}

This good servant\textsuperscript{15} of God would like things to move a little more quickly but it seems to me that God’s affairs are accomplished gradually and almost imperceptibly and His spirit is neither violent nor tempestuous. I told you above that I was asking you [to see him]; but I have since thought that there is no need; it will be sufficient for you to send him my letters.

I am very glad, Monsieur, that your nature is getting over those strong feelings you had about Rome in the beginning, and that you fear them at present, because it will be the pure love of God that will take you there. Consequently, you have reason to hope that the same spirit of God will animate you and accomplish His work through you. Go then, Monsieur, \textit{in nomine Domini}, in this confidence. Write to me often and about everything. Choose a healthy place for your dwelling. Cardinal Mazarini’s letter is very well written.

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\textsuperscript{13}Jacques Raoul de la Guibourgère, Bishop of Saintes, had in mind the establishment of a seminary in his diocese as early as 1633, but he was able to realize his project only in 1644. (Cf. Louis Audiat, \textit{Saint Vincent de Paul et sa congrégation à Saintes et à Rochefort} [Paris, 1885].)

\textsuperscript{14}According to Abély (\textit{op. cit.}, bk. I, chap. XXXI, p. 146), it was around 1636 that Saint Vincent erected a seminary in the Collège des Bons-Enfants, where young boys studied the humanities. Touched by what the Saint had said to him one day about the necessity of training for a year or two, in the virtues and functions of their state, the students who had already entered Holy Orders or who were ready to do so, Richelieu gave him one thousand écus in 1642 for the maintenance of twelve seminarians. Others, who paid for their own board, came to join these twelve. They became so numerous that Saint Vincent had to withdraw from the Bons-Enfants those who were studying the humanities and transfer them to a building situated at the end of the enclosure of Saint-Lazare. Thus began the seminary of Saint-Charles. The seminary of the Bons-Enfants passed, therefore, through three successive phases: the first from 1636 to 1642, the second from 1642 to 1645, and the third from 1645 to 1791.

\textsuperscript{15}M. Thévenin.
I am, Monsieur, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

M. de Montereil, secretary of the Ambassador in Rome, will take a boat to go from port to port. Please go to Marseilles around the twenty-sixth or twenty-seventh.

Addressed: Monsieur Codoing, Priest of the Mission, presently in Lyons

571. - TO PIERRE DU CHESNE,¹ IN CLAYE²

Saint-Lazare, March 2, 1642

Monsieur,

Here is the answer for Madame de Claye and a note to have M. Boudet³ return. Mon Dieu, Monsieur, what shall we do about that, and how is M. de Renty?⁴ How is your

Letter 571. - The original of this letter was put on sale by M. Charavay, who published the text in one of his catalogues.

¹Pierre du Chesne entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1637. He became one of the best Missionaries of Saint Vincent who entrusted him with the direction of the houses of Crécy (1641-1644), the Boms-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.

²In Seine-et-Marne.

³Jacques Boudet, a Priest of the Mission born in Epinay-sur-Seine (Seine-Saint-Denis), was received into the Congregation of the Mission in 1634 and ordained a priest in 1635. He gave missions in Brittany with M. Olier (cf. Faillon, op. cit., vol. I, p. 219), in the Toulouse area, in Champagne, and elsewhere. Saint Vincent used to say: “He is a holy soul.”

⁴Gaston de Renty, born in 1611 at Bény-Bocage (Calvados), was, according to Abelly, “as noble by his virtue as he was by his birth” (cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. II, p. 365). After fighting in Lorraine at the head of a company of cavalrymen, he settled himself in Paris,
Company? Is Our Lord blessing your mission? I have not been able to see the Bishop of Meaux; it would be well for you to send him word about the state of the mission and ask him to let you know if he would be pleased to come and bless its work.

I am writing you these lines in haste. I am, for M. de Renty and for you, in the love of Our Lord . . . .

If M. Boudet is not in Claye, direct this bearer to Fontaine.  

572. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Between 1639 and 1647]  

Mademoiselle,

I told the Duchesse d’Aiguillon my thought about that good demoiselle from Bordeaux, which is that I think she is placed himself under the direction of Father de Condren, and devoted himself to practices of piety and works of charity. The recitation of the Divine Office, prayer and examinations of conscience took up a part of his day, and he would rise at night to recite Matins. One day a week was set aside for visiting the sick of the Hôtel-Dieu, whom he instructed and comforted; another day he visited hospitals. He used to visit the poor in their homes with the Sisters of the parish of Saint-Paul. To the English who had taken refuge in France because of their faith, to the people of Lorraine who fled to Paris to find the security they were lacking in their own country, to the prisoners of Barbary, the galley-slaves of Marseilles, and the Missionaries of the East, he was a generous benefactor. Doctor Burnet, the Bishop of Salisbury, said “that he should rightly be placed among the greatest examples France provided” in the seventeenth century. (Cf. Collet, op. cit., vol. I, p. 215, n.) Such a man was bound to be in frequent contact with Saint Vincent. We have already said that he was the principal auxiliary of the Saint in giving assistance to the nobles of Lorraine who had taken refuge in Paris. When he met with sinners anxious to mend their ways, he would advise them to make a retreat at Saint-Lazare. The pious and charitable Baron died on April 24, 1648, at the age of thirty-eight. Father Saint-Jure wrote his life, La vie de Montieur de Renty (Paris, 1651).

2Dominique Séguier.


1This letter is dated March 1651, which we believe is an addition of the editor. The mention of the meeting concerning Lorraine indicates that it should be placed between 1639 and 1647.
extending herself too soon; she seems to recognize that fact. It appears that Mademoiselle Poulaillon is raising no objection about joining forces with her.

