that we might grow to dislike others where nature finds no satisfaction. Since, I repeat, there is question of such an important matter, it deserves to be pondered in depth. Therefore, please proceed no further until I have seen the outline for your petition.

If we have to request this extension, it should be on condition that we will give missions in towns only when the bishops in whose dioceses we are established order us to do so. It must be made clear that, of ourselves, we should aim at giving missions only in the country, in line with the original plan.

1493. - TO CARDINAL ANTONIO BARBERINI, PREFECT OF PROPAGANDA FIDE

Most Eminent Prince,

I received the letter with which Your Eminence deigned to honor me, with a sentiment of profound respect and humility, but especially of gratitude. I understood from it not only how much you keep us in mind but also how you esteem and support the members of our Congregation who are serving on the island of Madagascar. Their work is certainly of little account but, by the goodness of God, they do it zealously and willingly.

Most Eminent Cardinal, for a long time I have been thinking of sending new workers to this island and already considered this as well as done. However, those on whom all the voyages depend, and who usually sail for the Indies, did not dare to entrust themselves to the sea in a ship badly deteriorated by long use, and especially during a season of the year unfavorable to sailing. They have therefore postponed the departure until the month of September. At that time, God willing, the four workers destined for this mission will set out, if the Sacred Congregation gives its approval.

Letter 1493. - Archives of Propaganda Fide, II Africa, no. 248, f° 121, original signed letter, written in Latin.
On the other hand, we were notified by Rome that our men could travel on Portuguese ships, so— not wishing to leave any stone unturned—we discussed this with the Legate. He told us that those ships do not land in Madagascar at all, but if it should be to our advantage, he would intervene and have them pass by Goa. However, since there is no trading between Goa and the said island, we dismissed this offer as unsuitable.

That, Most Eminent Cardinal, is where matters stand at present. We await an opportunity and, when one presents itself, will send the workers at Your Eminence’s pleasure. They will do their utmost to draw those people, enveloped in the darkness of ignorance, into the admirable light of truth.¹ In the meantime, we shall pray continually to the greatest and most high God for you, Eminence, who are so good to us, that He may bless you always and attribute to you the greatest share of the fruits our Congregation will gather.

I am the most humble and devoted servant of Your Eminence.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission

Paris, the fifth day before the nones of May,² 1652

1494. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

Paris, May 3, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of April 1. If you are pleased that our correspondence will continue on a weekly basis, I can assure you

¹ Cf. 1 Pt 2:9. (NAB)
² May 3.

Letter 1494. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.
that I feel the same way. To give you two proofs of this, as Thursday
draws near I begin to get a little impatient to receive your letters
because they are usually delivered to me on that day, and I was very
disappointed not to get any by the next to last regular mail. I wrote
you last Friday that, since then, I had received the letter which was
supposed to reach me at that time. This will let you know that on
Friday, after sending my own packet, I received your letter of
March 25; so, all your letters have been received and answered.

The plan for America proved a failure for us—not that the ship
is not sailing, but the person who asked us for priests has not said
another word to us about it. Perhaps this is due to the objection I
first raised about not being able to give him anyone without the
approval and faculties of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda
Fide. He had not given that a thought, and I think that the priests
being taken there are going without authorization. Like you, Mon­
sieur, I think it is good to make similar sacrifices to God by sending
our priests for the conversion of unbelievers, but only, of course,
when they have a legitimate mission.

I am glad you have decided to keep in touch with M. Dehorgny.
He returned to Rome sooner than I expected, but only for two
weeks, and I think that at the time I am now writing to you he has
gone back to giving missions.

I received the letter M. de Fleury was pleased to send in reply
to mine. Please thank him for me.

Since I know your charitable heart and how much it shares in
our public and private afflictions, I shall tell you that they are
increasing daily because the armies are nearby and are destroying
everything. If God does not give us peace, for which negotiations
have already taken place, we are on the eve of many evils.¹ Our

¹Religious first mentions the distress of Paris in the March-April 1652 issue. Soup kitchens
were organized for poor families with a large number of children and for those unable to work.
Nine hundred poor persons were assisted at Saint-Hippolyte parish, three hundred at Saint-
Martin, and six hundred at Saint-Laurent. Lack of funds prevented soup kitchens from being
established to help other poor persons or parishes of the capital. Several parishes were in distress,
Community is still going along as usual. We have not sent anyone away, despite our hardships, and will not do so as long as we can support ourselves, since that is your opinion.

I thank God for the benevolence He continues to give the King and Queen toward the Company. I ask His Divine Majesty to sanctify their souls more and more and to give whatever outcome He pleases to the suggestion of establishing you at Saint Benedict Church. I am pleased that it has fallen to you, and for the exhortations you have given to the French in the absence of Their Majesties. I would like to think that you spoke to them in the language we use with the poor country people.

M. Bajoue told me that the town of Villeneuve,² a league away from La Rose, had revolted and would be placed under siege. In that case, he says, our house is going to be looted. I have nothing but good reports from all the others, except that M. Thibault³ is slightly ill in Saint-Méen.

I hear that our men in Barbary are in good condition and are working zealously and effectively. I received some letters from them today, and Br[other] Huguier arrived in Marseilles en route to Paris, in accordance with the instructions I gave him.

We are trying to find a man to go to Tunis to take over as Consul in the place of M. Le Vacher,⁴ who will succeed better in the duty proper to him. From what M. Barreau writes me, the brother of the former is getting carried away with zeal in Algiers, with the result that he is prostrate with work.

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²Villeneuve-sur-Lot (Lot-et-Garonne).
³Louis Thibault.
⁴Jean Le Vacher. His brother, Philippe, served in Algiers.
We have no news from the priests who have gone to the Hebrides\(^5\) not from M. Brin.

I almost forgot to tell you that, after sending someone to M. Bouchet's house, I went there myself one day this week, but he was not there so he came here. He is quite pleased with you and told me he has not yet received the elk's foot;\(^6\) consequently, neither have we.

May God grant abundant blessings to your heart and to your Company! I greet them with all possible tenderness and am, in Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert, Superior of the Priests of the Mission now in Warsaw, Poland

1495. - TO PIERRE DE BERTIER, COADJUTOR BISHOP

OF MONTAUBAN\(^1\)

May 4, 1652

Excellency,

Enclosed is Madame de Fronteaux’s reply to me, and it is in

\(^5\)Saint Vincent had just sent François Le Blanc (Francis White), Dermot Duiguin (Dermot Duggan), and Thomas Lumsden there.

Thomas Lumsden, born in the Aberdeen diocese (Scotland), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 31, 1645. On his return to his homeland, he traveled through northern Scotland: Murray, Ross, Sutherland, Caithness, and as far as the Orkney Islands. Driven out by persecution in 1663, he returned to France and died there in 1672.

\(^6\)Cf. no. 1482, n.4.

Letter 1495. - Reg. 1, P. 30 v.

\(^1\)Pierre de Bertier (cf. no. 1249, n. 3.) esteemed Saint Vincent highly, as we see from the following comment, written the day after the Saint died: "God had given me such respect and affection for Monsieur Vincent that I truly believe that none of his children felt his death more than I did."
line with your wishes. My sins have made me unworthy of playing any part in your plan by my services, but the grace that accompanies you has merited its success. I ask God, Excellency, to be pleased to accomplish this always and in all ways and to give me greater opportunities of serving you. They will always be very dear to me, and I shall consider myself most fortunate to render you the perpetual obedience I owe you, Excellency.

I am, in His love, Excellency, your most humble and very obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.s.C.M.

1496. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

Since it has pleased God to give me knowledge of the Congregation and, in particular, of the state and needs of each house and the disposition of its members, I do not see how you could be more effective elsewhere at present. In the name of God, Monsieur, remain steadfast, and rest assured that you will not lack God's blessing. One of my keenest consolations is seeing you in the place you now are, and I hope we shall see one another in heaven some great day.

[Note on the plan for the sanctuary of Notre-Dame de Lorm (or Notre-Dame de l'Orme), which de Bertier wanted to entrust to the Priests of the Mission. The act of union was passed on September 5, 1652. (Cf. no. 1502 and Abbé Perdrix, Notre-Dame de Lorm, paroisse de Castelferrus, diocèse de Montauban (Toulouse, 1873).)]


This priest had requested a change of house.
1497. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

May 10, 1652

Saint Vincent gives Lambert aux Couteaux news of the missionaries sent for the relief of the provinces devastated by the wars. Donat Cruoly, "crossed rivers, walked barefoot, and made dangerous journeys in the midst of the troops."

Having been notified one day that the soldiers had just robbed some poor people of their cattle—their only resource—he went after the thieves, met up with them in a wooded area, and succeeded in making them give back the stolen goods, which he himself returned to their rightful owners.

1497a. - TO THE COMTE D'ARGENSON, AMBASSADOR OF FRANCE, IN VENICE

Paris, May 10, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter with all the respect and gratitude which I


1Donat Cruoly (Donat Crowley), born in Cork (Ireland) on July 24, 1623, entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 9, 1643, took his vows in November 1645, and was ordained a priest in 1650. He was among the group of Missionaries sent to Picardy in 1651 for the relief of the people reduced to destitution by the war. Saint Vincent afterward appointed him Director of Students and theology professor at Saint-Lazare (1653-54) and sent him next to Le Mans as Superior. In 1657 he returned to Saint-Lazare to teach moral theology. Later he filled the office of Superior in Richelieu (1660-61), Saint-Charles (1662-64), Montauban (1664-65), Agen (1665-66), and Saint-Brieuc (1667-70). Sent to Le Mans in 1676, he was Superior there (1687-90). There is no trace of him after 1690.

Letter 1497a. - Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, Correspondance de Venise, vol. 84, f° 200, original signed letter. Only the postscript is in the Saint's handwriting. The text was published in Annales C. M. (1927), pp. 236-37, and reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, no. 71, pp. 92-93. This edition uses the latter text.

1Marc-René de Voyer d'Argenson (1623-1700). When his father, René, resigned as French Ambassador to Venice to become a priest in 1651, Marc-René succeeded him (1651-55). From 1655 to his death he lived in retirement, occupied with good works and the writing of devotional works. An active and influential member of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, he is the
owe to the honor of your memory. I am unworthy of the gratitude you offer me because it is undeserved and also because of my obligation to be of service to you, which I would like to do, Monsieur, in a matter of greater importance. May God grant me the opportunities to do so!

In the meantime, I thank Him for the fact that you have been received with great honor by the Venetians and for the graces He has granted you—from what I have heard—of placing you in high-standing among them.

I ask Him to bless your leadership and your house more and more. And since I am too insignificant to hope for the happiness of being able to do anything else for you or for your house, I shall at least continue to offer you frequently and lovingly to Our Lord, and my ardent wish is to render you my obedience. I beg you most humbly, Monsieur, to accept the offers I make of it to you.

I am, in life and in death, in the love of this same Lord, Monsieur, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

If I could put my heart into this letter, along with its desire to be of service to you, it would be a joy for me to do so.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur d'Argenson
Mademoiselle,

I cannot thank you humbly and affectionately enough, Mademoiselle, for your charitable and incomparable concern for us. I ask Our Lord Jesus Christ to be Himself your thanks and your reward.

Yesterday we had a little disturbance in this faubourg. We trust that Our Lord and His good servants, like good Monsieur de Lamoignon and you, will protect us in future, as you did three years ago and have done up to now. I assure you, Mademoiselle, that it is a sweet consolation for me to think it will be so.

Letter 1498. - Revue des Questions historiques, new series (1907), vol. XXXVII, p. 222, copy of the original autograph letter made available to Coste by the Comte de Ségur-Lamoignon and conserved at the château of Méry-sur-Oise (Val-d'Oise). The present location of the original is unknown.

An account of the skirmish is given in “Extrait du livre des choses mémorables de l'abbaye de Saint-Denis en France pour l'année 1649 et suivantes” [excerpt from the diary of the Abbey of Saint-Denis for 1649 and subsequent years], found at the end of vol. III of Registres de l'hôtel de ville de Paris pendant la Fronde, edited by Adrien Le Roux de Lincy and Louis-Claude Douet d'Arcq (3 vols., Paris, 1847).

After a brilliant victory before the gates of Étampes, the royal army, commanded by Turenne, had advanced to Étampes and Palaiseau and occupied Saint-Denis. Paris was in turmoil. Hearing that the royal army was trying to take the Saint-Cloud bridge, Condé, the leader of the Frondeurs, left Paris at the head of 10,000 soldiers. Repulsed, he moved on Saint-Denis, seized it, and took 300 prisoners. On the eleventh, the Frondeurs were in turn driven from Saint-Denis. A number of Condé’s troops barricaded themselves within the Abbey, and held out until the thirteenth. François de Bourbon, Duc de Beaufort, hurried to their assistance with a few squadrons of cavalry and some infantry. By a rapid and skillful maneuver Saint-Mégrin turned their flank and cut off the escape route to Paris. Caught in a cross fire, the frondeurs dispersed in all directions. “They were slaughtered like sheep,” says the author of the “Extrait” (p. 374). He goes on to say: “It was truly a spectacle deserving of compassion to behold the number of corpses that lay on the highway and in the fields, from the town of Saint-Denis right up to Paris. Seven lay up against the door of the La Chapelle church; these poor wretches had thought they would find asylum in that holy place, but they were all slaughtered unmercifully, trumpets proclaiming, at the officers’ commands, that no one should be spared.” The victors lost only fifteen or twenty men on the battlefield.

Guillaume de Lamoignon (1617-77), brother of Mademoiselle de Lamoignon. On October 2, 1658 he was named Chief Judge of the Parlement of Paris.

In writing to M. Portail from Villepreux on January 22, 1649 (cf. vol. III, no. 1087, n. 4),
Thank you again for your offers of housing and for the arrangements you made to put the poor foundlings in safer surroundings. The fierce fighting taking place right before the eyes of the wet nurses, and the men they saw killed in front of their house, so terrified them that they all ran off with the girls, each with her infant, and left the other children asleep in bed.

I am consoled by the good news you give me and for the reason we have to hope for peace. I praise God that you have acted so much in conformity with what you were advised. I can assure you, Mademoiselle, that you will find grace and glory in this, and nothing but anxiety in acting otherwise.

In the meantime, I send most humble greetings to good Monsieur de Lamoignon, and I ask you to help us to thank him for all his kindness. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Mademoiselle, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.a.C.M.

1499. - TO MADAME DU SAULT, WIFE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 15, 1652

Madame,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Saint Vincent was unaware that six hundred soldiers, quartered at Saint-Lazare, had pillaged and sacked the house, sold part of the corn, and burned the firewood (cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. I, ch. XXXIX, p. 182; Collet, op. cit., vol. I, p. 471). When the city fathers heard of this, orders were given to Colonel de Lamoignon that, until further notice, he was to send soldiers every day to Saint Lazare for its “safety and preservation” (cf. de Lincy and d’Arog, op. cit., vol. I, p. 204).

Mademoiselle de Lamoignon was being strongly urged by various persons to accept a marriage proposal. She preferred to serve God free of any ties. Might this be the resolution praised by Saint Vincent?

I received your welcome letter with all due respect and with profound gratitude for the honor you paid me of remembering me. I feel equally embarrassed, however, because I am so unworthy of all this by my birth and my inefficiency in serving you. This was clearly manifest in the matter of the charges brought by M. du Sault, your son. Although I could not petition on his behalf, I spoke, nevertheless, to one of his judges, who had come to this house to make his retreat. From his knowledge of the affair, however, he gave me reason to fear that things would turn out as they actually did, which I greatly regretted.

God knows, Madame, how consoled I would be to have a better opportunity to use my influence for him. Yet, I dare not hope for any whereby I might procure for him, either by my entreaties or my personal credibility, the benefit you desire. I have not seen the Queen for six or seven months now because of her absences. If God does not soon give us peace, I shall not be in a position to see her for a long time to come. We are in a very difficult situation; the storm that broke over Guyenne has now burst in Paris.

I think you are quite well informed of the present state of affairs, but only God knows the outcome. In all probability, I have good reason to fear that my sins make me unworthy of serving you and the Baron effectively. Still, you can rely on my obedience in whatever way I can prove to you that I am, in the love of Our Lord, Madame, your....

1500. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[May or July 1652]

Most Honored Father,

This alarm \(^1\) has really given us all a fright. Several of our Sisters would

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Letter 1500. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^1\)Since this letter is undated, we do not know whether Saint Louise is referring to the battle
really like to go to confession today, and I fear we cannot get a priest from Saint-Laurent. If that is the case, please do us the kindness of giving us someone for after dinner.

I do not think we can go to buy wheat, since there is none in the neighboring villages, and there would be great danger of losing the money, if we went farther away. I informed Mademoiselle de Lamoignon of this, and she told me the same thing she told your charity about it. I also told her that you felt yesterday that we should get some at La Grève and that the leaders of the city were ready to have it brought by some constables, whom we would pay for their trouble. I do not think there is any other way to keep these poor little children from starving to death.

Most of the people are leaving this faubourg and stripping their homes; should we not follow their example? This, however, would be a major undertaking for us. If there were something to fear for our young Sisters, we could send them here or there to various parishes and, if we could, send them some food. As for me, I feel as if I am awaiting death and cannot prevent my heart from jumping every time there is a call to arms. It seems to me that Paris is abandoning this faubourg, but I hope that God will not abandon it and that His Goodness will be merciful to us. We trust that your charity is asking this of Him for us, and we, with all our heart, ask for His blessing. I am, Most Honored Father, your most humble and very grateful daughter and servant.

L. de Marillac

I am afraid that the man from Bicêtre could not get through. What shall we do about Sister Geneviève, who is really needed there to protect our poor Sisters? Will your charity please let us know?

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

of May 13, 1652 or the passage of the front deurs near the Saint-Lazare enclosure on the evening of July 1. Coste made no determination; Sister Élisabeth Charpy, D.C., editor of Écrits spirituels (L. 348, p. 396), opted for July 1.

2The Hôtel de Ville (City Hall) was situated on the Place de Grève.
3The City Magistrates of Paris.
4Geneviève Poisson, who directed the foundling home in Bicêtre.
I think, Mademoiselle, that there is no danger in sending Brother Mathieu to make the rounds in those villages. Let him take only twenty écus to buy three or four setiers of wheat. Apparently M. de Lamoignon foresees great difficulty getting any from Paris; they have no control over the people.

Geneviève will do well to go back. Things in that area are not so turbulent as they are around here.

There will be no inconvenience in sending your Daughters—the most timid ones—to the parishes. I am not convinced that the danger is as great as it is made out to be or that the faubourg will be taken by force. I think better order will be imposed than has been done up to now, although it seems greater than I thought. What Our Lord guards is well guarded; it is only right that we entrust ourselves to His adorable Providence. Alas! Who has ever been mistaken in this? If I am able to do so and you can come to the parlor presently, we shall see if there is anything else that can be done.

