longer, without doing anything to consolidate your establishment, we will have to think about what should be done.

We have no news here; everyone is well, thank God. I often offer you and M. Admirault to Him, together with all your retreat exercises, that His Divine Goodness may be pleased to preserve and strengthen you.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the page: Monsieur Edme

2303. - TO N.

I would like to think that the person who has written you so tenderly means no wrong in this. We must admit, however, that the letter is capable of having a bad effect on a heart that is not so strong as yours and might have some inclination toward tenderness. May Our Lord be pleased to preserve us from the company of a person who can do the slightest harm to our spirit!

2304. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, July 13, 1657

Monsieur,

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

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3Claude Admirault.


Letter 2304. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Hains Collection, original signed letter.
It was a consolation for me to receive your letter of July 3. Thank you once again for your care of M. Husson. May God grant him sufficient strength to undertake and to continue his journey! I strongly approve of the advice given him to leave Marseilles; I think the country air will contribute greatly to his recovery.

It was the stroke of a clever man to seize, as you did, part of the merchandise of the captain to whom you had consigned certain sums for Algiers, in order to safeguard your money. You will also act wisely by seeking advice on how to avoid being taken by surprise. If other creditors of the same captain find out that you have this merchandise in storage, they might have it confiscated and awarded to themselves because all movable goods that are seized remain with the first distrainer. See then if it is advisable for you to anticipate them by seizing it first; this has to be done by authority of the courts. Furthermore, you tell me neither the amount of the sums consigned nor for whom they are intended, which I would like to know.

As for the three hundred livres bequeathed to the Fathers of the Mission, by getting information from the testator's relatives and seeing if he was more closely associated with the Blessed Sacrament Fathers than with you, you can find out whether he intended to give the money to them. If you did not know him, ask if he attended a mission because he might, in that case, have acquired there some good will for the Company.

In any event, Monsieur, if it is more likely that his legacy is intended for those priests rather than for your house, there must be no dispute with them. If, on the contrary, you think there is some probability that it is for you rather than for them, or you have reason

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1Congregation of the Priests of the Blessed Sacrament, founded in 1632 by Christophe d'Authier de Sisau, Bishop of Bethlehem, and approved by Pope Innocent X in 1647. Its end was the work of missions and the direction of seminaries. Initially the priests were called Missionaries of the Blessed Sacrament. See vol. II, no. 580, n. 1, and no. 2385 in the present volume for more detailed information on this Congregation and the confusion arising from the similarity between its name and that of the Congregation of the Mission.
to suspect this, and they still claim they have a right to it, get the Bishop to give his opinion on it—not so much because of the importance of the matter, since it is small and onerous, as for the consequence that might prove very harmful to us if they were at liberty to adopt and presume on the name of Missionary, which is ours, whereas theirs is—and must only be—Priests of the Blessed Sacrament. Now, the Bishop’s decision can remedy this confusion of names and draw a distinction between them for the future, by giving orders that they be called of the Blessed Sacrament, and that the name of Priests or Fathers of the Mission shall be understood to mean priests of our Company.

I am somewhat impatient to receive news of the state of affairs in Tunis and Algiers. We have heard nothing from the former for a long time, and we do not know what has happened to the elder M. Le Vacher since M. Husson’s departure. I am worried about him, and still more about the other—I mean Philippe Le Vacher—and Brother Barreau, whom we know are being persecuted. I am very much aware that it is difficult for you to get any definite news about them until the return of the ship that the Consuls in Marseilles sent to Algiers. I hope, however, that you will keep me informed about everything and that, while waiting until it is safe to send them some help, you will console them by letters. You can have these forwarded to them either by the Bastion of France, if you dare to rely on it, or by Leghorn, if you can get in touch with someone there. Please use one or both of these ways. I hope to write to them next week.

If, as people say, the Consul’s imprisonment is costing him 2500 écus, it is impossible for us to draw that sum there and to release

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2The words “or you have reason to suspect this” were written by the Saint.
3Etienne du Puget.
4As early as 1650, to protect their coral fishing grounds, merchants from Marseilles established a fort on the North African Coast, near El Kala. This fort, known as the Bastion of France, became an important commercial center. The Turks ransacked it repeatedly during the seventeenth century, and it was abandoned in 1827. Its ruins can be seen at Mers-et-Keraz.
him from his old and new debts. And where would we find such large sums of money? The Duchesse d'Aiguillon told me frankly that she can help us with only one thousand livres, which her nephew, the Abbot, will give us—six hundred livres whenever we wish, and the remainder when he can. We could certainly sell the consulates, if there were people who wanted to buy them. You told me that this will be difficult for the one in Algiers; we can find something for the one in Tunis—not perhaps so much right now, as we might have done five or six months ago. Please discuss this with some knowledgeable, trustworthy persons to find out what they think, and send me their opinion along with your own because, if our priests can continue their ministries without those duties being discharged by persons established by us, we should rid ourselves of them.

I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

I am writing to ask M. Huguier to give thirty livres to a convict named Malleville on the galley Saint-Philippe, which his mother had someone bring to us. Please take this into account for him. This money and what we will receive from now on for the captives will be kept by Brother Ducournau, to be given you whenever you wish through bills of exchange.

The King is supposed to write to the city of Marseilles and to the Duke of Florence to secure Rappiot's clothing or other effects for the release of the Consul. I expect the letters any day now.6

Addressed: Monsieur Get, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Marseilles

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5Emmanuel-Joseph Vignerod, Comte de Richelieu, Abbot of Saint-Martin-des-Champs, was born on March 8, 1639. The son of the Duchesse d'Aiguillon's brother, François Vignerod, he died in Venice on January 9, 1665.

6See Appendix, nos. 4 and 5.
Monsieur,

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

I am deeply grieved that God has chosen to deprive us of Father Aversa,¹ as you informed me in your letter of June 12, not only because we have been deprived of a true friend, but also because he is a loss to the entire Church. I have recommended him to the prayers of the Company, since he was its benefactor and loved it as a father loves his children. To inspire us with gratitude for our indebtedness to him, we had a service for him yesterday, as we had previously done for the late Cardinal Rapaccioli.

Even if the plague were to do no other harm in Rome than to carry off this holy person, it would have done far too much. May Our Lord grant that it will stop at that² and that my sins may not cause our prayers to be ineffectual! We will continue to offer them to God for the cessation of this disease throughout Italy and for the special protection of our confreres who are in great danger in Genoa. It is rampant there and is almost everywhere; in the end, they will be obliged to risk their lives because the Cardinal ³ will need confessors for the spiritual assistance of the sick. I have told them to wait for, and not to anticipate, his order.

I praise God that the Bishop of Cavaillon ⁴ is in Palestrina,
sheltered from the plague and the hot weather, which might have been injurious to his health if he had made the journey. I ask God to preserve him and to bring back to you the other workers who are still giving missions, in the same dispositions as Messieurs Pesnelle, Ballano, and de Martinis. I await the brief report of the various results of their labors, for which you have led me to hope. Meanwhile, I thank God for them and embrace these men.

I have decided to take the honor of writing to Cardinal Chigi since you feel that I should—and will do so for the next mail coach because I could not do it for this one, which is leaving this city today. Where we receive the Pastors’ blessing at the end of our missions does not matter, be it in the Church or in their houses; it should be received very simply wherever it is most convenient.

Providence has not permitted the six volumes of M. Abelly’s book to reach you, given the time since they were sent to you so you could give one to the Pope, to whom it is dedicated. Therefore, the author wanted me to send you one by this mail so as not to delay any longer its presentation to His Holiness, since others in Rome already have it. That, Monsieur, is what I now ask you to do. I am, in Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

I am sending six écus to M. Jacob to pay the postage for M. Abelly’s book. Try to have it presented to His Holiness and let

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5 Flavius Chigi was born in 1631 in Siena and was created Cardinal in 1657 by his uncle, Pope Alexander VII (1655-67). He was appointed Bishop of Albano in 1668 and of Porto in 1689. Cardinal Chigi died in Rome in 1698.

6 The last phrase is in the Saint’s handwriting.

7 We are familiar with only one work that Abelly dedicated to the Supreme Pontiff. It is entitled: De l’obéissance et soumission qui est due à N. S. P. le Pape en ce qui regarde les choses de la foi (Paris: G. Josse, 1654).
him know that it was sent to him first but was detained in Genoa, where the plague was raging.\footnote{The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.}

\textit{Addressed:} Monsieur Jolly, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Rome

\textit{2306. - TO NICOLAS DUPORT, IN GENOA}

Paris, July 13, 1657

Monsieur,

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

The great devastation caused by the plague in Genoa terrifies and afflicts me to the utmost. It causes me also to share my sorrow with any good people who can help us to ask God to be pleased to lift the weight of His arm from that poor city, which is being crushed by it. That is the prayer our Little Company offers constantly to Him and will continue to do so for the duration of this visitation from heaven because, apart from its being a public affliction, it is a source of fear for us that your family will not be exempt from it.

We must, however, submit to the adorable governance of God, who will spare you if it is more expedient for His glory. It will be enough for you to renew to the Cardinal the offer M. Blatiron has made him of the family in general and of each one in particular for the spiritual assistance of the sick, whenever His Eminence thinks it advisable to use you for this purpose. By doing this you will say and do all you should; God is not asking you for more. He is aware of your dispositions and will know how to call you by name if the

\footnote{Letter 2306. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy.}
time comes when He needs to make use of you in these circumstances. Please do not anticipate it by presenting yourself alone, without a special order. You should not be concerned with “what will people say?” and it would be human respect to act otherwise on the pretext that someone will be scandalized by not seeing you in danger—as if all the priests and monks should be at risk at the same time.

I am worried about Brother Rivet’s ailment. I ask Our Lord to free him from it and to bless you with His choicest blessings.

Continue to send me your dear news and to pray for me, who am always close to death at my advanced age. I am, Monsieur, in the love of Our Lord, for time and eternity, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.s.C.M.

2307. - TO GILLES BUHOT

Paris, July 14, 1657

Monsieur,

With all possible humility, Monsieur, I prostrate myself in spirit at your feet and ask your pardon for having delayed so long in answering the two letters you did the honor of writing me and in

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1Jacques Rivet, coadjutor Brother, born in Houdan (Yvelines) on September 11, 1620, entered the Congregation of the Mission on December 16, 1641, and took his vows on April 22, 1646. His brothers, François and Louis, were both Priests of the Mission. There is mention of him as late as September 23, 1657 (cf. no. 2391).


2Gilles Buhot was probably the most distinguished priest in the Bayeux diocese in the seventeenth century. He was a Doctor of the Sorbonne, author of a course of philosophy (Corpus philosophiae [3 vols., Cadous, J. Poisson, 1673]), and Founder and Superior of La Delivrande Seminary and the Bayeux Seminary, to which he gave a house and its annexes on March 11, 1669. Buhot died on January 5, 1674, in the seventy-second year of his age. (Cf. Abbe Jacques
thanking you for the favor of having called this poor, despicable Company to Notre-Dame-de-la-Délivrande to serve your diocese.\(^2\) I do so now, Monsieur, with all the tender affection and gratitude of my heart, after the prayers we offered that Our Lord might be pleased to make His holy Will known to us. Because, however, I am not worthy to thank you in a manner corresponding to the great benefit your charity is pleased to offer us, I ask Our Lord Himself to be your thanks and your reward.\(^3\)

With all possible reverence and gratitude, then, our Little Company accepts the charity that you, Monsieur, are pleased to do it. As soon as we receive your orders, we will send someone to visit you to learn in greater detail your intentions and that of those gentlemen who desire to associate themselves with it. May God in His goodness be pleased to grant us the grace to correspond with your expectations of us, Monsieur, and to give us a share in the abundant graces He has given you and, through you, to your diocese! \(^4\)

I am, meanwhile, in His love. . . .

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\(^2\) Buhot was offering his house and a revenue of about two thousand livres to Saint Vincent for an establishment of the Missionaries. The house was situated in the commune of Douvres (Calvados), site of the shrine of Notre-Dame-de-la-Délivrande.

\(^3\) In the original, the following words were crossed out in this place: "and may He make us worthy of the acceptance our Little Company is making of the favor you are doing it, and according to the conditions you propose to it. We had some difficulty with the establishment in. . . ."

\(^4\) The negotiations were unsuccessful. François de Nesmond, Bishop of Bayeux, had better luck when he resumed the project after Saint Vincent's death. The Priests of the Mission were established at Notre-Dame-de-la-Délivrande in 1692 and directed the pilgrimages until the French Revolution.
Monsieur,

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

We are sending M. Berthe, the bearer of this letter, to make the visitation of your house. Please inform him fully of everything; have the same confidence in him as you would have in me and inspire it in those of whom you have charge.

You know that we pay a pension of three thousand livres to Abbé Lucas ¹ on behalf of your house, in addition to other small sums to other persons. Now, he has suggested to us that, if we want to pay off two-thirds of this pension at the rate of twenty per cent, he will consent to it. This obliges me to inform you of it so that, if, after consulting your men about it, you have grounds for a contrary opinion, you will please let me know. If you agree—as we think you should because our Council finds the proposal reasonable and even advantageous—send us the written consent of your community, assembled for the purpose of dealing with this.

And because ten thousand livres in cash are required, which we do not have, you will authorize by the same act M. Alméras, who represents the Superior General of the Company in the Saint-Lazare house, to borrow this sum in the name of your community, to be used to pay off the two-thirds of the pension that it owes to the said Abbé. You can well imagine, Monsieur, that no one is willing to lend such a large sum on the simple bond of your family; that is why our family will commit itself to help yours. Abbé Lucas wants the affair to be kept very confidential; therefore, please do not say anything about it to anyone outside [the Company], and have the community promise not to speak about it either. Your capitular act

Letter 2308. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.

¹Martin Lucas, Provost of the collegiate church of Notre-Dame-de-Côffort in Le Mans, was a benefactor of the confreres there.
will be drawn up among yourselves and will state more or less that, since you are now bound to pay an annual pension of three thousand livres for life to the said Abbé, you deem it advisable for your house to pay two-thirds of it with a lump sum of ten thousand livres, and you authorize and ask M. Alméras to sign an agreement with the said Abbé and to borrow this sum to be used for the extinction of this debt and to commit the goods and revenues of your house for the payment, etc.

I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Cruoly

2309. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

Thursday evening [July 1657]¹

I very humbly ask you, Most Honored Father—if Your Charity deems it advisable—to authorize the Superior in Sedan to receive and offer to God Sister Jeanne-Christine's² renewal of vows and the vows her companion³ wishes to take for the first time, if they desire this and mention it to him.

I forgot to suggest to Your Charity this morning that it would perhaps

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¹Date added on the back by Brother Ducournau.

²Sister Jeanne-Christine Prévost had served the poor in Liancourt (1648), Fontainebleau (1651), and Saint-Gervais parish in Paris. According to Saint Louise, she won the approval of the people wherever she went. She was elected Assistant of the Company in 1660, but withdrawing her from Sedan was so difficult that Superiors were constrained to leave her there.

³Sister Renée Peschecho. In August 1655 she was in Paris, where she signed the Act of Establishment of the Company of the Daughters of Charity (cf. vol. XIII, no. 150). She then went to Sedan; in August 1657 she took her vows for the first time.
be beneficial for me to accompany Sister Jeanne and Sister Madeleine. In addition to any other consideration, I think Sister Jeanne would be somewhat pleased, and it would be a consolation for me. I make my suggestions, as always, in a spirit of submission, Most Honored Father, in the way that your very humble daughter and most obedient servant should do.

LOUISE DE MARILLAC

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

2310. - TO EDMUND BARRY, SUPERIOR, IN NOTRE-DAME DE LORM

Paris, July 18, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever! I have not received any letters from you since I last wrote you. The purpose of this letter is to ask you whether M. Liebe has left for Richelieu, where I asked him to go, and whether you have taken—or have had someone take—possession of Saint-Aignan parish, under the terms of the power of attorney I sent you. Please inform me also about the present situation of your seminary, your affairs in general, and your health in particular; please take good care of the latter.