We are holding our meeting about Lorraine tomorrow.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am . . . .

573. - TO THE GOVERNOR OF A LARGE TOWN

I shall be of service to you, if I can; however, as far as the matter of Priests of the Mission is concerned, I beg you to leave it in the hands of God and the law. I would prefer that they not be in your town rather than see them there through the favor and influence of men.

574. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Saint-Lazare, Sunday morning [Between 1640 and 1648]

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Uncertain as to whether I shall be able to attend the meeting today of the Ladies of Charity, which is supposed to be held at your house, because of another that we are having here concerning Lorraine,² I am sending you the letter the Duchesse


¹This governor, that of Toul perhaps, had asked the Saint to use his influence at Court to obtain a favor for him; in exchange, he was promising to protect the Missionaries of that place against those who were opposing their establishment.

Letter 574. - The original autograph letter is in the Archives of the Provincial House of the Daughters of Charity in Lille.

¹The meeting concerning Lorraine mentioned in this letter led Coste to assign these dates.

²Most likely a meeting of those charitable persons who, in 1640, had taken on the assistance of the Lorraine nobility taking refuge in Paris, and continued doing so until 1648.
d'Aiguillon wrote me yesterday. In it you will see that she has sent word that the Ladies may begin to collect alms. So, they shall please do this. The obligation of placing into the hands of those gentlemen the money coming from it is not stated.

Show the Ladies the statement they wanted me to draw up to give to the Ladies who will take up the collection, in order to inform people of the affair. Both they and you will add, omit, and change what you see fit and, when that is done, send it to me this very day so that I may put the finishing touches on it. I shall return it to you early tomorrow morning, for you to send it on to Madame Mestay.

I think it would be well for you to tell the Ladies that it is advisable for them not to talk about the objections those gentlemen are raising, and that it would be well for them to get started and to divide up the tasks here this week.

If I can, although I doubt it, I will get away around four o'clock or thereabouts to be present for the end of your meeting today.

Good day, Mademoiselle. I am for the Ladies and for you, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras

575. - TO BERNARD CODOING, IN ROME

Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, March 17, 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Letter 575. - Original autograph letter. We have the rough draft and the final text of this letter, both written in the hand of Saint Vincent. The first document (no. 575), dated
I received your letter of February 23 from Lyons just two or three days ago; I have been very upset about it. We received earlier the one you wrote from Avignon to Monsieur Soufliers. Now, I shall tell you, in answer to yours and then to that of Monsieur Soufliers, that we shall take care of all the sums you withdrew in Lyons. For want of having received your letter in time, we paid only about one thousand livres in two parts, for which we were brought your letters of exchange and not that of Monsieur Morand, the Master of the Horse from Lyons; however, we shall take care of it. From now on, to avoid confusion, I beg you not to withdraw anything there except what you need to live on, in the event that I do not send it to you when I am aware of your need, about which you will have written to me.

I give thanks to God for the grace He has bestowed on you in all that you wrote to me. I beg Him to continue to grant you that grace subsequently and especially to keep you in perfect health. I ask you to take care of it and, with that end in view, to lodge in a place with clean air and to be somewhat attached to the observances of leaving Rome and returning there at the times the common people deem suitable. For want of doing that, good M. Lebreton deprived the Company of his person.

We held a serious consultation with seven men of the Company, six together and the other apart because he was leaving for the country, concerning the dictations about which you [spoke] to M. Soufliers. Having weighed and considered all things, five of us, two of whom are esteemed the most learned men in the Company, were opposed to these dictations. These are our reasons:

The first is from the standpoint of the subject matter one

March 17, is preserved in the Cathedral of Bogotá, Colombia. The second and final version (no. 575a) is dated the following day and belongs to the Archives of the Mission in Turin.
wishes to teach, which will be more reliable when it is that of
an approved author rather than the writings of a private
individual.

(2) From the standpoint of prelates and the public, who
would much prefer an approved author rather than the
writings of a young man who has not proven his knowledge
at school.

(3) From the standpoint of the Company, in that it has
more subjects who could interpret an author profitably than
those who could compose and dictate lessons; also, it would
not be in danger of censorship of its lessons nor attract as
much envy as it might do.

(4) From the standpoint of those who do the teaching, for
whom it would be much more useful to interpret an author
than to compose writings, unless the teacher takes them, as
you have done, from Bonacina¹ or some other author; in that
case, when people discover the author, they will make fun of
the teacher. If he makes them up on his own, he will have to
be a theology professor or have the knowledge of one, and
spend a great deal of time consulting authors and doing
nothing else. And farewell to the concern of having the
seminarians recite well, in which lies the principal fruit;
farewell, too, to the care of the spiritual and everything else.
If your mind is equal to all this thus far, we would have to
see what it would do in the long run. And in any case, even
if you can do it, everyone does not have the good mind Our
Lord gave you to cope with all that.

