Monsieur,

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

This letter is to give you some news from us. We have not heard any more from Genoa. I already told you that God has 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 of 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 cried out 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.

We have finally received some letters from good M. Bourdaise in Madagascar, where God is preserving and blessing him. They confirm the grace His Divine Goodness has granted Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville by drawing them to His glory: M. de Belleville died 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, Monsieur, for all those losses, which are great for the Company, according to our way of speaking! However, all those good servants of God are very fortunate because, as O[ur] L[ord] has said, they have saved their lives by losing them,¹ so we

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
ought to expect greater help from them before God, for time and
for eternity, than if they were still 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 the
plague, 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 return, as he has been advised to do, we
will soon have the consolation of seeing him here. As for M. Oz­
enne, 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 helping them corporally.

M. Le Vacher of Algiers is here with us now. He came about
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 to
those of your community all its needs, especially the repose of the
souls of the departed and the preservation of the living.

It has been only eight or ten days since I wrote to you. Since
then, I have received your letter of August 24 and have seen the
copy of the one you wrote to the Bishop.² I think you said in it all
you had to say, and you expressed yourself very well. You also did
dwell to notify the Pastors of the summons given you from the
Seneschal of Agen by the person who obtained by request one of
the chapels of your seminary, so the former will support you, as he

²Barthelemy d'Elbène.
has been instructed to do by the Cantor who, for his part, will do what he thinks best for the preservation of the rights of the said seminary.

As for you, Monsieur, it will be well for you to do whatever you can in this matter so that, if it should happen that all or part be taken from you, you will have no regrets about omitting anything. Meanwhile, be prepared to give up everything voluntarily, if God permits them to oblige you to leave. I do not think this will happen, no matter what ill-will there seems to be in those who should be defending and protecting you. All ships are subject to storms, but that does not mean that they are lost. May O[ur] L[ord] be your protector, your strength, and your sanctification.

I cannot write to M. Chretien today.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

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

2373. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

(Now Vol. V, no. 1856a.)
Monsieur,

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

We need you here. Please come at the first opportunity that presents itself after you have received this letter. I will be overjoyed to see you, and I ask O[ur] L[ord] to bring you here safely.

You and M. Molony ¹ have written me several letters, which I have not answered. This is not for lack of affection, or even for lack of reflecting on them, but because I could not make any decision on the matters you and he had proposed. However, we have discussed them several times and finally concluded that it would be advisable to settle them with you. That is why we will wait until you get here to find out what we will do and what we have to do. Please tell M. Molony this and make my excuses to him. I had intended to tell him myself but cannot, in fact, do so this time because it is now nighttime.

God has chosen recently to try us more than He has ever done. We assume that all our confreres in Genoa are dead. The plague is raging so violently and malignantly there that it has depopulated the poor city. The streets are strewn with dead bodies, and there are no living persons left to bury them. The disease entered our house and carried off good M. Ennery and M. François Vincent first of all, then attacked Messieurs Duport and Lejuge. We do not know what has happened since. Two of our priests were risking their lives in a hospital for the plague-stricken; short of a miracle, not a single one of them will escape.

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¹Thady Molony (Molonay) was born in Limerick (Ireland) in July 1623. He entered the Congregation of the Mission on September 4, 1643, was ordained a priest in Rome on March 6, 1650, and took his vows on November 14, 1655. He was in Le Mans in 1658-59. There is no trace of the correspondence between Thady Molony and Saint Vincent.
What fills us to the brim with sorrow is the fact that God has also taken from us the last three priests to go to Madagascar: Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville. The latter died on the way out; the others after their arrival at the site of their mission. God be praised, Monsieur, for all those losses, which are great for the Company, according to our way of speaking! Nevertheless, all those who have died are fortunate since, as Our Lord has said, they saved their lives by losing them, and we ought to expect greater help from them, for time and for eternity, than if they were still among us. God has granted us the mercy of preserving M. Bourdaise and of blessing him in every way. He has written a little report of this for us—including the beautiful deeds and apostolic virtues of those dear departed ones, whom I recommend to your prayers and to those of your community, together with all the living and dead members of the Genoa house.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

2375. - TO EDMUND BARRY, SUPERIOR, IN NOTRE-DAME DE LORM

Paris, September 12, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I just received your letter of the first of this month. I am about to answer it, together with that of August 2, as I have answered all the preceding ones.

While awaiting the Visitor, who will appoint an Assistant, it will be well for you to choose one of your priests as Procurator and to

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²Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.

give him a key to the strongbox where the money will be kept. That is the custom in all our houses.

The Richelieu house is greatly in need of a Brother like Brother Dupuich; if you can manage without him, please send him to M. de Beaumont.

If you have a watch you can lend M. Lucas, you will give me pleasure and will be doing him an act of charity; if you do not have one, see if M. Cuissot can lend him one.

It will be a good idea to have a sundial at your house and to bring in someone who knows how to make one. This will make up for your clock, which is not of much use to you.

Since receiving your last letter, I have been unable to speak to M. Bajoue about the annuity he has set up. I will mention it to him one of these days.

I praise God for the arrival of the Bishop of Montauban and for his good will regarding his seminary. I am really sorry he has not satisfied those priests in Castelferrus because as long as they are discontented they can be troublesome to you. Still, we have to hope that the Goodness of God and that of the Bishop will remedy that. Meanwhile, make up your mind to be patient in the difficulties you will encounter.

It is greatly to be desired that the seminary be transferred to

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1Antoine Dupuich, coadjutor Brother, born on May 26, 1620, entered the Congregation of the Mission on November 7, 1642, and took his vows on November 21, 1646.