Letter 1501. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This letter is a reply to no. 1500 and was written shortly after it.
2Brother Mathieu Reignard was born on July 26, 1592 in Brienne-le-Château, now Brienne-Napoléon (Aube). He entered the Congregation of the Mission in October 1631, took vows on October 28, 1644, and died October 5, 1669. He was the principal distributor of Saint Vincent’s alms in Lorraine and also during the troubles of the Fronde. Because of his daring, composure, and savoir-faire, he was a great help to the Saint. His biography is in vol. II of Notices, pp. 29-33.
3An obsolete measure for grain. One setier equals about thirty-seven hectoliters; one hectoliter equals about 2.84 bushels.
4In June the militia guards at the gates of Paris stopped a cart of provisions, which Saint Vincent was sending to Palaiseau. The safe conduct written by Saint Vincent is found in vol. XIII, no. 108.
5Sister Geneviève Poisson.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

When I wrote you that I was disappointed at the brevity of one of your letters, which was only half a page long, it was only to express how consoled I am to read them, and not to oblige you to write me longer ones. So, please do not go to that trouble, unless the things you have to tell me are worth it.

I praise God that you are enjoying the gentle, amiable presence of the Archbishop of Vilna. We shall ask God to preserve him for a long time for His Church and to continue to bless his leadership.

I am not surprised that the affair of the little church built for the Germans was not a success. I always suspected that the people involved would raise some objections to it unless they were much better than we are in France. It seems to me that there is no dwelling place comparable to the one to which you aspire—that of peace and quiet—while awaiting the adorable orders of Divine Providence. I pray that God will establish you in it for all eternity.

The Cardinal of Paris has been inflexible up until now regarding the Queen’s wishes and our requests, and I was told that he wrote a long letter to Mademoiselle de Lamoignon giving the reasons for his refusal. True, the blockade of Paris, the agitation of the people, the riots in the city, the capture and recapture of Saint-Denis, and some fighting that occurred between La Chapelle and us have preoccupied us so much that we have not been able to take strong action with regard to this good Prelate. We shall be able to do so now that we are beginning to look forward to a little calm.

Letter 1502. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.

1Jean-François de Gondi.
2For authorization to send the Visitation nuns to Poland.
M. Berthe told me that M. Cruoly will do very well in the post for which the Queen in her goodness asked us for a priest, so we shall prepare him for the journey.

There are no Daughters of Charity who come from Germany. There was a Flemish girl, but she is no longer with them and would not have been suitable.

I am going to send you a copy of our Bull, more authentic than the one you have, and, if possible, everything else you requested.

When I saw the letters Zelazewski wrote to me as well as to other persons, I thought he was more determined than he is to remain in the Company. If God permits him to leave, as seems likely, we shall adore His ways willingly and submissively.

Our news is that the Company is in the same state and that the Coadjutor of Montauban has put us in possession of a chapel for pilgrims in that diocese. This is being done with the idea of establishing the Company there, according to the intention of the last possessor, who has just died. He had resigned it in the Roman Court and it was received under the name of M. Bajoue, to whom the last possessor and the said Bishop had spoken about that affair. He is now asking me for three or four priests for that place.

I send greetings to your dear family, and my heart embraces yours in a warm and respectful manner, knowing that it belongs entirely to God. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert

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3The Bull of Erection of the Company (cf. vol. XIII, no. 81).
4Pierre de Bertier.
5Notre-Dame de Lorm.
6The words from "to whom the last possessor" are in the Saint's handwriting.
7The foundation was accepted, and the Priests of the Mission were able to take over the new establishment in the course of the year.
1503. - A DAUGHTER OF CHARITY 1 TO SAINT VINCENT

[Between 1639 and 1660] 2

Monsieur,

We are overwhelmed with work and will give way beneath it if we do not get some help. I am obliged to pen these few lines to you at night, on duty with our patients, because there is no respite during the day. Even while I am writing to you, I have to exhort two of the sick, who are dying. First I go to one and say: "Friend, raise your heart to God and ask Him to have mercy on you." After that, I come back and write one or two lines. Then I run to the other and say: "Jesus! Mary! My God, I hope in You." Then I return to my letter again. So I come and go, writing to you in stages with my mind going in different directions. That is why I most humbly entreat you to send us another Sister.


1This letter has been attributed to Sister Nicole Haran, based on the contents of a letter from Saint Vincent to her dated January 16, 1658 (vol. VII, no. 2512), which seems to be a reply to the first-mentioned letter. Cf. La Compagnie des Filles de la Charité aux Origines—Documents (Tours: Marne 1989), ed. Sister Elisabeth Charpy, D.C., ed., Doc. no. 711, p. 813.

2The letter could only have been written after the Daughters of Charity were established at the Angers hospital (1639) because it was the first hospital outside of Paris in which they ministered.

1504. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION 1

May 21, 1652

I have no trouble believing that you are still attached to our Company and its works; your past behavior has convinced me only too well of this. I also respect the opinion of the monk who told you that it would be a temptation if, because of your difficulties in prayer, you stopped being a Missionary, for it is true that in every...


1This priest, received at Saint-Lazare, had returned home before completing his Internal Seminary because "of a tightness around his head." He was now asking to return to the Company.
Community there are many persons—often the best—who cannot apply themselves to meditation, where the imagination or reasoning play a part, because that hinders them. But the blessed Bishop of Geneva taught his nuns another kind of prayer, which even the sick can make: to remain peacefully in the presence of God, manifesting our needs to Him with no other mental effort, like a poor person who uncovers his sores and by this means is more effective in inciting passers-by to do him some good than if he wore himself out trying to convince them of his need.

So, we pray well when we remain in this way in the presence of God, with no exertion of the understanding or will. Therefore, you will do well to listen to God in the urge you feel to return to us. I would simply like to know how you are doing with preaching, teaching catechism, and hearing confessions, especially since it is a good sign if you are not upset by them.

Please ask God, Monsieur, to make known to you what He wants of you. Begin some special devotion for this purpose, and try to place yourself in the greatest possible indifference so as to be more ready to follow His attraction and His Will in such an important matter. Then, after the feast of Our Lady next August, let me know your dispositions so that we can reflect on whether it is advisable for you and for the Company for you to come back to it.

1505. - TO PHILIPPE VAGEOT,† SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

Paris, May 22, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
Your letter of April 24 has given me fresh reasons for thanking

†Philippe Vageot, born in Bellegarde (Ain), entered the Congregation of the Mission as a
God for all the graces He grants you. I do so with deep sentiments of gratitude in the hope that He will continue to protect you. I often ask this of Him and I have the Company do the same. I have also shared with them the favours with which He has blessed your leadership. I thank Him, too, because, despite the misfortunes of the time, He has seen to it that you have received some money and gives you hope of getting more soon.

We must admit that the Bishop of La Rochelle is very good to us, and his goodness resembles that of God who, once He begins to do good for someone, continues to do so unceasingly. When I have the opportunity of doing myself the honor of writing to him, I shall thank him for his kindnesses to you at every turn.

God has been pleased to take to Himself good M. Rivet's father. Before breaking the news to him, please prepare him to receive it well. One thing that should console him, in addition to his good life—because he was a very fine man and consequently, is now blessed, as we have good reason to believe—is that he is now beyond the sufferings of this world. He had his share of them before he died, both with regard to material goods and to his own poor health.

We have more troubles here than ever. Paris is swarming with poor persons because the armies have forced the poor country folk to seek refuge here. Meetings are held daily to see how they can be helped. A few houses have been rented in the faubourgs, where some of them have been housed, particularly, poor girls. We

cleric on May 3, 1645, at twenty-three years of age, and took his vows on October 12, 1647. In September 1648 he was ordained a priest and placed in the house in Saintes shortly after his ordination. He was Superior there from 1651 to 1655, the year he left the Company.

Jacques Raoul de la Guillouque.

Louis Rivet was born in Houdain (Yvelines) on February 19, 1618; he entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 13, 1640, took his vows on October 16, 1642, and was ordained a priest on September 19, 1643. He was placed in Richelieu in 1646, then at the Saintes Seminary, which he directed for several years (1648-50, 1656-62, 1665-73).

Among the father's blessings was his family, well represented in the Vincentian family: his widow entered the Daughters of Charity, and three sons—Francois, Jacques, and Louis—were members of the Congregation of the Mission.
continue to assist the border areas of Champagne and Picardy, and we still have ten or twelve men there.

We have nothing else noteworthy to write you. The Company is going along as usual, thank God, as far as health and the retreats are concerned. The foundation in Poland is doing better and better; they are asking for Daughters of Charity and for another one of our priests to distribute the Queen’s alms in a devastated province.

I am in a hurry and cannot tell you anything else. I warmly embrace good M. Rivet and you, Monsieur, and I am, in O[ur] L[ord], your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Vageot

1506. - TO ACHILLE LE VAZEUX, IN ROME

June 1652

Concerning what you tell me about the intrigues being used at present to settle affairs, and that they are even being used against us, let us ask God to preserve us from this spirit. Since we criticize it in others, it is all the more reasonable to avoid it ourselves as a fault against Divine Providence, which makes those who commit it unworthy of the care God takes of all things. Let us establish ourselves in total dependence on God, trusting that, in so doing, whatever men say or do against us will turn to the good. Yes, Monsieur, and even if the whole world should rise up to destroy us, nothing will happen except what God, in whom we have put our hope, will allow.

I ask you to enter into these sentiments and to abide so firmly
in them that you will never again be preoccupied with these useless
fears. Know for certain that those very intrigues by which others
might try to harm us in order to succeed in their own establishments
will be used by God to defend us. As for me, I ask pardon of His
Goodness if up to now I have listened to the things you have written
me on this subject and for any answers I may have given you which
did not tend absolutely to that abandonment to God which we
should have. I ask Him to grant us in future the grace of neither
fearing nor desiring anything but Him alone, in whom I am,  
Monsieur, your... 

1507. - TO MONSIEUR MAURISSE

June 8, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!

I received your letter[1] with the respect and gratitude I owe to
your incomparable goodness in thinking of us for the two priories
of Saintes, and I thank you most humbly for this. I shall have the
honor also of thanking the Bishop of Alet[2] for supporting you in
this idea, even though we are most unworthy of such a favor.

I have received your second proposal in the same spirit, Mon­
sieur, but accepting it will certainly be very difficult for me,
considering our insignificance and such a great good. Nevertheless,
since you felt that this was God’s plan, we must respect your
opinion and submit to His guidance so as not to divert us from the
order of His Providence. Consequently, Monsieur, we will do as

Letter 1507. - Reg. 1, p. 29 v.

[1]This letter, in which Maurisse had offered two priories in Saintes to Saint Vincent, is no
longer extant.

you wish regarding both the matter itself and the conditions, knowing that you will not propose any that are not according to God.

The state of public affairs makes access to this city so difficult that we must dissuade you from coming too soon. This will perhaps give you the opportunity of going to Saintes to explain this affair to the Bishop.³ I strongly hope that everything will be done in agreement with him and in whatever way he thinks fit. In case you may want to confide in M. Vageot, Superior of the seminary, he will keep your secret faithfully, as I shall also do. I will not say or write anything about this to anyone, except to ask M. Vageot, in the event you discuss a matter of such importance with him, to honor the silence of O[ur] L[ord] and to leave to you the entire negotiation of this agreement with the Bishop and him. If it succeeds, fine; we will have you as a father and benefactor and will ask God to impute to you the merit of this good work, if He is pleased to draw some service from it. But even if it should not succeed, the Company will not on that account consider itself free of our debt of gratitude for your good will, which will be expressed by our prayers and services. I, in particular, Monsieur, offer you my obedience with all possible humility and affection, and I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your . . .

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

1508. - TO A COADJUTOR BROTHER OF THE RICHELIEU HOUSE

June 12, 1652

I was very pleased to get your letter because I truly love you

³Louis de Bassompierre.
Letter 1508. - Reg. 2, p. 322.
tenderly. I am very sorry, however, about what happened to good M. [Escart], whom you have good reason to esteem highly for the qualities you pointed out to me. Nevertheless, dear Brother, you should remain calm, when you see him treated as he is. Virtue does not prevent the mind from being able to deviate and, if the weakness of his mind has not been apparent to you, it does not follow that others have not noticed it. Take my word for this; you can be at peace on that point.

It is not the first time he has fallen into this state. Once before, we had to have him brought back from Savoy for a similar reason. Now I am sure that people were right in acting as they did in his regard because, besides what was written to me about him, I see his eccentricity in his own letters, and if you had seen just one of them, it would suffice to remove your difficulty. This should not surprise us; God permits this infirmity to humble him. There are no Communities where similar things do not occur.

Furthermore, dear Brother, you should take as a maxim always to consider that Superiors do the best they can, do nothing of any importance without reflection and advice, and that it is not the place of Brothers to criticize their conduct. Otherwise, they would have as many supervisors as subjects.

I repeat that your letter brought me great joy, but I must recommend to you not to dwell again on what seems to you poor management by the officers of the house, especially by the head of the family, who is a wise man and a good servant of God. If you

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1Letter no. 2813 (cf. vol. VII) gives an indication that Saint Vincent probably refers here to Pierre Escart, born in the canton of Valais (Switzerland) in 1612, entered the Congregation of the Mission on March 6, 1637, and was ordained a priest the following year. He was stationed in Annecy and later sent to Richelieu. At the beginning of his stay in Annecy, he made a good impression on Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, who said of him, "M. Escart is a saint." He was indeed virtuous, zealous, and very austere, and would have continued to please Saint Jane Frances if he had known how to moderate his zeal, to be more tolerant with the defects of others, and to judge his conferees, especially Superiors, with greater faiirmindedness. His temperament carried him to extremes, and in a fit of passion he killed one of his friends. He went to Rome to seek absolution for this murder and died there tragically some time before 1659.

2Mental illness.
have seen him act hastily and firmly at times, remember that Our Lord did not always treat His disciples gently. He said some very hard words to them, even to calling Saint Peter “Satan,” and this, apparently, for a small matter. Once or twice He also used whips against persons who were profaning the temple to show those responsible for others that it is not always good to spare them too much.

I do not mean, however, that Brothers in the Company should not be allowed to write to the General to inform him of serious faults they may notice in those who direct them, but that refers to moral faults and not those pertaining to government, for which Superiors have insights which others do not have, and particular reasons, unknown to their subjects, for doing and not doing things.

It will always be a consolation to me, dear Brother, to know that you are growing from virtue to virtue.

1509. - TO JEAN DEHORGNY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

June 13, 1652

What you tell me about the missions you give demands of us special gratitude to God, and I thank Him for it from the depths of my soul. Let us ask Him, Monsieur, to be glorified more and more by the labors of the Company. Believe me—I cannot stop saying it—let us confine ourselves invariably to our principal works. God will be on our side and, to the extent that we are faithful to them, He will bless us. I shall never deviate from this opinion.

I just left an important meeting, presided over by the Arch-

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3 Cf. Mk 8:33. (NAB)
4 Cf. Mt 21:12-13. (NAB)

1 The first fragment ends here.
2 A plenary assembly of the Ladies of Charity, and not a meeting of the members of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, as Father Charles Clair believed (cf. “La Compagnie du
bishop-elect of Reims, where I spoke about you. It was held to discuss the poor country people who have taken refuge in Paris. Their number is very great and so are their needs. We have started assisting them corporally, and I volunteered to have missions given to them, in line with the maxim which states that we should take our good wherever we find it. We are obliged to go and serve them in the rural areas, when they are there. They are our portion, and now that they are coming to us, driven out by the hardships of war, which is emptying the countryside, it seems that we are more obliged to work for their salvation in their present affliction in the place where they are now, subject, of course, to the good pleasure of the Archbishop.

As for the objection people might raise to me that we do not give missions in episcopal cities, I have replied that the submission we owe to the bishops does not allow us to dispense ourselves from such missions when they instruct us to do so, and that you yourself have just finished one in Terni, where Cardinal Rappaccioli had ordered you to work. Consequently, we could do the same here on the orders of the Archbishop of Paris, especially since it will be only for those poor afflicted persons who have taken refuge here.

As for the bishop who gives you reason to believe that he has plans unfavorable to our Company, and your fear regarding M. de Ventadour's proceedings, let me tell you once and for all that we belong to God and should wish that others do the same, and that we are insignificant workers in His Church, who should rejoice when He calls to it better persons than we. Quis tribuat ut omnis
populus prophetet et det eis Dominus spiritum suum? If those who present themselves have the Spirit of God, what have we to fear? And if they do not, what can they do as long as we proceed in an upright manner? All our trust must be in God and, since we are established principally on this virtue, we must rest assured that nothing will happen to us that God does not allow. I am as averse to these precautions concerning the plans of others as I am careful to avoid the intrigues to which people resort in the world today. In the name of God, Monsieur, let us beware of both of these.

I do not know if the Jesuit Fathers are acting against us. I would like to think they are not, but, in any case, let others do what they please; as for us, let us hold fast to God. Persecution changes into something good when it is accepted well, and happy are those who suffer for justice' sake.8

7Who may grant that all the people might prophesy and that the Lord give them His Spirit?
Cf. Nm 11:29. (NAB)
8Cf. Mt 5:10. (NAB)
Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!

I have been greatly consoled to learn from your letter that you arrived safely in Rome with those good priests who are with you. I thank God for this and beg Him to keep you in perfect health. I also ask you and them, Monsieur, to do whatever depends on your own care for this purpose, since it is a question of God's interests to preserve three of His best servants engaged in the negotiations of an extremely important affair. Please do not be in a hurry, and do not go out in the heat of the day. It will be most pleasing to O[ur] L[ord] if you husband your strength in order to serve Him better. We here will try to help you as much as we can by our prayers and modest efforts. In addition, the Court is already being petitioned for other letters so we can send them to you.

Letter 1510. - Reg. 1, f° 50 v°, copy made from the unsigned rough draft.

1François Hallier, born in Chartres (Eure-et-Loir) in 1595, was Officialis of his native diocese, then Doctor of the Sorbonne, chairman of the theology faculty (1645), and Bishop of Cavaillon (1657). He wrote several works of philosophy and theology in Latin. Hallier died on July 23, 1659.

2Jérôme Lagault, born in Paris, was a Doctor of the Sorbonne; he died in Switzerland in October 1653, on his way home from Rome.

3In a letter from Rome, Pierre Colombet, Pastor of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, had read: "Those braggarts, the Molinists, who made so much noise in Paris, dare not appear in Rome." This determined him to accept the challenge: with one thousand écus collected from his parish he went to François Hallier, the man he judged best fitted to win a victory. The letter, accompanied by Lagault and by François Joyas, also a Doctor of the Sorbonne, arrived in Rome on May 24, 1652 to try to thwart the influence of those working at the Roman Court to prevent the condemnation of Jansenism. In the audience granted them, the Pope manifested great benevolence. When the Bull Cam Occasione of May 31, 1653, censuring the Five Propositions taken from Jansenius' Augustinus was issued, they tried to mitigate the consequences.

4Although this letter is directed to both Hallier and Lagault, Saint Vincent uses the singular, "Monsieur," throughout, as he does also in no. 1517.

5Saint Vincent assisted the three Doctors with money, advice, and his influence; he also gave orders to his priests in Rome to do everything in their power for them (cf. Collet, op. cit., vol. I, p. 546).

6The Queen had given them letters of introduction to the French Ambassador in Rome. He
Very little is being said now about these questions; perhaps this is because the unrest of the war is occupying people's minds and the misfortunes of the times are beginning to make themselves felt. However, a minor incident has occurred causing these matters to be brought forward again. Those people have had a printed letter circulated entitled *A Letter from a Bishop to a Priest*. They sent copies to several persons, including me, but it was discovered that this was not their own creation but rather a letter of Saint Prosper, which they translated and adapted in their own way.