I am answering a few questions M. Thieulin asked me. We have no news here, except that the plague has broken out again in Rome but is not doing much damage there. It is, however, raging in Genoa, where our confreres have given over their house to the plague-stricken and have taken refuge in another that they

— 380 —

4Sisters Jeanne Lepeintre and Madeleine were going to the Salpêtrière, a hospice established several years previously to house the mendicants in Paris.

rented. All are awaiting orders from their Cardinal-Archbishop to risk their lives in the service of the sick.

We are very well, thank God. M. Brin is Superior in Troyes; he has just given a very large mission, during which he did a great deal of good. M. Berthe has left to make visitations; I hope he will be going to see you sometime soon.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Barry

2311. - TO LOUIS DUPONT, SUPERIOR, IN TRÉGUIER

Paris, July 18, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I learned of your indisposition from your last letter, and I am very worried about it. I ask O[ur] L[ord] not to permit it to continue but to restore you to health for the advancement of His work and the consolation of the Company. Please do whatever you can to contribute to this by taking the appropriate rest and remedies. If your health does not improve after that, either because of the climate of the region, which may not be good for you, or because of your work, which may be too great a strain for you, we will try to have someone relieve you.

You can tell M. Berthe, who left here four or five days ago to make a visitation, what you think about this. However, I do not
think he will reach Tréguier for another month because he needs that much time to make visitations of the houses in Le Mans, Richelieu, and Saint-Méen. Once he is with you, I hope he will settle everything and see about the help you are awaiting. Please trust him entirely and prepare the house to make good use of his visitation. I am taking the honor of writing to the Bishop to apologize for our delay in sending the third priest he requested of us.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Dupont

2312. - TO N.

July 19, 1657

Vincent de Paul gives his correspondent news of the Saint-Lazare house, where sixteen or eighteen Missionaries, worn out by the work of the missions, are recuperating.

1Balthazar Grangier de Liverdri.


1Did Collet make a mistake in the date? What Saint Vincent says here about the health of his conferees scarcely seems to be in harmony with what he wrote in nos. 2310 and 2320.
Monsieur,

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

I am glad that M. Husson has left Marseilles. He wrote to me from Lyons, where he arrived in almost the same state as when he had left you, but is a little more sick at heart. He was determined to continue his journey as soon as possible and to travel by river, so we expect him here in six or seven days. I thank you again for all the care you took of him.

We will try to meet your third bill of exchange, as I think I informed you.

I thank God for the help the city of Marseilles has sent to Genoa; I ask Him to preserve all the persons sent there and that in His mercy He will soon deliver this afflicted city. We are deeply distressed and worried about our poor confreres, who are in great danger. May God in His goodness be pleased to preserve them from this scourge! It is difficult for you to send them the fabric by any safe way just now; I think it will be better for you to wait.

I think some objections are being raised about getting the hospital funds and the chaplains’ salaries. I will speak to the Duchess about it today and, if possible, will send you word in this letter; if not, I will do so at the first opportunity.

It has been about two months since I sent you the Archbishop of Rouen’s 1 absolution to allow Brother [Parisy] 2 to take final Orders. I am anxious to know if you received it because you have not said anything to me about it. It would be well for you to mention in your letters the ones you have received, especially the documents that accompany them.

Letter 2313. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Hains Collection, original signed letter.
1François de Harley de Champvallon.
2Antoine Parisy. As explained in no. 2194, n. 4, this name was cut out of the letter.
Enclosed are two letters from the King, ordering Rappiot's effects to be seized and stored, both in Marseilles and Leghorn. Please see that this is enforced and have the letters I wrote to M. Le Vacher and Brother Barreau forwarded to Algiers by the shortest, safest route possible, which may be via Leghorn.

Please give one écu to M. Huguier, who is responsible for giving it to Martin de Lancre on the galley Morgue.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2314. - TO CHARLES OZENNE, SUPERIOR, IN OPOLE

Paris, July 20, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I was greatly consoled by your letter of June 13 when I heard, on the one hand, that national affairs are steadily improving and, on the other, that good M. Duperroy is better than he was. Since these are favors we have been asking earnestly and perseveringly of God, we are deeply grateful for them. I thank His Divine Goodness for this with all the tenderness of my heart, as well as for your good health and that of M. Desdames. May God be pleased

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3 The Saint had these two documents copied on the blank page of his letter; the texts are in the Appendix, nos. 4 and 5.
4 Philippe Le Vacher.

Letter 2314. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.

5 Nicolas Duperroy.
to divert from him and from Warsaw the storm with which you say this poor city is threatened!

We have received Sister Marguerite's two lancets and will send them back to her after they have been repaired. I ask Our Lord to render her the charity that she shows toward our patient. I send greetings to him and to those Sisters. I embrace you, Monsieur, with the affection God has given me for you, and am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Ozenne

2315. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, July 20, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I saw the letter you wrote to M. Portail about our Rules. Far from doing badly by telling us your opinion of them, you would be committing a fault by concealing from us the lights God has given you or that you have received from enlightened persons—either on this or on other subjects—so please continue to do so. I have asked M. Portail to reply to you. He is at Saint-Denis as I am dictating this, but I think he will return soon enough to write to you by this mail.

You did the right thing in not taking into your house the Italian who had been in France. When he left here, he asked me to find

---Marguerite Moreau: she had nursed M. Duperroy in his illness.

lodgings for him when he was in Rome. Instead, however, of leading him to hope for this, as he told you, I made it clear to him that this could not be done. True, the Nuncio had recommended him to me; still, I did not think his recommendation went as far as Rome.

I am consoled that M. Le Vacher in Tunis can act as Consul—because there is none there—so we can work as priests, according to the advice of the persons you consulted. I will be even more greatly consoled, however, if you can obtain express permission for him to do this, as you have led me to hope you will try to do.

I praise God for having given Claude Sicoex 1 sufficient health to return to his own region, and you for giving him the money he needed for his journey.

You are right to be anxious about our house in Genoa and about the city itself because, if the death toll continues as long as it has until now, the number of inhabitants will be reduced to a few, and our confreres, who have been preserved in the past, will be in great danger. I am so distressed by this that I am crushed with grief. If the situation were the same in Rome, I do not know where I would be. God be praised that the disease is not making progress there! I hope His Divine Goodness will not permit it to do so and will gradually dissipate what has appeared. That is the prayer we offer Him almost unceasingly, and especially that He may be pleased to preserve you and all our confreres in Italy.

I think I forgot to tell you that the Archbishop of Rouen has dispensed Brother Parisy from appearing before him to receive the absolution which in his kindness he sent to us; I already sent it to this Brother a long time ago.

We have forwarded the letters you sent me. I have no news for you. Everything here is going along as usual, and the Company is

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1Claude Sicoex, born in Rumilly (Haute-Savoie) on April 15, 1625, entered the Congregation of the Mission in Rome as a coadjutor Brother on October 12, 1654.
doing some good everywhere, thank God. I am, in Him, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
Ls.C,M.

I have been asked by M. d'Orgeval, to whom His Holiness has given a priory or abbey that was in the possession of the late Cardinal Bichi, to find out if the Pope has issued a Brief by which His Holiness transmits to the King his power of appointment to the benefices of the late Cardinal, in case he should die in the Court of Rome. In the name of God, Monsieur, make careful enquiries about this. We are greatly indebted to M. d'Orgeval. M. Gueffier is well aware of that.

M. Portail has just brought me his reply to your letter. I do not have time to read it, still less to give it careful consideration. Please write and let me know any objections you might find to it; in the future, send directly to me, and not to others, anything you may have to propose about our Rules.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly, Superior of the Mission, in Rome

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2Alessandro Bichi was born in 1598 in Siena and died in Rome on May 25, 1657. He was Bishop of Isola (1628) and Carpentras (1630), Apostolic Nuncio in France (1630-34), Cardinal (Cardinal-Priest of the church of Santa-Sabina) (1633), and Legate of Avignon (1634). (Cf. Turnizey de Larroque, Le Cardinal Bichi, évêque de Carpentras, vol. VIII of Les correspondants de Peiresc. Lettres inédites. Marseilles [1885].)

3Etienne Gueffier had been charge d'affaires for the French government in Rome since 1632. He died in that city in June 1660, at ninety-four years of age.
Paris, July 21, 1657

Dear Brother,

May God be eternally glorified and blessed for your return to the poor border areas and your safe arrival in Ham,² where I embrace you in spirit!

Enclosed are some letters we received for you since your departure.

I was not at the meeting³ yesterday because of a slight attack of illness. The Ladies wanted me to ask you, as I now do, to find out discreetly, in every canton and village through which you pass, the number of poor persons who will need to be clothed next winter, in whole or in part, so we can estimate the amount of money needed and you can get the clothing ready early. It is thought that we should buy linsey-woolsey rather than serge. It will be necessary, then, for you to write down the names of those poor people so that when the time for distribution arrives they will get the alms, and not others who can manage without them. Now, to discern this correctly, those poor people should be observed in their own homes so you can see for yourself who are the most needy and who are less so. Since, however, it is impossible for you to make all these visits on your own, you could enlist for this purpose some devout, prudent persons who would carry out the duty honestly and inform you frankly of the situation of each individual. But this information

Letter 2316. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.

¹Born in Châtillon-en-Dunois (Eure-et-Loir), Jean Parre entered the Congregation of the Mission on April 16, 1638, at twenty-seven years of age, took his vows in 1643, and died after 1660. He and Brother Mathieu Regnard were two of the most intelligent, active instruments that Divine Providence placed in Saint Vincent's hands. Brother Parre traveled all over Picardy and Champagne assessing and remedying needs. (Cf. Notices, vol. II, pp. 223-40.)

²Today, chief canton town in the district of Peronne (Somme).

³The meeting of the Ladies of Charity.
must be obtained without the poor people themselves knowing about the plan; otherwise, those who already have some clothing would hide it so as to appear naked.

The Ladies also want you to find out in what town in Picardy those linen and woolen blankets are made or sold—the ones formerly distributed to the sick poor—which they obtained at a fair price, and how much they cost now.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], my dear Brother, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

2317. - TO FRANÇOIS CAULET, BISHOP OF PAMIERS  
Saint-Lazare, July 24, 1657

Excellency,

The incomparable zeal God has given you for contributing to the sanctification of the ecclesiastical state, and the special blessing His Divine Goodness bestowed last year on the retreats for the ordinands to whom you gave the conferences, have given me the confidence, Excellency, to entreat you most humbly to see fit to do so again at the September ordination [retreat]—provided, however, you can do so without inconveniencing yourself. I would have gone in person to make this most humble appeal to you, as I should and as I desire to do; but I hope, Excellency, that in the great kindness of your heart, which is willing to bear with my boorishness, you will excuse me for dispensing myself from this duty and writing you this letter. I will never deviate from the reverence and submission O[ur] L[ord] has given me for your sacred person and which has made me, Excellency, in His love, your most humble servant.

Monsieur,

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

I thank His Divine Goodness for the gracious manner in which I imagine you have welcomed the King and for all you have done to keep everyone informed. I heard from La Fère that the Queen was supposed to leave last Monday for Sedan and that her Court will reside there for some time. I ask O[ur] L[ord] to be your wisdom and your governance so that all will go well with you and by you, in accord with whatever God may ask.

We thought of sending you M. Berthe to fill in during the absence of the Superior. As far as I can see, however, God will supply for him through you in the very best way; furthermore, we needed M. Berthe elsewhere. M. Coglée 1 is still in Forges; when he returns we shall see. You could seek advice from the Governor or his wife about the principal matters you may have to handle in your relations with the Court; it seems to me that you could do no better than to consult them. Renew to them the offers of my obedience and do the same with Father Annat, 2 the King’s confessor, if he is in Sedan.

I am writing to M. de Saint-Jean, 3 whom you should regard as someone who is very good to us. We have been praying for the King, his affairs, and his Council and will continue to do so, with

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1Mark Cogley, the Superior.
2François Annat, born in Estaing (Aveyron) on February 5, 1590, entered the Society of Jesus on February 16, 1607. For thirteen years he taught philosophy and theology in Toulouse and was Rector of the Collège de Montpellier and the Collège de Toulouse. He became Assistant to the Superior General, Provincial of France, and confessor of King Louis XIV (1654-61). We are indebted to him for many works against Jansenism. Annat died in Paris on June 14, 1670.
3The Queen’s chaplain.
God’s help, in accordance with the command of His Majesty and His Eminence. 4

Please pray for the city of Genoa, which is greatly afflicted and almost deserted because of the plague. Our confreres have been preserved until now, but they are still in danger. We have no news here. I write in haste and am steadfastly in Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.a.C.M.

2319. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES
Paris, July 27, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever! I received your letter of July 17. M. Husson has not yet arrived, although he wrote to me from Lyons that he would be here on the twenty-sixth, and M. Delafortcade on the twenty-fifth. I am very much afraid he became sick on the way.

4Cardinal Mazarin. Jules Mazarin (Giulio Mazarini) was born in Pescina in the Abruzzi (Italy) in 1602, studied in Spain as a youth, and served in the papal army and the papal diplomatic corps. He met Richelieu in 1630 and represented the Pope in negotiating the peace of Cherasco with France in 1631. Mazarin had hardly begun preparing for the priesthood—he received tonsure in 1632, but never became a priest—when he was assigned to other important diplomatic posts: Vice-Legate of Avignon (1634), then Nuncio in France (1635-36), in which positions he demonstrated the ability and flexibility of the most subtle statesman. He became a French citizen in 1639, and Richelieu obtained a Cardinal’s hat for him in 1641. Before Richelieu’s death (1642), he recommended Mazarin to Louis XIII. He became the principal minister of Queen Anne of Austria during the regency of Louis XIV (1643-61) and, until his own death in 1661, was the absolute master of France.

Letter 2319. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Hains Family Collection, Marseilles.
I am still awaiting news of the return of the ship sent to Algiers, and I mention this to remind you to tell me about it.

You know that the Consul has a Flemish man in his house who owes him 1640 piastres. I have had someone write about this to Antwerp, his native place, where his father has declared that he is ready to pay them, when he knows to whom. This young man, named Vancamberg, will have to write a letter asking him to have someone pay this sum to us in Paris, together with whatever is needed additionally for expenses of transport and warranties in Algiers. He must also assure him that by this means he will be set free entirely. If you have the opportunity, please inform Brother Barreau about this and have him send us that letter. I can write to him about it some other time.

I ask O[ur] L[ord] to preserve Marseilles and the whole province from the disease they fear there. Genoa is drastically afflicted by it, and our confreres there are in great danger. May His Infinite Goodness be pleased to take them under His protection and to put an end to this scourge!

The Duchesse d’Aiguillon has informed me that she continues to ask M. Foulé for money for the hospital funds and the chaplains’ salaries, and that M. Foulé has led her to hope that he will go to the Superintendent to see what can be done.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Since I wrote this letter, M. Husson has arrived in almost the same state of health as when he left Marseilles.

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1Gaspard Vancamberg.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I just received your letter and have sent it to Mademoiselle Le Gras, together with Sister Marguerite's. I am deeply distressed by M. Duperroy's sufferings and the length of his illness. I ask Our Lord to strengthen him. I am glad you brought in another surgeon, in addition to the Queen's, to dress his wounds. Please spare nothing in order to restore him to health; embrace him for me and tell him that I send him my heart folded up in this letter, although he has it already, that I often speak to the Company about his sufferings and patience, and that we pray almost unceasingly and with the greatest affection for him. We do the same for you, Monsieur, and for good M. Desdames. I am very worried about him because you tell me that the enemy has returned to Warsaw. In the name of Our Lord, Monsieur, please send me news about him whenever you can and do not let him want for anything.

I ask you also to tell our dear Sisters of Sainte-Marie how very sorry I am that their land has been ravaged, but I hope that time, the great restorer, will make good their loss, with God's help. I recommend myself to their prayers and especially to those of the Mother Superior, whose humble servant I am.

I am deeply consoled by the good news you sent me. I thank God for it, asking His Divine Goodness to preserve the King and the Queen and to bless their plans.