(5) From the standpoint of the seminarians, who will either
be theologians or not. If they are such, they will not come to

¹Martino Bonacina, born in Milan around 1585, is one of the princes of moral theology.
For three years he taught canon and civil law at the seminary in his native city, and was
then appointed Rector of the Swiss College. In recognition of his merits, Ferdinand II
named him Palatine Count and Knight of the Golden Fleece. Consecrated Bishop of
Utica, he died while on his way to the court of Vienna, where Urban VIII was sending
him as Nuncio (1631). He composed a manual of moral theology, which had already
seen eighteen editions by 1754, and many tracts on law, dogma, and moral theology.
the seminary to learn moral theology, but rather piety and other matters appropriate for them, just as those holding a licentiate in theology from the Sorbonne do not join the ordinands to learn the doctrine taught there, but to become better. If they are not theologians, none will be content with [the dictating of] writings, as is ordinarily done at the Sorbonne. And the teacher who is instructing them will think he has done enough by giving them writings, and that he has worked enough by composing them and giving them; and may God grant that they think about them afterwards! If they are uneducated, as are the majority on that level, alas! Monsieur, of what use will it be to them that you have taken so much trouble for them? Would it not be better for you to use the time in interpreting things clearly for them, having them learn by heart and [then] recite an author, than to waste the time in giving them writings, since the whole advantage for them lies in having them learn by heart and recite?

The objection is made that the disciples will be tempted to leave if they are not given something of one’s own invention, and that they will not have such a good opinion of their teacher. That would be true perhaps if there were no other attractions in the seminary; but you have piety, which will be a great attraction if God be pleased that deeply devout men are produced from it. You have chant, the conferences, the ceremonies, instruction in teaching catechism and preaching, and, above all, the fine reputation arising from the good life of those educated in this way, and their being sought after for their services.

The Company of externs² that comes to hold conferences at Saint-Lazare makes profession of dealing with subjects in a simple way. As soon as someone brings forward more doctrine or embellishes his language, people immediately

²Members of the Tuesday Conferences.
complain to me to do something about it. The last person who complained was M. Tristan, a doctor in theology, who is a member of the group. And yet Our Lord so permits that everyone wants to be a member. The last man accepted was the Abbé de Saint-Floran, Counselor in the Parlement. Believe, Monsieur, that Our Lord’s spirit is not a spirit of doing things in order to be esteemed. I think the spirit of the Mission must be to seek its greatness in lowliness and its reputation in the love of its abjection.

It has been said that it is easier to compose and dictate than to interpret an author. If that is so in your regard, fine; but reason balks at that, I think. It is much more difficult to think up topics, examine authors, organize doctrine in one’s own mind, write it oneself, then dictate and explain it, than it is simply to give an interpretation.

It has been said that things are learned by writing. That is to be desired; however, those who write at the Sorbonne reveal just the opposite. It is true that some few [of them magis afficiunt; however, many of them nec afficiunt nec memoria capiuntur].

The objection is made that the teachers will become more learned in this way, because they will study matters in depth and will examine several authors in order to do so. Yes, but then they will not be able to do anything but study and compose and, that being the case, who will instruct the seminarians about interior matters? Who will have them perform the ceremonies? Who will teach them how to catechize and preach and who will see that regularity is observed? That will require a lot of people for each seminary.

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3Claude Tristan, Seigneur de Maisoneilles, Canon, Grand Archdeacon, and Vicar General of Beauvais for forty years. His refusal to sign the formulary (against Jansenism) brought upon him in 1666 exclusion from choir and the loss of the income from his prebend. He died June 29, 1692.

4We completed this phrase according to Jean Bonnet, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, who in his circular letter of December 10, 1727, quoted the greater part of this letter.
And who will pay for their upkeep and what will become of the missions? You will tell me that all that is being done in Annecy by a single man. That is true, but all places and all Missionaries are not the same, plus the fact that they are just beginning.

Finally, people cite the example of the Jesuit Fathers and the University of Paris, but that is not the same. They publicly profess to teach the sciences and need a good name, but in the seminary there is more need of piety and passable knowledge with an understanding of chant, ceremonies, preaching and the teaching of catechism, than of a great deal of doctrine. What shall we say about the universities in Spain, where they do not know what it is to dictate in class and where they are content to interpret? Nonetheless, everyone agrees that the theologians there are more profound than [elsewhere]. And then, if this manner of composing and dictating everything were introduced now, in a short while you would see that people would say that, in order to have men capable of doing this, we should have collèges and teach. O Jésus! Monsieur, if that were so, what would become of the poor common people?

All these considerations induce us to continue interpreting Binsfeld² as we have begun to do successfully, and I entreat you, Monsieur, to let it go at that, and also to subject your ideas to the decisions made here. I do not mean only with regard to this point but also in every matter. Do nothing of importance without writing to me about it, nor until you have received a response.

You see, Monsieur, you and I allow ourselves to be carried away too much by our own opinions. You, however, are in a

²Pierre Binsfeld was born in Binsfeld (Luxembourg) around 1540 and died of the plague on November 24, 1598. He left several works of theology and canon law. Saint Vincent undoubtedly had in mind his Enchiridion Theologiae Pastoralis, published in Trier in 1591 and 1602, then in Douai in 1630 and 1636, with notes by François Sylvius. This work merited the praises of the synod held in Malines in 1607.
place where an exceptional reserve and circumspection are necessary. I have always heard that the Italians are the most cautious people in the world and the most distrustful of individuals who act too quickly. Caution, patience, and gentleness resolve everything with them, in time. Because they know that we French act too quickly, they leave us out in the cold for a long time without making friends with us.

    In the name of God, Monsieur, be careful about this and about never disregarding the orders you receive from us, as you did with regard to M. Thévenin. How, in good conscience, Monsieur, could you take what I was sending to him? You say that he is a madman, that he asked for alms on the road and spent little. I hope so; however, you should have considered that I had some special reason for doing what I did, and you should have thought that perhaps the money was not from this house, as indeed it is not. In the name of God, Monsieur, pay attention to this. Let us reflect that we shall always do God’s Will and He will do ours when we carry out that of our Superiors, and that we fall into thousands of difficulties and disorders when we act otherwise.