2Pierre de Bertier, Doctor of the Sorbonne, former Canon and Archdeacon of Toulouse, Coadjutor of Bishop Anne de Murviel and then his successor (1652). In 1636 he was consecrated Bishop of Utica in partibus. He had to tolerate a great deal from the elderly Bishop of Montauban and several times was on the point of resigning. Some time before the Prelate's death, he wrote to Mazarin: "His health is so good and his humor so bad that I cannot hope for his succession nor even his favor. Therefore, my Lord, not only am I unemployed in my ministry and deprived of sufficient revenues for my position, I am, in addition, constantly persecuted and believed guilty for no reason." (Cf. Arch. Nat., KK 1217, p. 207.) De Bertier was Bishop of Montauban until 1674.

3A small commune of Tarn-et-Garonne, in the district of Castelsarrasin. The Priests of the Mission, directors of the shrine of Notre-Dame de Lorm, which was established in the commune of Castelferrus, competed with the interests of the Lord of the locality and the local clergy.
Montauban; the Bishop wants this, and I would be consoled very much by it. True, I told that good Prelate earlier that, in this case, we would give two thousand livres to purchase a house, but the person who was willing to do us the charity of providing the money at that time has now changed his mind. When I have the joy of seeing him, I will find out if there is anything to be hoped for.

I pray to O[lord] that your ailment will have no ill effects and that you may soon be over it.

I wrote to M. Cuissot that if he can manage without M. Treffort 4 he should send him to you to give missions, since M. Jeandé is in no condition to do so, and M. Lucas could not undertake anything on his own. If he does send him, send M. Jeandé to Cahors to do there whatever M. Cuissot thinks advisable. In two or three months we will see if this change will succeed in satisfying everyone. If not, we will find a remedy for it, with God's help.

I praise God for the hope you have that your seminary will soon grow. O Monsieur, what good reason we have to ask God to make this happen so we can contribute to the formation of good priests, which the Church needs so badly, and to try to remedy the scandals given by bad ones!

I hope you will have the Visitor with you next month and will be consoled and edified by his presence.

God has chosen to try us more than ever before. We have given up for dead all our confreres in Genoa. The plague is so virulent and deadly in that city that it is like a ghost town. The streets are strewn with dead bodies, and there are no living persons left to bury them. The disease entered our house and first carried off good M. Ennery and M. François Vincent; then Messieurs Duport and Lejuge caught it, and we do not know what has happened since

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4Simon Treffort, born in Villiers-Herbisse (Aube) on October 2, 1611, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 5, 1642, and took his vows on October 7, 1645. He was Superior in La Rose (1668-77) and died in Cahors on July 16, 1682. In a letter written a few days after his death, Edme Jolly, Superior General, praised his virtues highly.
then. Two of our priests were exposed to the danger in a hospital for the plague-stricken. It will be a miracle if a single one of them escapes it.

What overwhelms us with grief is that God has also taken from us the last three priests who went to Madagascar: Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville. The latter died on his way out, and the others after their arrival at the site of their mission. God be praised, Monsieur, for all those losses, which are great for the Company, according to our way of speaking! Nevertheless, all those who have died are very fortunate since, in the words of Our Lord, they have saved their lives by losing them. We ought to expect greater help from them, for time and for eternity, than if they were still among us. God has been merciful to us in preserving M. Bourdaise and has granted him the grace of blessing him in every way. He has drawn up a little report of this and of the beautiful deeds and apostolic virtues of those dear departed ones. We will send you a copy of it some day for your consolation.

M. Le Vacher, whom you met in Ireland, has come from Algiers. He arrived in this city a few days ago for the affairs of the Consul, Brother Barreau, who was severely mistreated by the Turks.

I recommend to your prayers and to those of your family the living and the dead members of the Company, and I am, Monsieur, in Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Barry

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Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
Dear Brother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I think I wrote to you about how deeply grieved I have been by the evils you have suffered; that feeling is renewed within me every time I reflect on them. Although you cannot imagine how much I have been moved by this, you can, nevertheless, be sure that it touches me to the quick because, bearing you in my heart as I do, your sufferings can only be mine as well.

Now, for the same reason, I am beginning to worry about your affairs, since they are among our most important ones. I have had someone speak to M. de Brienne about them. I have discussed them several times with the Duchesse d'Aiguillon and the other Ladies of Charity because they are the only persons to whom I can turn. They really show that they sympathize with your difficulties and want to help you, but I do not see them taking any steps to do so. The Duchess has admitted to me that she, on her part, can do very little. The unfortunate state of her affairs and the way she has been treated by the Duc de Richelieu have placed her in financial difficulty. The recent wars have drained the best families and really tightened their purse strings, with the result that all those Ladies are feeling the effects of the public impoverishment. They are also disheartened by all the demands being made on them from every quarter, especially when they are for large amounts, such as the ones you owe. In actual fact, they are right; for where will we find the eight to ten thousand écus you are requesting, since we are


1Henri-Auguste de Loménie, Comte de Brienne and de Montbron, Seigneur de la Ville-aux-Clercs, and Secretary of State. He died on November 5, 1666, at the age of seventy-one.

2Armand-Jean du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu.
having the utmost difficulty finding even small sums for public necessities that cannot be neglected?

As a result, dear Brother, we are absolutely incapable of helping you. M. Le Vacher, who is working at this with all his might, is a witness to the efforts we are putting forth and to the little progress we are making. We have only six hundred livres for certain. Rest assured we will continue to work hard to procure for you whatever help we can, but this requires time and patience. Some persons have said that those sums you owe should be levied on the merchants who do business with Algiers—Monsieur de la Haye, son of the Ambassador in Constantinople, was of this opinion. Others, however, seeing that this cannot be done without many painful difficulties, think the opposite; therefore, there must be no further talk of this. I would really like to be able to say that the Company should commit itself to getting you released by borrowing this sum—if that could be done—but apart from the difficulty of getting the money on loan or of securing a return on an investment because people know the Company is involved in debt elsewhere, we cannot commit ourselves further without putting it in danger of going under.