We are all very well here, by the mercy of God. Our confreres in Troyes have given a mission in Nogent, where they did a great thing.
deal of good. The Bishop of Troyes \(^3\) administered the Sacrament of Confirmation, and his three Vicars-General worked there the whole time of the mission.\(^4\)

The city of Genoa is almost deserted because of the plague. So far, the Missionaries have been preserved. M. Husson, who was expelled by the Turks in Tunis, has just arrived here. The Consul in Algiers \(^5\) was imprisoned and beaten for no reason; he is now free. The rest of the Company is going along very well everywhere, thank God, in whom I am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Ozenne, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Warsaw, in Opole

2321. - TO NICOLAS DUPORT, IN GENOA

Paris, July 27, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

We can only pray and sigh before God when we think of the very distressing news you sent us. God must surely be very angry to ravage such a great, Catholic city as Genoa to the extent that His adorable governance has chosen to do, despite the prayers and good

\(^3\)François Malier du Houssaye (1641-78).


\(^5\)Jean Barreau.

Letter 2321. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy.
works being offered to appease His justice. May His Holy Name be ever blessed and may He will to prepare us for all the events of this life so as to merit His mercy in the next! As for you, Monsieur, you have reason to hope for this because of the mercy you are ready to show the plague-stricken, and which, thank God, you practice at all times with all sorts of persons.

I am greatly consoled by the consolation you gave His Eminence in offering yourself to him for the spiritual needs of the sick, whenever he finds it advisable to set you to work at this. I am, however, even more consoled by his goodness in considering the reasons that led him to reserve you for one of the three occasions you mention and for the complete confidence he manifests in his poor [Congregation of the] Mission. I must admit that I am deeply moved by this and strongly desire that God may be pleased to make us worthy to correspond with his charity and expectations. I tried a few days ago to touch the heart of the Company concerning this, when I shared your letter with it; at the same time, I tried to inspire it to pray earnestly for the preservation of H[is] E[minence] and the repose of the soul of his deceased brother, our benefactor. I had them pray also, Monsieur, for the grace to preserve the whole family from this scourge and to liberate the city from it at last. These are at present the most common intentions of our prayers as well as the causes of our greatest fears.

Now, since you have declared your good dispositions once and for all to this great, holy Prelate, do not pressure him any further on this point, but remain in peace, awaiting the time when God and H[is] E[minence] will find it advisable to put your charity into practice. I am speaking not only of you personally, but of the whole house in general.

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1Stefano Cardinal Durazzo.

2A note added to the end of the letter indicates these three occasions: (1) for the poor of the countryside, should the plague extend that far; (2) for the city, when no other priests or monks can be found there; (3) to assist his Eminence himself, if he catches the plague.
Please tell Brother Rivet that I have asked our Brothers to offer a Communion for him and have requested the priests to remember him in their Sacrifices so that God may be pleased to restore him to health or to increase in him the grace and strength to make good use of his present condition.

I send greetings to your entire little community and am, Monsieur, for you and for them, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

ī.s.C.M.

2322. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, July 27, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of June 25. As the plague increases, so do our sorrow and our prayers. O Monsieur, what a cause of deep affliction for the entire Church to see such a great people ravaged in that way, and what great apprehension for us to see you at risk as you are, with all the rest of the family! Although none of you is serving the sick, you are still surrounded by the disease and are on the verge of doing so. This is in accord with the offer M. Duport made to the Cardinal and the answer the latter gave him, which is worthy of a Prelate as great and holy as he is.

You yourself sent me word that several persons died of the plague two or three days after you had heard their confessions and given them Holy Communion. This shows the danger in which you

--- Letter 2322. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy. ---

1At the beginning of July, more than eight hundred persons a day were dying of it.
are. May God, in His infinite goodness, be pleased to extricate you and all your men from it and look with pity on those who are in the country as well as those in the city! I am hoping for this and am consoled by this hope, as well as by the precautions you are taking. Please continue to do so, and use every reasonable means possible to protect yourselves.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

Enclosed are some letters from your home town.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Blatiron

2323. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN HAM

Paris, July 28, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

The Ladies have examined the two samples of linsey-woolsey you sent. They think it is good for the price and agree that you should buy about eight hundred livres’ worth. Get gray rather than any other color—if you can find enough for so much money—because it is better suited to poor persons and hard work, and is also a better buy. They do not think there is much to be gained by going to Amiens for that purpose, if this fabric can be found in other nearby towns. Have some clothes made from it and keep them ready to be distributed when there is a sure way. You can draw a bill of exchange for that amount right now on Mademoiselle Viole.
You are also asked to choose a good worker to be placed in the General Hospital—someone with good morals, who can work with this type of fabric. Give him money for his journey and tell him to come here.

Travel as little as possible, as long as the soldiers are occupying the passes. Take care of yourself and pray for me, as we shall do for you. I am, in O[ur] L[ord], dear Brother, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, in Ham

2324. - TO LOUIS RIVET, SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

July 29, 1657

You must not allow any of the rights from your benefice of Saint-Preuil 1 to be lost. So, if your council thinks that tithes may be due to you on M. d’Albret’s 2 farm, claim them; if, after you have spoken with him and used every gentle means to get them, he refuses to pay, then have him served with a subpoena. Do not fear that he will mistreat you; since you have the law on your side, he would never dare to attempt such a thing.

I am of the same opinion concerning the lesser tithes, if it is true that you have the right to collect them. To ascertain this, consult some knowledgeable persons. Above all, find out the custom of the neighboring parishes and of the Pastors who preceded you. It is

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1A commune of the district of Cognac (Charente).
2César-Phoebus de Miossaux, Chevalier d’Albret. He died on September 13, 1676, after having served as Maréchal de France and Governor of Guyenne.
very difficult for me to consent to going to law, but tithes are a privileged case that obliges us in conscience to preserve them. Undoubtedly, in uniting this benefice to your house, all that depends on it has been united to it; now, small tithes, as well as the large ones, have always belonged to the Pastors; consequently, they should belong to your community. I mean the ones that were being collected then, but not the new ones, if by any chance some have turned up since the union, which might belong to the permanent Vicar. So please read the terms of the union, and if there is any reservation, show it to your council to get its opinion, and send me a copy.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

2325. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

I have been informed that you are straining yourself when you talk to the people and that this is making you very weak. In the name of God, Monsieur, take care of your health and moderate your speech and sentiments. I told you before that Our Lord blesses sermons delivered in a normal, familiar tone of voice because that is how He Himself taught and preached. I also said that, since this manner of speaking is natural, it is also more relaxed than the other, which is forced, so the people enjoy it better and benefit more from it.

Would you believe, Monsieur, that when actors realized this, they changed their style of delivery and no longer recite their lines in a high tone of voice, as they used to do? They now use a moderate tone, as if they were speaking familiarly to their listeners.¹ A person

¹Georges Mongredien, C.M., writing in Education nationale on February 8, 1951, found in this letter a proof of the influence and novelty of the tone adopted by Molière and his players.
who used to be in that profession told me this recently. Now, if the desire to please the world more could have such an influence on the minds of those actors in the theater, what cause for shame would it be for the preachers of Jesus Christ if ardor and zeal for procuring the salvation of souls did not have the same power over them!

Furthermore, I have been deeply saddened by the fact that, instead of giving the regular catechism instruction in the evening, you have given sermons during your mission. This should not be done: (1) because the person who preaches in the morning might have difficulty with that second sermon; (2) because the people have greater need of this catechetical instruction and derive greater profit from it; (3) because, in giving this catechetical instruction, it seems there is, in a certain sense, greater reason to honor the manner Our Lord Jesus Christ used to teach and to convert the world; (4) because it is our custom, and Our Lord has been pleased to bestow immense blessings on this exercise, which offers a greater means to practice humility.

2326. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, August 3, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Here we are again, deprived of your dear letters. We pray that some will reach us soon and will not bring us any bad news, but rather the news that you, your house, and the entire city are still in good health. I received no letters from Genoa this week, as I did last week. May God be pleased to look mercifully on that afflicted city!

Since, however, Molière's troupe did not arrive in Paris until October 1658, it is possible that this undated letter is from a later period. (Cf. Annales C. M. 1950-52, p. 108.)

Letter 2326. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
I told you how Brother Barreau was mistreated by the Turks, who beat him, put him in prison, and forced him in the end to pay or to be answerable for 2500 écus. We cannot leave him there any longer, although it is very difficult for us to free him. Moreover, although the King has heard about this assault on his subject and his official, he finds it more advisable to cover up this insult than to resent it or complain about it. All he will do is not to send another Consul, which means that the consulate—and, consequently, the slaves—will be abandoned unless a priest can assume the position. I am referring to M. Philippe Le Vacher, who is on the spot. We would send the commission to him and another to his brother in Tunis, provided His Holiness allowed them to fulfill this office together with their mission. Please make this request, since only filial devotion leads one to practice these acts of charity for the slaves, for love of God alone.¹

I am sending you a packet from M. Jaillard,² who brought us six hundred livres of your money. This adds kindness to kindness and a further indebtedness to the many others the Company owes you for the temporal and spiritual favors you are constantly doing for it. O[ur] L[ord] will be your rewarder as well as your reward for this. He alone can do so, since He is your sole motive and end for the good works you do. Nevertheless, I thank you, Monsieur, for this latest act of charity and for all the others. M. Jaillard saw M. Paris, who mentioned some documents to him and gave some addresses to have you paid ³ from his estate what he owes you. There is reason to hope that you will not lose anything in that quarter and that God will help that poor fugitive, in consideration of the fact that he is making the effort to do you justice.

I have sent you M. Edme’s ⁴ resignation and the consent of the

¹The phrase that begins with “since only filial devotion” is in the Saint’s handwriting.
²Edme Jolly’s cousin.
³The original said “to pay you”, Saint Vincent changed it to “to have you paid.”
⁴Edme Menestrier.
Abbé de Tournus for the union of Saint-Pourçain; please work on it. I am your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

2327. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

- Paris, August 3, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Since I last wrote you, I have been [deprived] of any letters from you and from M. Duport. I greatly fear that in the future I will be getting fewer than before. The same applies to Rome; we have received no letters from there by the last two ordinary mail coaches because the plague is making the passage difficult and keeps them from getting through.

How are you, Monsieur, and how are those whom O[ur] L[ord] has entrusted to your guidance? I greatly fear that this disease will attack your little flock, but may God be pleased to avert it and protect you from it! All of you must be careful and use every reasonable means possible to prevent it. If you are still in the country—as I very much hope you are—stay as far away from the danger as possible. My great trust is in God and not in these human efforts; still, I think He approves of your taking precautions,

5Louis de Chandenier.


1A word omitted by the copyist.
provided you are resigned to whatever His paternal guidance may have in store for you.

Have no doubt, Monsieur, that we often commend you and your men to O[ur] L[ord]. Assure your family of this, and tell them that I embrace each one in spirit with great tenderness. I recommend myself to their prayers and to yours.

The enclosed packet is for M. Simon. ²

I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

2328. - TO PIERRE CABEL, IN SEDAN

Paris, August 4, 1657

Monsieur,

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

You did well to send a priest and a Sister ¹ to Stenay; you would do well also to leave them there—if the Queen so wishes—and to do whatever Her Majesty orders in this matter and in everything else. I strongly approve of the choice you made of M. Michel. I thank God for your fine way of acting, and I think everyone is satisfied with it. This is also the sentiment of M. de Saint-Jean, ² who expressed his satisfaction with it in his letter.

Do not interfere with those gentlemen who are talking about providing a foundation for the maintenance of a teacher. If they

²Rene Simon.

¹Jeanne-Christine Prevost.
²Nicolas de Saint-Jean, the Queen's chaplain.
sign the contract for it, in nomine Domini, you will have to accept it gratefully and send it to me for ratification. If, however, they wanted to impose further obligations on your house, such as teaching young people, you would have to let me know and wait for my answer before making any commitment. Do not pressure them to conclude anything nor pay anything; Our Lord Himself will impel them by His charity, if it is His Will that they exercise theirs in your regard.

M. Cogleé ³ arrived here yesterday from Forges, without experiencing any effect from the waters. Actually, you do not feel it for a month or two.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Cabel, Priest of the Mission, in Sedan

2329. - TO JEAN D'ARANTHON D'ALEX ¹

[Between 1653 and 1660]

Monsieur,

Since M. Le Vazeux has informed me of the testimony that you in your incomparable goodness gave in favor of this insignificant

³Mark Cogley, the local Superior in Sedan.

Letter 2329. - Dom Innocent Le Masson, General of the Carthusians, La vie de messire Jean d'Aranthon d'Alex (Clermont-Ferrand: Thibaud-Landriot, 1834), p. 52. This letter was not written before 1653, the year Achille Le Vazeux was appointed Superior of the Annecy Seminary.

¹Saint Vincent's relationship with Jean d'Aranthon d'Alex dated back to the time when the latter was studying in Paris. One day, after the Saint had heard him speak at a priests' meeting.
Little Company in Savoy and Piedmont, I feel bound to give you a thousand thanks on behalf of the Company and in my own name. I do so now, Monsieur, with all possible gratitude and humility, and because I am not worthy to thank you, I ask Our Lord to be Himself your reward and your thanks and to grant you the grace of meeting the expectations people have in that area because of all you have said about this.

Your reputation is so great—as I have heard before and am hearing every day—that people are valued according to your estimation of them. I certainly have no difficulty believing this when I recall the incomparable wisdom that was apparent in you while you were still a young man studying in Paris. Even then, it seemed to me that I was seeing the spirit of our blessed Father come to life again in you, and I can assure you that I have never thought of you nor heard about your leadership, except in reference to that beloved Prelate. I ask him to ask God, for the good of His Church, to put you in the state that the virtues exemplified in you deserve. I make the same prayer to Our Lord, in whose love, I am, Monsieur, your most humble and most obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

he introduced himself to d'Aranthon and invited him to come to Saint-Lazare from time to time, which he did. Shortly after ordination to the priesthood on December 17, 1644, he was appointed Canon of Geneva and Pastor of Ceury. The services he rendered the diocese and the Court of Savoy, his great learning, and his indefatigable zeal in combating heresy made him a likely candidate to succeed Charles-Auguste de Sales, who died on February 8, 1660. Some time before, Saint Vincent had foretold that he would be appointed to this position and had recently repeated his prediction to the Prelate's nephew, the Prior of La Pérouse. Jean d'Aranthon enjoyed one of the longest and most fruitful episcopates ever known to the Geneva diocese. He died on July 4, 1695, at seventy-six years of age. The Priests of the Mission, directors of the Annecy seminary, who had nothing but praise for his benevolence, inherited his library, his chapel in the country, a precious chalice, and all of his paintings.

2Saint Francis de Sales.
Monsieur,

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

I received the two letters you wrote me on July 10 and 16. I believe what you say more than the things I see, and I have too many proofs of your zeal for the welfare of the seminary to ever have any doubt about that. This causes me to suspend my judgment concerning the complaints I have received that you are too curt in your ways of acting, until you have explained what this is all about. I would not even be as upset about this as I am, except that I am being informed from three or four sources of the bad effects of this.

On the one hand, I heard about the indignation of one of your clerics and the scandal given to the others because you insulted him in their presence, calling him impudent several times and using other harsh words against him. On the other hand, people have written me that a large number of priests and clerics have left the seminary because they could not stomach your biting reprimands. Furthermore, I have heard that others, who were planning to enter it, changed their minds when they heard how severe you are. Lastly, Monsieur, I have been told that those you are now instructing object to being treated so harshly and are scandalized by a certain jealousy you show when your older men talk to them or have anything to do with their direction.

In truth, if I had been advised of this by only one person, I would be right in not paying any attention to it, but since it has been

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Letter 2330. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy. The rough draft of this letter, in the secretary's handwriting, is in these same archives.

1The name of the recipient, Honoré Bélart, is written at the bottom of the first page of the rough draft. Born in Montreuil-sur-Mer (Pas-de-Calais), he entered the Congregation of the Mission on August 2, 1647, at seventeen years of age, and took his vows on October 8, 1649.

2The rough draft has "committing other outrages against him, even threatening to hit him."
confirmed by various persons in several places, from those outside the Company, and at different times, I have reason to fear that, with so many things—and many others that it would take too long to recount—there is some truth in this, especially since I know that when you were in Richelieu, similar situations arose. Therefore, Monsieur, I ask you to reflect on your conduct and give yourself to God to correct, with His grace, any lack of graciousness you find in it because, besides the fact that His Divine Majesty is offended, other inconveniences may arise from it, even if your intention is good.