    Write to me about everything and I promise to answer you by every regular mail, or at least every two weeks. And what you have to let me know, please tell me personally.

    In addition to the letter you will be writing to me about private matters, send me another that I can let people see.

    It would also be well for you to write one to Monsieur de Montmaur, the Master of Requests, who has helped us on this occasion. If the affair succeeds, we have reason to hope that he will continue his charity to us. Your letter will have as its aim to thank him and to ask him kindly to allow you to give him an account of the state of your affairs from time to time. It would also be good for you to write now and then to the Duchesse d’Aiguillon and to Madame de Herse, the

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6Probably M. Thévenin, Pastor of Saint-Etienne (Dauphiné).
7Henri-Louis Habert, Seigneur de Montmaur.
President’s wife, who also helped us on this occasion; however, you will mention none of these to anyone whomsoever, please, and will send me your letters unsealed.

Well now, Monsieur, I have certainly written to you about many things, but to whom can I speak plainly and with entire confidence if not to another self whom I cherish more than myself? Oh! indeed, I shall always open my heart to you and shall not hold back from telling you anything whatsoever, because I know the depth of your heart and the love Our Lord has given you for me. I am, in His love, for you and for your dear Community, whom I embrace in spirit, prostrate at its feet, and I am in the love of the same Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

57Sa. - TO BERNARD CODOING, IN ROME

Paris, March 18, 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

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Madame de Herse, born Charlotte de Ligny, was the daughter of Jean de Ligny, Seigneur de Randicey, Master of Requests. She was also the mother of Félix Vialart, the Bishop of Châlons, as well as a relative of Jean-Jacques Ober. Her late husband was Michel Vialart, Seigneur de la Forest de Herse, Councillor to the King in his Parliament, President of the Requests of the Palace, then Ambassador to Switzerland. He died in Solothurn, October 26, 1634. Madame de Herse was dear to Saint Francis de Sales, who had consented to being her son’s godfather. She enrolled in the company of the Ladies of Charity and became one of Saint Vincent’s chief auxiliaries. She gave a great deal to the poor of Paris, Picardy, and Champagne, generously supported the works for ordinands and for abandoned children, and established the Daughters of Charity in Chars (Val-d’Oise). During the wars that ravaged the capital, the Queen Mother entrusted to Madame de Herse and some other ladies the distribution of her personal alms. Madame de Herse died in 1662.

Letter 57Sa. - Original autograph letter. The previous letter (no. 575) was a draft copy; this is the final text, which is the property of the Archives of the Mission in Turin.
Blessed be God because I think that you have now arrived in Rome; may His Divine Goodness grant that it be for His glory and keep you in perfect health! I beg you, Monsieur, to do all you can in that regard and, with that end in view, find suitable housing in places where the air is good, and even be somewhat attached to observing the times the common people consider it dangerous to leave Rome and come back to sleep there. We lost good M. Lebreton there because he failed to take these precautions.

I paid your letters of exchange from Lyons, except M. Morand's for one thousand livres, because I have only known about it for two days. It is advisable that you not withdraw anything in Rome without letting me know about it and waiting for my reply, unless it be for food.

We had serious consultation with seven men of the Company regarding the matter of dictation. Five of them hold a negative opinion, so we shall continue to interpret an author without dictating, as we have successfully begun to do. These are the reasons:

The first is taken from the standpoint of the knowledge one wishes to impart, which will be more reliable than that taken from the writings of an individual, since it is that of an approved author.

The second, from the standpoint of the prelates and the public, who would much prefer an approved and selected author rather than the writings of a young man who has proven his capabilities only during his studies.

The third, from the standpoint of the Company, because it has more subjects who will be able to interpret an author than men who will be able to compose and dictate; and thus it will be able to serve the Church in more places and be less subject to envy.

The fourth comes from those who will do the teaching, for whom it will be much easier, whatever people say, to interpret rather than to compose and dictate, unless they take their
lessons from an author, for example, Bonacina. When the students discover this, they will make fun of the teacher or hold him in contempt. If he makes them up on his own, he will need the competence of a theology professor. Moreover, he will have to devote a lot of time to consulting authors, and to do only that. In that case, how will he interpret well, have lessons recited well, and take care of the spiritual and all the other exercises? If you have managed all that, not everyone has such strength and perhaps it will fail you in the long run. Again, if the teachers give the same lessons to the second round of seminarians, it will be said that they only know the same old song. And what difference will there be between doing that and always taking the same author? If they are forever composing something new, they will never be able to do anything but that.

The fifth reason comes from the standpoint of the seminarians, who are either learned or uneducated. If learned, they will not be coming into the seminary to learn moral theology, but rather to become better and to learn the other material taught there. That is what the Bachelors of Theology do, who come to the ordinand retreats, and the Doctors who come to the ecclesiastics’ meeting at Saint-Lazare, where humility and simplicity are so much a part of the matters treated. If they are uneducated, alas! Monsieur, of what use will writings be to them?

These, Monsieur, are the reasons for which we have made the decision I just mentioned to you, which is to interpret an author. And now, the response to the objections that the letter to M. Soufliers puts forward.

It is said that the seminarians will not have a very good opinion of their teacher and will be tempted to leave the seminary if they are not given writings. Now, our reply is that this would be true if there were no other attractions in the seminary but knowledge, and assuming that all the seminarians were scholars. You have there, however, the attraction
of piety, chant, the ceremonies, the teaching of catechism, preaching, and finally the reputation of those who have been there and who will receive preference in employments, conditions, and benefices. The Penitentiary already has his eyes on our men to make use of them in monasteries and similar employments.