Your brother told us that he sent to Marseilles a bill of exchange for three thousand livres to be held for you. That is a start to help pay off your debts. If the Flemish man who is in your house would pay you soon, you could satisfy the most insistent slaves who lent you their money. I pray that Our Lord will remedy all your needs, since it is to be feared that you may be engulfed by them if His Providence does not send you some extraordinary help, which is beyond our power. Nevertheless, we will strive to cooperate with Him in this.

God has chosen to try us in several ways almost simultaneously and as painfully as He has ever done. The plague in Genoa snatched M. Ennery and M. François Vincent from us, then struck down Messieurs Duport and Lejuge, who were beyond hope for recovery on July 20. It is likely that others have died since then—perhaps
the whole family, composed of the best members of the Company. This apprehension appalls us.

To crown our sorrow, the three Missionaries who had gone to Madagascar—Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville—have now gone to God, the latter on his way to the site of his Mission, and the others after their arrival there. God has been merciful to us in preserving M. Bourdaise and blessing him in a marvelous way. He has drawn up for us a little report of this and of the beautiful deeds and apostolic virtues of those dear departed men. I recommend the living and the dead to your prayers, and I am, dear Brother, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

We have written to M. Forne in Amiens and have had others write to him for the ransom of your slave. His brother leads us to hope he will send the money here. The Mercedarians also give us a similar hope, but they are not now in a position to do so because of the dissension in that Order.³

Addressed: Monsieur Barreau, French Consul, in Algiers

2377. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, September 14, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
Your second-to-last letter had consoled me when I saw that it

³The postscript is in the Saint’s handwriting.

was written entirely by you, but I am distressed to see that because you were not feeling well you were unable to finish the last I received, dated August 20, without the help of M. François. This has pained me more than I can tell you. I ask Our Lord to restore you to your former state of health for the good of the Company, and I earnestly entreat you, Monsieur, to spare nothing on your part to contribute to this as much as you can, and even to return here if the doctors feel that it is dangerous for you to remain there any longer.

I am unable to answer today the questions you put before me previously about Saint-Pourçain; with God's help, I will do so by the next regular mail. Meanwhile, I will await the results of your usual care and diligence in this matter, which is important to this house.

The illness of Messieurs Duport and Lejuge has distressed me deeply, especially that of the first-mentioned. Oh! what a loss, Monsieur, unless God performs a miracle to preserve him! We have great reason to fear that God may take them all, one after another, because of my sins, which alone bring upon the Company the trials God chooses to send it.

I have seen the compromise Father Hilarion has chosen to make regarding the conditions of our vow of poverty. I am quite satisfied with it and am certainly filled with gratitude for the obligations we are under to his paternal charity for all the favors he does us and the affection he shows us. I will continue to pray and have others pray for him, since he is our benefactor.

I gave the Provincial of the Mercedarians the letters you sent me, which M. Gueffier gave you.

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1Pierre François, born in Riceys (Aube) on November 11, 1627, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 20, 1654, and took his vows in Rome on November 26, 1656, in the presence of M. Jolly. The Lyons manuscript gives a summary of the conference on his virtues, held in Rome after his death.

2Since he was divesting himself of all his benefices but one, Louis de Chandenier was trying to unite the Saint-Pourçain Priory to the Saint-Lazare house to help defray the expenses of the retreats for ordinands.

3Hilarion Ranetti.
lawsuit will be successful through your intervention; otherwise, we
will have a hard time recovering the eight hundred écus that
Brother Barreau was forced to pay for helping (and we can say, for
saving) one of their monks, who went to Algiers dressed as a
layman to deprive the Turks of their alleged rights. The Provincial
says that, if he is not confirmed and authorized, he cannot withdraw
the money from collections in this kingdom nor, consequently, pay
off this debt, which he will be able to do after his confirmation.

If, after you have tried to retain Brother Oderico by delays and
remonstrances, he pressures you to allow him to leave, you can let
him go.

I think I told you that I received all your letters as far back and
including the one of July 17, but I forgot to tell you that I did not
get the three preceding ones, dated June 26, July 3, and July 10,
which I should have received three weeks later. At the time, I
attributed the delay to the plague that was along the routes, forcing
the carriers to take a detour or to remain in quarantine. Because,
however, I have received six or seven of your letters—one each
week regularly since then—whereas none of those three has ar­
rived, I think they must be lost, along with the other documents that
may have accompanied them. If you have kept notes of what is in
them, and there is anything of which I should be aware, please let
me know. I think there was an indulgence I had asked you to request
for a church in the Aire diocese.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I. S. CM.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly
Monsieur,

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

This is the third time I have written to you in the last two or three weeks. I asked you to do whatever the Marchese di Pianezza would like regarding the foundation in Savigliano.¹ I see clearly that what you fear could happen and that, by leaving Turin, we run the risk of not getting back there. Mais quoi! shall we go against the intention of our founder—and of such a founder as he? God forbid! I hope that, if we are very obedient to him, the Divine Goodness will bless us, whereas, if we oppose him, we would commit a great fault which would make us unworthy of the protection of this good nobleman and of the grace of doing some good in that country.

I have written several times to M. Richard to deter him from the journey he wants to make to his native place. If he wishes to ignore the reasons I pointed out to him, in nomine Domini, he will be doing his own will and not the Will of God. I will continue to ask God to forgive him this fault, but if I were to consent to his going off to see his relatives and abandoning the Lord’s work for no legitimate reason, I would be as guilty as he, since Our Lord did not permit His own disciples to return home.²

I say the same for M. de Musy. I will be very sorry if they go, which I hope they will not do.