I am sure you have been kept informed about everything. Regarding the solemn translation of the relics of Saint Geneviève and the public processions which took place to ask God to put an end to the sufferings of the people, through the intercession of this saint, I shall just tell you that never has a larger crowd of persons nor a greater manifestation of devotion been seen in Paris.\(^7\) As a result, before the eighth day the Duc de Lorraine,\(^8\) who had his army before the gates of Paris and who himself was in the city, decamped and went back to his own region, taking this decision at the moment when the King's army was about to swoop down upon his own army.

Since that time also, negotiations for peace have continued with the Princes,\(^9\) and we hope from the goodness of God that peace will

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\(^7\)The Archbishop of Paris had ordered special processions; the closing one, in honor of Saint Geneviève, the patroness of Paris, took place on June 11. Her relics were carried with great solemnity from her church to Notre-Dame, amidst throngs of the faithful. The Princes and the court nobility were present, as well as the members of Parlement in their scarlet robes and other civic bodies in their ceremonial garb. A detailed account is given in *Registres de l'hôtel de ville de Paris pendant la Fronde* (vol. II, pp. 370-77).

\(^8\)Charles, Duc de Lorraine, had entered Paris on June 2, and on June 6 began negotiations with the King. He promised to leave the kingdom within five days, provided the King raised the siege of Étampes on the tenth, if that city was still holding out. The King was also to withdraw the royal army about ten miles from its walls. Charles kept his word and left Paris, but he plundered everything that lay in his path.

\(^9\)The very day the Duc de Lorraine left Paris, the deputies of the Parlement received assurances from the Court that, if the Princes promised to disarm, to induce their followers to submit, to
come about, especially since people are striving to appease His justice by the great good being done at present in Paris for the bashful poor and the poor country people who have taken refuge there. Soup is distributed daily to fourteen or fifteen thousand persons, who would die of hunger without this assistance.

In addition, about eight to nine hundred girls have been placed in private homes, and all the refugee nuns living in the city—some of them in questionable places, so it is said—will be housed in a monastery prepared for this purpose. They will be under the care of the Daughters of Sainte-Marie.¹¹

That, Monsieur, is quite a bit of news, contrary to our little maxim of not writing any, but who could refrain from publicizing the greatness of God and His mercy? It is in Him that I am, Monsieur, your....

1511. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

Paris, June 21, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Yesterday I received your letter of May 20 and, a few days earlier, the one dated May 6—which I should have received two weeks ago—was brought to me. I do not know where it came from

break off relations with foreign powers, and to give solid guarantees of the sincerity of their promises, the Cardinal would be allowed to leave and would be provided with a post farther away, after justice had been done and his honor vindicated. The negotiations fell through.

¹°Mère Angélique Arnauld, in one of her letters (Lettres [3 vols., Utrecht, 1742-44], vol. II, p. 139), writes that persons lay in wait at the city gates for young girls forced by famine to take refuge in Paris, and tried to lead them astray or to trade on their youth and beauty. Pastors and other charitable persons gathered these poor creatures into municipal buildings, where they were supplied with food for both body and soul. The girls were able to earn some money by working, which had the twofold advantage of preserving them from the dangers of idleness and of providing them with some means for their return home.

¹¹Visititation nun. (Cf. Annales de la Compagnie du Saint-Sacrement, p. 127.)

Letter 1511. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.
because the Franciscan Father\textsuperscript{1} and Madame des Essarts had sent me word that they had not received anything for me. It contains nothing special, so I only have to answer your last one, which deals with two main points: the first, concerning the Daughters of Sainte-Marie, and the second, concerning your establishment.

You say you cannot understand why the Archbishop of Paris is preventing these Sisters from going to Poland, and you want me to tell you something so you can inform the Queen, who is distressed about this. I will tell you, then, Monsieur, that M. de Morangis,\textsuperscript{2} who enjoys the confidence of the Archbishop to a certain extent and who used his influence with the latter to try to make him relent, told me that he \[the Archbishop\] gave him two reasons why he was unwilling to give his consent to this establishment: (1) the Queen did not go to him first about it, and (2) he is annoyed with those nuns because they handled this business without discussing it with him, and for another reason which I cannot tell you, but I can assure you that it was not their fault. In the eyes of God, however, the matter is of such a nature that he cannot give an explanation for it.\textsuperscript{3}

Please note that he \[the Archbishop\] has never before interfered in any of their establishments, and they have always proceeded as they tried to do in this one, without any fault being found.

That, then, is the basis for his refusal. I strongly doubt that he will change his mind, unless the Queen writes him a cordial letter in French which may satisfy him. Even if she should do so, I still doubt that he will give in.\textsuperscript{4} Do not hesitate, however, to use this means, if Her Majesty chooses to do him this honor. Besides all that, I still fear the opposition of the Sisters’ relatives, when the time comes to take action. But I must tell you, Monsieur, that in all these difficulties those nuns are in no way at fault. They would

\textsuperscript{1}François Berthod, Chargé d’Affaires for Poland in Paris.
\textsuperscript{2}Antoine Barillon, Sieur de Morangis, Master of Requests.
\textsuperscript{3}These words, from “I can assure you,” are in the Saint’s handwriting.
\textsuperscript{4}Jean-François de Gondi persisted in his refusal. The Visitation nuns who finally went to Poland were chosen from monasteries in dioceses other than Paris.
willingly undertake this good work for the glory of God, the consolation of the Queen, and the honor of their holy Institute, if they were not prevented from doing so.

Regarding the second point of your letter, which speaks of the objection being made to permitting your establishment, I adore in that the guidance of God, without whose orders nothing is done. We shall do better to see His good pleasure in all the obstacles we may encounter rather than to impute them to anyone. Even if it were true that those persons mentioned to you might be envious of us and do the worst they could against us, I would still do all in my power to esteem, love, and serve them either here or elsewhere. Nevertheless, I am enclosing an authenticated copy of our Bull certified by the Officialis of Paris and the Nuncio. I am waiting for a letter from the latter for the Nuncio to Poland, containing a recommendation and a testimonial on behalf of the Company so that the Nuncio to Poland might consent to present them to the Bishop of Poznan in place of the testimonial letter he requested of you from the Archbishop of Paris, from whom I dared not ask it. I hope, by God’s goodness and the power of truth, that it will suffice and that you will soon make your foundation.

We will give a warm welcome to that good priest from the household of the Nuncio of Poland and will put him up at the Bons-Enfants, as you have led him to hope.

Our little news is still the same. We are unable to go and give missions in the rural areas because the poor people are so scattered—some here; some there, driven from their homes by fear of being mistreated by the soldiers—so we have decided to give them to the people who have taken refuge in Paris. We began today in our own church, with eight hundred of those poor persons living in these faubourgs, and we will go to the others next. One of our

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3The Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission. (Cf. vol. XIII, no. 81.)
4André du Saussay.
5Niccolò di Bagno.
6Florian Kazimierz Czartoryski (1650-54).
men has also gone to open the mission for the refugees at Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet, and we shall go to hear confessions in the same church.

We have had some hopes for peace in the past few days since the Duc de Lorraine departed to leave the kingdom with his army, which came right up to our gates, and he even entered the city. He made his peace just as the King’s army was going to join battle with him near Charenton. He preferred to come to terms rather than risk fighting, so this poor country has been relieved of a troublesome burden.

It is devoutly believed that this is the result of the intercession of the saints, especially Saint Geneviève, and of the processions that took place in a very orderly fashion, with as much external devotion as I have ever seen. It may also be due to the good works being done in Paris amidst the present tribulations, of which the principal ones are: (1) the daily distribution of soup to nearly fifteen thousand poor persons, both the bashful poor and the refugees; (2) about eight hundred refugee girls have been placed in private houses, where they are taken care of and instructed. You can imagine how much harm would have been done if they had been left wandering around. We have a hundred of them in one house in the faubourg Saint-Denis; (3) we are going to rescue from the same danger the nuns from the country, whom the armies have thrown into Paris. Some are on the streets, some are living in questionable places, and others are staying with relatives. Since, however, they are all in a state of dissipation and danger, it was felt that enclosing them in a monastery, under the care of the Daughters of Sainte-Marie, would be a service most pleasing to God; lastly, people are sending here to us poor pastors, curates, and other priests from rural areas who have left their parishes to flee to this city. We are getting some every day; they will be fed and will be formed in the things they should know and practice.⁹

So, this is how God chooses to have us participate in so many holy projects. The poor Daughters of Charity are more involved than we in the corporal assistance of the poor. They prepare and distribute the soup daily for thirteen hundred bashful poor at the home of Mademoiselle Le Gras, and for eight hundred refugees in the faubourg Saint-Denis. In Saint-Paul parish alone four or five Sisters make the distribution to five thousand poor persons, in addition to the sixty to eighty patients they have on their hands. Other Sisters are doing the same elsewhere.

Please pray for them and for us, as we always do for the success of your holy intentions, the sanctification of your souls and your leadership, and for the personal preservation of all of you. I tenderly embrace you and those whom the good God has entrusted to you.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
_i.s.C.M._

Enclosed are two letters from the Nuncio. I think M. du Chesne will tell you why there are two.

1512. - TO THE SISTERS OF VALPUISEAUX

Paris, June 23, 1652

My good Sisters,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
Blessed be God that you are finally back home again\(^1\) and for

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\(^{10}\)In another letter on this subject (no. 1512), Saint Vincent gives this number as eight thousand.

Letter 1512. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original signed letter.

\(^{1}\)The village of Valpuiseaux, near Étampes, had suffered greatly from acts of banditry and
keeping you safe in the midst of so many trials and dangers! I thank Him for this with all my heart. I was very happy to have news of you but equally sorry to hear that you have been ill. Nevertheless, I submit to the good pleasure of God, who will draw His glory from your sickness, as He has done from your good health, which I hope He will soon restore to you by His grace and by the change of air. I cannot tell you how grateful I am for your protection; I feel this as keenly as if you were dead and He has brought you back to life.

It must be acknowledged, Sisters, that you have really had a hard time but, consequently, you will be amply rewarded for this. Not only will your reward be great because of what you have suffered, but also because of the good you have done by serving the sick and the wounded in the hospital, and for the good example you have given there. I ask God to be His own praise and thanks for all this.

I have heard that there are many sick persons in Val de Puiseau, and that the poor place has great need of assistance right now. This has made me redouble my prayers to God to restore you to a condition in which you can visit and console them, and I beg you, Sisters, to do your utmost to get well. Mademoiselle Le Gras is sending you syrups and medicines for this purpose, and I am asking the poor widow of the late Pierre Charpentier to supply you with the money you need.

Please spare nothing for your recovery. We would send you a Sister to help you, if we could, but you are aware of the dangers on the roads.² Besides, the situation in Paris is so bad that Mademoiselle Le Gras does not have enough Sisters to care for the sick and the poor refugees in all the places where people are requesting them. Soup is prepared for them in a large number of parishes; our Sisters at Saint-Paul distribute it daily to almost eight thousand³

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²The dangers arose not only from soldiers and bandits; wild animals were prowling about the countryside, and even in the towns, looking for corpses. It was reported in the August Relations that even in Étampes three women had been devoured by wolves.

³No. 1511 has five thousand.
poor persons, both the bashful poor and the refugees, not counting the sixty to eighty patients they have on their hands. Your Company has never worked so hard or so effectively as it is doing at the present moment. I hope that, in consideration of this, God will bless it abundantly.

Your good Mother\(^4\) is well. I come back to you, Sisters, to ask you once again to take great care to recover the strength you have lost. Do not be in any hurry to get back to work until you have fully recovered. Just now you are, as it were, in a desert, for I consider Val de Puiseau as such, but remember that Our Lord Himself honored solitude, when He willed to spend some time in the desert, as you know. Now, it is always a blessing for us to be in those states through which our good Lord and Master has passed.

I often recommend you to Him. Continue to fear and love Him well; offer Him your difficulties and your little services, and do only what pleases Him. In this way you will continue to grow in grace and virtue. Pray to Him for us and for me, who am, in His love, my good Sisters, your affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

*Addressed:* The Sisters of Charity, Servants of the Sick Poor, in Val de Puiseau

\(^4\)Saint Louise.
1513. - TO A VISITATION NUN OF THE SECOND MONASTERY ¹

[June or July 1652] ²

Mon Dieu! dear Sister, how I thank you with all my heart for your goodness to us! I cannot tell you how grateful I am. The constant state of confusion in which we now are has prevented me from going to see you. I have not been to town for a week or so. Besides, I do not think that your house has any reason to fear. In addition to the special protection of God, you have the esteem in which your Order is held, generally speaking, and then the concern all the relatives of our dear Sisters and of your little girls have for your protection. Your walls on the side of the open country are strong and high, thank God. Oh no! dear Sister, I do not feel that you should be alarmed at all, even though other monasteries might be withdrawing to the city.³

These, dear Sister, are my humble thoughts on the matter. I am, dear Sister, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

I send most humble greetings to our dear Mother ⁴ and am her most humble servant.

Letter 1513. - Reg. 1, p. 7, copy made from the original autograph letter.

¹The letter is addressed to "The Mother of the Visitation of Saint-Jacques," that is, to the Superior. This is obviously an error. The Saint was probably writing to Sister Marie-Agnès Le Roy, who had finished her second three-year term on May 13, 1652.

²The fears of the Visitation nuns of Saint-Jacques Monastery must have been caused by the events occurring at this time in Paris.

³For six months the First Monastery gave hospitality to the Sisters from Saint-Denis, Chaillot, and Dammartin. The Sisters of the Second Monastery remained at home and came to no harm.

⁴Mother Marie-Augustine Bouvard, one of several daughters of the chief physician of Louis XIII, who had entered the Visitation Order. She was a nun for twenty-eight years, dying at the Second Monastery on November 15, 1659, at the age of forty-eight.
Niolo is a valley about three leagues long and half a league wide. It is surrounded by mountains, and the access and roads to reach it are the most difficult I have ever seen, either in the Pyrenees or in Savoy. Consequently, the place is a sort of refuge for all the bandits and ruffians of the island; since they have this hideout, they engage freely in highway robbery and murder, with no fear of the law.

There are several small villages in this valley and about two thousand inhabitants within its confines. I have never met any people—and I wonder if there are any in all of Christianity—more forsaken than they. We found almost no other vestiges of the faith there other than the fact that they said they had been baptized, and there were a few very run down churches. The people were so ignorant of matters pertaining to their salvation that it would have been very difficult to find a hundred persons who knew the Commandments of God and the Apostles' Creed. Asking them if there is one God or several, and which of the three Divine Persons became man for us, was like speaking Arabic to them.

Vice passed for virtue there, and vengeance was so rife that no sooner had children learned to walk and talk than they were taught how to seek vengeance at the slightest offense. It was useless to preach the contrary to them because the example of their ancestors and the bad advice of their own relatives regarding this vice were so deeply rooted in their minds that they were incapable of accepting any opinion to the contrary. Many of them went seven or eight months without going to Mass, and three, four, eight, or even ten years without going to confession. We even came across some young people of fifteen or sixteen who had never even been to confession.

Along with all that, there were many vices rampant among these poor people. They had a strong penchant for stealing; they never scrupled eating meat during Lent and on other days of abstinence; they persecuted

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This letter has been erroneously attributed to Jean Martin by the author of his biographical sketch (cf. Notices, vol. I, pp. 277ff). It was actually written by a Missionary familiar with the Pyrenees, i.e., by Étienne Blatiron, former Superior of the Alet house. In fact, in his letter of August 9, 1652 to Jean Martin (cf. no. 1535), Saint Vincent himself attributes it to Blatiron.

The contents show that the letter could not have been written before the month of July.

On the island of Corsica.
and harassed one another like barbarians; and when they had a certain enemy, they had no problem accusing him falsely of some major crime, bringing him to court and producing as many false witnesses as they wanted. On the other hand, those being accused—guilty or not—found persons to say and uphold in court whatever they wanted, in order to justify themselves. The result was that justice was never done so they took it into their own hands, readily killing each other under any pretext.

Besides all these disorders, there was also very serious abuse among the inhabitants of this island regarding the Sacrament of Matrimony. They rarely celebrated it without first having lived together. Usually, when they were engaged or had merely given their word to one another, the girl would go and live in the home of her future husband, continuing in this situation of concubinage for two or three months, sometimes for two or three years, without bothering to get married. What is even worse, many of these marriages took place between close relatives, without a dispensation from the impediment of consanguinity, and they remained in this situation eight, ten, even fifteen years and longer. In the meantime, they had several children, and if the man happened to die, these were abandoned as illegitimate, and the woman would marry someone else who—again—was sometimes one of her relatives. We have seen some who have had up to three husbands, with whom they lived in concubinage and incest. It even happened that, if people who were married in this way began to tire of one another, even if they had children, they would separate and look elsewhere for another partner.

There was yet another major abuse: most of the parents would marry off their children before the age of consent. Some had them marry from the age of four or five, and one man had married off his one-year-old daughter to a five-year-old boy. Another disorder resulted from this because very often these children who never had any affection for one another could not stand even to see one another, and several got divorced, which led to mutual hostility, attempted murder, and murder itself.

In this valley alone, we found one hundred and twenty persons cohabiting without the benefit of marriage, of whom about eighty were also living in incest. About forty of the latter had been denounced and excommunicated for this but, in spite of that, they continued to do business and to converse with the rest of the people as freely as if they were not [excommunicated]. As a result, almost the entire district was included in these censures, and most of the inhabitants were excommunicated for keeping contact and doing business with these people.

That then was the deplorable state of all those poor people, when some priests were sent to give the mission in that place. Here is what we did to try to remedy so many disorders:
(1) We used the greatest possible diligence to teach the people things necessary for salvation; this took us about three weeks.

(2) We had those living together outside of marriage separate from one another—at least all the ones we knew about and who were living right there. On the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, patrons of the church where we were, all of them, firmly convinced of the bad state in which they had been living and touched by a true sentiment of penance, knelt down at the end of the sermon, publicly asked pardon for the scandal they had given, and made a solemn promise that they would separate. When they did, in fact, separate, they presented themselves at the confessional.

(3) We also set apart those who were excommunicated. With all the signs of a truly contrite and humbled heart, they presented themselves at the door of the church to be absolved. Once they were admonished for the censure they had incurred, they committed themselves, one after another, by a public oath, to remain separated and never to enter one another’s house for any occasion or reason whatsoever. Then they were publicly absolved, went to confession, and received Communion shortly after. Since there were a few priests who were fomenting these disorders by their bad example and were committing incest and sacrileges with their own nieces and other female relatives, God in His mercy was pleased to touch their hearts by the charitable reproaches made to them and by means of the spiritual conferences they attended. As a result, all made their general confessions with every sign of true repentance, and to this they added public reparation for the scandal they had given.

The bulk of our work, however, was in our efforts to bring about reconciliations, and I can say hoc opus, hic labor 4 because the majority of these people were living on bad terms with one another. For two weeks we were unable to make any headway, except that one young man forgave another who had shot him in the head. Everyone else remained unyielding in their bad dispositions, refusing to be moved by anything we said to them. All the same, there was always a large crowd of people who came to the sermons, which we continued to give every morning and evening.