The third objection is that it is easier to compose and dictate than to interpret an author and have others recite. That seems a paradox to me for, in the first case, one must study, examine authors, compose, dictate, and interpret; in the second, one has only to study, interpret, and recite.

The fourth objection is that things are learned by writing them. That I admit, when there is question of just a few things to be retained; but when there are many, experience proves the contrary, [as] at the Sorbonne, where those who have only writings are as ignorant of things as those who have not been there at all.

It is said, moreover, that by this means teachers will become more learned, because they will study subjects in depth and will examine a number of authors. I admit that; however, they will not be able to do anything else but study, compose, and dictate; that being the case, who will teach piety, chant and the ceremonies? Who will give lessons in the teaching of catechism and preaching? This will require almost as many men as there are areas of training in each seminary. And where shall we find as many men as are needed and the funds to maintain them? If people reply that we succeed in doing all that in Annecy, I shall say, as above, that such is good for that place and as a beginning, and that the training of the ordinands causes us to experience the opposite here.

Finally, people raise as an objection the practice of the

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1This objection is, in reality, only the second.
Jesuit Fathers and the universities. I make a distinction among
the universities. No dictation is given in the whole of Spain
where there are such great theologians. And besides, that is
not the same; in France, these institutions make profession of
teaching the humanities.

I assure you, Monsieur, that if we enter into that spirit, you
will soon see proposals in the Company for us to take on
collèges and teach publicly so as to have more learned men to
teach the seminarians. And if that were so, alas! Monsieur,
what would become of the poor people in the [rural areas],2
and into what sort of spirit would we enter were we to wish
to be on a par, as far as knowledge is concerned, with those
great institutions? Where would holy humility be, in which
God has been pleased to conceive, bring forth, and raise this
Little Company up to the present?

Now, all this being said, Monsieur, in the name of God,
ever make that suggestion again. Hold firmly to the decisions
made here in all matters; do nothing without writing to us
about it, nor until you receive our reply; I mean: nothing that
is of any importance. Remember, please, what I wrote to you
about this in Annecy.

I have many things to say to you concerning what you did
with regard to that good priest from Dauphiné.3 That will be
for another time, God willing.

Write to us often, and every three months to M. de
Montmaur, the Master of Requests, who is helping us with
your maintenance, and the Duchesse d’Aiguillon and Madame
de Herse as well. To us you will write one letter referring to
private matters, and another with things we can allow to be

2The word used in the original was “company,” obviously the result of a distraction.
3Probably M. Thévenin, Pastor of Saint-Etienne in Dauphiné, a section of Southeastern
France whose chief city is Grenoble. Charles de Valois, who became Charles V of France
in 1364, had been sold this territory in 1349. During the period of the Valois monarchy
(1364-1389), the eldest son of the King was sent there to govern, hence the title Dauphin.
Dauphiné was a stronghold of Protestantism.
seen. As for the letters to M. de Montmaur and the Ladies, they will be to thank them for their assistance, to assure them of your prayers, to tell them briefly the state of the Company, what is to be hoped for with regard to the ordinands, and to ask them to continue their good graces toward that establishment. None of them wishes us to mention the assistance they have given us.

I hope to write to you every two weeks and perhaps by every regular mail. If you write to me and the matter requires it, write everything directly to me, please, and not to others to pass it on to me.

That is all I shall say to you for the time being. All that remains is to embrace your dear Company, as I do, prostrate at their feet and yours. I am, in the love of Our Lord and His holy Mother, Monsieur, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

576. - TO JACQUES BOUDET, IN FONTAINE

Saint-Lazare, March 25, 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I most humbly entreat you, Monsieur, to return to Saint-Lazare as soon as you receive this letter. We need you here and await you with affection.
I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
I.S.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Boudet, Priest of the Mission, in Fontaine

577. - BERNARD PREVOST, SEIGNEUR DE SAINT-CYR-LES-COLONS, TO SAINT VINCENT

1642

The attentions of your priests, coupled with the example of their piety, have brought about such a change in the lives of my country people that they are scarcely recognizable to their neighbors. As for me, I confess that I no longer know them, and I cannot help but be convinced that God has sent me a new colony to populate my village. These Gentlemen found only rough people whose change could be accomplished only by the grace which accompanies your workers, and particularly those to whom you gave the task of coming to convert these people and me. It is a consequence of God's mercy and a result of your prudence that we were sent men suited to our needs. And after the thanks I extend to you for this, all that remains for us is to offer ardent prayers to God that He might shower your Company with His blessings; I consider it one of the most useful to His glory in His Church today. However, I remain fearful that these poor people, lacking a virtuous pastor to maintain them in the good resolutions they have made during this mission which has been so beneficial for them, may easily fall into the sin of omission by forgetting or neglecting to put into practice what has been taught them with such discernment.

Since you were unwilling to give them a parish priest, I think that,

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1In the locality of Yonne. Bernard Prévost was a Councillor of the Great Council.
as you have begotten them anew in Our Lord, you are at least obliged to procure one for them by your prayers; this I entreat you to do, with all my heart.

578. - MADAME DE SAINT-CYR-LES-COLONS ¹ TO SAINT VINCENT

Although I recognize that I am incapable of thanking you worthily for the great honor and the many benefits we have received in our parish through you, still I cannot keep to myself this truth that, after God, you are in some way our savior, through these good Gentlemen you have sent us; they have done marvels in this place. They have so thoroughly won the affection of Monsieur de Saint-Cyr that I fear he will be ill when he is separated from them. As for myself, I am not going to tell you how I feel about the matter, since I am too sad to be able to say anything else.