I ask the Divine Goodness to send you enough laborers to work in places to which you are being called. I am sure God will do so, with time. Meanwhile, we have to be satisfied with a few, and not

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¹The Marchese wanted to move all the Missionaries from the Turin house, where he had established them, to a new house in Savigliano.
²Cf. Lk 9:59-60. (NAB)
undertake too much. M. Jolly tells me he is sending you from Rome a diocesan priest who is a good worker.  

M. Blatiron wrote M. Jolly that, after God had taken M. Ennery and M. François Vincent to Himself, Messieurs Duport and Lejuge caught the same disease and he was despairing of their lives. Oh! Monsieur, what a loss if we are deprived of those two men as well! It is greatly to be feared that God may take all of them from us because of my sins.

I send greetings to your little family, and I am for you and for it, Monsieur, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

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

2379. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, September 14, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of the fourth. If it were as easy to send immediate assistance to Brother Barreau as it is for him to request it, it would have been done already. We are trying to work on it, but are making no progress. M. Le Vacher,¹ who is very zealous in this, can testify to that. When people are far from Paris, they cannot imagine that money is so scarce here, which we see is the case.

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³This sentence is in the Saint’s handwriting.

Letter 2379. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Hains Collection, original signed letter.

¹Philippe Le Vacher, who was in Paris at the time.
That is what I told that Brother who, unaware of the expenses of Saint-Lazare and of how tight purse strings are in Paris, thought it was easy for us to help him out. We will do our utmost in this, but it will be to no avail, unless God provides us with the means.

Tell him not to draw any more bills of exchange on you, unless you give him the order to do so; otherwise, he might catch you unawares, and perhaps we would be unable to meet them. Please tell M. Le Vacher of Tunis the same thing. He has to manage to maintain himself by his own resources—I mean by the revenues of the consulate. Any income we can obtain from the coaches, earmarked for Barbary, must be used for the ransom of the Consul in Algiers, so he must not expect anything from France until that is done. Nevertheless, you tell me, as he himself has done, that he sent orders to Algiers to have two hundred piastres paid to Brother Barreau, on the one hand, through the intervention of a Moor to whom he promised to give them, and 270 piastres, on the other, which a knight gave him to be obtained from a Turk in Algiers. However, since these sums are payable only to his brother, who is here, it is unlikely that either the Moor or the Turk will give them to Brother Barreau or that M. Le Vacher of Tunis will draw them on you. This is not only because you wrote him not to do so, but also because he will want to be sure ahead of time that those 470 piastres have, in fact, been received in Algiers, according to his orders. Now, his brother feels that they will not, so I think you have nothing to fear.

It was a consolation for me to read your report on the good results of the seminary and how satisfied the priests of Saint-Victor are with it, for which I thank God. That obliges me to ask M. de la Fosse to continue.

On July 20 M. Blatiron wrote M. Jolly in Rome that, after God had taken Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent to Himself,
Messieurs Duport and Lejuge caught the disease, and he was despairing of their lives. Oh! Monsieur, what a loss if God deprives us of those two men, especially of the first! It is greatly to be feared that He will take all of them from us; that is to be attributed to my sins.

Let me go back to Brother Barreau to tell you that his brother told us he had sent to Marseilles a bill of exchange for one thousand écus to be forwarded to him. If you have any knowledge of this, please let me know or, if you have not heard it mentioned, see what you can find out about it.

We have received here an écu for Antoine Auroy and thirty sous for André Lesueur, convicts in Toulon. I ask M. Huguier to give these sums to them, and I ask you to reimburse him.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2380. - TO PIERRE CABEL, IN SEDAN

Paris, September 15, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Although I have not written to you for a long time, I continue to thank God that all went well with you during the sojourn of the Court. I attribute this, after the grace of God, to your care, piety, and good administration. I ask His Divine Goodness to continue
and increase His blessings on you. I think that is all I can and ought
to say in reply to your letters.

Enclosed are two letters from M. Cogleé, who is beginning to
recover, thank God.

We have received several pieces of bad news at almost the same
time. The plague has nearly depopulated the city of Genoa. The
streets are strewn with dead bodies and there are no living persons
left to bury them. Two of our priests put themselves at risk in order
to nurse the sick, and I have had no news of them since then. All I
know is that the disease attacked our family and carried off good
M. Ennery, then M. François Vincent. Next, Messieurs Duport and
Lejuge caught it, and on July 20 there was no hope of survival for
them. That is what M. Blatiron wrote to M. Jolly in Rome, who
informed me. I leave you to imagine how grieved we are at the loss
of so many men who were true Missionaries. What terrifies us,
however, is the fear that since that time God may have taken all the
others to Himself, for this plague is one of the most virulent and
deadly ever seen.

That is not all, Monsieur; God has also chosen to take from us
the last three priests who went to Madagascar: Messieurs Dufour,
Prévost, and de Belleville. The latter died on the voyage out, and
the others shortly after they had arrived. This overwhelms us with
grief. 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 very fortunate because, as O[ur]
L[ord] has said, they have saved their lives by losing them,¹ and
we ought to expect greater help from them, for time and for eternity,
than when they were among us.

God has been merciful to us in preserving good M. Bourdaise
and granting him the grace of blessing all his work in a marvelous
way. He has drawn up a little report of this and of the beautiful

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
deeds and apostolic virtues of those dear departed men, which has greatly consoled the Company. Please recommend to God and to your community both the living and the dead.

M. Le Vacher of Algiers is here; he came to seek some remedy for the disgraceful mistreatment Brother Barreau is suffering from the Turks.