All the men came to the sermons armed with a sword at their side and a gun slung over their shoulder; these were their usual weapons. But, in addition to these weapons, the bandits and other criminals carried two pistols and two or three daggers in their belts. All those people were so filled with hatred and a desire for vengeance that, no matter what we said

4This is the work; in this is our labor.
to cure them of this strange passion, it made no impression on them. When we spoke about forgiveness of enemies, several of them even left the sermon. This left all of us very worried, myself more than anyone else, because handling these reconciliations was my special task.

Finally, on the eve of the general Communion, as I was coming to the close of the sermon, after exhorting the people once again to forgiveness, God inspired me to take in hand the crucifix I was wearing and say to them that anyone who was willing to forgive should come and kiss it. Then I invited them to do so in the name of Our Lord, who was stretching forth His arms to them, saying that those who kissed that crucifix would be giving a sign that they were willing to forgive and were ready to be reconciled with their enemies. At these words, they started to glance at one another but, when I saw that no one was coming forward, I pretended I was going to leave. I put the crucifix away, complaining of their hardness of heart, saying that they deserved neither the grace nor the blessing Our Lord was offering them.

At that, a reformed Franciscan got up and began to cry out: "O Niolo, O Niolo, so you want to be cursed by God! You do not want to receive the grace He is sending you by means of these Missionaries, who have come from such a distance for your salvation!" While this good monk was uttering these and similar words, a parish priest, whose nephew had been killed and the murderer was present at the sermon, came to prostrate himself on the ground and asked to kiss the crucifix. At the same time he said in a loud voice: "Let a certain person (his nephew’s murderer) come forward so I can embrace him." When this was done, another priest did the same with regard to some of his enemies who were present. These two were followed by a throng of others, so much so that, for the space of an hour and a half, we saw nothing but reconciliations and embraces. For greater assurance, the most important matters were put in writing and authenticated by the notary public.

The next day—Communion day—a general reconciliation took place. After the people had asked pardon of God, they asked it also of their pastors and vice-versa; it was all very edifying. I then asked if there was still anyone who was not reconciled with his enemies. Immediately one of the pastors stood up and said yes, and he began to call several people by name. They came forward, adored the Blessed Sacrament, which was exposed, and without any resistance or difficulty warmly embraced one another. O Seigneur, what edification on earth and what joy in heaven to see fathers and mothers who, for the love of God, were forgiving someone for the death of their children; wives for their husbands; children for their parents; brothers and relatives for their near and dear; in a word, to see
so many persons embrace one another and weep over their enemies! In other countries it is rather common to see penitents weep at the feet of their confessors, but in Corsica, it is a minor miracle.

The day after Communion, we received a letter telling us to go to La Bastida,3 where a galley sent expressly by the Genoa Senate was awaiting us. Nevertheless, we delayed two days longer, using them very effectively for a few remaining reconciliations. On Tuesday, a sermon was preached on perseverance, and there was such a huge crowd that we had to preach outside the church. There, promises and declarations of a desire to lead a truly Christian life and to persevere in it until death were renewed, and pastors committed themselves to teach catechism and to be more careful about their duty.

The rain which began at the end of the sermon prevented us from leaving that day so, in the evening, I went off to a place about a league away to speak to two persons who had refused to come to any sermon for fear of being forced to forgive their enemies who had killed their brother. Yet, when their pastor asked them to at least defer the effects of their vengeance until they had spoken to me, they did so, and Our Lord touched their hearts with His grace, with the result that they forgave this brother’s death. On Wednesday morning, after hearing their confessions and giving them Holy Communion, we all left together, accompanied by several priests and other influential persons in the district who, as a sign of their gratitude for the modest services we had rendered them, fired a volley of shots from their guns and other weapons as we were boarding the ship.

1515. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

July 5, 1652

Profound gratitude should be expressed to that fine Senator who wants to do some good for your house and to win over someone else to his plan. For my part, I thank God for this with all my heart. However, giving an account to anyone of the use of the money he gives you, other than to the Visitor of the Company, is something we cannot do, and I have never been willing to submit to anything

3Former name for the city of Bastia (Corsica).

Letter 1515. - The first part of this letter has been preserved for us in Reg. 2, p. 64; the second, by the author of the manuscript life of Monsieur Almeida, p. 33.
of this sort, not even for the Saint-Lazare house. When we went to live there, the Archbishop of Paris led us toward this and tried to get us to render accounts to him, as the former monks did. I told him, however, that we would prefer to leave, and no matter what anyone said to me, God gave me the grace to remain firm. My reason was that, since we go all over giving missions, it is almost impossible to write down in detail our various expenditures, and to balance our accounts in this difficult situation we would have to estimate money we had not spent instead of recording some real expenditures we had omitted to write down. This could not be done without danger of sin.

You lead me to hope for your prayers for the peace of this kingdom, and I thank you for this. Never was the need greater. Just three or four nights ago we had an entire army surrounding our enclosure. However, because it was pursued by the King’s army, it cleared out in great haste early in the morning, and the rear guard was attacked behind Saint-Charles Seminary, which ran a great risk of being sacked.¹ Eight soldiers, who had entered the house for this purpose, intended to mistreat M. Alméras,² who offered them food and money, provided they did no other damage; but they went into the rooms, broke open the coffers, and carried off the best of anything they found.

Just as they were leaving, loaded down with booty, a porter and a coachman of the Duc de Bouillon,³ who were passing by, saw all this disorder and drew their swords against them. After making them give back all they had taken, they put them out and stayed all

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¹On July 1, 1652, the rebel army of the frondeurs, led by Louis II de Bourbon, Prince de Condé, retreated and fortified itself behind barricades in the faubourg Saint-Antoine on the outskirts of Paris. That same day, the royal army, led by Henri de la Tour d’Auvergne, Vicomte de Turenne, marched from Saint-Denis toward Paris, where the battle of the faubourg Saint-Antoine was fought on July 2. Saint-Charles Seminary, situated at the far end of the Saint-Lazare enclosure, on the road between Paris and Saint-Denis, was directly in the path of both armies.

²Superior of Saint-Charles Seminary.

³Frédéric-Maurice de la Tour d’Auvergne, Turenne’s brother.
day and night in the house to prevent other thieves from entering. These were men who did not know us and who came to our defense out of compassion. We must acknowledge that God is wonderful to have had them come to us just in the nick of time. We considered them two protectors sent by Him. They left the next day—last Wednesday—very pleased with us.

1516. - TO LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

Paris, July 5, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Public affairs here are in such a state of confusion that we can hardly think of anything but self-preservation. Nevertheless, I want to tell you that, in the midst of all that, your letter of June 4 consoled me greatly.

I change nothing of what I informed you about the Daughters of Sainte-Marie, nor have I anything to add to it. We shall see what effect the Queen’s letter, will have on the thinking of the Archbishop of Paris.

The Daughters of Charity will still be ready to go, but we have to wait for an opportunity. M. Cruoly is still in Rethel, continuing to assist the poor people of the town and the environs within a radius of five leagues from it. He is being helped by two other priests and a Brother. The harvest which will be gathered there, and the misfortunes here will oblige him to leave his post at the end of this month, along with all the others who have been laboring in that

Letter 1516. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.

1In a previous letter (no. 1511) Saint Vincent had suggested that the Queen, Louis Marie de Gonzague, personally write to the Archbishop of Paris, Jean-François de Gondi, to ask him to allow some Visitation nuns to depart for Poland.
holy work in Champagne and Picardy for the past two years. At that time I shall see what M. Cruoly’s dispositions are for the journey to Poland.

I praise God that the Queen is still zealously inclined to all good works of charity and that her alms are being distributed effectively in Krakow. I also thank O[ur] L[ord] for the preservation and fine leadership of the workers you have sent there.

I thought I had written you that I received the letter with which Her Majesty had honored me in reply to mine regarding her safe delivery, on which I had congratulated her.

I receive all your letters on time because I send for them punctually every Thursday at Madame des Essarts’ house or at Father Berthod’s. They are in safe hands with either person.

I finally received the elk’s foot, for which I thank you; I shall send it on to the Duchesse d’Aiguillon.

I have nothing to tell you about our present troubles, except that on Monday evening we were suddenly surrounded by an army, but it only passed along the walls of our enclosure, stopping there just part of the night. It was pursued by the King’s army, which drove it away from us, and both of them caused us more fright than harm.

Saint-Charles Seminary would have been sacked were it not for two men sent by God. After making eight soldiers give back the booty they had taken, they put them out and kept others from entering. We did not know these two men and vice-versa; that is why I say that God sent them to us just in the nick of time to defend this house, which they did out of compassion, as they told us. They left the next day to go see the Duc de Bouillon, their master, at Saint-Denis, where the Court has been for the past eight to ten days.

Since the bad times are getting considerably worse, we have been advised to keep a few armed men here. As a matter of fact,

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2Cf. no. 1482, n. 4.
3July 1.
we had them here last night and intend to keep them so that, by the grace of God, they will protect us during the rough storm in which we now are. I kept watch with them myself, and every night six or seven members of the Company and the same number of servants keep watch at Saint-Charles, and within the enclosure and around Saint-Lazare, from which we have removed as much furniture as we could.

I leave you to imagine our hardship and that which will befall Paris, unless God has mercy on it. It is to be feared that it will destroy itself. Things began yesterday at City Hall, where M. Le Gros spent the night in great danger of being killed or wounded, as has happened to many others. The Parlement does not dare to return, for fear of the rebels.

Continue to pray for us and for me, who am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Lambert, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Poland, in Warsaw

4Among the members of the assembly held at the Hôtel de Ville on July 4 were twenty deputies from the various religious Congregations in Paris. Jean-Baptiste Le Gros, C.M., represented Saint-Lazare.

5July 4, 1652, is counted among the saddest days in the history of Paris. A frenzied mob assaulted the Hôtel de Ville, set it on fire, pillaging and killing without a second thought. Legras, Minister of Requests; Ferrand, Counselor in the Parlement; Legrand, parlementary lawyer; Leboulanger, Auditor of Accounts; and Guillois, First Alderman, were among the victims. (Cf. Registres de l'hôtel de ville, vol. III, pp. 51-73.)
Monsieur,  

Thank you for the consolation your precious letter brought me. I am really embarrassed at seeing myself given this great honor and the thanks you offer me, despite the fact that I have been altogether useless to you, as has our Little Company, which has not been worthy to give you hospitality in Rome, so wretched is it. I am well aware that this is not for want of good will on its part, and we shall never lack the good will to be of service to you. I, personally, am most anxious for opportunities to render you mine.

I am going to do as you asked with regard to the Franciscan Father and to see that Fathers . . . do not involve him in your affair. I shall let you know their opinion on this and shall continue to ask God to bless your work there. It may take a long time, if our good God does not shorten in your favor the usual lengthy proceedings of the Roman Court. For this reason, Monsieur, you must take good care of your health.

If, in your absence, you honor me here with your orders, I shall receive them with great joy and a similar desire to prove to you that I am in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your . . .

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Letter 1517. - Reg. 1, f. 51.

1 As the contents indicate, this letter belongs to the period when Hallier and Legault had first taken up residence in Rome; it must have followed closely on no. 1510.

2 Cf. no. 1510, n. 4.
I most humbly entreat Your Eminence to forgive me for returning home last evening without having the honor of receiving your orders. I was obliged to do so because I felt ill. The Duc d'Orléans has just informed me that he will send Monsieur d'Ornano with a reply for me today, which he wanted to discuss with the Prince. I told the Queen yesterday about the gracious, respectful conversation I had the honor of having with each of the two individually. I told His Royal Highness that, if the King were reinstated in his authority and a decree of vindication issued, Your Eminence would give the desired satisfaction. I also said that it would be difficult to have this important affair settled by deputies, and that persons who trusted one another were needed to negotiate matters by mutual agreement. He indicated to me by word and gesture that this was agreeable to him and replied that he would discuss it with the Council. I hope to be able to bring the reply to Your Eminence tomorrow morning, God willing.


1The Court arrived at Saint-Denis on the evening of June 28 and settled in Pontoise on July 17. This letter belongs between the two dates since, according to Abelly, the Saint went to see the Queen at Saint-Denis. If we take the events in Paris into consideration, it is quite probable that it was written after July 4.

2From Saint-Denis.

3Gaston, Duc d'Orléans, uncle of Louis XIV who was still in his minority.

4Henri-François-Alphonse d'Ornano, chief equerry of the Duc d'Orléans.

5Louis II de Bourbon, Prince de Condé.

6Of the Cardinal.

7Probably that Mazarin leave the kingdom.

8These efforts of the Saint were futile. By accepting the title of Lieutenant-General of the kingdom on July 20, the Duc d'Orléans only widened the rift that separated him from the Court.
1519. - TO THE DUCHESSE D'AIGUILLON

[Between July 5 and 24, 1652] 

Disease is still widespread in Palaiseau. The first persons who fell ill and did not die of it now need time to recover, and those who were healthy are now sick. One of our priests came to me expressly to say that the soldiers have cut down all the wheat and that there is nothing to harvest. However, we are no longer in a position to bear this expense. We have contributed to it 663 livres in cash up to now, besides the food and other things in kind which we have sent them. I beg you most humbly, Madame, to hold a little meeting at your house today to decide what we should do. I will be there, if possible.

I have just sent the priest back with a Brother and fifty livres. The disease is so contagious that our first four priests, and the Brother who accompanied them, caught it. We had to bring them back here, and two of them are now dying. O Madame, what a harvest to be reaped for heaven at this time when such great misery is at our gates! The coming of the Son of God was the downfall and the redemption of many, as the Gospel says. In a certain sense, we can likewise say that this war will be the cause of the damnation of many persons, but that God will also make use of it for the grace, the justification, and the glory of many persons. We have good reason to hope that you will be in that number, as I am asking Our Lord.


1The mention of the four priests and the Brother who became ill in Palaiseau is a sure indication that this letter precedes no. 1527, which mentions seven or eight persons being ill. It must also have been written later than no. 1516, which says nothing of the sick persons who came from Palaiseau.

2Principal town of a canton in Essonne. Turenne had established his headquarters there for three weeks.

3Cf. Lk 2:34. (NAB)
Monsieur and Most Honored Father,

Madame de Varize came here yesterday to have the honor of seeing you and to propose to you the desire of those in charge of the Châteaudun hospital to have two of our Sisters. She told me she could manage without the two we gave her for Varize and thinks it would be very useful to send them there. I am well aware, Monsieur, that they have been asking us for Sisters for that place for a very long time, but up until now there has always been some reason against it.

Madame and the Lady who was with her came also to ask your charity for two of our Sisters to serve the poor at Saint-André. I cited to them the fact that we had to send Sisters to Étampes and to the parishes in Paris, where most of our Sisters are still ill.

Last evening we buried good Sister Perrette, mother of a Carthusian, and I was told that one of our best Sisters, who serves the sick at Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas, was to receive Extreme Unction in the course of the evening. Another one is seriously ill at Saint-Sulpice. In short, Monsieur, there is good reason to believe that my sins are emptying the Company of the Daughters of Charity. When I see the faults I commit in it by my laziness of mind, I am very much ashamed.

I most humbly entreat your charity to inform me whether I should give some answer to Madame de Varize on these two points. Please give me your blessing and continue to do me the honor of believing that I am, in

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1Because of its contents, this letter should be placed near no. 1522 of July 19, 1652, and L. 349 in Spiritual Writings, pp. 401-02, dated July 14, 1652.

2A locality in the district of Châteaudun (Eure-et-Loir), situated on a hill about 25 miles west of Orléans. The four Daughters of Charity who were eventually sent for the Châteaudun hospital did not begin their service until July 16, 1654.

3Sister Perrette was a widow when she entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity. She was at Saint-Germain in 1642 and in Iezy in 1649.

4According to Sister Élisabeth Charpy, editor of Écrits spirituels (p. 398), this is Sister Élisabeth Jousteau. She recovered and in December 1654 was sent to Sainte-Marie-du-Mont, where she was still serving in January 1658.
the love of Our Lord, Most Honored Father, your most obedient daughter and very grateful servant.

LOUISE DE MARILLAC

Our Sister who works with the galley slaves came to me in tears yesterday. She cannot get any more bread for her poor men because money is owed to the baker and because bread is so expensive. She begs and borrows everywhere with great difficulty and, to crown her woe, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon wants her to make a list of those she thinks can be put out.

I have three serious objections to that. First, her only knowledge of them is from the way they treat her, be this with insults or praises. That being the case, she might commit an injustice. Another objection is that some of them bribe the captain and the concierge, who have already begun to quarrel with her and to accuse her of being the cause of their disorder. The third objection is that those who remain in the chain gang will think she is to blame for this. You know, Most Honored Father, what those men are capable of saying and doing.

I told our Sister to put off making this list until I have instructions from your charity regarding what she should do.

1521. - TO PATRICE VALOIS, IN GENOA

Paris, July 19, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Your letter is full of your concern about the return of M. Blatiron and the others. As a matter of fact, you are right to fear that they may be overcome by the heat in Corsica and perhaps by some illness. I, too, am anxious about them and ask God to preserve them from all dangers of sea and land. I do not think that the Republic,1

1Genoa.
which sent them to that region and knows there is no plague there, will quarantine them, but if it does we must conform ourselves to God’s Will in that as in all else. It would give them an opportunity to work in the rural areas, or they could use the time to take a rest; both of these things are feasible and desirable.

We shall continue to pray to God for them and for you. I ask you to do the same for our houses here and for the country. It is becoming more and more disorderly and will soon be in a state of extreme misery, unless God in His goodness puts a stop to its spread.

Besides this affliction common to all, we have our own particular trials: the loss of Brother Patrocle, who died here on Sunday, and the burden of sixteen to eighteen sick men we have here, several of whom are in danger, including M. Molony, who has had a relapse. I am not going to mention the qualities of the man who died, because M. Duport knew him and was his Superior; he can tell you how wise, gentle, pious, and exemplary he was. I can simply add that he was growing daily in the spirit of his vocation. He was a native of Paris and came from a prominent family.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Patrice Valois, Priest of the Mission, in Genoa

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2There is some confusion about this confere. Coste states that he is Guillaume-Seguin Patrocle, seminarian of the Mission, who was born in Paris and entered the Congregation of the Mission at the age of thirty-four. *Notices*, vol. I, p. 477, lists him under this name with the priests and seminarians who entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1650. However, in *Notices*, vol. V, (Supplement), p. 562, he is listed as Patrocle-Guillaume Seguin, a coadjutor Brother, who was born in Paris in 1616, entered the Internal Seminary in Paris on October 9, 1650, and died in Etampes in 1652.
Monsieur and Most Honored Father,

Madame de Herse,\(^2\) the President’s wife, came here yesterday to ask for Sisters for Saint-André. I am very distressed at not being able to send some strong ones to relieve our Sisters in the parishes and also at not being able to give any to that good Lady. Nevertheless, Monsieur, if none should be sent to Étampes or to Poland, as Mademoiselle de Lamoignon believes, we should make some effort to satisfy her, if your charity thinks it advisable, provided there is no fault to be found in the conduct of the parish priests.