579. - PIERRE DE NIVELLE, BISHOP OF LUÇON, TO SAINT VINCENT

If it should please God that the Institute of the Gentlemen of your Congregation continue for a long time in His Church, she ought to expect very great fruit from them. The diocese of Luçon, in whose territory they have been working for three or four years under your mandate, has already received from them such considerable benefits, particularly the town of Luçon itself in which their mission has been most fruitful, that I am infinitely obliged to Cardinal Richelieu for having procured them for us and to you, Monsieur, for having sent


¹Marie de Moncy, daughter of Claude de Moncy, comptroller, was the wife of Bernard Prévost.

them to us. Their Superior, in particular, is laboring there unceasingly with admirable solicitude; he possesses talents well suited to the performance of his task and his zeal causes him to be esteemed by everyone. He is praiseworthy in all, except that he is excessive in his labors, if, however, there can be any excess in works undertaken to win souls to God.

580. - TO BERNARD CODING, IN ROME

Saint-Lazare, April 1, 1642

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am telling you these things in great haste: that I received your two letters from Marseilles and took care of the bill of exchange, and that we had agreed upon the union and M. Authier’s conditions four or five years ago, and when he came

1Jacques Chiroye.


1Christophe d’Authier de Siagau, born in Marseilles on April 6, 1609, obtained, while still young, the benefice of the Abbey of Saint-Victor. He was ordained a priest in June 1633, and a few days later received his doctorate. In 1634, the Archbishop of Aix entrusted to him and to all those who joined him in giving missions, the chapel of Notre-Dame de Beauvesez. A year later he approved the new Institute under the title of Congrégation des clercs de la Mission, which he replaced in 1638 with Congrégation des missionnaires du clergé. They established themselves at Brignole and Marseilles and were requested for Valence (1639) to direct the major seminary. In Senlis they were entrusted with the parish of Sainte-Geneviève (1640). Urban VIII recognized the Society by a brief of June 4, 1644. November 20, 1647 Innocent X changed its title to Congrégation du Saint-Sacrement pour la direction des Missions et des Séminaires and its members were called Prêtres missionnaires de la Congrégation du Saint-Sacrement. In 1644 Christophe d’Authier was appointed Director of both apostolic colleges of Avignon and later titular Bishop of Bethlehem. He was consecrated in Rome on March 26, 1651 and lived there during 1652, 1653 and part of 1654. He returned to France where he continued to direct his Congregation. He died in Valence on September 17, 1667.

On the efforts of union of his Institute with that of Saint Vincent, the Annales des prêtres du Saint-Sacrement (manuscript preserved in the library of the Benedictines of Marseilles, before their expulsion) state: “On the return of M. de Siagau from his first
back from Provence, he sent me word that these Gentlemen disapproved of the matter. If they have changed their minds and communicated the conditions to you, you can be sure that we shall be ready to do what is reasonably possible. Please let

journey to Rome, when his Congregation was only an idea, some devout persons inspired him to go to Paris to see if he could join up with M. Vincent de Paul who had just established an almost similar one, under the name of the Mission. To this end, he went and lived incognito for several months in their house in Paris, called the Bons-Enfants, to see if they could come together to see if their goals were similar. Since the Will of God was not yet clear, however, the subject was taken up again (1642) because of a very virtuous girl. The life of this saintly girl from Valence, known as Sister Marie, was written by the Minim, Father de la Rivière, (cf. Histoire de la vie et moeurs de Marie Tessonnière [Lyon: n.p., 1650]) on the express order of the Queen Regent, Anne of Austria, and with the approval of several Doctors of the Sorbonne. It displeased the Bishop of Valence, however, who censured the book and had it condemned by the Assembly of the Clergy of France who likewise forbade devotion to her. Sister Marie told M. d'Authier that he should join up with M. Vincent de Paul and make one Community out of two the better to carry out in the Church the holy designs God was giving them. She was so insistent and produced such irrefutable proofs that God wanted it thus that M. d'Authier, who professed to practice great detachment, allowed himself to be persuaded. The better to try his disinterestedness, Providence allowed that at that time four or five Missionaries of M. Vincent should pass through Valence, returning from a mission they had just given, and they went to greet him in the seminary and to discuss this matter. M. d'Authier received them very cordially and, having had a conversation with the head of the group, called Codoing, gave him to understand that it would be better to have no union if it were not for the greater glory of God and the good of the Church. Arriving in Paris, M. Codoing recounted his conversation to M. Vincent who, on April 22, 1642, wrote M. Sisgau a letter to assure him that he was equally interested in this union. A short time after, M. d'Authier came to Paris to discuss this. What stopped negotiations was that M. Vincent did not want to take on parishes, nor run the seminaries of our Congregation, nor would he allow his Missionaries to wear cuffs and collars similar to priests living in the world."

This narration appears to be correct except on two points: Bernard Codoing did not go to Paris, and obstacles did not so much arise from cuffs and collars as from what M. d'Authier was requiring in the fusion of Rules and Constitutions and his request to become Saint Vincent's Assistant with right of succession.

Both Congregations worked together in 1643 on the galleys in Marseilles. Later, a certain coldness arose between them. The priests of M. d'Authier tried to prevent the establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in Rome. On the other hand, the similarity of their names gave rise to unfortunate misunderstandings, so much so that Saint Vincent took steps to see that the Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament would no longer bear the name of Missionaries.