M. Ozenne is ministering to the sick and to those wounded at the siege of Krakow, and M. Michel is doing the same for those at Montmédy.

M. Desdames has once more lost everything in Warsaw, which was again besieged, captured, pillaged, and then abandoned by the Swedes. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable, since neither war, nor the plague, nor impoverishment, nor all three 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 and by the virtue and patience of good M. Duperroy, who is in great danger from a stomach abscess resulting from a badly bandaged wound. If he had the strength to come back home, we would have the consolation of seeing him here soon.

Please continue to pray for all the needs of the Company and for the ordinands we have here.

I send cordial greetings to all our dear confreres in Sedan, of whom I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], especially of you, Monsieur, the most humble and devoted servant.

Vincent De Paul,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Cabel
Dear Brother,

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

I received your letter of the ninth and have nothing to say to you about it. Our Brother forgot to bring it to the meeting yesterday; I was unable to attend, so only three or four Ladies were there.

I praise God for all you did in Ham and that you are now in Saint-Quentin to put everything in order so you can go to Laon and Rethel, once you have finished. May God bless your plans since they are all for His honor and the salvation of the poor! I think it will be a good idea for you not to leave Saint-Quentin until you hear once again from our assembly; God willing, it will take place in a week.

We received the blanket you sent us. These sorts of blankets are not suitable for us. Thank you for sending it.

I 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

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Monsieur,

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

Knowing how you love the Company, I would dispense myself from writing sad news to you for fear of grieving you, if I were not obliged to recommend to your Holy Sacrifices the souls of our deceased confreres. I think I already told you that the plague was ravaging Genoa so virulently that there were scarcely enough men still alive to bury the dead. The corpses, heaped up on the streets, caused such extraordinary infection to spread that perhaps nothing worse has ever been seen before in this completely desolated city. I do not know, however, if I told you that two of our priests, Messieurs Tratebas and Boccone, had risked their lives to serve the plague-stricken and that the disease had entered our house and carried off Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent. Messieurs Duport and Lejuge caught it next, and on July 20 there was no hope for them. Since that time I have heard nothing about them. If the loss of so many good Missionaries grieves us, the fear that not one of them is now alive certainly terrifies us.

That is not all, Monsieur; God has also chosen to take to Himself Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, who had gone to Madagascar. The first and second saw the long-desired promised land and worked there for a while, but the third died on the way out; all of them succumbed to illness. 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, those dear departed men and those heavenly beings are fortunate since, as O[ur] L[ord] has said, they have saved their lives by losing
them,¹ and we ought to expect greater help from them before God, for time and for eternity, than if they were still among us.

As for M. Bourdaise, the companion of the late M. Mousnier, God has been merciful to us in preserving him and granting him the grace of blessing him and his work in a marvelous way. He has drawn up a little report of this, together with the beautiful deeds and apostolic virtues of those three deceased men, which has greatly consoled the Company.

M. Le Vacher of Algiers is here with us to seek some remedy for the violence and tyranny of the Turks toward Brother Barreau.

M. Ozenne was called to the siege of Krakow for the spiritual assistance of the sick and wounded. M. Desdames has once more lost everything in Warsaw, which was again besieged, captured, pillaged, and then abandoned by the Swedes. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable, since neither war, nor the plague, nor impoverishment, nor all these put 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 and by M. Duperroy, who has undergone all those trials and is now in danger from a stomach ailment resulting from a badly bandaged wound. If he had enough strength to come back home, we would have the consolation of seeing him here soon.

Please pray and have prayers said for the living and the dead I just mentioned, Monsieur, and in general for all the needs of the

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
Company—my own in particular. I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord],
Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Rivet, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Saintes, in Saintes

2383. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

.... What shall we do in those circumstances except to will what Divine Providence wills, and not will what God does not will? During my wretched prayer this morning, I conceived a great desire to conform my will to everything—good and bad, general suffering and personal suffering—that happens in this world, because God wills it, since He sends it. Oh! what marvelous opportunities this practice seems to provide, and how necessary they are for Missionaries. Let us therefore strive to conform our wills to God's Will in this way; peace of mind will be one of the many great benefits that will result from it.

2384. - TO THE CHAPTER OF PARIS

September 19, 1657

Messieurs,

The honor you have done us by sending your officers here for the retreat preceding ordination obliges us in conscience to give

Letter 2384. - Reg. I, fol. 16, copy made from the unsigned rough draft.
you an account of what we have observed. Now, I will tell you, Messieurs, that we did not observe any disposition for the ecclesiastical state in M. Badou, the last person you were pleased to send us, and I was told that, while he was in the Bons-Enfants Seminary, he gave no reason to hope he would do well in the exercise of Holy Orders. I tell you this, Messieurs, so that you will please set things right with him according to your prudence before he enters Holy Orders.

I add to that, Messieurs, a renewal of my perpetual obedience with all possible humility and affection. I ask you most humbly, Messieurs, to allow me to call myself your most . . .

2385. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, September 21, 1657

Monsieur,

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

The regular mail has brought me nothing from you this week; perhaps I will receive two of your packets next Sunday. I am still very worried about your illness, and I cannot ask God enough and have others ask Him to restore you to good health. We are no longer getting any news from Genoa. You cannot imagine how grieved we are by the fear that all those we hold most dear there are now dead.

We found among your letters the questions you asked us previously regarding what you need to know about the union of Saint-Pourçain; they are enclosed with the answers I now send you.

Letter 2385. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1The union of Saint-Pourçain Priory with Saint-Lazare. (Cf. no. 2377, n. 2.)
We have no news here. We are nearing the end of the ordination retreat.