I most humbly entreat your charity to remember that I am awaiting your orders to return. I have not made any visits because of a slight ailment which has kept me in bed. However, I do not think I will be really sick, as I feared, thank God.

I had asked our Sister to find out from your charity whether I should send someone to request Madame de Bouillon’s\(^3\) carriage to go and see her, in line with the wish she expressed to you. She was mistaken in the message she gave you. I think we have to stand on more ceremony with this Lady than with the others.

Letter 1522. - The last known proprietor of this original autograph letter was M. Lorenzo, priest of Saint-Dominique parish, 14 rue de la Tombe-Isaure, Paris; copy in the Archives of the Mission, Paris.

\(^1\)Date added on the back by the secretary.

\(^2\)Madame de Herse, née Charlotte de Ligny, was the daughter of Jean de Ligny, Seigneur de Ranticey, Master of Requests. She was the widow of Michel Vialart, Seigneur de la Foret de Herse, Counselor to the King in his Parlement Court, President of Requests of the palace, then Ambassador to Switzerland. He died in Solothurn (Switzerland), on October 26, 1634. Madame de Herse was also the mother of Félix Vialart, Bishop of Châlons, as well as a relative of Jean-Jacques Olier. She was close to Saint Francis de Sales, who was her son’s godfather. As a Lady of Charity, she became one of Saint Vincent’s chief auxiliaries and was a great benefactress of the poor of Paris, Picardy, and Champagne. She 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 her and some other Ladies the distribution of her personal alms. Madame de Herse died in 1662.

\(^3\)Eléonore-Catherine Fébronie de Bergh was the daughter of Frédéric, Governor of Friesland (Netherlands) and Françoise Ravenel. On February 1, 1634, she married Frédéric-Maurice de la Tour d’Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon. She was one of the first Ladies of Charity; by her liberalities, she contributed to the establishment of the Daughters of Charity in Sedan for the care of wounded soldiers. Madame de Bouillon died July 14, 1657, at the age of forty-two.
Continue to honor me by believing that I am, by God’s Will, Most Honored Father, your most humble daughter and very grateful servant.

LOUISE DE MARILLAC

The priests of Saint-Sulpice have just this minute sent someone to ask for four of the refugee girls to help our Sisters. Should we let them do this or would it not be better for the convalescents to go and pick up their own meals? We have six Sisters there, but two of them are ill. I am afraid that this mixture might cause some confusion and much harm, and this may come from our Sisters themselves.

1523. - TO JACQUES-RAOUL DE LA GUIBOURGÈRE, BISHOP OF LA ROCHELLE

[Around 1652] ¹

I received the letter with which you have honored me as a blessing from God. It was a great consolation to me amidst the common afflictions of this region. If those which threatened your diocese have not disturbed it too much, I think that this is due, after God, to your wise leadership, which has held off the storm while serving the King. I thank God for this and for all the other good you are doing inside and outside your town, by which the people are maintained in their duty to God, to the Church, and to their Prince. Even heretics, who witness this, see also the excellence of our holy religion, the importance and grace of the episcopacy, and what it can do when it is administered in a holy way, as it is by your sacred person.

¹Girls driven from their homes by the war and sheltered in the house called Le Refuge. (See no. 1511 for Saint Vincent’s description of the plight of the refugees in Paris and the efforts to alleviate it.)


¹This letter must have been written shortly after the disturbances of the Prond in the southwest of the country.
I ask God, Excellency, to give us many bishops like you to work for the spiritual and temporal advancement of the people.

1524. - TO THE QUEEN, ANNE OF AUSTRIA

[July or August 1652] ¹

Madame,

Paris rejoiced in amazement when it learned that the King and Your Majesty, in your incomparable goodness, demanded that wheat be brought in without hindrance. However, this joy has been followed by a little sadness, Madame, because troops of soldiers are constantly coming to carry off the wheat, not only on the Saint-Denis plain, as I have witnessed, but also between La Chapelle and La Villette, two villages a quarter of a league away from Paris. They chase away the owners who dare to approach in order to gather in their harvests.²

I most humbly entreat Your Majesty to allow me to give her this information because she did me the honor of telling me³ that the King did not forbid those who have sown their land to reap its fruits. I also know, Madame, that, if it please His Majesty and you, Your Majesty, to have the obstacles placed in their way removed, this would go a long way toward convincing the people that Your Majesties are better to them than they might imagine. For my part,

¹This letter was written near harvest time, at a moment when Paris was surrounded by bands of soldiers bent on pillage, which places it around July or August 1652.
²Mère Angélique wrote on July 5 (cf. Lettres, vol. II, p. 153): "The need for flour is so great in Paris that bread, as black as can be, is already worth ten sous a pound. . . . We have wheat, but it is very difficult to get it ground because the soldiers are robbing the mills." On July 16 (ibid., p. 161) she wrote: "They try to send the peasants back from Paris to harvest the grain, but as fast as they take it in the soldiers come and beat them, rob them, and put everyone to flight."
³Probably in the interview mentioned in no. 1518.
Madame, I shall always testify to this before the whole world, on the strength of its truth and by my obligation to be, as I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Madame, Your Majesty's most humble, most obedient and most faithful servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

1525. - TO MONSIEUR DE RAMEVILLE ¹

[July 1652] ²

Monsieur,

The goodness Our Lord has granted you in my regard leads me to entreat you most humbly to give us a guard for the protection of a little farm we have near [Livry].³ I have not had sufficient time to ask M. Desbordes⁴ to write to you about this.

The escort you in your kindness did me the honor of sending me as a precaution, when I was going to Saint-Denis recently, gives me the confidence to have recourse to your protection in these circumstances. If God is pleased to grant me the means of expressing gratitude for it by my most humble services, God knows, Monsieur, how gladly I shall do so. I am, in the love of Our Lord. . . .

Letter 1525. - Reg. 1, f° 70, copy made from the original autograph letter.
¹Brigadier General in the King's army.
²This letter was written shortly after no. 1518.
³The copyist read "Lucas;" the farm in question was probably Rougemont, situated in Sevrain, near the Livry woods.
⁴Vicomte de Soudé and Comptroller.
My Lord,

I take the honor of writing to you to renew to you the offers of my perpetual obedience and to entreat you most humbly to accede to the most humble request I make you of giving us a guard for the protection of a little farm we have near Livry. I have absolute confidence that, in your kindness, My Lord, you will grant us this favor. I ask it of you for the love of Our Lord, with all possible affection and humility. I am...

1527. - TO JEAN GICQUEL, IN LE MANS

Paris, July 24, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

The extraordinary pressure of business, in which the disorders of the times have involved me, explain why I did not write to you when I wished. So, I am doing it now, while I can, to tell you that I am very distressed about M. Gentil’s illness and to ask you to take

Letter 1526. - Reg. 1, F° 70 v°, copy made from the original autograph letter. This letter was written on or about the same day as no. 1525.

1Henri de la Tour, Vicomte de Turenne, born in Sedan on September 11, 1611. His successes in Lorraine during the Thirty Years’ War and in Italy won for him in 1643 the Field Marshal’s baton. The victories of the Army of the Rhine, which he commanded with Condé, increased his prestige and reputation. His love for the Duchesse de Longueville drew him initially to the side of the Fronde, but, defeated by the Royal Army at Rehet (1650), he returned to the King and remained faithful to him. After the Fronde he distinguished himself by a series of victories and conquests in Artois, Champagne, Flanders, the Palatinate, and on the Rhine. A convert of Bossuet, he abjured Protestantism in 1668 and died on the battlefield at Salzach on July 27, 1675.

Letter 1527. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
good care of him, sparing nothing for food and medicine to restore him to health. By the same token, I recommend that you take care of your own health. I just remembered, as I write this, that you sent me word that Brother Le Blanc has also been sick. I am very sorry about that; I hope, however, that there have been no complications to his illness. If there are, remember that the greatest pleasure you can give me is to see that your patients are well taken care of.

We have several priests in the border areas of Champagne and Picardy, who have been assisting the poor people for two years now. Some of them are supposed to return here after this month because alms from Paris can no longer be sent so far away nor so abundantly as in the past on account of the large number of poor who are now here in this city. We will send you two of the men who will be coming back to us, for the purpose for which you request them. In the meantime, please be patient about the needs of your house, which I ask Our Lord Himself to remedy.

I am consoled to hear that, despite the fact that you are only a few workers, you are still having some little missions given. After the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, this is the best means we have of drawing down the blessings of God upon us. It is also our main concern; when it is carried out in the Spirit of Our Lord, it ensures our salvation.

In the absence of Brother Robineau, who is in the country, I read the letter you wrote him and have given someone else the responsibility of informing Abbé Lucas of M. Guibert's lawsuit.

1Charles Le Blanc, born in Roye (Somme) on July 15, 1625, entered the Congregation of the Mission on November 20, 1649, took his vows on November 21, 1653, and was ordained a priest the following month. In 1658 he set sail for Madagascar but had to return to Paris, after a violent storm snapped the masts and rudder and imperiled the lives of the passengers, forcing the ship to drop anchor at Lisbon.

2Louis Robineau, coadjutor Brother, born in Neuvy-en-Dunois (Eure-et-Loir), entered the Congregation of the Mission on November 8, 1642, at twenty-one years of age, and took his vows on November 1, 1650. He was Saint Vincent's secretary for thirteen years; the notes he wrote for the Saint's biographer are still extant. (Cf. Dodin, op. cit.)

3Martin Lucas, Provost of the collegiate church of Notre-Dame de Coiffort in Le Mans.
to reduce the forty livres a year he has promised him on his lease. As soon as I have his answer, I will let you know.

Please tell me the amount of the lease on the chapel of M. Pangois, and how much he wants us to give him annually in payment, for it would be wrong to give him a larger pension than the benefice is worth. If he is satisfied with receiving from us exactly what he receives from his farmer, the settlement will be feasible. I am well aware that the house is grossly overburdened with such leases, but it is also wise to ensure the benefices which depend on it in order to protect ourselves against lawsuits that will be brought against us, if the holders resign them or if others petition them for them. This is greatly to be feared from the mentality of the people in that region.

We now seem to be at the height of the greatest calamities, which are almost beyond measure here; therefore, they will begin to diminish in future, please God, and when that happens we shall be able to satisfy your needs more easily.

You can imagine how deeply we are affected by the public afflictions; in addition, God is pleased to try us by some of our own. We have sixteen to eighteen sick men, some of them seriously ill, but there are also several who are getting better. That is not all: we have just lost two excellent men, one a priest; the other a seminarian. The former is M. David, whom we had sent to Étampes for the corporal and spiritual assistance of the poor inhabitants, almost all of whom the army and the siege left sick and in a state of extraordinary poverty. That good priest worked so zealously and

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*Pangois was a priest of the collegial church of Coëffort when it was united to the Congregation of the Mission.

Jean David, born in Mézières (Ardennes), entered the Congregation of the Mission on August 26, 1645 at the age of eighteen, took his vows on October 29, 1647, was ordained a priest in February 1651, and died on July 15, 1652. David had asked to go to Madagascar and the Saint was planning to send him.

*The army of the Princes (frondeurs) had left Étampes (Essonne) on June 23, after a two-month stay and a one-month siege. The utter misery in which the population was living after the departure of the soldiers defies description. “The surrounding countryside,” wrote Maxime de Mont-Rond, quoting an eyewitness, “shared in these sad calamities; the fields were
indefatigably that he contracted a persistent fever, of which he died three or four days ago. Tomorrow we are sending three men there to assist good M. Deschamps, who is still holding up well in the midst of this heavy labor. We took on similar work in Palaiseau, where another army camped out for twenty days. The poverty and disease there are also very great, and seven or eight of our workers fell ill, one after the other. This has obliged us to recall them and send others to that place.

The other dear deceased is good Brother Patrocle, a very wise, pious young man. He was a native of Paris and came from a distinguished family.

In great haste I send greetings to your family and am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Gicquel, Priest of the Mission, at Notre-Dame de Coëffort, in Le Mans

1528. - TO PATRICE VALOIS, IN GENOA

Paris, July 25, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

ruined, as after a violent storm, and most of the villages were abandoned, offering only a spectacle of mourning and desolation.” (Cf. Essais historiques sur la ville d'Étampes [2 vols., Étampes: Fortin, 1836-37], vol. I, p. 124.) The Daughters of Charity had also gone to Étampes; several died victims of their dedication there. Four shelters were set up, two for the people of Étampes and two for the localities in the environs; an orphanage was organized in a spacious house in the town. (Cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. I, chap. XLII; also Relations, May 1652.) Feillet writes in 1662 (op. cit., p. 414) that Étampes showed its gratitude to Saint Vincent and his sons and daughters by “an iron cross erected near Saint-Basile church, at the Carrefour des Ormes.”

Letter 1528. - Collection for the process of beatification.
You have greatly consoled me, Monsieur, by sending me news of Monsieur Blatiron and his dear companions. I ask Our Lord to bring them all back in good health. *O Jésus!* Monsieur, how the news that your dear family is doing well has also consoled me! Oh! how I hope that Our Lord will be pleased to give it more and more of His Spirit and His holy manner of acting!

I praise God that the good gentleman is persevering in the devotedness Our Lord has given him for the welfare of the Company, and that he has found two other persons of his own social class similarly disposed. I ask Him to guide this work according to His own good pleasure.

I will explain to you my objection to binding ourselves to keep accounts: when the Archbishop\(^1\) did us the honor of coming to put us in possession of this house,\(^2\) he suggested that we present to him an annual account of the income, as our predecessors had done. I asked him to excuse us from this and went so far as to tell him that we would prefer to go back to our poor collège.\(^3\) Now, in his goodness he disregarded those difficulties and welcomed us here without obliging us to render any accounts. And how, Monsieur, could Missionaries keep an account of so many little things they buy, when they are out giving missions in the country? Please keep this reply for M. Blatiron.

I thank God that the building the Cardinal\(^4\) is having erected is making progress, that Monsieur Duport is giving the mission to the laborers working on it, and that His Eminence wanted translated into Italian what I wrote you on the assistance of the poor in Paris.

I wrote you that Our Lord has taken to Himself Monsieur Patrocle, a person of noble birth and rather noteworthy piety, and a seminarian of our Company. Today I have to tell you that Divine

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\(^1\)Jean-François de Gondi.
\(^2\)Saint-Lazare.
\(^3\)The Collèges des Bons-Enfants.
\(^4\)Stefano Cardinal Durazzo.
Providence has also taken the late Monsieur David, a priest of our Company, of whom it can be said that in a short time *explevit tempora multa*. He had been assisting the sick poor for only ten to fifteen days in Étampes, where the army of the Princes had stayed for a long time and left the air contaminated, although not contagious. Monsieur Deschamps, who was with him, sent me word that he did there what a man come down from heaven might have done with regard to hearing confessions, teaching catechism, corporal assistance, and burying the dead whose bodies had long been decomposed. He had twelve corpses, which were infecting the village, buried in Étréchy. Because of that he fell sick and died. He tells me that, shortly before he [David] died, he was somewhat fearful of the justice of God and cried out: “No matter, Lord. Even were you to damn me, I would never stop loving you in hell.”

Monsieur de la Fosse most generously asked to be allowed to take his place, and Brother Féro to go with him. They left yesterday with a coadjutor Brother, like three victims to be sacrif...
ficed for the good of the neighbor. I recommend them to your prayers, and also the eighteen to twenty sick men we have here.

I almost forgot to tell you that Monsieur David is the first member of the Company Our Lord has taken while assisting the poor people corporally, and that the Divine Goodness has preserved all those whom we have sent to the border areas of Picardy—thirteen or fourteen priests and Brothers.

I close by recommending myself to your prayers and those of your family, whom I greet, prostrate in spirit at their feet and yours. I am your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Valois

1529. - TO BALTHAZAR BRANDON DE BASSANCOURT ¹

The last day of July, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!

The troubles everyone is experiencing in these times have prevented me from going to see you to express my sympathy on the loss you have suffered of the late Bishop of Périgueux,² and the whole Church with you. I most humbly entreat you, Monsieur, to accept my apology for this. With the help of God, I hope to carry out this duty as soon as possible, to go to ask you for the favor of

on October 3, 1647, took his vows on October 15, 1649, and was ordained a priest in Agen in March 1656. He was Superior in Montmirail (1662-66).

Letter 1529. - Reg. 1, f° 70, copy made from the original autograph letter.

¹Vicar-General of the Périgueux diocese.
²Phillibert de Brandon had died in Paris on July 11.
the same benevolence with which this holy Bishop honored me, and to offer my obedience to you as I did to him.

I beg you, Monsieur, to allow me to tell you that we owed him four thousand livres, and consequently, we owe them to you, his heir. We will make some arrangement with you for the annuity, whenever you wish, since it is impossible for us, in these times when the majority of people are suffering, to give you this sum. I entreat you, Monsieur, to agree to this and to my transferring to you the esteem and affection we had for this holy Bishop. I am your...

1529a. - TO N.

[1652 or 1653] ¹

That they have used his name and shown counterfeit letters, benefitting the Jansenists.

Write to Rome that in the Papal Bull no mention be made of the term “Inquisition” nor of temporal punishment, which are contrary to the style of France.

That Monsieur Hallier and Monsieur Lagault may count on finding, on their return to this city, the sum of one thousand livres for the purpose for which they wrote.

Tell him that everyone is well disposed to submit to the decision of His Holiness, regardless of any rumors the Jansenists are spreading to the contrary.

That he should be careful of the persons to whom he writes and be prudent in doing so.

That a journal should be kept of all that has taken place during their negotiations, noting all the important details and events.

Letter 1529a. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original autograph outline for a letter. Coste placed it in his First Supplement, vol. VIII, no. 3309; because of the date he assigned it, the editors have repositioned it here.

¹This letter belongs to the period when Hallier and Lagault were in Rome (May 1652-53) and precedes the publication of the Bull, Cum Occasione (May 21, 1653).
Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I have seen the letters you wrote to M. David, your brother, and to me they always seemed full of piety and good sentiments. They have led me to think that you belong wholly to God, like a true daughter of Our Lord, who desires only His good pleasure and is glad that it is accomplished in all that concerns her. Therefore, Mademoiselle, I do not have to use any other preface to inform you that God has been pleased to call M. David to Himself. It suffices for you to know that it is God who has done this, to cause you to love the hand that has deprived you of a person so close to you. Still, I am sure you are deeply grieved at this, since your nature is so good, and grace does not destroy our natural feelings. I ask Our Lord, Mademoiselle, who alone is the Consoler of hearts in such sorrows, to be yours also, and I ask you, for your part, to do all you can to ease your sorrow.

The reasons you have for this are, first of all, the Will of God, who wished to reward this dear soul for the services he has rendered Him and for those he wanted to render Him, especially on the island of Madagascar for the conversion of unbelievers, of whom you have heard. This was an apostolic endeavor he was unable to carry out, but, in the eyes of God the will is taken for the deed.