The life of Christophe d'Authier de Sisgau was written by Nicolas Borelli, a priest of his Congregation: Vie de Mgr. Christophe d'Authier de Sisgau, évêque de Bethléem (Nouv. ed., Lyon: 1703).

2The priests of Christophe d'Authier.
me know the proposals they have made to you and who made them; then, accordingly, we shall consider the matter before God and write to you about it.

In the meantime, continue working on our establishment along the lines set up by our good M. Lebreton, without committing yourself to anything. I entreat you, Monsieur, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to be on your guard against natural ardor in the situation you describe to me. The spirit of God proceeds discreetly and always humbly. Remember that you and I are subject to a thousand outbursts of nature and recall what I told you about finding myself, in the early stages of the project of the Mission, with it constantly on my mind. That made me wonder whether the affair sprang from nature or from the evil spirit, and I purposely made a retreat in Soissons so that God might be pleased to remove from my mind the pleasure and eagerness I was experiencing in this matter. God was pleased to answer my prayer in such a manner that, by His mercy, He took them both away and allowed me to be in the opposite dispositions. I think that, if God is granting some blessing to the Mission and I am less a subject of scandal to it, I attribute it after God to this fact. I wish to remain in this practice of neither concluding nor undertaking anything while I am caught up in these ardent hopes at the prospect of great benefits.

I close, meanwhile, by greeting the Little Company; I am your servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Monsieur Codoing, Priest of the Mission, in Rome

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Bernard Codoing was not yet in Rome when Saint Vincent wrote this letter; he arrived there on April 8.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Monsieur Dehorgny is going to make a visitation of your house. I hope that in your goodness you will receive him with all the affection and tenderness Our Lord has given you for all the members of the Company. I shall say nothing about his integrity, zeal, and the experience he has in matters concerning our Institute, nor about the other virtues that make him worthy of commendation, since they are familiar enough to you: that is what has prompted me to send him to you, since I cannot come myself. I am relying on the grace Our Lord has given him that his visit will be a source of consolation and edification for you. So, I shall see you through him and embrace you with him, in the love of Our Lord, whom I beg with all my heart to bestow on you the dispositions of Saint Zachary and Saint Elizabeth for the reception of the graces the Blessed Virgin's visit brought them. I beg Him also to animate M. Dehorgny with the spirit with which He had filled His holy Mother, so that you will receive everything he tells you as coming from His mouth or rather from His all-holy, all-divine heart, in which I am entirely, Monsieur, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

i.s.C.M.

April 19

Addressed: Monsieur Chiroye, Superior of the Mission, in Luçon

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Letter 581. - Archives of Turin, original signed letter.

1 Someone other than the secretary wrote on the back of the letter: "April 19, 1640." This is the date followed by Reg. 2, p. 98. We do not agree with this date because Jacques
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

These lines have only two purposes: one, to send you two letters, one to you and the other to M. de Montereil, the Ambassador's secretary. We are very much obliged to M. de Saint-Aignan because he has relinquished to us for the ordinands a priory with two thousand livres income and is having another one given over, worth four hundred livres more. I shall send you, at the first opportunity, the consent of the abbots on whom they depend, one of whom is His Eminence.

Good M. de Saint-Aignan has looked after a monastery of women in this diocese in which great abominations occurred. The King took it away from the Franciscans and placed it once again under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Paris. M. Lebreton worked hard on the affair; you will find some reports of it among his papers. I beg you to act in conformity with them.

You cannot imagine how important this affair is. Please write to me about it, and to him also, and send his letters to me unsealed.

Moreover, please obtain from the Office of the Penitentiary a dispensation for an individual to enter religious life, accord-

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Chiroye was named Superior of the establishment only later, on October 6, 1640 (cf. no. 488). Jean Dehorgny was sent on a round of visitations in Lorraine in 1640. He may have visited other houses in the course of 1641 or 1642. In April 1643 he left for Italy and did not return from there until 1653.

Letter 582. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original autograph letter.
1François du Val, Marquis de Fontenay-Mareuil.
2Perhaps the priories of the diocese of Langres mentioned in other letters.
3Cardinal Richelieu.
4The monastery of Saint-Eutrope (cf. no. 594).
According to the statement of the case I am sending you. It is called a *discreto viro*; and I recommend this to you as ardently as I can. It concerns a woman who is a great servant of God.\(^5\)

M. Authier has recalled his closest friend, the one most in harmony with his own way of thinking among these priests in Senlis,\(^6\) so they say, in order to send him to Rome. The Superior of Senlis has sent us for the ordinands a young priest from his house and has written me that he would see me the first chance he gets to discuss a matter of importance requiring my time and that he would do so before his departure on a long journey. I replied that he would be welcome and that we would take all the time he wanted. Since then, he has sent me word that he would not be taking his journey and said nothing of the matter which he wanted to discuss with me. That did not prevent my writing to M. Authier to say that I had gladly accepted the tentative offer of union which had been made during your interview, about which you wrote to me, and that he will find us still willing for it. I wrote the same thing to good Sister Marie\(^7\) and her companion, who took the trouble to write to me about it. We do not know if this change in M. Le Bégue, who is the Superior of their house in Senlis, stems from the fact that he has seen his way to becoming established permanently in Senlis in spite of the objection we are making to the Bishop of Senlis\(^8\) about accepting the best parish in his diocese,\(^9\) which he is offering us for our residence. He spoke

\(^5\)This person had made a vow to become a Carmelite. A vow to enter a religious institute which had solemn vows was a reserved vow, i.e., one whose dispensation was reserved to the Holy See.