Someone told us that a ship in Brittany is getting ready to leave for Madagascar. This makes us consider preparing a few Missionaries to go to console and help good M. Bourdaise.

I cannot close without recommending that you take care of yourself. I am, in the love of our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

M. Martin is greatly to be pitied, finding himself committed to giving a large mission and abandoned both by M. Richard, who has gone to Lorraine, and by M. de Musy, who is absolutely wearied by our works and has almost made up his mind to leave. He now has only one priest and a Brother left, whereas there should be at least five of them. I have given him hope that you will send him some help, either in that good priest who left the Congregation of the Bishop of Bethlehem ² and has asked us to let him go and work on the missions in Piedmont, or in some other way. I ask you to do this, Monsieur, as soon as you can.

The Madame Royale ³ is urging M. Martin to give a mission around All Saints' Day in a town on her land, where there are quarrels aimed at shedding the blood of several noblemen. These men are hoping for reconciliation when the Missionaries get there. Mon Dieu, Monsieur, what shall we do about that? ⁴

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

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²The Congregation of the Priests of the Blessed Sacrament, founded by Christophe d'Authier de Siagou in 1632. (Cf. no. 2304, n. 1.)

³Christine of France, Duchess-Regent of Savoy and sister of Louis XIII. She governed during the minority of her son, Charles Emmanuel II.

⁴This paragraph was added by the Saint.
Monsieur,

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

I just received your letter of the eighth of this month, which has distressed me greatly, seeing how distressed you are at not receiving my letters. Yet, this is the fourth I have addressed to M. Delaforcade since your mission in Savigliano. I do not think it is through his fault that you did not receive them; however, I am writing to him to find out if he knows the reason for this.

I am also deeply grieved because M. Richard has left you, and M. de Musy is in danger of doing the same. I ask God to forgive the former his fault and to retain the latter so that you will not be deprived of workers when you need them so badly and that, in the final analysis, His Divine Spirit will be your strength in the midst of your hard work and difficulties.

M. Jolly told me he would send you a good, very wise, devout priest, suitable for your purposes. He was one of the principal members of the Congregation of those priests in Valence and has been wanting to work on your missions. We have granted him permission to do so because of his zeal and fine qualities. In addition, I have written to Troyes to send you M. Gigot, who is also capable of assisting you. We cannot send you any more help from here just now, and I do not see how you can expect any from Rome, both because of the commitments of that house and because M. Jolly is ill, so one of the men he intended for the Missions will

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Letter 2386. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1The priests from the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, mentioned in the previous letter. Valence was one of the centers for this Congregation.

2Denis Gigot, born in Donnemarie (Seine-et-Marne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on July 22, 1647, at the age of twenty-two, and took his vows on October 9, 1649, in the presence of M. Bourdet.
have to stay with him. Nevertheless, I am telling him that, if he can help you—and I am earnestly entreat him to do so—he should do it as soon as possible. I will also tell him that you are committed to give a mission for the Madame Royale; I hope he will do something about it.  

I notice that you included something in your last letter concerning the foundation at Savigliano that I think you omitted in your preceding ones; namely, that our priests who will reside in that town should be permitted to give some spiritual assistance to its people through occasional sermons and through hearing confessions. Now, Monsieur, you know that is an insurmountable obstacle to this foundation and contrary to two of our Rules, one of which forbids us to work in those ways in places where we are established, and the other forbids us to preach or hear confessions in episcopal towns. Please explain this to the Marchese, your founder.

We have no idea what has happened to our family in Genoa during the past two months. It is likely that none of them is still alive. This fear overwhelms us. I was expecting some news of them from M. Jolly, but the last regular mail has arrived, bringing us no letters from him, which only increases our anxiety.

In the name of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, take care of your health and moderate your work, no matter how pressured you may be. Put your trust in the grace of God, who will not allow you to sink under the weight of things if you use such moderation, nor the results of your work to be meager, although you think you are not doing much.

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3The end of this paragraph, from “and I am earnestly entreat him to do so,” is in the Saint’s handwriting.
I am, with all my heart, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

You would be a burden to people in Savigliano, and they would constantly complain about you, if you did not preach and hear confessions in that town as the other Communities do. Perhaps neither the Marchese nor I paid attention to that. I entreat you, Monsieur, to tell him how things stand and to renew to him the offers of my perpetual obedience.

We have no one here who speaks Italian whom we could send you. We have only Messieurs Portail, Dehorgny, and Alméras. The first two are in no condition to preach because they are elderly, and the last-mentioned is completely worn out. Mon Dieu! Monsieur, what shall we do? 4

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

2387. - TO CARDINAL NICOLÒ DI BAGNO

September 22, 1657

Monseigneur,

I received the letter of August 13, with which Your Eminence was pleased to honor me, and Your Eminence's order to send two French priests to Ireland and Scotland to learn the state, number,

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4The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.

Letter 2387. - Reg. 1, fol. 32v. The copyist notes that he based his text on the autograph rough draft.
conduct, and results of the men working in that ravaged vineyard of Our Lord. Now, allow me tell you, Monseigneur, that I thank you a thousand times for the grace of choosing to make use of me in this matter, and I gladly offer myself to Your Eminence to set to work as soon as I receive an answer from you regarding the following difficulty: it will be very difficult—even impossible—for us, Monseigneur, to find any French priests who know the different languages of those two kingdoms. I know only one who understands and speaks English, and Your Eminence has already thought of sending him to England, where he had been chaplain to the late Chief Justice, who was at the time the King's ambassador in London. Now, however, he is Pastor in a place near Chartres and principal of a collège he had built in his parish, so it is very hard to take him from there. It seems that Your Eminence does not wish to send native priests there; you state that they should be French. Then, too, they will find it difficult to get there. We had sent one of our own Irish priests to visit our Missionaries in Scotland and the Hebrides and gave him nearly the same commission of finding out the state of affairs as Your Eminence indicated to me. However, he was unable to obtain a passport in London, although he was in disguise, and was obliged to return here.