Secondly, the service he was performing when he fell ill is one of the holiest that can be done on earth, namely, the corporal and spiritual assistance of the suffering members of Jesus Christ, in the person of the poor inhabitants of Étampes and the environs. The army had encamped there for a long time, leaving almost all of them sick and totally ruined, with the result that most of them
would have perished without the aid sent from Paris. This help was brought to them by this good Missionary and a few others who are still on the scene. The latter have written me that he did this great work with as much punctuality, zeal, and charity as a man come down from heaven would have done. In the short time he worked there—only ten to twelve days—he won the esteem and affection of the whole town.

Our Company has suffered a great loss in him. Everyone who knew him mourns his passing, I more than anyone else. I was hoping that his grace and talents would produce considerable results for the good of souls.

In the third place, it was his good fortune, young as he was, to be taken away from the corruption of this world, where occasions of wrongdoing are so frequent and misery so prevalent that they cause the living to consider that the dead, who are no longer subject to it, are fortunate. We can say that about this good priest, who had not yet tasted the false sweetness nor the true bitterness of the world, since he was called from his childhood to the service of God. He was so good that in the time he was with us he always devoted himself to the practice of virtue and to living out his vocation so as to become a good evangelical worker and by this means to assure his salvation, while procuring the salvation of others. He was working at this, as I said, very ardently and successfully, when our good God chose to send him a persistent fever. On the seventh day of his illness, it made him delirious, and on the fifteenth it put him in possession of the glory of his Lord, as we have good reason to believe.

I cannot refrain from recommending him to your prayers, since we are not sure of God’s judgments and must always be in fear of them. We are still tossed about by the disturbances of this life, which is like a stormy sea, where those who are not attached to Jesus Christ and the duties of their state, as was our dear departed, are shipwrecked.
May His Divine Goodness be pleased to grant us the same grace and to give me opportunities to serve you, since He has made me, in His holy love, Mademoiselle, your....

1530a. - TO MOTHER MARIE-AGNÈS CHEVALIER,¹ VISITATION NUN

[July 1652]²

...and the sorrow of leaving your dear house. Mais quoi! no thought should be given to the expense in these circumstances, and your sorrow will be compensated by the consolation of seeing your dear Sisters,³ who are waiting to give you such a warm and loving welcome, that I cannot even express it to you. I enclose the letter our dear Mother⁴ wrote me on this subject, and perhaps she has already forwarded to you the orders I sent her for you. It will be well, then, for you to send—today, if possible—your little girls and some of the Community, such as the....

... dear Mother, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

What prompts me to give you this advice is the fear of a recurrence of the danger in which you have been and the pain of

Letter 1530a. - Visitation monastery of Boulogne-sur-Mer, original signed letter. The postscript is in the Saint’s handwriting. Because the top of the letter has been cut off, some material on both sides has been lost. The text was published first in Annales C. M. (1929), pp. 725-26, and reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, no. 72, pp. 93-94. This edition uses the latter text.

¹The letter bears no addressee; it is apparent from the text that it was intended for the Superior of a religious Community over which Saint Vincent had authority, and which had to leave its monastery and take refuge elsewhere with its pupils. These indications allow us to think it concerns the Visitatin nuns of Saint-Denis who, during the troubles of the Fronde (July 1652), had been forced to seek shelter at the First Monastery of the Visititation in Paris. At that time Mother Marie-Agnès Chevalier was Superior at Saint-Denis.

²Date when the Saint-Denis nuns had to flee to Paris.

³The Visitatin nuns of rue Saint-Antoine in Paris.

⁴Louise-Eugénie de Fontaine (Fontaines), Superior at rue Saint-Antoine, born in Paris of Huguenot parents on March 12, 1608, entered the Visitatin Monastery (rue Saint-Antoine) in
the harm done to you, and not because of any special knowledge I have of the state of affairs. We cannot go wrong in putting Our Lord's advice into practice. Then again, the pressure being put on you by the relatives of your little girls, who may know more than I, gives me a sense of urgency myself.

1531. - JEAN LE VACHER TO SAINT VINCENT

[Tunis, between 1648 and 1660]¹

Two galleys left yesterday on a raid, with more than five hundred Christian slaves on board. By the grace of God, all of them have put themselves in a good state. Oh! what a sorry day that was for them, and how many blows those wicked renegades in charge rained upon their poor bodies! I am well aware that convicts on the French galleys are treated no better, but the difference is that convicts in France are condemned for their crimes there, whereas the slaves in Barbary undergo all their punishment and suffering only because they are good Christians, faithful to God.

The day these poor men received Communion and were then taken to the galleys, I prepared a little feast for them, and had more than five hundred rolls and the meat from two steers distributed to them. I also had

¹The length of time Jean Le Vacher remained in Tunis during Saint Vincent's lifetime.

a quintal\(^2\) of white crackers given to each galley to be dispensed to those who got sick during the voyage.

From there I went to visit the slaves in Sidi-Regeppe. I found them unchained, so I realized that their master had kept his word to me because the last time I saw him he had promised me to take those unbearable irons off them. I found among them six adolescent boys between the ages of sixteen and eighteen. They had been slaves for four or five years and had been unable to get permission to leave the place where they were housed; consequently, it had always been impossible for them to go to confession and Communion as the others had done. I prepared them for both sacraments and, after hearing their confessions, told them to prepare their poor sheds as decently as they could and said that I would bring them the Blessed Sacrament the next day in the same way I bring it to the sick.

And so I did. After celebrating Holy Mass in Annunciade prison, I brought this Divine Treasure to those poor slaves, followed by all the Christians I met in the streets of Bizerte. O Dieu! how devoutly and lovingly those poor young boys welcomed that holy visit! The tears of joy and consolation falling from their eyes compelled everyone present to weep, too—not so much for their wretched situation as because they understood how happy they were. I heard the confession of a seventh boy, who had fallen ill the night before, and gave him Communion; then I gave him Extreme Unction, and he died soon after. I had to spend the rest of the time in the service and assistance of the sick in the prisons.

1532. - TO CLAUDE DUFOUR, IN SEDAN

August 3, 1652

In reply to your letter, I agree that it was very wrong to lease the tithes to Huguenots. I was not aware of it, and I must admit that I am deeply grieved by it. I will write my thoughts on that to Monsieur [Coglée]\(^1\) some other time, since it is not the right

\(^2\)A quintal equals approximately 220 pounds.

Letter 1532. - Reg. 2, pp. 160 and 82.

\(^1\)Reg. 2 omitted his name, but Saint Vincent is evidently speaking here of the Superior of the Sedan house.
moment to do so just now, lest he surmise that you were the one who told me.\footnote{The first fragment ends here.}

The present state of public affairs puts us in such a difficult situation here that, to my great regret, I still have not been able to read the manuscript you sent me. I will do so at the first free moment God sees fit to give me; then I will also have some of the men here read it. After that I will tell you their opinion and mine. In the meantime, you must understand that we have always considered the writing of books a hindrance to our work, and that for this reason the custom was not to be introduced into the Company. However, since no rule, however general, does not have some exception, we shall see whether it is advisable to have yours printed.

1533. - TO MADEMOISELLE DE LAMOIGNON

August 4, 1652

Mademoiselle,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

One of our good Ladies of Charity had asked me if the Queen of Poland was entrusting to the Ladies of Charity the distribution of the twelve thousand livres Her Majesty is donating for the poor of Paris and the surrounding areas. I told her no. What gave rise to this idea is the fact that I told the company of Ladies that Her Majesty had paid me the compliment of allowing me to assure the Ladies that, if they wished to borrow four thousand livres from this sum of twelve thousand livres for urgent necessities, Her Majesty would certainly send them what they needed. So, Mademoiselle, I

Letter 1533. - Reg. 1, f° 72 v°, copy made from the original autograph letter. This is the last letter in Reg. 1; it was continued on a page that is now lost.
beg you most humbly to set the Ladies straight regarding this idea that the Queen of Poland has entrusted this distribution to them. I assure you that I never said that, not...

1534. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

God be praised that you are ready to do His Will in all things and everywhere and to go to live and die wherever He chooses to call you! This is the disposition of good servants of God and of truly apostolic men, who are attached to nothing. It is the mark of the true children of God, who are always free to correspond to the plans of such a worthy Father. I thank Him for this on your behalf, with lively sentiments of love and gratitude. I am sure that your own heart, prepared in this way, will receive abundant graces from heaven to do much good on earth. I ask this of His Divine Goodness.

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3When the Queen of Poland sent the twelve thousand livres in April, she had expressed the desire that the distribution be entrusted to Madeleine de Lamoyne and Mother Angélique Arnauld. The latter consulted her on May 16 as to the use of the money (cf. Lettres, vol. II, p. 115), suggesting that "a certain amount could be lent to some, then passed on to other needy persons when the first recipients were able to pay it back. I have still another idea, which would be to buy cows and lease them to our poor people; if they can pay, we could give the price to others." On June 9 the royal benefactress replied that she was satisfied with these suggestions. It is easy to imagine the astonishment of Mother Angélique when she heard in July that the Queen had reneged on her original intention and was entrusting the distribution of the twelve thousand livres solely to the Ladies of Charity! She wrote to Madeleine de Lamoyne expressing her surprise (cf. Appendix 5 in this volume). Saint Vincent was consulted; this letter (no. 1533) is his answer. Allier took advantage of this misunderstanding and of a mistaken date, attributable to Alphonse Follot (op. cit., p. 243), to cast unkind and unfounded insinuations on the Ladies of Charity, the Saint, and the editor of his letters. (Cf. Raoul Allier, La cabale des dévots [Paris: Colin, 1902], p. 85.)

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Monsieur Blatiron has told us of the blessing God has given to your work in Corsica,¹ and I cannot refrain from telling you what a consolation that is for the Company here, and for me in particular. I am going to send this report to all our houses to edify and encourage them, by your example, to undertake many things for the service of Our Lord and to rely on Him in times of difficulties, which He uses as a basis to merit success. I thank Him infinitely for the results of that mission and for your safe return. May His Divine Goodness be pleased to preserve you and be more and more glorified in and by you!

Each quarter when your brother has requested it, I have always given him a written consent, under my personal seal, to withdraw your pension from City Hall. Now he has come to tell me that the disbursing officials are raising objections to paying him because they do not recognize my seal. So, he has asked me for this consent to be notarized, not just for one quarter but permanently. I did not want to do this for him without your advice. Please let me know if you approve my giving him my notarized authorization, on your behalf, to collect the said pension for two or three years. I have already done this for one quarter only, while awaiting your instructions, to save him the trouble of coming here every three months.

¹Cf. no. 1514.
I recommend myself to your prayers and am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Martin, Priest of the Mission, in Genoa

August 16, 1652

Thank you for sending me a report of the present state of your house. I see some straw in it and some good grain. We must not hope for anything else from the condition of mortal men; we have to wait until we are in heaven to find pure wheat. I hope that God in His goodness will draw strength from these weaknesses and His glory from our miseries. Let us humble ourselves and, while working to support others, let us strive to make ourselves pleasing to God and to those with whom we live.

You keep asking me for M. Ennery for Corsica, but I do not think he is gentle enough for that region, where the people are uncouth and used to being rough. They must be won over by kindness and cordiality, for evils are cured by their contrary. I have warned this good priest of his fault, which comes from his nature. I think he is trying to correct it; we shall see how effective he is in doing so. I have not yet mentioned this journey to him.
1537. - TO A COADJUTOR BROTHER,¹ IN THE GENOA HOUSE

August 16, 1652

Your letter consoled me greatly, on the one hand, because I saw the basic goodness of your soul, which makes you want to please God. On the other hand, although this desire is proper, it gives you other desires which are immoderate, and because they have distressed you, they have distressed me, too. I have since seen, in a letter from M. Blatiron, that you have recovered peace of mind, and I thank God for this. I ask Him to confirm you in it so that nothing can trouble you any longer and still less make you fail in the support you owe your brothers or in the fidelity demanded by the grace of your vocation—the two things that have been a source of temptation to you.

By “temptation” I mean the urge which prompted you to go off alone to the country to instruct the poor and serve the sick; first of all, because the teaching of divine matters is not one of the functions of the laity. A person must have received Holy Orders to preach the Word of God; otherwise, this would be a disorder and would encroach upon the office of priests, who alone have the right to teach Christian truths publicly.

Secondly, if you were to go and serve the sick, it would be in a hospital or in their own homes. If it were in a hospital, alas! poor Brother, you would be going from the frying pan into the fire, for so many painful crosses and contradictions are encountered there that the ones about which you are complaining are nothing in comparison. The work is heavy, times of rest are short and interrupted, repugnance is certain, and reproaches and insults are frequent there. Almost all the poor grumble about things because they are never satisfied and usually complain to both the devout persons who visit them and the Administrators who are in charge of them.

¹French by birth,” the register adds. This was probably Brother Sébastien Nodo (cf. no. 1565), born about 1603 in the Rouen diocese, entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1633.
They even make false reports to them about those who serve them because the latter have refused them something. Those poor servants are harassed on all sides, having as many supervisors and critics as there are masters, chaplains, and persons who have some responsibility in those houses. This is what our poor Daughters of Charity find the hardest.

If your intention is not to stay in a hospital but rather to seek out the sick poor here and there in the country, I do not know how you would go about this nor what assistance you might give them, unless you have ample resources to keep up this work and to alleviate their penury. You would soon tire of going begging for yourself and for them. Whatever way you look at it, I see insurmountable difficulties in this.

Furthermore, these are only suggestions of the evil spirit who, to jeopardize your salvation, suggests to you extraordinary works that are beyond your strength, under the fine pretext of practicing, on your own, the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, as if our Company were not making its chief concern to serve the poor people in all these ways, even the sick in hospitals and in their own homes. Look at what has been done for the past two years in the border areas of Champagne and Picardy by many of our priests and Brothers—as many as sixteen or eighteen of them. Look also at what is being done in the environs of Paris by six or seven of our men, who are looking after both the spiritual and corporal needs of the poor abandoned people.

Why do we give missions in France and Italy? Is it not to instruct the country people and to assist the sick who are needy? As a member of the body, you have a share in the labor and merit of these works of the Congregation. If you were cut off from it, you would certainly work at this much less than you do now, like others who have left, returning to the world to be more free to do so, but not doing the good they had planned to do there.

True, you would also be free, but it would be only to regret at your leisure having deceived yourself by false zeal. So, remain in the state to which God has called you, in which He gives you the
grace to serve Him in an edifying manner, and in which you have all the right signs to convince you that this is where God wants you.

You yourself have always believed and acknowledged this truth. Why, for no good reason, do you now think the contrary? You say simply that you cannot tolerate what is going on among our Brothers, that is, some slight misunderstanding. My reply to that is that even the holiest Companies, like human bodies, are subject to sickness and congestion. Sometimes they are healthy; sometimes ill. No one's health is so good that it is not at times affected in one way or another—if not the whole body, at least some part of it. However, remedies restore us to health, and we see that the weak among us become stronger and those who have fallen rise again, thank God.

I would like to think that the little disagreement about which you wrote me has already passed, that those Brothers are reunited and that, instead of the little quarrels you were hearing, you now see only mutual support and cordiality among them. With the shepherd absent, it has been easy for the wolf to disturb the fold, but now that the Superior has returned, it is at peace. Each is trying to be first in showing respect to the other, and all are helping one another. Not that they still do not commit any faults—the saints committed them, and even the Apostles did not always get along with one another. Our Lord had to put up with a great deal from them.

That being the case, dear Brother, should you be surprised to find something to criticize in those with whom you live? You know that you yourself are not always in the same state. If you are exact today, closely united to God, and a consolation to the whole house, tomorrow you will be out of sorts, indolent, and a source of affliction to others. Then you will need their support, as you have supported them. That is why the Father and Lord of us all has so strongly inculcated reciprocal love in us, knowing how difficult it is for those who do not have it to live happily together.

This is the love we lack, you will tell me. Oh well! dear Brother, apply that to yourself and not to others. Practice humility and
patience; you need these two virtues to attain true charity, and they are also necessary for all who wish to serve Jesus Christ. No type of life in this world is without its crosses. Nevertheless, people have a natural desire to avoid them and everyone imagines that by changing his situation he will be happier. I have rarely seen bishops who did not complain of their situation, although it is so holy and exalted.

If we want to find the manna hidden in our vocation, let us restrict and confine all our desires within it. Let us esteem and love it as a precious gift from the hand of God and try to accomplish His holy Will in it always and in all things. This is my prayer to Him and what I ask you to ask of Him for the whole Company and for me. I am, in His love.

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1538. - TO CARDINAL ANTONIO BARBERINI, PREFECT OF PROPAGANDA FIDE

Paris, August 16, 1652

Monseigneur,

The second letter Your Eminence did me the honor of writing to me regarding the Madagascar mission obliges me to thank God once again for having given His Church such a vigilant shepherd as Your Eminence, who is so concerned about the conversion of unbelievers in that country.

I have just seen, Monseigneur, one of the men in charge of sending ships to that island. I regret to inform Your Eminence that he doubts they will be able to make the voyage this September, as they had planned. They still do not have a ship and are in no hurry to fit one out. The reason for this, Monseigneur, is the present state of France, which has compelled some of those involved in the

venture to leave Paris, and it is causing the rest of them to hold off making the necessary expenditure.

I am really distressed about this delay because we have had one of our priests on that island for the past three years,¹ and have not been able to make any contact with him since this interruption in trading. I inquired about our sending men by another route and was told that the Portuguese have no communication with the island. As for the Dutch, they hold the island of Saint-Maurice,² just about one hundred leagues from there, and sometimes go to Madagascar, but only to one of its tips, where there are no French. The French are at the other end of the island, about one hundred twenty leagues away, and traversing the island is very difficult.

But the greatest difficulty, Monseigneur, would be to sail there on Dutch ships because the Dutch are doing their utmost to become masters of the Indies and to drive out the French. It is even feared that they are paying one of those gentlemen to induce them to abandon the undertaking, with the result that, instead of facilitating our going there, they would prevent it. Nevertheless, I will see once again if we can find some way to send new workers to this nascent Church; in which case, I shall inform the Sacred Congregation.

In the meantime, I most humbly thank Your Eminence for all your kindness to me and the benevolence with which you honor our Little Company, which continues to ask God to preserve Your Eminence. For my part, I renew the offer of my perpetual obedience and am, in the love of Our Lord, Monseigneur, your most humble and very grateful servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL

¹ Not even one was left because Charles Nacquart had died on May 29, 1650. Two years later Saint Vincent was still unaware of this loss.

² Today Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar.
Most Holy Father,

I, most unworthy of all men, prostrate most humbly at the feet of Your Holiness, offer, dedicate, and devote to you myself and our entire little Congregation of the Mission, of which I, though most unworthy, have been appointed Superior General by the Holy Apostolic See. Confident of your paternal affection, with which you graciously hear and receive all your children, even the least, dare I also make known to you the very pitiful state of our France, which is most deserving of compassion?