The first is that those men who leave the seminary disgruntled might grow tired of virtue, fall into vice, and be lost because they left that holy school too soon, for want of being treated gently. The second is that they may criticize the seminary and thus hinder others from entering, who otherwise would receive there the instruction and grace proper to their vocation. The third is that the bad reputation of an individual house affects the entire Little Company which, besides losing some of its good reputation because of this, is thwarted in the progress of its functions and sees a lessening of the good God has been pleased to do through it.

If you say you have not noticed these faults in yourself, it is a sign, Monsieur, that you do not know yourself well; for if you did have this self-knowledge, as required of a priest of the Mission, you would consider yourself the most imperfect of all, would think you were guilty of these things, and would attribute to some secret self-love the fact of not seeing in yourself what others see, especially since you have been warned about this.

Speaking of admonitions, however, I have also been told that you cannot bear to receive any from your Superior and still less from others. If this is true, O mon Dieu! Monsieur, how your
present state is to be feared and how far removed it is from that of
the saints, who demeaned themselves before the world and rejoiced
when they were shown their slight imperfections! In this you
imitate poorly the Saint of saints, Jesus Christ, who allowed Him­
self to be rebuked publicly for the evil He had not committed and
said not a word to shield Himself from this shame.

Let us learn from Him, Monsieur, to be gentle and humble.
These are the virtues you and I must constantly ask of him, and to
which we must pay particular attention so as not to allow ourselves
to be surprised by the contrary passions, which have such bad
results and destroy with one hand the spiritual edifice being built
with the other.

May this same Lord be pleased to enlighten us with His Spirit
so we can see the darkness of our own mind and submit it to those
whom He has designated to guide us! May He animate us with His
infinite gentleness so that, pervading our words and actions, it will
make them pleasing and helpful to the neighbor. May He inspire
you also to ask this grace frequently for me, as I entreat you to do.
Awaiting your reply, I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most
humble and affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

It has always been our intention that the seminary and the
seminarians be totally dependent on the Superior and, in his ab­
sence, on his representative. This is the custom everywhere, with
the result that the person who teaches should receive direction and
correction from them and adapt himself in everything to their
orders. In the name of God, Monsieur, see that you act in this way.
Monsieur,

A good priest who came from Rome entrusted to the Superior (named M. Jolly) of the Mission in that city 255 Spanish pistoles. When he arrived in Paris, he gave M. Maillard, our house treasurer here, another sixty gold louis—the total amounting to 315 Spanish pistoles—on condition that they be returned to him in the same currency and at the same value. His name is M. Doublard; at the time, he intended to establish himself in Paris, but not finding the opportunity to do so, he has gone to Anjou, his native place.

Now, on the fourth of this month, he wrote from Anjou asking me to have this money forwarded to him. Please prepare his account whenever he wishes and write a note to inform him that you are ready to do so. Madame Fautier, who lives on rue du Petit-Prêtre in Angers, will deliver your letter to him. Please address it as follows: To M. de la Bouverie-Doublard, priest, in La Bouverie.¹

I sincerely hope he will be satisfied. In view of that, Monsieur, you will do us a big favor by giving him whatever satisfaction you can for the time of payment as well as for the type of currency. In the event that he asks that the money be in the same currency as he gave, and you cannot furnish every species entirely, I am sending word to him that we still have here the fifty Spanish pistoles and ten gold louis he left with M. Maillard and that, if he gets them there from a person who has offered them, we will reimburse here whoever is authorized to receive the money. I hope, however, that he will come to an agreement with you and that we will not have

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¹Known today as Les Bouveries, a small locality near Angers.
to deal with someone else. Please withdraw the notes of M. Jolly and M. Maillard in order that we may make allowance for them with you by enclosing them with this letter to you.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord]. . . .

2332. - TO HENRI ARNAULD, BISHOP OF ANGERS

Paris, August 8, 1657

Excellency,

The humble services we have tried to render you with regard to your people in Craon \(^1\) do not merit the honor you do us of thanking us for them. On the contrary, Excellency, it is we who should thank you a thousand times—as I now do most humbly—for deigning to make use of such poor, insignificant workers and for telling me that you would be pleased to see us established in your diocese. We are, indeed, most unworthy, Excellency, that this great benefit should be ours. Still, if it were the good pleasure of God, we would have reason to hope that the grace you have would also be given to them, so as to work effectively for the salvation of the souls committed to your care. In addition, we would constantly ask Him for the grace of always corresponding to your holy intentions because there is no other Prelate in the kingdom for whom we have greater respect and submission.

Therefore, Excellency, I entreat you to accept the offers of the obedience of our Little Company and of my own in particular, which I make to you with all the reverence and submission due you.

\(^1\)Today, principal town of a canton in La Mayenne.
I am, in the love of Our Lord, Excellency, your most humble and very obedient servant.

At the bottom of the page: The Bishop of Angers

2333. - TO EDMÉ JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, August 10, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of July 17, after having gone three weeks without receiving any. It gave me great consolation, since I saw that everything is all right in Rome and in your family, for which I thank God.

The same cannot be said of Genoa, where the devastation defies description. Yesterday I received a letter from there that plunged me into such deep sorrow that I am still taken aback by it. As of July 3, our poor Missionaries had not yet been affected by the plague, but it was in their house, and the streets where they sometimes have to go are strewn with dead bodies. Furthermore, two of them, chosen by lot, namely, Messieurs Tratebas and Boccone, were going off to risk their lives to assist the dying in a
country hospital. So you see, Monsieur, they are all in such danger that, short of a miracle, they cannot possibly escape it. That is why we must pray earnestly for them that God may see fit to preserve them. If one of your men could visit the seven churches for that intention, I would be very glad.

As I dictate this letter, I realize that I do not have yours with me because I gave it to M. Portail, who is away, so I cannot answer you exactly.

Enclosed is a letter written to you by the good priest from Angers who, before leaving Rome, left with you 255 Spanish pistoles. When he arrived in Paris, he also placed another sixty in the hands of the treasurer of our house here. The same day, he wrote from Angers, where he is now, asking me to have this money forwarded to him. Luckily for us, we have enough on hand to pay him. So I have written to our tax farmer to pay him back in the same currency, if possible; but if he is unable to do so, and this gentleman is willing to accept French currency, then, so as not to lose anything, he should give him an exchange of eleven livres to the Spanish pistole, which is what they are currently worth here. Otherwise, he will have to wait a while to give us time to look around Paris for as many of those pistoles as he left with you and put them with the ones M. Maillard is holding because I am very anxious to satisfy him. Please answer him and head your letter as follows: To Madame Fautier, living on rue du Petit-Prêtre, in Angers, to be delivered to M. de la Bouverie-Doublard, priest, in La Bouverie. That is the address he indicated to me.

I am enclosing the certificate of poverty for two poor persons from the Laon diocese, who are related in the second degree. Will you kindly obtain a marriage dispensation for them? They have

ordination or in that of his death. Notices, vol. V (Supplement), gives no information about his ordination.

1Antoine Maillard.

2M. Avril.

3Saint Vincent is requesting that the Roman Rota, or marriage tribunal, issue a necessary dispensation and assess the usual court costs at the minimum because of the couple's poverty.
had a premarital relationship so they need the dispensation *cum absolutione*. We have been led to hope that the fee will be sixty-two livres; please see, Monsieur, if you can have it sent for that amount. In that case, remind me that I have to send it to M. Migot, the Pastor in Laon.

I make no mention of our state of affairs right now, except to say that M. Philippe Le Vacher of Algiers is in Leghorn, most likely to try to do something about the bankrupt Rappiot's effects.  

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

*Addressed*: Monsieur Jolly, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Rome, in Rome

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2334. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

Oh! how fortunate you are to be the instrument of Our Lord in forming good priests and to be an instrument such as you, who enlighten and fire them up at the same time! In this you do the work of the Holy Spirit, who alone enlightens and inflames hearts—or rather, this Holy and Sanctifying Spirit works through you, for He resides and operates in you. He does so, not only that you may live of His divine life, but also to establish His same life and manner of working in these men, called to the most lofty ministry on earth, through which they must exercise the two great virtues of Jesus Christ, namely, reverence toward His Father and charity toward mankind.

Consider, then, Monsieur, whether any employment in the

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3This sentence is in Saint Vincent's handwriting.

world is more necessary and desirable than yours. I personally know of none, and I do not think that God has waited very long to allow you to see this, since He has given you the zeal to apply yourself to it and the grace to succeed in it. Humble yourself constantly and place all your trust in Our Lord so that He may make you one with Him.

2335. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN SAINT-QUENTIN

Paris, August 11, 1657

Dear Brother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

In your last letter you ask whether the eight hundred livres you have orders to get for the fabric are for the poor of Ham or of Saint-Quentin. The Ladies have replied that nothing is to be distributed in the administrative sector of Ham because these alms were given not only to clothe the poor of Saint-Quentin but also those in Laon, Rethel, and surrounding areas—as far as the money will go. You see, then, that they intend to exclude only the poor of Ham because there are separate alms for them, namely, five hundred livres that Madame Fouquet asks you to get by drawing a bill of exchange on her, in addition to the two hundred fifty livres you have already taken and that she says she has paid. So, these five hundred livres are to clothe the poor of Ham and its administrative sector. If this sum is insufficient, please inform the above-mentioned Lady.

Mademoiselle de Lancy of Laon sent word that it is time to start working on clothing for the winter. Therefore, buy the fabric as soon as possible and send to Laon as much of it as you think

advisable so that the women who are waiting for it can get to work.

Because the village and church of Bucy,¹ which is in the direction of Notre-Dame-de-Liesse,² had been burned down, the assembly asked M. Carlier to make a journey there, which he did. I am writing to tell him to take two hundred livres to begin to rebuild that poor church and that we will try to send him a few vestments.

That is all I have to tell you today, while awaiting news from you about the visit you are now making to the places where the armies have encamped. May God in His mercy preserve you for the consolation of His afflicted people and bless your soul and your work! I am, in His love, dear Brother, your affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, in Saint-Quentin

2336. - JEAN MARTIN TO SAINT VINCENT

August 11, 1657¹

I sent you word that, from the very beginning of our mission,² God was pleased to touch the hearts of the soldiers. Since then, we have always continued our sermons, catechetical instructions, and other usual functions, for which the crowd was so large that the church, which is very spacious, was always full, even at a time and season when everyone was busy with domestic concerns.

By order of the public authorities, all the shops remained closed during

¹Bucy-lès-Pierrepont, a commune in the district of Laon.
²Locality in the district of Laon, renowned as a place of pilgrimage.
¹In no. 2349 Saint Vincent mentions the exact date of this letter.
²The mission of Savigliano.
the time of the sermon and of the major catechetical instruction; on market
days there was no business during that time so that everyone could
conveniently listen to the Word of God. Monks and priests were present in
large numbers, and most of them made a general confession—even the
monks, who heard one another's confession. Restitutions and reconciliations took place there with the same beneficial effects as in other places.

The closing of the mission was held in a vast public square of the town,
with more than twelve thousand persons in attendance. During the entire
mission we gave conferences to the more than one hundred priests who
were present at each meeting.

Now, it happened that one of the workers, a good priest we had
asked to come from Turin to help us, became sick and died with sentiments of
extraordinary piety, after working for a few days in the confessional. On
his death bed he kept repeating, “Humility, humility; I am lost without
humility!” As soon as he died, the local inhabitants came in a body to offer
their sympathy. As a sign of their affection and gratitude, they wanted to
give him a solemn high funeral service, which they attended in very large
numbers, carrying torches and candles. All the religious Orders were
present, and the burial was as honorable as could take place in this area.

These good people were so appreciative of the services we tried to
render them that they conceived a great desire to have some priests of our
Congregation remain with them, and they offered us the most advanta-
geous conditions possible to keep us there. When they saw that we had to
refuse because of our small number of workers, they decided to create a
foundation for the maintenance of four or five priests, and they turned to
the Marchese di Pianezza to obtain them. They set forth such cogent
reasons to him that he strongly urged us on our return to accept this
foundation, which, however, we explained to him with all respect that we
were unable to do.
Most Honored Father,

After most humbly asking pardon of Your Charity, I now ask your blessing, for the love of God, so that the Holy Communion I plan to receive tomorrow—if you allow me to do so—will not turn to my shame, since I am deeply troubled in spirit.

The following three Sisters most humbly ask Your Charity to bless them and to offer to God their annual renewal. They are: Madeleine Menage, for the sixth time; Renee from Saint-Barthelemy, for the fifth time; and Marie from Fimes, for the third or fourth time. All three are very good Sisters. As for me, I am very wretched but am, nevertheless, consoled to think that I have the right to call myself, Most Honored Father, your most humble and very grateful daughter and servant.

L. de M.

Monsieur,

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

Letter 2337. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Date added on the back by Brother Ducournau.

2Madeleine Menage entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity around 1646 and had been at the Motherhouse since at least 1653. In 1657 she was named Bursar there. Madeleine had three sisters who were Daughters of Charity: Marguerite, Françoise, who was in Nantes, and the youngest, Catherine.

3Renee Delacroix, a native of Le Mans, entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity in 1646. She was in Nantes from June 1649 until 1655, before moving to Saint-Barthelemy parish in Paris. Her sister Jeanne was also a member of the Company.

Letter 2338. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Hains Collection, original signed letter.
I praise God for M. Le Vacher's arrival. I am expressing my joy to him about this in the enclosed letter and am asking him to come to Paris as soon as his health allows. I think you and he are wise in deciding not to compete with the Turks over Rappiot's belongings, since they have sent a man to confiscate them. Still, it is only just that they subtract from the amount Rappiot owes them the three thousand and some piastres they demanded of Brother Barreau. In this way, that Brother can be reimbursed from the confiscated goods, if they are sufficient, or from others that might be discovered with time.

We will try to honor your bill of exchange for six hundred livres. Thank God that the contagion has not yet reached Marseilles. There is reason to hope that His Goodness and the methodical way with which they are dealing with it will avert it.

It is a great evil—if it is true—that the Consul used for his affairs money that was sent to him for the ransom of slaves. He told me that several slaves lent him the money they had, and he used it. There is nothing to criticize in that because they did so of their own free will, but it would be wrong to withhold the price of their ransom without their consent, and it would give the merchants reason to be angry with us. Please let me know the amounts those merchants you fear have sent him.

Speaking of this, perhaps it will be well for you to wait a while longer before handing over to him, on the one hand, the 3150 livres I sent you last week for the ransom of three Basques and, on the other, the sixty écus for a slave from Nancy. I ask you, Monsieur, not to send the 3150 livres until the matter is cleared up.²

We have received twenty livres for a convict named Traverse. I am writing to tell M. Huguier to give them to him, and I ask you to reimburse him.

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¹Philippe Le Vacher.
²This sentence is in the Saint's handwriting.
I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
is.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Get, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Marseilles

2339. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, August 17, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received your letter of July 24. I am amazed that it and the preceding one arrived so promptly and that the two or three written before them and sent by ordinary mail have not yet come. We are still waiting for them, and I am waiting for the opinion of your council regarding the explanation of the conditions of the vow of poverty we take in the Company.

I will forward to M. Oelville the indulgence you sent me. He is still working in his native place.

Please do not pick up the extra tempora of Br[other] de Fontaines ¹ until you let me know the cost of the Bull or the Brief, which I asked you to send us.

We are at a moment in time when the missions are inspiring

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¹Pasquier de Fontaines, born on September 9, 1630, in Bailleul-Sire-Berthoult (Pas-de-Calais), entered the Congregation of the Mission on April 22, 1653, as a clerical student and took his vows on April 25, 1656, in the presence of M. Delespiney. He volunteered for Madagascar and was sent there twice, but both times conditions at sea prevented passage and he had to return to France. Both vols. I and V (Supplement) of Notices refers to him as Desfontaines.
many persons to work in them. It may be that those Priests of Saint-Sulpice who have gone to Rome have other plans than the ones that are apparent. I praise God for all the progress you are making for the benefit of the Company.