Now, assuming it to be true, Monseigneur, that it will not be easy for us to find any Frenchmen who understand those languages and that natives of those countries will find it difficult to travel there, the thought occurred to me, Monseigneur, to suggest that Your Eminence might be willing for us to choose a French priest

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1Mathieu Molié, born in Paris in 1584, became Attorney General in 1614 and Chief Justice of the Parlement of Paris in 1641. Appointed Keeper of the Seals on April 3, 1651, he lost the office ten days later because of political pressure resulting from the Fronde but was reappointed on September 9. He held the position of Chief Justice until the Queen Regent, Anne of Austria, summoned him to the Royal Court outside Paris. Molié died on January 3, 1656. (Cf. Amable-Guillaume-Prosper Brugière, baron de Barante, Le Parlement et la Fronde. La vie de Mathieu Molié [Paris: Didier, 1859].)

2Gerard Brin. (Cf. vol. IV, nos. 2075 and 2076; vol. V, nos. 2105, 2150, and vol. VI, no. 2345 for further reference to this question.)
of our Company and assign him as companions an Irish coadjutor Brother for Ireland, an English one for England, and a Scotsman for Scotland. If so, we will have them leave as soon as I receive your order. A Jesuit Father who has arrived from London told me that the Protector has just published one of the harshest edicts ever issued against Catholics: he orders that their children and two-thirds of their property be taken from them. The tyrannical persecutors of the Church, who spilled so much Christian blood, never devised such an extraordinary persecution. He wants to have the children taken away and raised in heresy to put an end to the Catholic religion in the person of their parents. We have reason to hope that O[ur] L[ord] will not allow this and will grant me the grace, if He so chooses, of making me worthy of the continued benevolence of Your Eminence. I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], your most...
The plague has been so virulent and malignant in Genoa that there were not enough men still alive to bury the dead. The corpses, left heaped up in the streets, infected the whole city and contaminated the air, with the result that the disease finally entered our house. It first carried off Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent and then struck down Messieurs Duport and Lejuge, whose lives were despaired of on July 20. Since that time we have been unable to learn the outcome of their illness or the state of the rest of the family, all of whom were at risk. Apart from those who were looking after their sick confreres, two were nursing the patients in a hospital that had been contaminated. Most likely not a single one of them has escaped this grave danger. You can just imagine how much this fear has grieved us.

But that is not all. God has also been pleased to take from us Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, who had gone to Madagascar for the propagation of the faith but have now gone to heaven to increase the number of the blessed. All three brought their sacrifice to perfection through illness—M. de Belleville on the way to the site of their mission, and the others after they had arrived and worked there for a while. This overwhelms us with grief, but God be praised for all those losses, which are great for the Company, according to our way of speaking. Nevertheless, Monsieur, all those Missionaries are very fortunate since, as O[ur] L[ord] has said, they have saved their lives by losing them,¹ and we ought to expect greater help from them before God than if they were still among us. God willing, their ashes will be the seed of many apostolic workers. God has been merciful to us in preserving good M. Bourdaise and granting him the grace of blessing him and his work in a marvelous way. He has drawn up a little report of this for us, together with the extraordinary deeds and virtues of those dear departed men, and this has greatly consoled the Company.

¹Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
They have written to us from Poland that things are taking a turn for the better, thank God. M. Ozenne is ministering to the sick and those wounded at the siege of Krakow. M. Desdames is still in Warsaw, where he has once more lost everything because the city was again besieged, captured, pillaged, and then abandoned by the Swedes. The steadfastness of this good Missionary is admirable because neither war, nor the plague, nor impoverishment, nor all of these put 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. She is also [greatly edified by the virtue and patience of] M. Duperroy, who [has endured all those trials] and whose life [is now] in danger [from a stomach ailment,] resulting from a poorly bandaged wound. [If he had enough strength] to come back home, we would have [the consolation of seeing him here soon]. . . .

I recommend [to your prayers and to those of your community] both the living and the [dead I just mentioned] and, in general, all [the needs of the Company.]

That brings us now . . .

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2389. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE

Paris, September 22, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

The Ladies were deeply edified when they saw what you have done and what you propose to do in Saint-Quentin. In order to help

Letter 2389. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
you to assist poor Pastors and the sick, and for the other needs you mention, four hundred livres have been granted you for Saint-Quentin. Draw them on Mademoiselle Viole whenever you wish. They also decided to send you four bolts of cloth for Saint-Quentin, as many for Laon, and three for Rethel. That makes eleven bolts in all. No more can be given at present.

The assembly lauded the plan for enclosing the poor of Saint-Quentin. It feels, however, that no great help is to be expected from Paris; but God will provide.

When you have settled everything in Saint-Quentin, you can go on to Reims and Rethel. May God be pleased to lead you there safely and to bless you there as usual! When you are in Reims, Mademoiselle Viole asks that you help a poor woman named Jeanne Le Gros, the wife of M. Rainssant, who lives in the hamlet of Vesles,¹ at La Teinture de bon Teint.

I am enclosing a letter that Mademoiselle Mailly wrote me. Will you please let me know the identity of the person she mentions and whether she is as badly off as she states? You can obtain information about this. I am not saying that I know anyone willing to help her, but we shall see.

I am writing to M. de Fonsomme to satisfy him but am not promising him anything. I spoke about him to the Ladies and did not obtain anything. Still, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon has led me to hope that she will help him, but I am not telling him this. Advise him yourself to write a letter to this Lady, informing her of his situation, losses, and needs; perhaps that will induce her to put her good intention into practice.