The royal house is divided by dissensions; the people are split into various factions; cities and provinces are ruined by civil wars; farms, cantons, and towns are destroyed, ruined, and burned. The farmers cannot harvest what they have sown and no longer plant anything for the coming years. Soldiers do as they please; the people are exposed not only to their thefts and pillaging, but also to murder and all kinds of torture. Most of the country people are perishing of starvation if not by the sword. Not even priests escape the soldiers' hands; they are treated with inhuman cruelty, tortured, and killed. Young women are raped, and even nuns are victims of their lust and fury. Churches are profaned, plundered, and destroyed; those left standing are, for the most part, abandoned by their pastors, so the people are deprived of the sacraments, Mass, and almost all other spiritual assistance. But what is horrible to think and even worse to say, the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Body of the Lord is treated very unworthily, even by Catholics. In order to get possession of the sacred vessels, they throw the Holy Eucharist on the ground and trample it underfoot. I dare not, and even cannot, say what is done by heretics, who have no faith in this


1The result of the Fronde.
mystery. It is a small thing to hear or read these things; they must be seen and ascertained with one's own eyes.

I am aware that Your Holiness may justly accuse me of great rashness because I, a private, nameless individual, dare to give such a forcible reminder of these things to the Head and Father of all Christians, who is so well and so fully informed about everything from every nation, especially Christian nations. Sed, quae so, ne indigneris, Domine, si loquar.² Loquar ad Dominum meum, cum sim pulvis et cinis.³ Most Holy Father, there is no other remedy for all these evils of ours, except the help that the paternal care, love, and authority of Your Holiness can bring us. Nor am I unaware that you are deeply distressed by our misfortunes, that you have frequently tried to nip these civil wars in the bud, have sent pontifical letters for this purpose, and have instructed the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Apostolic Nuncio⁴ to intervene effectively in your name, which I know for a fact that he has done with apostolic zeal and, as far as depended on him, has worked admirably for Your Holiness and for God, although to no avail thus far. But, Most Holy Father, there are twelve hours in the day, and what has not succeeded one time may have better results if tried again.

What more can I say? The hand of the Lord is not shortened,⁵ and I firmly believe that God has reserved to the care and solicitude of the Shepherd of His universal Church the glory of obtaining for us in the end rest from our labors, happiness after so many misfortunes, and peace after war; of uniting the royal family, divided by so many dissensions; of bringing relief to the people crushed by such a long war; of bringing back to life the poor, prostrate and almost dead from starvation; of restoring devastated farmlands and afflicted provinces; of rebuilding ruined churches; of giving security to young women; of returning priests and shepherds of souls

²But please do not grow angry, Lord, if I speak up. Cf. Gn 18:30. (NAB)
³I am speaking to my Lord, though I am but dust and ashes. Cf. Gn 18:27. (NAB)
⁴Nicolò di Bagno.
⁵Cf. Is 59:1. (NAB)
to their churches; and, in a word, of giving life back to everyone.

I humbly beg and implore Your Holiness to do this, by the tender mercy of Christ, whose Vicar on earth you are and whose person you represent. I ask you also to give me your blessing.

I am the most humble, most obedient, and most devoted servant of Your Holiness, and your son in Christ.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
most unworthy Superior of the Congregation of the Mission

Paris, August 16, 1652

1540. - TO NICOLAS BONICHON, IN CAHORS

Paris, August 17, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

You did well to obey the Bishop of Sarlat\(^1\) in what he asked you. I shall take the honor of thanking him for the honor he wants to confer on our Little Company and for the confidence he has placed in you, as I have thanked the Bishop of Cahors\(^2\) for his recent favors. May God be the reward of both these holy Bishops and your inspiration in carrying out their holy intentions!

Please find out the intention of the Bishop of Cahors regarding the conferences for the next ordination, and do not use M. de Nans, unless he allows you to do so.

We have no Brother at the Bons-Enfants who has been married nor any who can give you any information on the Huguenot lady

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\(^{1}\)Nicolas Sevin, Bishop of Sarlat and Coadjutor Bishop of Cahors.

\(^{2}\)Alain de Solminihac.
about whom you wrote me. If you let me know her name and where she lived in Paris, I will try to find out the rest.

Nothing new has happened to us that is worth writing. Once again I ask God to give you strength in your heavy labors and, through you, to bless your dear house.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
i.s.C.M.

Neither the Assistant, nor even the Superior of a particular house, has the right to bless vestments. I am the only member of the Company with that authority, but we will try to get it for all the Superiors.

Addressed: Monsieur Bonichon, Priest of the Mission, at the Cahors Seminary, in Cahors

1541. - TO THE CHEVALIER DE CHANDENIER

August 19, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!

Letter 1541. - Reg. 1, p. 3, copy made from the original autograph letter.

1François de Rochechouart, Marquis de Chandenier and Baron de la Tour en Auvergne, lived an unsettled life but was very brave in battle. The Queen, Anne of Austria, whose favor he had won, conferred on him the great honor of coming to his wedding, celebrated at the Palais-Bourbon in 1646 in the King’s presence. On February 10, 1651 he fell into disgrace for refusing to serve in place of the Duc de Gévres and was ordered to sell his office of Captain of the King’s bodyguards. He refused to do so and withdrew to his estates, where Mazarin’s implacable anger pursued him and had him imprisoned in the château of Loches. Misfortune embittered him; his greed and fits of anger were a source of great suffering to his family, especially to his brothers, Louis and Claude. The brothers refused to resign in his favor the abbeys of Tournus and l’Aumône, from which they were already paying him a pension of 20,000 livres. One day, when the Abbot of Tournus was on his way to Rome, François, accompanied by armed men, fell on him and took him prisoner. For two months the irascible Marquis led his brother from château to château, threatening to put him out to sea where he would be washed up on the shores of
Since writing my letter to your brother, the Abbot, which I sent to your mother, Mademoiselle de Chandenier, I have received the one M. Romanesque delivered to me from you. In reply I shall tell you, Monsieur, that apparently you allowed yourself to get carried away by anger. After you reflect in a more reasonable way on the importance of things, I think you will find it advisable to return without delay, on good terms and in agreement with one another, and to leave all your business to be settled here so definitely, with the advice of your friends, that no further difficulties will ever come between you again. In this way, the quarrel that arose will serve only to consolidate the affection which should exist among brothers, and to which, Monsieur, you are exhorted by your most humble and very obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

1542. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, August 30, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Barbery or England, but Louis held fast. Towards the end of his life, the Marquis de Chandenier withdrew to Sainte-Geneviève Abbey, where he died on August 14, 1696, at eighty-five years of age. His name is often mentioned in the Mémoires of Madame de Motteville. (Cf. Général-Comte de Rochechouart, Histoire de la maison de Rochechouart, [2 vols., Paris: E. Allard, 1839], vol. I, pp. 188-217; and the obituary of the Abbot of Toumùs in vol. II of Notices, p. 531.)

2Louis de Chandenier, Abbot of Toumùs.

3Louise de Montberon, married to Jean-Louis de Rochechouart on September 11, 1609, died on May 31, 1654.

4Saint Vincent undoubtedly wrote or meant to write “Madame,” the title due to Chandenier’s mother, as is noted in no. 1552.

Letter 1542. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
I received no letters from you in this mail; they say that delivery has been stopped because of the plague.

I have nothing new to tell you; everything here is in the same state. We had hopes for peace but just now things look very doubtful. As our sick men get better, others fall ill and take their place. M. de la Fosse, who was assisting the sick poor in Étampes, was brought back home on a stretcher by his companion. He has a fever but is not in any danger, thank God. We expect another man, with a persistent fever, from Palaiseau this evening; he is a good Brother from the seminary. Messieurs Le Soudier and Berthe are also sick in Picardy, and, to crown our distress, I learned yesterday that M. Lambert in Poland is also ill with double tertian fever—I mean he was ill when he wrote on July 28. I am waiting impatiently for more letters to find out the course of his illness, but I also submit to God's ways. The King and Queen of Poland are also sick or, rather, they are getting better now.

It is said that ten thousand people a month have been dying in Paris for some time now. Please pray for all of us and for our upcoming ordination; we were hoping not to have it because of the misfortunes of the times, but we are still being burdened with it.

This year we will lose at least twenty-six to thirty hogsheads\(^1\) of wheat, even if we can save the little that has been left us, which is, however, in great danger because most of it is still in granaries in the country. May God be pleased to make use of us and of what we have for His glory!

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Blatiron, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Genoa

\(^1\)A hogshead holds approximately 7.5 bushels of grain; Saint Vincent estimated that some 200 to 230 bushels of grain would be lost.
1543. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

[Shortly after August 22, 1652]  

I am sorry to have to inform you of another piece of news, since it will distress you deeply: God has called to Himself good Monsieur Gilles, the Superior in Crécy. I cannot express to you either the extent of this loss or the sorrow it causes us; however, we shall still endeavor to submit to the good pleasure of God. I recommend the deceased and our sick men to your prayers.

1544. - TO NICOLAS BONICHON, IN CAHORS

Paris, the last day of August, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Today I received your letter of August 16, and I answered all your previous ones two weeks ago. I have nothing new to tell you except that I am enclosing the contract for the foundation of an anniversary Requiem Mass you had sent me to be ratified, which I have done.

I praise God for the strength He gives you to keep up with all your duties and that M. Treffort's health is improving. I have told him how happy this makes me, and I ask you to assure him that my joy is very great because his health is a treasure for the family and for the poor, and so is yours. So, I recommend that you take care

Letter 1543. - Lyons manuscript.
1The date of death of Jean-Baptiste Gilles. The letter was probably written after no. 1542.
2Jean-Baptiste Gilles, who had profound reverence for Saint Vincent, had expressed the wish that, should he survive the Saint, and with the approval of the Company, his heart be buried under the feet of Saint Vincent. (Cf. Arch. Nat., Ms. 211, f° 1.)

of the health of both of you, and of good M. Water as well. On the other hand, I am truly distressed about the illness of your sick men and ask O[ur] L[ord] to make them well soon.

Most of our patients are recovering, thank God, but others are falling sick and taking their place. M. de la Fosse, who was assisting the poor in Étampes, has returned home with a fever. Others have gone to take his place, just as he had replaced the late M. David, who died there doing that holy work, as I have told you. Every day we feel the loss of such a good worker. But, O Dieu! Monsieur, this next loss will undoubtedly touch you deeply! I am speaking of good M. Gilles, whom God took on August 22 in Crécy, where he was Superior. I am not going to tell you how grieved we are because I cannot; all of you knew him well enough to imagine it.

God is choosing to try us in another way as well, namely, by the illness of M. Lambert in Poland, of Messieurs Le Soudier and Berthe in Picardy, and by the public misfortunes, which increase daily, causing us crushing losses.

I recommend to your prayers the deceased and the living members of the Company, the healthy and the sick, and all our needs in general. For our part, we continue faithfully to offer you to God, in whom I am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
is.C.M.

Enclosed is a letter for the Bishop of Cahors. I will forward M. Treffort’s letters.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Bonichon

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1Jacques Water (James Water), born in Cork (Ireland) in 1616, entered the Congregation of the Mission at Saint-Lazare on October 9, 1638. He was ordained a priest in 1642, took his vows in 1644, and was sent to the Cahors Seminary, where he was in 1646, 1654, and 1662. He returned to Ireland in 1662.

2Jacques Le Soudier.
Reverend Father,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I was greatly consoled to receive your letter, coming as it does from a good servant of God and an apostolic worker, laboring most successfully in a country in such great need of men like you. I am indeed anxious to see some of your Fathers to rejoice with them at your good results there, including the important one about which you wrote to me. I thank God for all the graces He bestows on you and, through you, on so many souls. I thank you, Reverend Father, for remembering me on this occasion.

Would to God that it were in my power to be of service to that person; I would gladly do so. I shall, in fact, ask several good persons to try to find some employment or situation for him. However, I must tell you that it is greatly to be feared that none may be found right now that would be suitable for him because of the misfortunes of the times, when everyone is getting rid of personnel. People devoted to the assistance of their neighbor are using all their energy and aims to snatch the poor from the jaws of death and poor girls from occasions of sin.

This is the state to which this poor region, for a radius of ten leagues around Paris, has been reduced. Just some days ago we had twenty thousand refugees in that situation in this city, who had to be fed for a long time, plus a large number of sick persons we were assisting in the rural areas and are continuing to do so at great

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Letter 1545. - Archives of the Discalced Carmelites, Rome, original signed letter; photocopy in the Archives of the Mission, Curia Generalis, Rome.

1César de Saint-Bonaventure, of the Order of Discalced Carmelites, was the son of Piet Bert, a converted Calvinist pastor. He died on October 25, 1665, after having successfully evangelized his native Holland.

2Alexandre-Gabriel de Bosses, a converted Protestant, bearer of the letter of recommendation from Father César.
expense, which we can hardly meet. Those who have an income, cannot draw it; those who have land, have not harvested their crops this year, and nothing can be planted for next year. With this prospect of even greater poverty, charitable donations have fallen off considerably.

As for us, Reverend Father, we are in no position to exercise this charity toward that good young man in the way you would like; far from taking on anyone new, we are obliged to let some of our own people go. No one pays anything; some farms of ours have been pillaged, and we are truly at a loss about how to manage in these hard times, when we are receiving nothing from our modest revenue. I am distressed that this prevents us from contributing anything to the good work you have begun.

I ask Our Lord to give you the means of doing it better and to continue to give you the grace of doing an infinity of similar works for the extension of His glory. We shall see whether I can effectively comply with your wishes later on, for I desire to do so with all my heart. I entreat you, in the name of God, not to allow my present powerlessness to discourage you for the future, when opportunities will present themselves for me to use my influence for the service of God and yours. I am, in His love, Reverend Father, your most humble and obedient servant.

VINCENT DE PAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur César de Saint-Bonaventure, chaplain and preacher of the King’s Ambassadors and Ministers in Holland, at The Hague.
1546. - BERTRAND DUCOURNAU TO SAINT VINCENT
WITH THE SAINT’S REPLIES

[AFTER 1645] 1

Q. - The Daughters of Charity of Forges 2 say that the Pastor wants to give them the chalice from the Church for safekeeping. Mademoiselle Le Gras is asking whether they should take or refuse it and, if they do take it, should some document be drawn up, stating that the Pastor wanted them to be responsible for it?

A. - I do not think these formalities are necessary.

Q. - Little boys who have misbehaved in school are being sent to them to be whipped, as though their teacher were incapable of doing so himself. They are asking what they should do.

A. - It is absolutely unsuitable for the Sisters to have boys in their school, much less to punish those who are sent to them.

1547. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

Please spare nothing either for medicine, food, or rest, and do whatever the doctor tells you. For our part, we will ask God to restore you to health and to grant you the grace of making good use of your illness.

Letter 1546. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1The earliest date that can be assigned this letter is 1645, the year Brother Ducournau became Saint Vincent’s secretary. Furthermore, the Daughters of Charity were not established in Serqueux, near Forges-les-Eaux (Seine-Maritime), until November 13, 1645, by M. de Saint-Luc, castellan of Taillefontaines.

2Forges-les-Eaux (Seine-Maritime); for several years Saint Vincent had formerly gone to its mineral springs for his health. Because the Pastor of Serqueux was deaf, Saint Louise had allowed the Sisters to go to the Pastor of Forges for confessions. (Cf. Spiritual Writings, L. 292, p. 431.)

I thank God, Madame, for the grace He has granted His Church in restoring you and His Sacred Majesty, the King, to health. I pray it will last for years to come and that He will sanctify Your Majesties more and more and, through you, the people He has entrusted to you.

M. Lambert writes me in all his letters of the incomparable acts of kindness Your Majesties have done for him during his illness, and for all you are constantly doing for the Little Company and that, just recently, Madame, you have purchased a house for its establishment and assigned a substantial revenue for its maintenance.

Now, since these are truly royal acts of charity, similar hearts would be required to thank Your Majesty in proportion to the grandeur of the matter. Since I am a miserable earthworm, unworthy of conveying this thanks to you, I ask Our Lord to be Himself your thanks and your reward. Should He see fit to draw some glory from the services of your Missionaries, I ask Him to attribute the merit to Your Majesty. From what I hear, Madame, you acquire new merits daily by the unprecedented good you do everywhere and for all sorts of persons. In this way you show everyone the great goodness of God through your own, and the infinite gratitude Poland owes Him for having given it one of the best Queens in the world.

May His Divine Goodness be pleased to continue to bestow His choicest blessings on the sacred persons of the King and Your Majesty and on all your ways of acting! These are the prayers and wishes of all good people here, especially the Ladies of Charity, who are very faithful in that. I, too, shall be faithful all my life in
asking God for the grace to bear more worthily than I do, Madame, the title of your most humble, obedient, and grateful servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

1549. - TO THE QUEEN, ANNE OF AUSTRIA

September 5, 1652

Madame,

The Bishop of Montauban, formerly Bishop of Utica,¹ asked me to do myself the honor of writing to Your Majesty regarding a man named Labadie,² who holds many unorthodox opinions about our holy religion. He has done a great deal of harm in Picardy and in the Bazas diocese, where the Bishop³ brought him and his supporters to court. In the end, to escape the law, he became a Huguenot in Montauban, where he is scheming to become a minister. The Bishop fears he may do more damage to the Church in that capacity than as a private individual and that Your Majesty should be informed of this.

That is what I am doing, Madame, so that, if Your Majesty approves, she may be pleased to tell Monsieur de Moucaut, deputy of this religion,⁴ that she does not want this man to be made a minister. May she be pleased also to write or have someone write to M. de Saint-Luc that it is in the King's interest that this man not enter the ministry because he is seditious, a blunderer, and the author of new heresies; that Your Majesty wants him [M. de

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Saint-Luc] to discuss this with some of the leading members of the synod and whoever is to represent the King there on the twenty-fourth of this month; and that it is not that the King wants to hinder the liberty granted them to practice their religion and to ordain ministers, but simply to give orders that this troublemaker not cause any difficulties between the religion and the State, whose interests are closely allied to those of religion."

This then, Madame, is the most humble representation which the Bishop of Montauban wanted me to make to Your Majesty. I do so, Madame, with all possible humility, and I renew here the offer of my perpetual obedience to Your Majesty. I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Madame, your most humble and very obedient servant and subject.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

1550. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[Around 1652]

When mention is made of permissions obtained from the Sister Assis-

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5The Edict of Nantes (April 15, 1598) granted a legal status or a kind of toleration to the Huguenots. The observance of the Reformed religion—permission to hold religious services in their own households—was permitted to nobles having the right of criminal jurisdiction and to the citizens of a certain number of cities and towns. Nevertheless, the edict prohibited public worship among Huguenots in all episcopal and archiepiscopal cities, at the King's court, and in Paris, as well as within a radius of twenty miles of the capital. Montauban was one of the centers of the Reformed religion.

The religious toleration guaranteed by the Edict of Nantes was revoked by Louis XIV on October 18, 1685. The observance of the Reformed religion in France was forbidden, and children had to be educated in the Catholic faith.

Letter 1550. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Approximate date of the rough draft of the Rules for the Daughters of Charity on which Saint Louise is giving her observations. Charpy (Écrits spirituels, op. cit., p. 385) dates this letter [Around 1651].
tant, is it not necessary always to add: "in the absence of the Directress?" Is the term "Directress" appropriate? For the reading required monthly, would it not be better to have it weekly? It is really essential that the Sisters in the parishes should not visit one another except in case of illness. Should an article be drawn up on this?

These are my observations, Most Honored Father, but, in the name of God, disregard my notes and remarks and do what you think God is asking of us. Add to that the maxims and instructions that might encourage us and keep us attached and exact to the observance of all these points of our Rules. It seems to me that, being as we are, we do not pay sufficient attention to our obligations, since we do not consider them as such.