Some gentlemen in Forez, who worked for a time at similar missions, have decided to band together and already have letters patent from the King, signed by a Secretary of State, which they have presented for the seal. I spoke to the Chancellor 2 about this, and he replied that it would be difficult to avoid placing the seal on them because many important persons are involved in the matter. At the same time, he sent word for me to have someone go to see him again and that they would ascertain that nothing in those letters was prejudicial to us. As for myself, I ask Our Lord not only to bless the intentions and works of these new missionaries and of all the others, but also—if He sees that they can do things better than we—to destroy us and to promote them.

You asked me if it is appropriate during a mission for someone who knows how to prepare remedies for certain illnesses to be allowed to do this. You should have explained that more fully to me because I assume from the question that someone has already done this in the past. It is advisable for me to know who it is, 3 what remedies he concocts, and for what kinds of illnesses. So, please send me this information before I give you an answer.

We never notify the local Bishop of the shortcomings of a parish where we have given a mission, unless it is absolutely necessary

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2Pierre Seguier, son of Jean Seguier, Seigneur d’Autry, and Marie Tudert de la Bourmalière, was born in Paris on May 29, 1588. He was named Keeper of the Seals in 1633 and Chancellor in 1635. In 1649 the Seals were taken from him but were returned in 1656 at the death of Mathieu Mole. He retained them until his death in Saint-Germain-en-Laye on January 28, 1672.

3It was Louis d’Eu (cf. vol. VII, no. 2494), born on April 8, 1624, in Fresnay-sur-Sarthe (Sarthe). He entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 20, 1651, withdrew, and reentered on March 6, 1655, taking his vows in Rome on March 7, 1657. After Saint Vincent’s death, he again left the Congregation, by order of the Archbishop of Paris, for some important business, but returned as soon as he was able when the Archbishop died. The Bibliothèque Nationale has acquired one of his manuscript works, L’homme accompli (fr. 9625).
for him to know this in order to remedy the situation. If these are secret faults, it is not appropriate to divulge them, and if they are public, then His Excellency must be aware of them from another source.

I received no letters from Genoa this week. I wrote you last week how worried we are about our confreres. May God preserve them and deliver the whole city and Italy from this devouring pestilence!

M. Le Vacher of Algiers has arrived in Marseilles to come to Paris about the Consul’s affairs. We await him here and await from God remedies for the troubles that have obliged him to make this journey.

I received word from Poland that they are going to send good M. Duperroy back to us here as the final remedy the doctors can apply to his wound. I recommend him to your prayers in a special way. M. Desdames is still in Warsaw and is still in danger from new calamities. The Swedes have once again laid siege, captured, pillaged, and abandoned that poor city. True, there was less looting.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Rome

2340. - TO DONAT CROWLEY, SUPERIOR, IN LE MANS

Paris, August 18, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Letter 2340. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, rough draft in the secretary’s handwriting.
We need you here. Please come at the first opportunity after receiving this letter and leave the care of the family to M. Gorlidot until further notice. I will be very happy to see you, and I ask O[ur] L[ord] to bring you here safe and sound.

You presented to me Brother Descroizilles' wish to be recalled to Paris. Please tell him that it is our maxim not to grant individual members of the Company things they request too ardently and that, when we see that he has moderated his desire, we will think about him. Meanwhile, it will be well to find something good for him to do there and for him to learn how to teach and to obey well.

You wrote me about other matters to which I am not replying because I will discuss them with you when you are here.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Cruoly

2341. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN SAINT-QUENTIN

Paris, August 18, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

God grant that your journey to Amiens went well and that you have returned in good health!

You put forward several needs in your letter of the thirteenth, which prompted the Ladies to earmark five hundred livres for you; that is all they can do at present. Use them for whatever you judge most urgent, either to assist the Pastors or to buy wheat, both for poor children and for sowing, so that the poor farmers can have

---Francois Gorlidot, born in Charly (Aisne) on January 10, 1623, entered the Congregation of the Mission on March 3, 1647, took his vows on September 30, 1649, and was ordained a priest in 1650.

Letter 2341. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
food for the winter. Nothing was designated for the churches because of a shortage of funds. So, take the five hundred livres and draw a bill of exchange for that amount on Mademoiselle Viole, who hopes to send you before long some fabric to make some clothes; she also asks by what means you want her to get it to you.

We have no news here except that M. Alméras has returned to Bourbon with Messieurs Perraud,1 Watebled, and Éveillard. Our confrères in Genoa are in grave danger, since some of them are risking their lives in the service of the plague-stricken and the others are surrounded by the sick and the dead. Please pray for them and for me, who am, in O[ur] L[ord], dear Brother, your most affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, in Saint-Quentin

2342. - TO GUILLAUME DELVILLE, IN ARRAS

Paris, August 20, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I am sending you the Brief of an indulgence you requested, which I received from Rome.

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1Hugues Perraud, born in Arguel (Doubs) on October 3, 1615, entered the Congregation of the Mission on January 5, 1640, took his vows on March 23, 1644, and was ordained a priest in 1646. He was placed in Saintes (1646) and Richelieu (1651), and died in Paris on December 26, 1659.

Letter 2342. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
The last letter I received from you was dated July 23, and it does not require an answer.

M. Alméras has returned to Bourbon; Messieurs Perraud, Wattebled, and Éveillard have gone with him for various ailments they have. We here are in good health, thank God, but greatly distressed by the ravages of the plague in Genoa. It has turned the city into a ghost town, and we are very much afraid that it will carry off all the Missionaries, who are all in danger. I recommend them—living or dead—to your prayers.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the page: Monsieur Delville

2343. - TO SISTER BARBE ANGIBOUST, SISTER SERVANT,  
IN CHÂTEAUDUN  

Paris, August 20, 1657

Dear Sister,

I thank God for all the things you told me, particularly concerning the good will of the Administrators and your fine manner of acting. I am very much consoled by this but am also very distressed—more than I can say—at the disobedience of that Daugh-

Letter 2343. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original signed letter.

1Barbe Angiboust holds an important place in the first twenty-five years of the history of the Daughters of Charity. On July 1, 1634, she entered the Company, at the age of twenty-nine, and took her vows on March 25, 1642. Barbe was sent to make the foundations in Saint-Germain-en-Laye (1638), Richelieu (1638), Saint-Denis (1645), Fontainebleau (1646), Brienne (1652), Bernay (1655), and Châteaudun (1657) where she died on December 27, 1658. In 1641 she was in charge of the Sisters serving the galley slaves. The conference on her virtues, held in the Motherhouse on April 27, 1659, is very edifying (cf. vol. X, no. 109). At the time this letter was written, Sister Barbe had just arrived in Châteaudun to try to settle the differences that had arisen between the Daughters of Charity and the Administrators of the hospital.
ter you mention. Try to get her to make up her mind to do as those gentlemen ordered at their board meeting. Do your best to have her wear other clothing, and if you need money for that, borrow some and we will reimburse you so you can pay it back. If, however, she is determined to come, assure her that she will not be badly received.

Mademoiselle Le Gras has been ill. She is somewhat better now, thank God. Pray for her, Sister, and for me, your servant in Our Lord.

VINCENT DE PAUL, i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Sister Barbe Angiboust, Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Sick Poor of the Châteaudun Hospital, in Châteaudun

2344. - TO MOTHER ÉLISABETH DE MAUPEOU, Superior of the First Monastery of the Visitation

August 21, 1657

Dear Mother,

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

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2 Sister Charlotte Moreau.
3 First redaction: "she will be well received." The correction is in the Saint's handwriting.

Letter 2344. - Reg. 1, fol. 31.

1 Madeleine-Elisabeth de Maupeou, daughter of Gilles de Maupeou, Intendant and Controller-General of Finances under Henry IV. She entered the First Monastery of the Visitation in Paris in January 1628, at thirty-two years of age. The nuns of the Caen convent elected her as their Superior on May 24, 1635, and reelected her on May 20, 1638. In 1641 she went to Bayonne to found a monastery of her Order, at the request of her nephew, François Fouquet, Bishop of that town. Mother de Maupeou remained in Bayonne and was again elected Superior there on June 2, 1650. On her return to Paris, she became Superior of the First Monastery (1655-58), where she died on July 3, 1674, at the age of seventy-eight. (Cf. Année sainte, vol. VII, pp. 249-54.)
I grant Sister Françoise-Antoinette du Soyecourt permission to go and remain in your house in Chaillot for the length of time we will judge necessary for her health, and for Sister Louise-Eugénie to accompany her with another Sister of your choice. They will stay in the same house, subject to the Superior there, until tomorrow, Wednesday, when Madame Duplessis will kindly go to pick them up with Sister Derbaux. I give them permission to leave your monastery for this purpose so they can all return together on the same day. I ask O[ur] L[ord], dear Mother, to bless this journey and your leadership.

I am, in His love, dear Mother, your . . .

VINCENT DEPAUL,
is.C.M.

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2Born in 1619, Françoise-Antoinette de Soyecourt entered the First Monastery of the Visitation in 1640 and died there on March 1, 1704. (Cf. Année saine, vol. III, pp. 24-29.)

3Louise-Eugénie de Fontaine (Fontaines) was born in Paris of Huguenot parents on March 13, 1608, and entered the Visitation Monastery (rue Saint-Antoine) in 1630, seven years after her abjuration of heresy. She soon became Mistress of Novices; after her election as Superior in 1641, she was reelected so often that the convent had her at its head for thirty-three years. In 1644 she went to La Perrine Abbey near Le Mans to establish the renewal. On her return, the Archbishop of Paris asked her to work on the Rule of Port-Royal Abbey. Saint Vincent, who observed her behavior in certain difficult situations, stated that “an angel could not have comport herself with more virtue.” (Cf. Sainte Jeanne-Françoise Frémyot de Chantal, Sa vie et ses oeuvres. [8 vols., Paris: Plon, 1874-80], vol. VIII, p. 446, note.) She died September 29, 1694, at the age of eighty-six, leaving the reputation of a holy nun. “God always blessed her leadership and her undertakings,” states the Book of Professions (Arch. Nat. LL 1718). Her biography has been written by Jacqueline-Marie du Plessis Bonneau, Vie de la vénérable Mère Louise-Eugénie de Fontaine, religieuse et quatrième supérieure du premier monastère de la Visitation Sainte-Marie de Paris (Paris: F. Muguet, 1696).
Monsieur,

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

I am very troubled because of the trouble you are having. When I sent M. des Jardins the documents regarding the union, I did so in haste, with no time to write to you, without reflecting on to whom I should send them, and even less, with any thought of excluding you from the negotiation of this affair. Please believe me when I say that it never crossed my mind and continue your efforts to bring it to a conclusion. It is, however, advisable for you to do this, please, in conjunction with M. des Jardins, for his position as Superior requires that he and his name figure in this endeavor. As matters now stand, this is even advisable for union of hearts as well as for the outcome of the affair.

We have sent by coach, in two separate packages, the conferences and other things you and M. des Jardins have requested for the ordination [retreat]. I hope you have received them by now so I ask you, Monsieur, to be prepared to give one of the conferences, for the love of O[ur] L[ord] who, I hope and pray, will strengthen and bless you. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Demonchy, Priest of the Mission, in Toul


Paris, August 24, 1657

Monsieur,

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

M. Ozenne has informed me that God has been pleased to visit you with a third fistula. This news has really touched my heart and leads me to think that God intends to make a great saint of you in paradise, since He is leading you along the way of the cross—and one of the most crucifying and sanctifying of all crosses.

O Monsieur! it seems to me that Our Lord is causing you and the acts of patience and conformity to His Will you practice to be regarded with joy by His heavenly court! Courage then, Monsieur, keep it up! The time will come when you would wish to have suffered more than you do now. Indeed, Monsieur, it seems to me that the angels have a holy envy of your happiness. Just this morning I was speaking about you at our repetition of prayer, and it seemed to me that everyone was envious of your happiness. Be assured, Monsieur, that you preach to all of us far more effectively than all the preachers we [hear] 1 and that we are all praying most fervently that God may be pleased to sanctify your dear soul more and more, preserve you for many years to come, and restore you to health.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Duperroy, Priest of the Mission, in Opole

1The Saint absentmindedly wrote attendons (await) instead of entendons (hear).
Monsieur,

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

I am consoled by the hope you give me in your letter of July 31 of satisfying the desires of Cardinal Bagni. I pray that O[ur] L[ord] will give you the means to do so.

The harvest is abundant in Piedmont; so much so that, when M. Martin gives missions in the towns, he is obliged to put all the priests and monks to work to satisfy the devotion of the people. If, therefore, M. Bonnet is anxious to go and work there, he will be welcome. You can give him a letter for M. Martin, asking him to welcome him, provided you find in him all the requisite qualities he needs to be a help to him and not a burden.

Thank you for the extra tempora for Brother de Fontaines and the faculties for M. Cogléé, which I have received.

For some time now, I have had no news of our Missionaries in the Hebrides because the English have cut off any kind of communication with Catholics. As a result, when M. Brin went to London, intending to go to Scotland and then to those islands, he was obliged to return here because he could not get any further, although he was dressed as a merchant. Since then, we have received a letter from one of those priests, who said they were still working in fear but with good results.

Since writing you about the reinstatement of a Pastor in the Chartres diocese, I have not seen him. If he returns, I will tell him what you wrote me about the matter and will find out whether he wants to go to the expense that is involved.

Letter 2347. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.

1In his index (vol. XIV) Coste lists a Jean Bonnet as a Priest of the Mission but gives no biographical data on him. Furthermore, there is no mention of him in Notices, vols. I and V (Supplement).
You sent me word that those who have taken vows in the Company cannot dispose of the revenues from their benefices or patrimonies without permission of the Superior and that this is the opinion of Father Hilarion.\(^2\) That is also the view of the Doctors here, as I think I wrote you. We have not consulted any lawyers and are waiting for the Parlement to pass judgment on an affair we have in this matter \(^4\) so we can set down the conditions of our vow of poverty.

Apart from what M. Blatiron wrote you in his letter of July 6, I have received no other news from Genoa. That letter gave us reason to fear the worst from the great danger in which that poor Genoa house was placed. Actually, you were the first to inform us that good M. Ennery had died and that M. François Vincent \(^5\) and Br[other] Jean \(^6\) were ill. O Monsieur! how distressed we are by these events and by the fear that even worse ones have occurred or will occur! As for me, I must admit that my heart is numb with sorrow at this. We pray constantly for that poor afflicted city and

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\(^2\)First redaction: “use.” The word “dispose” is in the Saint’s handwriting.

\(^3\)Abbot Hilarion, born Bartolommeo Rancati in Milan, on September 2, 1594, was the son of Baltasarre Rancati and Margherita di Bagno. He entered the Cistercians in Milan on March 10, 1608, and taught in Salamanca (1614-18), then in Milan. In May 1619 he was sent to the Convent of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome. Among the offices he held in the Curia was that of Consultor for Propaganda Fide, in which he provided many services for Religious Orders and Founders. Saint Vincent considered him a friend and protector (cf. *Annales C.M.* [1951], p. 374.

\(^4\)The contested inheritance of Louis Langlois. Born in Paris on January 6, 1616, Langlois was ordained a priest during Lent of 1640, entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 15, 1644, and took his vows on November 8, 1646. He was Superior in Luçon (1660-62), after which he was stationed in Fontainebleau.

\(^5\)François Vincent, born in 1611 in Gandelu, Meaux diocèse (Seine-et-Marne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on April 2, 1649, and died of the plague in Genoa on July 13, 1657.

\(^6\)In his Index (vol. XIV) Coste states that this is Brother Jean (Giovanni) Damiani, but gives no biographical data on him. *Notices*, vols. I and V (Supplement), gives no information either.
especially for our confreres, who at this moment are perhaps all before God. Please continue to share with us anything you hear.

I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Rome

2348. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

August 24, 1657

Monsieur,

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

We will try to replace the money you gave M. Le Vacher, whom we are expecting here in a week or so. When he arrives we will see what we can do, which will fall far short of his expectations.

You tell me that money can now be sent to Algiers and that we are safe from the Turks, but I do not think this applies to the Consul in his dire circumstances, which might force him to use the money sent to him for the slaves in a way other than desired. That is why I ask you to delay sending him what you have received or may receive, until the affairs of this poor man take a turn for the better.