\(^6\)Jean-Jacques Lafon. He died in Senlis where he was the Pastor of Sainte-Geneviève.

\(^7\)Marie de Valence (Marie Tessomière) was a holy widow with a very special devotion to the Blessed Trinity (cf. no. 580, n. 1). Saint Francis de Sales called her a living relic. Jean-Jacques Oller made a journey from Paris to Valence to consult her. Cardinal de Bérulle, Saint Vincent and Father Coton, her director, had the deepest respect for her. After her death, she was given a sort of public veneration.

\(^8\)Nicolus Sanguin.

\(^9\)The parish of Sainte-Geneviève in Senlis. It had been given to the priests of Christophe d'Authier.
to me about it so earnestly that he said he would get down on his knees to beg me to accept, if that is what it would take. Now, our problem comes from the difficulty you know we have always had in accepting parishes, except for the one in Richelieu. All this shows you that you should use circumspection in this matter.

I wrote to tell M. Germain to leave at the first opportunity. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

583. - TO MOTHER FRANCOISE-ELISABETH PHELIPPEAUX,¹
IN SAINT-DENIS

Saint-Lazare, May 1[1642]²

My very dear Mother knows that I am entirely at her service and at that of Sainte-Marie; but I am not her spiritual Father, except insofar as she is from the house in Paris. And then, I am very much afraid that I shall not be back from a journey I intend to make, with God's help, if a slight indisposition I have allows. If I am back or do not take this trip, and my dear Mother has the permission, I shall try to render her this small service. God knows with what pleasure I shall do so and

¹Cardinal Richelieu had to use his influence to make him accept it.

Letter 583. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original autograph letter made known by Baron de Bich of Aosta.

²Mother Francoise-Elisabeth Philipeaux Pontchartrain.

³This letter probably belongs near no. 585.
how much I am, in the love of Our Lord, very dear Mother, her most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Mother Superior of Sainte-Marie de Saint-Denis, in Saint-Denis

584. - A PRIEST OF THE PONTOISE CONFERENCE
TO SAINT VINCENT

May 1642

The little company of the Pontoise conference of priests has urged me to write to you to express the satisfaction we all feel about our little meeting. I must confess that, in the beginning, we did not yet understand what it was all about, but now we are enjoying more and more each day the graces and blessings Our Lord has been pleased to shower on it. We all see what benefit can come to us from it individually and for the whole body of the Church. After God, it is to you we are obliged, Monsieur, for having welcomed us to be associated with your good and virtuous company from Paris. We received from you the first instructions for this little company, which have served us as the seed to produce many good works presenting themselves to be done each day, and to which God grants increase and blessing. We are asking a favor of you, which is that, since we are still only children in virtue, not having sufficient strength to sustain and guide ourselves, you might be so kind as to grant us from time to time the visit of one of the priests of your company in Paris to teach us how to walk more steadfastly in the exercises we have all begun so courageously. We are exposing our weakness to you in this way so that you will do us the good of consenting to help us.

TO MOTHER FRANCOISE-ELISABETH PHELIPPEAUX, 
IN SAINT-DENIS

Paris, May 8, 1642

Dear Mother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter with an inexpressible feeling of tenderness, seeing in it a perfect outpouring of the heart of our blessed Father and our worthy Mother. Were it not for the difficulty I have with the matter you propose,¹ which enters into the realm of impossibility, I would have devoted myself to you in the way you and your holy Community do me the kindness to request of me. The concerns I have, which are increasing each day, and the indispositions that assail me, along with my age, cause me to entreat you most humbly, dear Mother, to excuse me if I am unworthy of the grace you and your holy Community are offering me. I assure you that, although I cannot serve you in the manner you suggest, I shall do so in any other way you direct. I am your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

Addressed: Reverend Mother Superior of the Visitation Sainte-Marie, in Saint-Denis


¹Saint Vincent had first written "Monsieur"; this word is scratched out.

²It would seem that this is the suggestion to which the Saint was also responding in no. 583.
586. - TO MONSIEUR N.1

[Between 1640 and 1648] 2

Your Lordship,

Our Lord has turned to you for the sustenance of the poor nobility of Lorraine and His Divine Goodness has blessed the charity He bestowed on you in their regard. He is turning to you once again to tell you that there is not one sou for next month and that if your providence does not cast eyes of compassion on them, those poor people will necessarily have to . . . .

587. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[Around May 1642] 3

Monsieur,

Maitre Belot foresees that the business concerning Sister Anne will be disagreeable and fears that there will be a lawsuit because it seems to be Monsieur du Ruisseau and the leading citizens 2 who wish to keep her there. She really thinks that her brother who is the executor

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Letter 586. - Reg. 1, f°70. - The copyist notes that the original was in Saint Vincent's own handwriting.

1 Most probably the Duc de Liancourt, who was a member of the society formed for the assistance of the poor aristocracy of Lorraine who were refugees in Paris, and he had the right to be called "Your Lordship."

2 The work for the nobility of Lorraine, founded in 1640, lasted about eight years. (Cf. Abeluy, op. cit., bk. I, chap. XXXV, p. 168.)

Letter 587. - Archives of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1 This letter was written shortly before the letter Saint Louise wrote on July 5, 1642 to Sister Jeanne Lepeintre (cf. *Ecrits spirituels*, L. 64, p. 77).

2 Of Fontenay-aux-Roses (Hauts-de-Seine). Although the Daughters of Charity were established in this place in 1642, the act of foundation dates only from 1650. (Cf. Arch. Nat. S 6.187.) An important legacy given by M. Béguin for the foundation of two Sisters assured the work begun there.