Please give your blessing to all your poor Daughters, and ask God for the mercy your servant needs to be truly, Most Honored Father, your poor daughter and very grateful servant.

L. de M.

1551. - TO CARDINAL MAZARIN

September 11, 1652

Monseigneur,

I venture to write to Your Eminence to entreat you to allow me to tell you that I now see the city of Paris returned to its former state and clamoring for the King and Queen. There is no one anywhere who does not say the same thing to me. Even the Ladies of Charity, who are among the most prominent citizens in Paris, tell me that, if Their Majesties approach the city, a whole regiment of Ladies

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2Title used by Saint Louise and given to the Superioress General in official documents of the period.

Letter 1551. - Reg. I, f° 45, copy made from the signed, annotated rough draft.

1The clergy of Paris, led by Cardinal de Retz, had gone to Compiègne on September 9 to urge the King to return to the capital. The King simply requested that "the Parisians do something to hasten this return by no longer tolerating the violent influence of those persons anxious to prolong the disturbances." This answer was obviously suggested by Mazarin. Saint Vincent wrote this letter in order to overcome the resistance of the Cardinal-Minister.
will go out to give them a triumphant welcome. Therefore, Monseigneur, I think Your Eminence would be acting in a manner worthy of your goodness to advise the King and Queen to return and take possession of their city and of the hearts of the people of Paris. But because there are many things to be said against this, here are what I consider the greatest objections, and my response to them. I most humbly entreat Your Eminence to read and reflect on them.

The first objection is that, although there are many good persons in Paris and a number of fine citizens who feel the way I mentioned, there are still many who have the opposite opinion and others who are somewhere in between. My reply to this, Monseigneur, is that I think there are very few who have the opposite opinion—at least I know of none—and that those who are indifferent, if there are any, will be carried along by the number and strength of those who are very much in favor of it. This includes most of Paris, except perhaps for those who might fear punishment, unless they were reassured by an amnesty.

Second, that there is reason to fear that the presence of the leaders of the opposition may repeat another day of the Palace and of the Hôtel de Ville. My reply is that one of them will be delighted at this opportunity to be restored to favor with the King, and the other, seeing Paris obedient to the King once again, will submit. There should be no doubt about that; I know it on good authority.

Third, some persons may perhaps tell Your Eminence that Paris

2Mazarin was suspicious of several Ladies of Charity and especially of their President, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, whom he suspected of connivance with the frondeurs. (Cf. Jules Cardinal Mazarin, Lettres [9 vols., Paris: Chéruel, 1872-1906], vol. V, pp. 4, 213, 346, 358, 438, 439, 475.)

3Allusion to June 25, the day on which the people invaded the palace and pummeled the Counsellors in the Parlement to oblige them to end their deliberations.

4Allusion to the riot of July 4, which resulted in the massacres at the Hôtel de Ville.

5The Due d'Orléans.

6The Prince de Condé.
should be punished to teach it a lesson. I think, Monseigneur, that it is advisable for Your Eminence to remember the conduct of the Kings under whom Paris revolted. You will find that they proceeded cautiously and that when Charles VI⁷ punished a large number of rebels, disarmed the city, and took away its chains, he only poured oil on the fire and inflamed the rest of the people. The result was that for sixteen years they continued the insurrection, opposed the King more than ever, banding together for that purpose with all the enemies of the State,⁸ and in the end neither Henry III⁹ nor the King himself¹⁰ has been any better off for having blocked them.

If it is said that Your Eminence will make peace with Spain and will come in triumph to fall upon Paris to teach it a lesson, I reply, Monseigneur, that far from becoming better established with the people in the kingdom by making peace with Spain, you will, on the contrary, be hated more than ever, if you hand over to Spain all its possessions we now hold, as people say Your Eminence wishes to do.

In that case, Your Eminence should fear, and rightly so, what happened to Charles III,¹¹ Regent of the kingdom and crowned King apparent. He abandoned Normandy and some towns in Flanders to the English, on condition that they be dependent on the sovereign power of the crown. This stirred up the people so strongly against him that an extraordinary meeting of the Estates was held to discuss the matter. This poor Prince was forced to flee

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⁷Charles VI reigned from 1380 to 1422.
⁸The Maillotin Rebellion (1382), severely punished by the King after the victory of Rosbecque; the tentative constitutional reform of the Carmelites, Eustache de Pavilly; the excesses of the Cabochians (1413); the civil war of the Burgundians and Armagnacs (1410-35).
⁹After the murder of the Guises during the civil war known as the Wars of Religion (1562-98), Henry III (1574-89) placed Paris under siege. He was assassinated in Saint-Cloud by Jacques Clément.
¹⁰Louis XIV. It appears that Saint Vincent, referring to violent political upheavals in French history, is advising Mazarin that Louis XIV, for whom Queen Anne of Austria and Mazarin ruled during the Regency, would suffer a similar lack of support.
¹¹Charles III reigned from 893 to 923.
incognito and died miserably in a village where he was in hiding.\footnote{Saint Vincent made a jumble of history here. Charles III did not yield Normandy to the English, but to the people of Normandy; he did not die hidden in a village, but as a prisoner in the château de Péronne. The King who gave some towns of Flanders to the English was Charles V (1364-80).}

If it is thought that before Their Majesties return to this city, it is better to deal with Spain and the Princes,\footnote{War with Spain, an outgrowth of the Thirty Years' War (1618-48), ended in 1659 with the Treaty of the Pyrenees. Two of Spain's French allies, the Duc de Lorraine and Condé, were granted pardons.} allow me to tell you, Monseigneur, that in that case Paris will be included in the articles of peace and will be indebted for its amnesty to Spain and those Princes and not to the King, and will be so grateful that it will side with them at the first opportunity.

Some persons might tell Your Eminence that your private interests demand that the King should not pardon the people and should not return to Paris without you, but rather that affairs should be embroiled and the war kept up to prove that it is not Your Eminence who is whipping up the storm but those evil-minded persons who refuse to submit to the will of their Prince. My reply, Monseigneur, is that it does not really matter whether Your Eminence return before or after the King, provided you do return. Once the King is reestablished in Paris, His Majesty can send for Your Eminence whenever he wishes; I know that for a fact. Furthermore, if Your Eminence is concerned mainly with the welfare of the King, the Queen, and the State, and you do what you can to reunite the royal house and to return Paris to obedience to the King, this will certainly win people back, Monseigneur, and you will soon be recalled in a proper manner, as I said. But, as long as the people are in a state of rebellion, it is greatly to be feared that peace will never be made on that condition. Public folly comes into play at that point, and experience shows that those stricken with this disorder are never cured by the same causes by which the wheels of their minds have been warped.

If it is true, as people say, that Your Eminence has given orders
that the King should not listen to the Princes, nor give them passes to go to see. Their Majesties, nor that any deputation or representation be heard, and to that end Your Eminence has surrounded the King and Queen with strangers—your servants—who block access on all sides to prevent people from approaching Their Majesties, then it is greatly to be feared, Monseigneur, that, if this continues, the opportunity may be lost and the hatred of the people may turn into rage. On the contrary, if Your Eminence advises the King to come and receive the acclamations of the people, he will win the hearts of all those in the kingdom who are well aware of your influence with the King and Queen, and everyone will be indebted to Your Eminence for this favor.14

This, then, is what I take the liberty to put before you, Monseigneur, confident that you will not take it amiss, especially when you realize that I have told no one at all, except one of Your Eminence's servants, that I am writing to you. In addition, I have no contact with my former friends who have views contrary to the will of the King,15 have not shown this letter to anyone whomso-

14The King, urged personally by his uncle, Gaston d'Orléans, one of the Regents, then by a deputation of the citizen militia, finally gave in. He made his entry into the capital on October 21 amidst public acclamation, and granted a broad amnesty to the rebels.

15The Saint had particularly in mind Cardinal de Retz.

Jean-François-Paul de Gondi, Abbé de Buzay, Cardinal de Retz, son of Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi, General of the Galleys, and Françoise-Marguerite de Silly. On June 13, 1643, he was named Coadjutor to his uncle, Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, and was consecrated on January 31, 1644. Although he played an active role in the troubles of the Fronde, the Queen—no doubt to win him over—obtained the Cardinal's hat for him on February 19, 1652. Discontented with his influence and plots, Mazarin had him imprisoned at Vincennes. Becoming Archbishop upon the death of his uncle (1654), and consequently more dangerous to the Prime Minister, Cardinal de Retz was transferred to the château of Nantes, from which he escaped to Spain and then to Italy. In Rome the Priests of the Mission gave him hospitality, upon the order of the Sovereign Pontiff. Because of this, Mazarin very nearly let all the force of his anger fall upon Saint Vincent and his Congregation. After the accession of Pope Alexander VII (1655), who was less benevolent to him than Innocent X, Cardinal de Retz left Rome taking a long journey to Franche-Comté, Germany, Belgium, and Holland. He returned to France in 1662, renounced the archbishopric of Paris, and received in exchange Saint-Denis Abbey. Age and trials had made him wiser; during the last four years of his life, some persons even considered him pious. In this peaceful, studious, simple-mannered man, concerned with paying off his numerous creditors, no one would have recognized the ambitious, flighty, and restless Prelate
ever, and will live and die in the special obedience I owe to Your Eminence, which O[ur] L[ord] has given me. I assure you of this, Monseigneur, and am forever your most humble, obedient, and faithful servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

1552. - TO LOUIS DE CHANDENIER

September 15, 1652

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

The Pastor of Saint-Nicolas has just sent me word that M. Delètre, a friend and servant of your family and a parishioner of his, spoke to him about arranging a reconciliation in the affair with your brother, the Chevalier. He then spoke with Madame and Mademoiselle de Chandenier, who had gone to see him with Madame de Nesmond. The outcome of their conversation was that it would be advisable for the Abbot of l’Aumöne and you, Mon-

who had stirred up Paris and made the powerful Mazarin tremble. The Cardinal died on August 24, 1679.

There is reason to believe that this letter displeased Mazarin because a few days later he dismissed Saint Vincent from the Council of Conscience.

Letter 1552. - Reg. 1, f° 71, copy made from the original autograph letter.

1Hippolyte Péret, Pastor of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet parish in Paris.
2François de Chandenier.
3Marie and sister of the Chandenier brothers. The latter, Marie de Chandenier, never married. She died in Paris in 1701 at eighty-seven years of age and left her estate to Guillaume de Lamoignon, Chief Justice of the Parlement.
4Anne de Lamoignon, wife of François-Théodore de Nesmond, Presiding Judge of the Court of Justice.
5The abbey of l’Aumöne or Le Petit-Chesaux, situated in the commune of La Colombe (Loir-et-Cher) in the Marchenois forest, was dependent on the Benedictine Order. Its Abbot, Claude-Charles de Chandenier, became Abbot of Moutiers-Saint-Jean in 1655. From 1650 to 1660 his life merges with that of his brother, Louis, Abbot of Tournus, whom he followed to
sieur, to agree with the Chevalier to settle this dispute through arbitrators, whom you and he will choose, after you come back here, and to refer to them all the disagreements you have among you. To put this promise into execution, you will decide from there on a person of high position in this city, to whom the Chevalier and you will write, asking him to vouch for the word you, he, and your brother will give one another, and that I will be asked to write to you about it.

That, Monsieur, is what I now do with all possible humility and affection. I beg you to accept it, Monsieur, in order to put an end to this affair.

1553. - TO JEAN DEHORGNY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME
September 20, 1652

I have asked you, and I ask you once again, not to be in any hurry with those good priests of Orvieto, and not to commit yourself in any way, if they speak of a union. In the event that they do, they should be most earnest in their request and very well disposed to adapt themselves to our little Institute and customs. Let me know exactly what their intentions are and what happens in all this. Perhaps they only want to procure our establishment in that diocese and then join the Company, as if there were no Community keeping them together.

You say you do not know how to settle the question of our vows with them. Make no pretense, Monsieur, but tell them clearly that

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Alet, Paris, and Rome. Their mutual affection made them inseparable. Both refused a bishopric; both loved Saint Vincent and his Congregation deeply. Claude lived until May 18, 1710. François Wael, Superior General, announced his death to his confreres and recommended the deceased to their prayers. A long, beautiful epitaph written on Claude de Chandenier’s tombstone is found in Collet (op. cit., vol. I, pp. 584-88).

Letter 1553. - Reg. 2, pp. 89 and 72.
we take simple vows, so that if they do not want to take them, they should not expect to join us. ¹

Like you, I realize that it is not good to make so many small establishments, and, with the help of God's grace, I intend to be attentive to this. However, it is also very difficult to make larger ones in the beginning of a Company like ours. Our situation is not like that of the Mendicants. All they have to do is pitch their tent and they are established. But we, who do not take anything from the poor, need revenue, and since we need a fair amount of it, we do not get it all at once, nor do we always get it in the towns to make establishments only there.

If we had not accepted Notre-Dame de Lorm, which is in the country, perhaps the opportunity to make an establishment in the Montauban diocese might never have presented itself. Perhaps also, with time, God will make use of this means to call us to the town.² So we do what we can first, and gradually Providence arranges things for the better.

¹554. - TO GERARD BRIN, IN DAX

Paris, September 22, 1652

Monsieur,

I received two of your letters, dated August 30 and September 9. I am very sorry to hear about your illness, and I ask Our Lord to heal you. For your part, do all you can to get well, sparing neither time nor remedies. See that you are well taken care of and purged. The people where you are usually drink cider; perhaps it would be better for you than wine because in Ireland you drink only beer.

¹The first fragment ends here.
²That is exactly what happened.

Since you are constantly traveling—sometimes to Saint-Pandelon, sometimes to Pouy, sometimes to Bayonne, and other times elsewhere—we cannot say that the air in Dax is bad for you. Even if it were, because it does not circulate, it could do you no harm with all your moving about. Then, too, are not people everywhere sick? There are very few persons here who have not been ill this year. We still have several, and our infirmarians have had so much work that they, too, have succumbed and are ill themselves.

As for your illness, I hope it will go away with a little care. I ask God for this with all my heart. Perhaps you are already over it; in that case, this letter may reach you in Pouy or Hinx, since you sent me word that you would be able to open the mission there at the end of the month. When I hear that it is finished, I shall be very glad. There is no need for the Bishop to be concerned about expenses, since you have enough to cover them. After the mission you will be welcomed by M. Bajoue as if you were a man sent from heaven. He really needs you, and awaits you eagerly and patiently, as he told me in his last letter. You may take a hundred livres with you and leave the rest with M. de Saint-Martin.

I have not heard that the plague is anywhere near Agen or Montauban. There may be the usual illnesses there, as everywhere else.

Thank you for wanting to come and see me. I would be consoled to see you, too—more than I can tell you—but, until God makes provision for that, let us see one another in Him and conform ourselves to His Will, which is to be preferred to any other good. What you will be doing in the places where He calls you will benefit you more than the good example you might find here.

To get here right now from anywhere is very difficult. You

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1 A hamlet near Dax.
2 Another hamlet near Dax.
3 Jacques Desclaux, Bishop of Dax.
4 Emerand Bajoue, Superior of Notre-Dame de La Rose.
5 Jean de Saint-Martin, Councillor for the chancery in Dax.
think, however, that by boarding a ship in Bayonne and disembarking at Nantes or La Rochelle you could reach Paris with no danger. This is not the case; you would be in the same difficulty in those towns as you are now. Look at M. Barry, who was in Nantes; I had written to him to come here, but he found the roads so impassable that, even though he was just as anxious as you to get here, he was, nevertheless, obliged to stop at Richelieu, where he still is.

I approve the request you made to M. de Burgo to send us the balance of the boarding fees for Thomas and Peter Butler. We shall be much obliged to him for going to that trouble. As for the vestments and furnishings you may have left there, if he sends them to us, fine, but do not put any pressure on him to do so. How do we know whether or not God will restore peace and religion to Ireland, and whether or not we will still have to send men there? I also do not want you to revoke the order you have already given him on this matter.

M. du Chesne has sent someone to get Peter Butler from the Collège des Bons-Enfants. I have to tell him that his father wants him to go home and to get a written declaration from him of how long we have boarded him and the amount to which these fees come. When this is done, I shall let you know, and he will remain at the Bons-Enfants because our minor seminary has been pillaged and is in danger of being so again, so we have left the place and sent the students home.

M. Alméras was Superior there and is now Director of the

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6Thomas Butler is not listed as a Vincentian, nor is he mentioned again in the letters of the Saint, so he may have spent some time in Saint-Charles Seminary and returned home.

Peter Butler (Pierre Buthleer in Notices, vol. 1, p. 482, and vol. V (Supplement), p. 102), born in April 1632 in the Cashel diocese (Ireland), entered the Congregation of the Mission in Richelieu on August 22, 1654, and took his vows there on August 13, 1656 (cf. vol. VII, no. 2694). This same letter (no. 2694) and others speak of Saint Vincent's attempt in 1658-59 to obtain dispensational letters for Peter Butler's ordination. The title for ordination in the Congregation of the Mission and the authority of the Superior General were at variance with the attempts of Propaganda Fide to have all Irish clerical students ordained on the continent take an oath to return as missionaries to Ireland.

7Pierre du Chesne.

8Saint-Charles Seminary.
Internal Seminary. M. Portail is still First Assistant and M. Grimal is Second Assistant. M. du Chesne was Superior at the Bons-Enfants, but in two or three days he is going to leave to make some visitations. He will begin with Le Mans, if he can get there with the help of an escort. We shall put someone in his place in the meantime. M. Admirault\(^9\) will be in charge of the collège, where he is still residing. As for good M. Gilles, God took him to Himself two months ago in Crécy, where he was Superior; he is a great loss to us. It has only been a week since we lost a coadjutor Brother named Jean Geneset.\(^10\)

I conclude with a renewal of the offer of my obedience, which I ask you to present to His Excellency in gratitude for his incomparable acts of kindness in your regard. I am, in Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant. . . .

M. du [Chesne] has just told me that the [boarding fees] of those two gentlemen will be set, [as] \(^11\) in the beginning, at two hundred fifty livres, even though others are paying three hundred livres; in this way, things will not go as high as we thought. If I can, I will write to M. de Saint-Martin and ask him to keep that money for us; if not, you will ask him and get a receipt from him for that amount. Please greet him and the Dean of the Cathedral of Bordeaux\(^12\) for me, and assure them both of my perpetual obedience.

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\(^9\)Charles Admirault (Amirault in Notices, vol. I, p. 462, and Amirault in vol. V (Supplement), p. 17), born in Chinon (Indre-et-Loire) on September 20, 1622, entered the Congregation of the Mission on December 1, 1640, took his vows on December 2, 1642, and was ordained a priest in December 1646. For several years he was assigned to the Bons-Enfants Seminary, where he died in August 1661, after a long illness.

\(^10\)Jean Geneset, a coadjutor Brother, born in Saint-Mihiel (Meuse) in Lorraine, entered the Congregation of the Mission around 1643, at about twenty years of age, and died in September 1652.

\(^11\)The words in brackets were read in the French by Pémartin as: Gach, mission, and encore, which make the sentence incomprehensible.

\(^12\)Jean de Fonteneil, a friend of Saint Vincent.