Yesterday I spoke to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon about funds for the hospital. She told me that in the present state of affairs it is very difficult to get what is being requested, but she will continue to ask for it.

Letter 2348. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Hains Collection, original signed letter.

1Philippe Le Vacher.

2Jean Barreau.
Before sending you the priest or the seminarian you are requesting, I need to know whether you are satisfied with the ones you have, what good the seminary has done, whether its members have made progress in their studies and in virtue, whether the religious of Saint-Victor are satisfied with it, and if those who have instructed them have fulfilled their duty properly and given edification to the house. I ask you this in confidence, and I ask you to honor the silence of our Lord with regard to anyone else. Rest assured that I will do the same with regard to your answer.

I do not remember whether I told you that the latest letters I received from Genoa stated that on M. Blatiron's return from the country to the city, where the plague was increasing daily, he was obliged to go to see the Cardinal, and he and his companion saw corpses piled up in the streets. They also found alive four persons who had dropped on the ground, and they heard their confessions. The letters likewise said that this Prelate asked for two priests to serve in a lazaretto, and this happiness fell to Messieurs Tratebas and Domenico Boccone, who had risked their lives joyfully and courageously.

I received all this news about three weeks ago; it had been written on July 3. Now, M. Jolly tells me that he had received more recent and more sorrowful news in Rome: on July 13, M. Ennery was stricken with the disease in the house and died two or three days later with great resignation, and that M. François Vincent, who was stricken on July 11, was still alive on the thirteenth but with little hope for recovery. He says that Brother Jean was also down with it.

All this has caused us deep distress; we really feel demoralized by it. I must confess that my heart is numb with sorrow at this, since I dare not promise myself that a single one of such good Missionaries, apt for everything and everywhere, will survive. If there are

3The novices of Saint-Victor Abbey were studying at this seminary.
still any of them alive, may God be pleased to preserve them and to give His glory to the others! We pray constantly for this, and I ask you and your men, Monsieur, to do the same. I embrace you and them in spirit, and am, for the head and the members, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Get, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Marseilles

2349. - TO JEAN MARTIN, SUPERIOR, IN TURIN

Paris, August 24, 1657

Monsieur,

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

After waiting so long for your dear letters, I finally received one on the eleventh of this month, which mentions another, mailed on the fourth, which I have not received. I am sorry about this, especially because it contains the details of the Savigliano mission and of the present situation of the family. I hope that this report is not lost but merely delayed.

In your last letter you gave me a description of that place and the goodness of the people, who are so easily inclined to do good, and how useful a seminary would be, if one were opened there. You also add that they are requesting workers from the Company, and you ask me to send four or five, if I approve of this establishment.

Letter 2349. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.  
1No. 2336.
I thank God, Monsieur, for such an inclination, and if it is His
good pleasure that this plan be realized, I ask Him to facilitate the
means to do so. I must inform you, however, that we can make no
decision on this right now because you did not tell me who is asking
for the Missionaries or what assurance is given for their mainte-
nance. Let me know about this, and we shall see. I think you wrote
me previously that it was an episcopal town and that the See was
vacant. We would have to know whether the Chapter and the
Vicar-General made this proposal, and if they have a suitable
house, etc.

I do not know how M. Richard can expect our permission to go
home, since I already asked him not to give this journey a thought
because I see no special reason for it. On the contrary, I see several
reasons why he should stay where he is. Please do what you can to
make him change his mind. Explain to him the inconveniences of
such journeys, the dangers, the futility, the waste of time, the bad
example for the Company, the need of your house, the success of
your missions, the good dispositions of the people, and the abun-
dant harvest that awaits you.

If he reflects on all that, he will realize that his urge to go is a
temptation, and that God's Will is that he deprive himself of this
satisfaction.

I say the same for M. Musy. Alas! if one of them went, how
could you refuse the other? And if both go, how could they be at
peace if, as far as it depended on them, they allowed God's work
to be neglected for temporal interests that serve as a pretext to do
d their own will! May God grant them the grace to do His Will.

I learned from M. Blatiron's letters, written in early July, of the
great desolation of the poor city of Genoa and the grave danger to
our dear family. I have had no news from him since then, but
M. Jolly wrote me that he received some on the thirteenth of the
same month and that the plague had stricken three Missionaries at

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2First redaction: "no valid reason." The word "special" is in the Saint's handwriting.
almost the same time, namely, M. Ennery, M. François Vincent, and Brother Jean. He said that the first had gone to God on the fourth day of his illness, but the others were still alive. This news distresses us greatly; personally, I think I have never been more distressed than I am now, both because of the loss of such a fine Missionary as M. Ennery, and because of my great fear that God has called several more of them—perhaps all—to Himself. We pray constantly for them—the living and the dead—and I am sure you are doing the same.

I consider this house deserted, then, and feel we are obliged to send men there again, as soon as God is pleased to cleanse that contaminated Republic. That is why I welcomed your suggestion to open a new house in Piedmont, as a means God gives us to have and to form good subjects for all of Italy. In the meantime, we have thought about some of our students, with a view to sending them to you as soon as possible so that, once they have learned the language, they may give you the possibility of doing all that is being requested. That is what we are going to prepare them to do.

We have no other news here; we are very well, thank God. M. Alméras has returned to Bourbon, accompanied by Messieurs Perraud, Watebled, and Éveillard.

If the delayed letter went astray, you would console me by letting me know its contents because I think there were many reasons for consolation in it. I thank God, Monsieur, for all the blessings He bestows on your leadership and on your work, and I ask Him to continue to do so and to strengthen you more and more. I send greetings and an embrace to your little community.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

This letter is going out just today, the last day of August. It was inadvertently left behind last week, but since then God has been pleased to let me receive your letter of the fourth, which consoled me very much when I saw the special blessings He has given your
work. I shared it with the Company, to have them thank God for this and as a counterbalance to the causes of affliction it has, not only from the ravages of the plague in Genoa, but from the loss of the last three Missionaries who went to Madagascar. I will write you the details of that another time.

Please renew my offers of obedience to the Marchese. I received your letter that had gone astray but am unable to answer it, except with regard to the suggestion that the Marchese, our founder, has made to you. Since he is our father and we his adopted children, we should submit entirely to his way of acting regarding his foundation and everything else. Please do so graciously, Monsieur, and have no doubt that God will bless your undertakings.\(^3\)

*Addressed:* Monsieur Martin, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Turin, in Turin

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2350. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, August 24, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I have been deprived of your letters since receiving the one of July 3, but M. Jolly shared with me the news you wrote him on the thirteenth, telling him of the grace God was pleased to grant M. Ennery in drawing him to Himself, and to M. François Vincent in bringing him close to Him, taking the first-mentioned by a happy death and reducing the latter to nearly dying from such a serious illness. You say furthermore that Brother Jean has also caught it. *Mon Dieu!* Monsieur, all that is hard to swallow! I had good reason

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\(^3\)This paragraph is in the Saint's handwriting.

to fear the consequences of that dreadful disease. You can well imagine how this sad news distresses us. It has touched me to the quick, more than I can tell you. What adds to our sorrow is the fear that God may have even deprived us of a few others—perhaps all of them. O my good Lord, please have pity on us and on me, a sinner, who am the cause of your removing from a newly-formed little Company what is best and most precious in it. In truth, Monsieur, I can attribute only to my sins the trials He is bringing to bear on it.

We pray constantly to His Divine Goodness for the whole city and for your house, that He may be pleased to deliver them from this disease. What overwhelms me with grief is my apprehension regarding the venerable person of the Cardinal, for whose preservation we also pray constantly. I do not know what to say to you in view of these irreparable losses and of the others we have only too great reason to fear, except that my heart is utterly numbed by them. This obliges me ultimately to adore the ways of God and to submit myself to the weight of His hand.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

2351. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN HAM

Paris, August 25, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

I received two of your letters, one from Amiens and the other from Saint-Quentin. The Ladies have given approval for your
journey and your purchase and will have your bills of exchange paid. They also approve of all you have written and, having given no further orders, are relying on you to carry out the previous ones.

Brother Alexandre \(^1\) requests that you send him one of those blankets that are made there, which you mentioned before in your letters, when you were urging the Ladies to have some purchased for the poor. You know we need a large number of them in this house and that they are very expensive here. We will see if they are suitable for us because, if they cost only forty, fifty, or sixty sous, as you told us, that will be a saving.

The plague, which is depopulating Genoa, entered our confreres' house and attacked almost simultaneously M. Ennery, M. François Vincent, and Brother Jean. The first died of it, and the others had no hope of recovery. You can just imagine the danger for the rest of the family because all of them are surrounded by the plague-stricken, both in their own residence and in the hospital where they serve them; perhaps they are all dead now. It has been about six weeks since I had any news of them. Please pray for them, whether they are dead or alive. This is a very great sorrow for us.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], dear Brother, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
I.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, with the Prior of Saint-Martin of Ham, in Ham

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\(^1\)Alexandre Véronne.
Monsieur,

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

I am a little late in answering your letter of July 25, in which you say that the property you have acquired will be taken from you by the Seigneur or by the relatives of the vendor. I have nothing to say to this, except God be blessed for having willed all earthly things to be uncertain and perishable so that we may seek in Him alone the stability of our plans and affairs because things then turn out well for us.

The property you propose to buy in order to secure your establishment is beyond our strength because it must cost more than twenty-five thousand écus. We are not in a position just now to undertake anything like that or even approaching it.

I am sending you an excerpt from the reply I had from Rome regarding the union of your parish. If you are willing to incur the expense, see if you can send there the documents that are being requested. See also if the Bishop thinks it advisable to establish a permanent assistant priest there because it is to be desired that the Company be completely relieved of the service of the parish in order to work at its own functions. I wrote to you previously that I do not think the family should be established there or far from the Bishop of Luçon,¹ nor is it advisable for a priest of the Company to reside there alone, as you propose; therefore, please take measures accordingly.

We have not yet handed over to M. Cramoisy the nine hundred livres you owe the Bishop; this is for want of funds and not of good

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2352. - TO JACQUES CHIROYE, SUPERIOR, IN LUÇON

Paris, August 26, 1657


¹Pierre de Nivelle.
will. With God's help, we will pay this debt with the first money that comes in.

I ask O[ur] L[ord] to pour His charity abundantly into your heart and on your house so that you can transmit it in like manner to the souls of the whole diocese, as our confreres in Genoa are trying to do at the risk of their lives. Some of them—perhaps all—have already given their lives. I think you are aware that the plague has nearly depopulated that poor city, which is in a deplorable state of desolation. What you do not know, however, is that the disease has finally entered our house—or rather, that our workers paved the way for it by serving the plague-stricken. Whatever the case, Monsieur, M. Ennery has died of it, and M. François Vincent and a coadjutor Brother—who were still alive on July 13 but had no hope of surviving—were on the verge of following him. Some of the rest of the family were with them to nurse them, and the others were serving the sick country folk gathered together in a hospital; so, Monsieur, all of them were at risk. We have received no news of them since then. God knows in what state they now are. We pray constantly for both the living and the dead, and I ask you to do the same. We are overwhelmed by this sorrow, and my heart is utterly numbed by it. These are some of the best men in the Company, fit for anything and anywhere. As for them, they will be very fortunate to die in the actual practice of charity, but it will be an irreparable loss for the Company.

I just learned that a ship from Madagascar has arrived at Nantes, bringing us news of our Missionaries. I do not know if it will be good or bad, since I have not yet received any of their letters. I wrote to M. Boussordec last Wednesday.

We here are all very well, thank God. M. Alméras has returned to Bourbon, accompanied by Messieurs Perraud, Watebled, and Éveillard.
I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble and affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
i.s.C.M.

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

2353. - TO EDME MENESTRIER, SUPERIOR, IN AGEN

Paris, August 26, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I have received three letters from you, the last one dated August 5. I will send to Algiers the one you forwarded to me for a slave, although it is worded in a most ridiculous fashion.

M. Le Vacher has come to France for some urgent business; we expect him here in four or five days. If by chance he knows this slave—which I do not doubt—I will send you a certificate of his slavery so that if he has any property it can be sold or pledged for his ransom.

True, Monsieur, it is unlikely that you will be held responsible for services rendered to the chapels, as long as they are involved in legal proceedings, since the person who has obtained them is filing a lawsuit in Bordeaux. Wait and see how the lawsuit turns out. If those who have established you are pleased with your services, they must do one of two things: either put you in possession of those chapels or pay you the nine hundred livres they

promised you. In the event that they do neither, I have already told you that Notre-Dame de la Rose is not far off and will be a place of refuge for you, just as it is a place of consolation for everyone. If the opportunity arises to have your needs presented to the Bishop of Agen, I will do so, but I do not know by whom. Continue to write to him about them, repeating more or less the contents of your preceding letters in the uncertainty whether he received them because you are, in fact, right to doubt whether he did, since he has given you no reply.

I praise God that your little family is well and that you have three new seminarians. The most pleasing news you can give me is that God is blessing the seminary and increasing its numbers, both because of the obligation of your house to devote itself to this good work and procure its advancement and because this is almost the only way to reform the ecclesiastical state, fallen so far from its pristine perfection. May His Divine Goodness be pleased to fill you so abundantly with His charity that you will be able to transmit it to the souls of persons in every walk of life!

That is what our confrères in Genoa are trying to do at the risk of their lives. Some—perhaps all—have already given their lives. I think you are aware that the plague has almost depopulated that poor city, which is in a deplorable state of desolation. What you do not know, however, is that the disease has finally entered our house—or rather, that our priests paved the way for it by serving the plague-stricken. Whatever the case, Monsieur, M. Ennery has died of it, and M. François Vincent and an Italian coadjutor Brother who were stricken at the same time, were on the verge of following him. They were still alive on July 13 but had no hope of being cured. Some of the rest of the family were with them to nurse them, and the others were serving the sick country folk gathered together in a hospital; so all of them, Monsieur, were at risk. We have received

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1 Both Agen and Notre-Dame de la Rose in Sainte-Livrade-sur-Lot were in Lot-et-Garonne.
2 Barthélemy d'Elbène.
no news of them since then. God knows in what state they now are. We pray constantly for them, whether they are dead or alive; I ask you to do the same. We are overwhelmed by this sorrow, and my heart is utterly numbed by it. They are eight or ten of the best workers in the Company, fit for anything, anywhere. As for them, they will be very fortunate to die in this way, in the actual practice of charity, but it will be an irreparable loss for the Company.

I just learned that a ship from Madagascar has arrived at Nantes, bringing us news of our Missionaries; I do not know if it will be good or bad, since I have not yet received their letters.

We are all very well here, thank God. M. Alméras has returned to Bourbon, accompanied by Messieurs Perraud, Watebled, and Éveillard.

I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

The attestation cost us an outlay of only about forty sous, but if our notary had been willing to take our money, we would have given him an écu. This is a favor—or rather, an alms—he has done for us, which you are not obliged to do for those gentlemen.

Addressed: Monsieur Edme, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Agen

2354. - TO LOUIS RIVET, SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

Paris, August 26, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I have received your letter of the fifth. M. Berthe, who is in Brittany right now, will be with you soon to make a visitation. Tell him your thoughts about M. Daveroult,¹ and after he has told me what he thinks of your proposal that you should be separated, we will see how it can be done.

It is true that what you tell me about M. Lièbe can be conjectured from the way he acts, but he is good-hearted and he means well, thank God. His gentleness of spirit helps him to win souls over to desire to do good, and I ask O[ur] L[ord] to give him the modesty and recollection he lacks. I am sure you have strongly recommended them to him and that the visit he paid you will be a big help to him.

I praise God that you have three seminarians and are expecting a fourth. The most agreeable news you can give me is that God is pleased to bless the seminary and increase its numbers, both because of the obligation of your house to devote itself to this good work and procure its advancement and because it is the only way to reform the ecclesiastical state, fallen so far from its pristine perfection. May His Divine Goodness be pleased, Monsieur, to grant you and your men the grace to work effectively at this.

I pray also that He may be pleased to straighten out the Charities you are going to set aright and fill you so abundantly with His own charity that you will be able to transmit it to the souls of persons of both sexes and all walks of life.

That is what our confreres in Genoa are trying to do at the risk of their lives. Some of them—perhaps all—have already given their lives. I think you are aware that the plague has almost depopulated that poor city, which is in a deplorable state of desolation. What you do not know, however, is that the disease has

¹Pierre Daveroult, born January 20, 1614, in Bèhune (Pas-de-Calais), was ordained a priest during Lent of 1638. He entered the Congregation of the Mission on April 13, 1653, and took his vows on January 13, 1656. Twice he embarked for Madagascar and twice returned to Paris without being able to set foot on the island.
finally entered our house—or rather that our workers paved the way for it by nursing the plague-stricken. Whatever the case, Monsieur, M. Ennery has died of it, and M. François Vincent and an Italian coadjutor Brother were on the verge of following him. They were still alive on July 13 but had no hope of recovery. Some of the rest of the family were with them to nurse them, and the others were serving the sick country folk gathered together in a hospital; so all of them were at risk. We have had no news of them since then. God knows in what a state they now are. We pray constantly for both the living and the dead, and I ask you to do the same. We are overwhelmed by this sorrow, and my heart is utterly numbed by it. They are some of the best men in the Company, fit for anything, anywhere. As for themselves, they are happy to die in this way, in the actual practice of charity, but it will be an irreparable loss for the Company.

I just learned that a ship from Madagascar has arrived at Nantes, bringing us news of our Missionaries. I do not know if it will be good or bad, since I have not yet received their letters.

We are all very well here, thank God, and so is your good mother. M. Alméras has returned to Bourbon, accompanied by Messieurs Perraud, Watebled, and Éveillard.

I am enclosing the warrant of the Great Council, summoning before it those persons who refuse to pay your tithes. I do not approve of your going to law for a few lambs, since you were paid with other small tithes. As for the large tithes from the Chevalier d'Albret’s² farm, follow the advice of your lawyer.

During a mission you may not hear the confessions of persons from another diocese. Either you or they must ask this permission from their Bishop. Neither may you hear confessions everywhere

²Cesar-Phoebus de Miossanx.
and of all sorts of people, as you request, without the permission of the Pastors or Superiors of the churches where you will be.

I am, Monsieur, in O[ur] L[ord], your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.s.C.M.

I have written to M. Langlois, telling him that he has to come here for his business, which is ours as well. I ask you to look after the seminary in the meantime, Monsieur, and to give him whatever he will need.

2355. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, August 31, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received your letter of August 21. M. Le Vacher arrived here yesterday in good health, thank God. I persist in asking you not to send to Algiers the money I sent you for three Basques, until I tell you to do so.

You ask us for a cleric capable of teaching the less advanced seminarians, in place of Brother Parisy, who is about to be ordained a priest and will meet your needs for the missions. We will try to send him to you, together with a coadjutor Brother, but before doing so I will await your reply to my last letter, in which I asked you to let me know what progress your seminary has made in learning and piety and whether you are satisfied with the teachers. I have a special reason for being informed about this.
We will pay M. Delaforcade the money he advanced; if you can help M. Le Vacher in Tunis by sending him a secretary for the Chancellery, you will do him a favor, and we will be very consoled by it.

We have no certain news from Genoa since what I sent you, but we have received other very disquieting news from elsewhere. To begin with the least distressing, I will tell you that I heard from Poland that good M. Desdames has once more lost everything in Warsaw, which was again besieged, taken, and pillaged by the Swedes, and then abandoned. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable, since neither war, nor the plague, nor impoverishment, nor all of these together could make him leave his post, although he had suffered from them several times and the Queen had encouraged him to leave. She herself told me so in an express letter, written in her own hand, in which she attests to being greatly edified by him, as well as by the virtue of M. Duperroy, who is in grave danger from his wound. The surgeons no longer know what to do for him. If he had the strength to come back home, we would be consoled to have him here soon.

One of the three or four ships that left Nantes when Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville sailed, has finally returned from Madagascar. I have not yet received the letters it has brought me, but one of our friends in Nantes has informed me that, when he asked about the state of our poor Missionaries, he learned that M. Bourdaise was well and doing even better, thank God. As for the other three, however, he was told they had brought their sacrifice to perfection since God chose to take them to Himself: M. de Belleville at Cape Verde on the voyage out, and the others after they had arrived at the site of their mission. We were already deeply grieved by what happened in Genoa, and now this has overwhelmed us with sorrow. But God be praised, Monsieur, for

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1Nicolas Duperroy.
all those losses, which are so great for the Company, according to our way of speaking! Nevertheless, since those dear departed are blessed because, as Our Lord has said, they saved their lives by losing them,² we ought to expect more help from them, for time and for eternity, than if they were still among us. I continue to recommend them to your prayers and to those of your little community. By the grace of God, I am, in His love, for it and for you in particular, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2356. - TO JACQUES PESNELLE, IN ROME

Paris, August 31, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of the seventh, which, like all the others, consoled me. I sent your brother the last packet you addressed to me. M. Langlois' affair is not yet settled, thanks to the ingenuity of the opposing parties in holding up the verdict as long as they can, as you foresaw. Seeing that they do not have a good case, they have used every possible delay and quibbling in order to enjoy the use of the property being demanded of them. The case was nevertheless on the verge of being tried at the end of this session of the Parlement, but it will not be, because it is too important for us not to do everything possible on our part to preserve your rights and

²Cf. Mt 16:25. (NAB)

those of M. Langlois. Since his presence will greatly contribute to the winning of his suit, and its loss is bound to be prejudicial to any similar dispute that may arise in the future, we are having him come here expressly from a place more than a hundred leagues away; therefore, we will have to wait until after the feast of Saint Martin \(^1\) to see what the verdict will be. We hope it can only be in favor of M. Langlois. That is why, Monsieur, since you have waited this long, it is advisable for you to postpone until then the request you have to make to your brothers, all the more so as the Parlement of Rouen is far stricter in these matters than that of Paris and has less knowledge of our little Institute. When, however, you have a presumption in your favor, you will have nothing to fear.

I thank God, Monsieur, for the favor He has granted you in freeing you from the anxieties you had. You should not be surprised by them; whoever wishes to follow Jesus Christ will be subject to temptations. A weathercock is no more subject to the way the wind blows than the mind of man is to exterior agitations, by which he is drawn now to one side and then to another; God permits this to try good persons and to strengthen them in Him. Happy are they who abandon themselves to His guidance, confide in His goodness, and remain at peace in the midst of these storms! You are one of these, thank God, and I ask O[ur] L[ord] to ground you more and more in the spirit of the Gospel.

If, on the one hand, your letter consoled me, it has, on the other, disturbed me greatly because of M. Jolly's illness. I will not be able to dispel my anxiety until I hear that he is better. Please give me definite news about him and, above all, do everything you can for his comfort and restoration to health, sparing nothing for this so that he may at least be in a condition to return to France, which I am asking him to do if the doctors should decide that it would be

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\(^1\) If Saint Vincent is referring to Saint Martin of Tours, the feast day is November 11.
harmful for him to remain in Rome. That is what I expect from your charity. I am, in that of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

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

2357. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, August 31, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received your letter of the seventh, which has troubled me greatly because of your illness and because I fear you may get worse. I pray, Monsieur, that O[ur] L[ord] may be pleased to have you recover from your state of prostration and restore you to perfect health. I ask you to do your utmost for that purpose by taking the proper rest, food, and remedies, and by handing over to others the care of external affairs.

For the rest, Monsieur, if the doctors feel that the air of Rome is harmful to you, please return here; the preservation of your health is too precious to us not to prefer it to whatever good you could do there. I ask you also, when you receive this letter, to please let me know quite simply where matters stand.

I will be glad for you to see that nothing is spared in the affair of the Provincial of the Mercedarians, either in diligence or in satisfying him.

I approve—in accordance with your way of thinking—of your

deferring proceedings for the union of Saint-Méen so as to avoid the antagonism of the priest there who is Procurator General in Rome and whose opposition would be unfailing and perhaps insurmountable.

I advise you to accept that good Spanish priest and the young Portuguese man who are asking to enter the Company and, if you like, the Rector of the Salviati College as well, given their perseverance and good qualities. The difficulty is in having them follow the seminary exercises and giving them a good spiritual guide. See if you have someone suitable for that, Monsieur. Perhaps now is the time when God wants to open a seminary in Rome, since the one in Genoa seems to have fallen off, and we really need men who speak Italian because Frenchmen do not seem disposed to learn it. Several of our Company are being requested for Piedmont, and we will probably have to open a new house in Genoa. I have received no certain news from the latter place since the news you sent me; but we have heard some very disquieting things about it from other places.

To begin with the least distressing, I will tell you that we have heard from Poland that good M. Desdames has once more lost everything in Warsaw, which was again besieged, taken, and pillaged by the Swedes, and then abandoned. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable, since neither war, nor the plague, nor impoverishment, nor all of these together could make him leave his post, although he had suffered from them several times and the Queen had encouraged him to leave. She herself told me so in an express letter, written in her own hand, in which she says she was greatly edified by him and by M. Duperroy, who is in grave danger from his wound. The surgeons no longer know what to do for him. If he had the strength to return home, we would be consoled to have him here soon.

One of the three or four ships that left Nantes when Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville went there, has finally returned from Madagascar. I have not yet received the letters it has brought me, but one of our friends in Nantes informed me that, when he
inquired about the state of our poor Missionaries, he learned that M. Bourdaise was well and doing even better, thank God. As for the other three, however, he was told they had brought their sacrifice to perfection, since God chose to take them to Himself: M. de Belleville at Cape Verde on the voyage out, and the others after they had arrived at the site of their mission. We were already deeply grieved by what happened in Genoa; now this has overwhelmed us with sorrow. God be praised, Monsieur, for all those losses, which are so great for the Company, according to our manner of speaking! Nevertheless, since those dear departed men are fortunate because, as O[ur] L[ord] has said, they saved their lives by losing them,¹ we ought to expect greater help from them, for time and for eternity, than if they were still among us. I continue to recommend them to your prayers and to those of your little community. By the grace of God, I am, in His love, for it and for you in particular, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

2358. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, August 31, 1657

Monsieur,

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

We are still being deprived of your dear letters. I have never desired them so ardently as I do now, nor have I ever been more

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.

troubled about anyone as I am about you. We greatly fear—and with good reason—that the disease has made further progress, after taking from us good M. Ennery and bringing good M. François Vincent to the brink of death, which is the last news we received by way of Rome. God alone, who is trying us, can make our grief known to you. We pray constantly for all of you, whether living or dead, and will continue to do so as long as His Providence keeps us in our present state of uncertainty.

To fill our cup of sorrow to the brim, we have received very disquieting news from elsewhere. To begin with the least distressing, I will tell you that I have been informed from Poland that good M. Desdames has once more lost everything in Warsaw, which has again been besieged, taken, and pillaged by the Swedes, and then abandoned. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable, since neither war, nor the plague, nor impoverishment, nor all of these together could make him leave his post, although he had suffered from them at different times and the Queen had encouraged him to withdraw. She herself told me so in an express letter, written in her own hand, in which she testifies that she was greatly edified by him and by the virtue of M. Duperroy, who is in grave danger from his wound. The surgeons no longer know what to do for him. If he had the strength to return home, we would be consoled to have him here soon.

One of the three or four ships from Madagascar that sailed from Nantes when Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville departed has finally arrived. I have not yet received the letters it has brought me, but one of our friends in Nantes informed me that, when he inquired about the state of our poor Missionaries, he learned that M. Bourdaise was well and doing even better, thank God. As for the other three, he was told they had brought their sacrifice to perfection, since God chose to take them to Himself: M. de Belleville at Cape Verde on the voyage out, and the others after they had arrived at the site of their mission. God be praised, Monsieur, for all those losses, which are so great for the Company, according to our manner of speaking! I include that of your house.
in this. Nevertheless, since those dear departed are fortunate because, as O[ur] L[ord] has said, they saved their lives by losing them,¹ we ought to expect greater help from them, for time and for eternity, than if they were still among us.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

*At the bottom of the first page:* Monsieur Blatiron

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**2359. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE**

Paris, September 1, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

I received your letter, in which the Ladies saw that you had bought five hundred livres worth of black linen. They have been anxious to know what money you used, and they ask you to let us know. They also request that you have clothing made for Saint-Quentin and draw on Mademoiselle Viole only the money required to pay for the cutting.

God has been pleased to take to Himself M. Ennery, a very good Missionary in Genoa, who died of the plague. M. François Vincent was also stricken with it, and there was no hope for his life on July 13. I have not received any letters about this since then, which has distressed us greatly because perhaps none of the good workers who were in that house may still be alive. All of them risked their lives, some in a hospital for the plague-stricken where they served

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.

Letter 2359. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
them, and the others in their own residence. Please pray for them, both the living and the dead.

We are experiencing incredible grief because of this, but that is not all. What overwhelms us with sorrow is the loss we have also suffered in the deaths of Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, who had gone to Madagascar; I still do not know the details of this. So, that is enough to oblige us to pray for them, even though we are almost certain that, having died from charity, in the actual service of Our Lord and the salvation of souls, they are now happy in heaven, since, as the same Lord Jesus Christ has said, they saved their lives by losing them.¹

M. Le Vacher of Algiers has just arrived here for the troublesome affairs of the poor Consul.

I am, dear Brother, in Our Lord, your most affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

2360. - TO HENRI ARNAULD, BISHOP OF ANGERS

September 1, 1657

Vincent de Paul is obliged to transfer Sister Cécile Angiboust,¹ Sister Servant of the hospital in Angers. He is sending her to Richelieu “to rest for a while.”

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.

Letter 2360. - In her letter to Abbé de Vaux (September 1, 1657), Saint Louise tells him that Saint Vincent has written to Henri Arnauld, Bishop of Angers, and to Sister Cécile Angiboust; she asks the Abbé to deliver the letters to them (cf. Spiritual Writings, L. 541, p. 565).

¹Cécile-Agnès Angiboust entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity a few years after her older sister, Barbe. She went to Angers in December 1639, was named Sister Servant in 1648, and remained there till October 1657, rendering such great service to the Company that, after seeing her work, Saint Vincent said: “Sister Cécile is invaluable.” Saint Louise’s many letters to her, which she carefully preserved, enable us to trace the history of the community at
2361. - TO SISTER CÉCILE ANGIBOUST, SISTER SERVANT, IN ANGERS

September 1, 1657

Saint Vincent asks Sister Cécile Angiboust to go to Richelieu to rest for a while.

2362. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Around September 2, 1657]

I ask Mademoiselle to buy the blankets that cost nine francs apiece. I am sure that the ones the cloth merchant offered to provide at eight and a half livres are not the same quality as the wool Mademoiselle mentioned to me and are worth even less. Very likely the cloth merchant would make a profit on them, in addition to the cost of the workman. Our good Brother, who is straightforward, would find this hard to believe; he does not know how to strike a bargain. We need sixty blankets. I am enclosing about six hundred livres.²

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²Saint Louise added at the bottom of the letter: "Only forty-five louis of eleven livres were found; this adds up to just 495 livres. Feast of Saint-Lazare, 1657. L[ouise] de Ma[rillac].—Gave ten pistoles for twelve blankets and thirty-five for forty blankets. October 5, 1657." The feast of Saint-Lazare was observed in Paris on September 2.
Monsieur,

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

Since our house in Toul has asked us for help for the ordination retreat they are about to open, we are sending them two good Brother clerics. However, they need priests because they are responsible for two parishes, but we cannot provide them because we need the ones here for our own ordination retreat. So, Monsieur, if there is a seat in the coach, I ask M. Monvoisin \(^1\) and you—or one of you, at least—to go there with those two good Missionaries, Brothers Laudin \(^2\) and Bréant, who will share with you our little news.

I ask your prayers, and am, Monsieur, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], your most humble servant.

**VINCENT DEPAUL,**  
i.s.C.M.

*Addressed:* Monsieur Guillot, Superior of the Mission of Fontaine-Essart, in Montmirail

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\(^1\)Jean Monvoisin, born in Arras on October 16, 1616, was ordained a priest in December 1640 and entered the Congregation of the Mission in Paris on July 13, 1641.

\(^2\)Gabriel Laudin.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letter telling me what the Bishop of Meaux said to you about the house where you are living. I have nothing to reply to this, except that we would be very happy to please him, but you know our reasons for being unable to do everything he wants. Your suffering really distresses me. I am sure you have a great deal of it, seeing this business drag on so long and not knowing whether you are in or out. *Mais quoi!* You are honoring the various states of Our Lord, who found Himself on several occasions in similar straits. Please continue to be patient, Monsieur, for love of that same Lord.

Furthermore, it seems that you are also being tried by certain persons. If this is the case, let me know who they are and what is going on.

The Bishop of Meaux passed through Crécy. He told M. Lhuillier to do something other than what he is doing, until the first of the year.

Please keep up your courage, Monsieur, and be convinced that O[ur] L[ord] is doing you a favor in giving you reason to suffer for justice’ sake. I am, in His love...
Monsieur,

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

I thank God for enabling you to write me in your own hand your letter of August 14 that I received; it is a blessing I had not hoped for so soon and it consoles me greatly. I ask His Divine Goodness to strengthen you more and more, and I ask you, Monsieur, to put every sort of business after the care and preservation of your health, which I recommend to you above all else.

I received your report on the conditions of the vow of poverty. I have not had time to show it to a lawyer to see if the Parlements will find anything to criticize in it. I have been busy since then, and these last two days I have been in the country. With God's help, I will do so as soon as possible.

As for the approval of the changes to be made in our Rules, we have several reasons—which I cannot put in writing—preventing us from going to those persons you indicate. God, however, has provided an opportunity allowing us to have recourse to the master himself; we will try to avail ourselves of it.

Thank you for the extra tempora you sent me for Brother Froment and for the perquiratur requested by M. Cuissot.

Letter 2365. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.

1In letters written on August 31, 1657 (cf. nos. 2356 and 2357), Saint Vincent expresses concern—even apprehension—regarding the health of Edme Jolly.

2Cardinal de Retz.

3Antoine Froment, born in Oeuf-en-Ternois (Pas-de-Calais), entered the Congregation of the Mission at the Paris Seminary on October 28, 1653, at twenty-six years of age. He took his vows there on November 25, 1655, and renewed them on January 25, 1656.

4A perquiratur was an order or commission that the Cardinal Datary gave for a single examination of dates in the registries of the Datary. The Apostolic Datary took care of certain business relating to non-consistorial benefices.

5Gilbert Cuissot, born November 5, 1607, in Moulins (Allier), had been a priest for six years when he entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 14, 1637. After serving as Superior of the Luzon house, he was appointed to the same office in La Rose (1640-44), then at the
Thank you also for the inquiries you made as to whether the Pope has granted an indulg to the King to make nominations for Cardinal Bichi’s benefices. I await your latest reply on this.

I have heard nothing from Genoa this week nor in the last few weeks either.

Since I wrote you that God was pleased to take to Himself Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, who had sailed for Madagascar and who have received their reward for this, I have received some letters from M. Bourdaise, whom God has preserved and blessed. He tells me that there are now three hundred Christians and that, without the French, who are numerous and keep him very busy because there is no other priest, there would be very many more, so disposed are those people to receive the faith. He hopes that in time many 6 would be converted, if only there were some workers. We are getting his little report set down clearly and in good order; I will send you a copy.

Cardinal Bagni did me the honor of writing me that they want to send two virtuous, upright persons, who should be French secular priests, to visit missionaries of various Orders in Ireland and Scotland to find out the state and number of Catholics, the means to preserve and increase our holy religion, and how the said missionaries function. He wants me to select those two men, to whom the necessary funds will be given for this purpose. Now, he does not say whether he is writing on behalf of the Sacred Congregation 7 or who asked him to do so. I would be glad to know if it is

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6First redaction: “the whole island.” The word “many” is in the Saint’s handwriting.
7First redaction: “on behalf of the Pope.” The correction is in the Saint’s handwriting.

College des Bons-Enfants (1644-46), where he took his vows on November 11, 1644. From there he went to the Le Mans Seminary (1646), then to Saint-Lazare (1646-47). He was Director of the Cahors Seminary (1647-62) and Superior of the Richelieu house (1662-66). He declared that, at the time of the election of Saint Vincent’s successor, he was hesitant about voting for René Almers, who was in poor health, but the Saint appeared to him and determined his choice. He also said that in 1662, while exorcising a possessed woman, he drew from the demon an acknowledgement of the Founder’s holiness and the reward reserved by God for Missionaries faithful to their vocation. Cuissot died in 1666.
on behalf of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide and, if so, whether it wants to make use of us.

While awaiting your reply on that, I will tell you that I do not understand if, in asking for two secular priests, they intend to exclude those living in Community, as they do monks. Furthermore, I doubt if there are any suitable persons among the French because they would have to know the languages of those countries; otherwise, they would be obliged to depend on interpreters and in the end would be recognized as priests and arrested. Perhaps we will await your reply before giving our own to this good Cardinal.

I told you that M. Le Vacher of Algiers arrived here for the troublesome business of the Consul, who owes eight or nine thousand écus and who, the longer he remains there, will commit himself for more. For this reason we are about to withdraw him from there because that is absolutely necessary. The King will be unwilling to send anyone else because of the ill-treatment the former received from the Turks, who beat him for no reason. When M. Le Vacher returns to Algiers, perhaps he will be allowed to exercise the office there, as his brother is doing in Tunis. Therefore, Monsieur, it is advisable for you to make His Holiness understand how important it is to allow those two priests to exercise the said office so that they can assist, spiritually and corporally, the suffering members of Our Lord and that, without this permission, more than twenty thousand Christian slaves would have to be abandoned in the town of Algiers alone. Tell him also that many of them would become Turks if they were not encouraged and assisted; so much so that M. Le Vacher has been told that even since he left there more than thirty have gone over to them.

Priests are employed to administer civil justice in the Ecclesiastical State, which seculars could administer; why not in Barbary, considering the state of affairs? I swear before God that it is not to

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8Jean Barreau.
carry on trade or to make use of any temporal advantage there, and that we have no other motive inciting us to this holy employment than charity for our neighbor, for the love of God.\textsuperscript{9}

You informed me that the recovery of rights for the Pastor in the Chartres diocese, for which I sent you the report, can be obtained only for the possession of benefices three years after the homicide, and that, for the quoad ordines,\textsuperscript{10} it will have to be signed by the Secretariat of Briefs for a fee of three pistoles. When this poor Pastor was told this, he gave us thirty livres for its dispatch. Please use your influence in this matter.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Jolly

2366. - TO ÉTIENNE BLATIRON, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, September 7, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Since receiving on July 13 the distressing news from Rome about the state of your house, we have been living in fear and hope because of the very grave danger to which you are all exposed. It seems to threaten the Company with the most acute privation that could befall it and would already have overwhelmed us with grief if God in His goodness, seeing the great loss we would suffer and

\textsuperscript{9}This paragraph is in the Saint's handwriting.

\textsuperscript{10}As regards the Orders.

the harm that would befall the Genoa diocese because of this, had not boosted our courage with the hope that He will preserve you, as we implore Him constantly to do. We pray also for the health of the whole city and the special preservation of the venerable person of the Cardinal.

I think I told you that God has again taken from us three good Missionaries, who had gone to Madagascar and went from there to heaven, as we have reason to believe. I am speaking of Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville. Good M. Bourdain, whom God has preserved and blessed, tells me that there are three hundred Christians among those islanders and that, if only there were workers, the whole island would eventually be converted. I will let you have a copy of his report once we have it ready to send out. In the meantime, I ask your prayers for this good servant of God, for his mission, for the deceased, and for me. I am, Monsieur, in the love of Our Lord, the most humble and affectionate servant of you and your men, whom I embrace tenderly.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

2367. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

Yes, Monsieur, with all my heart I commend your good mother’s soul to Our Lord. I have not been content with doing so myself; I have commended her most warmly to the prayers of the Company—and not just the departed mother, but also the living son, so that this same Savior may take the place of father and mother for him and be his consolation. I am sure your heart feels this separation keenly, even though it loves above all things the fulfillment of God’s good pleasure in this as in all other matters.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letter of August 5 from the camp outside of Krakow and am greatly consoled to know that you are with Their Majesties and the Daughters of Charity and are in a position to work. I thank God for this, asking Him to bless you and your leadership. I thank God also that matters are gradually improving and for inspiring people to be disposed toward reunion and obedience to the King. We ask God constantly to bless his armies and his plans and in His infinite goodness to repay the Queen for all she does for us, especially the help she gives M. Desdames and the money she has given M. Duperroy for his return to France. I cannot admire sufficiently the incomparable charity of Her Majesty or the patience of that servant of His in his prolonged sufferings. On the one hand, I am deeply distressed by his illness and by the fear that it may get worse instead of better; but, on the other, I am greatly consoled that he is recovering, and God knows to what an extent I will be so, if His Goodness is pleased to bring him safely here, for which we pray so often.

Since telling you the disposition of God in Genoa with regard to Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent (although the latter had not yet died on July 13), I have received no news about that afflicted city nor about what has happened to our poor family.

I think I also told you of the loss we have suffered in the deaths of Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, who had gone to Madagascar and went from there to heaven, as we have reason to hope. I have received some letters from M. Bourdaisé, whom God has preserved and blessed. He tells me that there are three hundred new Christians on that island and that, with time, there would be
hopes of converting the whole of it, if only there were workers. He is obliged to look after the French who are there, and this greatly interferes with the instructions of the inhabitants. Pray for the deceased and for all our needs.

I am, Monsieur, in O[ur] L[ord], your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Ozenne, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Warsaw, at the court of the Queen of Poland

2369. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, September 7, 1657

Monsieur,

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

You inform me that some persons have begun to shout outside your door and to reproach you, claiming that we are squandering the ransoms of the slaves. We must resign ourselves to endure such embarrassments; others will soon befall us, not only in Marseilles, but here and everywhere else, through the fault of that poor man who was so inconsiderate \(^1\) as to take the money of those poor captives and use it unwisely for purposes other than their freedom. Now, since he has put himself in such a position as to be unable to satisfy them, are they not right to complain, and do we not consequently have good reason to swallow the disgrace that is our lot as

\(^1\) First redaction: "so wretched." The word "inconsiderate" is in the Saint's handwriting.
a result of his imprudence and their reproaches? I ask O[ur] L[ord] to give us enough patience and humility to make good use of all the inevitable annoyances that may befall us on the head of this, since we cannot get the eight or nine thousand piastres he owes nor anything near that amount.

I will see the Duchesse d'Aiguillon today about your proposal to obtain an order from the King to levy on merchandise that will be sent to Algiers the three or four thousand piastres this last avania is costing him. That can be done only at the expense of the slaves to whom, as a rule, everything the captains take there belongs; and, to avoid having to pay anything, they will pass on to those wretched men the cost of what they themselves will be asked to pay. Please let me know how you think the city of Marseilles would welcome such a proposal because, if this were put into effect, it is to be feared ² that the merchants would protest against it.

In accordance with the order you gave M. Le Vacher in Tunis to send two to four hundred piastres to Algiers, and the hope you give him of forwarding them to reimburse him, he tells me, on the one hand, that he sent his brother a bill of exchange for two hundred piastres to be drawn on a merchant in Algiers and, on the other hand, that he gave him instructions to get in Algiers two hundred-seventy piastres from a Turk, once a slave in Malta, who owes them to a knight. He says he will reimburse him for this sum, provided his brother informs him that he has received it. Since, however, these orders did not reach Algiers until after M. Le Vacher ³ had left, he thinks they would have been unwilling to give those sums to anyone but himself, so it will be a good idea for you to let his brother in Tunis know that this is the reason why you have not sent him the money.

I pray that O[ur] L[ord] will cure your sciatica and give you the requisite strength of body and mind for your employment so that

²First redaction: "it is likely." The correction was made by the Saint.
³Philippe Le Vacher.
He will be more and more honored by your labors and administration, as we are edified by them.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Please write to M. Le Vacher in Tunis, telling him not to borrow anything whatsoever from anyone whomsoever, unless it is for his own needs.4

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2370. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN HAM

Paris, September 8, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

I received your letter of September 3 from Ham; it was read yesterday at the meeting, but no new orders were issued either this week or last.

I wrote to you last Saturday at Saint-Quentin, and today at Ham,

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4This sentence is in the Saint's handwriting.


1This part of the greeting was omitted by the secretary.
where perhaps you still are. I shared our sad news with you; we have heard nothing new since then.

May God in His infinite goodness bless and preserve you!

I am, dear Brother, in His love, your most affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Mission, in Ham

2371. - TO PIERRE DE BEAUMONT, SUPERIOR, IN RICHELIEU ¹

Paris, September 9, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I think it has been only a week since I wrote to you, expressing how consoled I am with your fine leadership, both of the family and of your seminarians. I wish you could see my heart on this point and how grateful I am for God's goodness in this. I have been told, however, that you are not attentive enough to putting an end to disputes in the town. It is up to a good Pastor to preserve peace among his people, doing his best to nip in the bud enmities, quarrels, and lawsuits. It will be a good idea for you, then, to be more careful about this good work and, for this purpose, to recommend that your priests let you know whenever they hear that some dispute or legal proceedings have arisen among the citizens. It would even be well to get some friend in the town—a prudent, upright man—to find out about these things and to let you know;


¹The name of the recipient is not given in the original. The contents show that it can only have been written to the Pastor in Richelieu or to the one in Sedan. No. 2380 eliminates the second hypothesis.
or—and this would be the best thing—you might have two devout, peaceful, intelligent parishioners you could persuade to assist you in this affair. They would do so, not only by letting you know what is going on in this matter, but by meeting with you once every week or two to discuss what should be done and how to proceed so that you can act in conformity with it. At the next meeting, you could tell them what you had done, so that new measures could be taken if the first were unsuccessful. This should be done so confidentially, however, that no one should know about these meetings, and still less about the topics you have discussed there. I ask God to give you His Spirit for this, as well as for everything else.

I have not received any more letters from Genoa. I told you that God had taken to Himself M. Ennery, who was a very good Missionary—capable, zealous, merciful, obedient, detached, and ready to do anything in the service of God—and that M. François Vincent, who was gravely ill, was still alive on July 13. Since then I have learned from Turin that the situation in the poor city of Genoa is extremely serious. Five or six thousand people are dying there every week. Even when a boat arrived in that port bringing fresh provisions from Savona, the crew shouted for a long time but no one answered, so they left on the bank the supplies they had brought. When they returned a few days later, they found them just as they had left them, leading us to believe that things have reached a deplorable state.

I do not know if I shared with you another very distressing piece of news. We finally received some letters from good M. Bourdaise, whom God is preserving and blessing in Madagascar, and they confirm for us the grace God has granted to Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville by taking them to Himself: M. de Belleville on the voyage out, and the others after their arrival at the site of their mission. This overwhelms us with sorrow. But God be praised for all those losses, which are great for the Company, according to our way of speaking! Nevertheless, all those good servants of God are fortunate since, as Our Lord has said, they
have saved their lives by losing them, and we ought to expect greater help from them before God, for time and for eternity, than when they were among us.

I heard from Poland that good M. Desdames has once more lost everything in Warsaw, which was again besieged, taken, and pillaged by the Swedes, and then abandoned. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable, since neither war, nor pestilence, nor impoverishment, nor all of these together could make him leave his flock, although he had suffered from them several times and the Queen had encouraged him to leave. She herself told me so in an express letter, written in her own hand, in which she attests to being greatly edified by him and by the virtue and patience of M. Duperroy, who is in grave danger from his wound. The surgeons no longer know what to do for him. I hope that, if God gives him the strength to come back home, as he is being advised to do, we will have the consolation of seeing him here soon. As for M. Ozenne, by order of Her Majesty he is ministering spiritually to the sick and those wounded at the siege of Krakow, and the Daughters of Charity are serving them corporally.

M. Le Vacher is now here with us; he came for the affairs of Brother Barreau, who was severely mistreated by the Turks.

And that, Monsieur, is how God is pleased to try the Little Company in various ways. I recommend to your prayers and those of your community all our needs, especially the repose of the souls of the departed and the preservation of the living.

I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

*Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.*