¹Today the commune of Vesles-et-Caumont, in the district of Laon (Aisne).
May God bless you, dear Brother! I am, in His love, your most affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Brother Jean Parre

2390. - TO EDME MENESTRIER, IN CAMBES

Paris, September 23, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Since M. Berthe wrote me from Nantes that he was going to Saintes and from there to Gascony, I am writing to him in advance at La Rose. I am addressing the letter to M. Chrétien, to whom you will please deliver the packet as soon as possible. However, M. Berthe may open it, if he happens to be at your house when this letter arrives.

I told you recently all the causes for sorrow that God in His goodness has chosen to send us. Among these I mentioned how the plague entered our house in Genoa and carried off Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent. Since then, I have learned from various letters from Rome that God has also chosen to take from us the best—and almost all—of the priests in that afflicted house. I mean Messieurs Tratebas and Boccone, who had risked their lives for the salvation of the plague-stricken in a lazaretto; Messieurs Duport and Blatiron, as a crowning misfortune; and lastly a coadjutor Brother.² That left only Messieurs Lejuge and Simon, four

¹A small locality in Lot-et-Garonne, a district of Marmande.
²Probably Giovanni Damiani (cf. no. 2347, n. 6).
seminarians, and three coadjutor Brothers alive. Since the end of July, when this news was written from Genoa, perhaps all those have followed the others. Things will be as God pleases. I am, in Him, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Edme, Superior of the Agen Seminary, in Cambes

2391. - TO LOUIS RIVET, SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

Paris, September 23, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I just received a letter from M. Berthe from Nantes, which makes me think he is now in Luçon or on the way to Saintes. I am sure you will be consoled by his presence and his visitation. Enclosed is a note for him, in case he is still with you; but if he has left for Gascony, do not bother to send it because I am writing him a longer letter at La Rose.

M. Langlois arrived here safely three or four days ago, thank God. We will try to send him back to you as soon as possible—or send you someone else in his place.

I told you recently all the causes for sorrow that God in His goodness has seen fit to send us. Among these I mentioned how the plague entered our house in Genoa and carried off Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent. Since then, I have learned from various letters from Rome that God has also chosen to take from

us the best—and almost all—of the priests in that afflicted house. I mean Messieurs Tratebas and Boccone, who had risked their lives for the salvation of the plague-stricken in a lazaretto; Messieurs Duport and Blatiron, as a crowning misfortune; and lastly an Italian coadjutor Brother. That left alive only Messieurs Lejuge and Simon, four seminarians, and three coadjutor Brothers, including Brother Rivet. Since the end of July, when this news was written from Genoa, perhaps all those have followed the others. Things will be as God pleases; from the ashes of these servants of His, I hope He will create a large number of perfect Missionaries. I recommend them to your prayers and am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

In the name of God, Monsieur, do not abandon your seminary, while waiting for me to send you some help; that is your most important business.

At the bottom of the page: Monsieur Rivet

2392. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

[September 1657]

I told you how the plague had carried off three Missionaries from our house in Genoa. Since then, I have learned that God has chosen once again to take from us the best—and almost all—of the priests in that house. I mean Messieurs Tratebas and Boccone, who

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1Jacques Rivet, a brother of the recipient of this letter.

Letter 2392. - Lyons manuscript.
had risked their lives for the salvation of the plague-stricken in a
lazaretto and, as a crowning misfortune, Messieurs Duport and
Blatiron. That left alive only Messieurs Lejuge and Simon, four
seminarians, and three Brothers. Perhaps these have all followed
the others since then. Things will be as God pleases; from the ashes
of these servants of His, I hope He will create a large number of
good Missionaries.

2393. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION, IN TROYES

Paris, September 26, 1657

Monsieur,

I learned from your letter of September 22 the decision you have
made to leave the Company to enter a religious Order. On this
matter I will say, Monsieur, that I will always adore God's guidance
in what He permits and what He wills, and may God keep me from
having any other sentiments in your regard!

I am bound to tell you, however, that you must remember three
or four things: first, your promise to His Divine Majesty to live and
die as a Missionary; second, how the Company has always treated
you, never giving you any reason to withdraw from it; third, that
the pretext you allege is groundless (for you say it is the work of
the missions; yet, you have never done this work). True, I did invite
you to the one in Sézanne, but a few days later I asked you to
remain in Troyes to continue to be responsible for the seminary.

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1Probably François Villain, born in Paris on April 10, 1605, and possibly baptized on the
same day (cf. *Notices*, vol. I and V [Supplement]). He entered the Congregation of the Mission
on December 24, 1649, three months after ordination, and took his vows on August 11, 1653.
Villain died at the Troyes Seminary on July 19, 1658. (Cf. *Notices*, vol. III, p. 165.)

2Principal canton town in the district of Epernay (Marne).
Now, if from these considerations you go on to a fourth (which is the tenacity you have always shown for your own point of view and the obligation Superiors have at times to thwart the will of individual members when they are attached to it, to the detriment of holy indifference and good order), I am sure you will recognize that the thought you have is sheer temptation.

When you say that it is legitimate for you to pass from your present state of life to a more perfect one, I admit that the state of the monks of Saint Augustine is very ancient and very perfect in the Church, and that our insignificant, secular Congregation is unworthy of being compared with even the least of Communities. However, Monsieur, the question is whether you can and should leave it because, for you to be able to do so, our Holy Father the Pope (who has approved our vow of stability and decreed that only he and the General can dispense from it) would have to give his decision on it. As to the obligation, the religious state would have to be more suitable and proper for you than the one to which God has called you and in which He has always blessed you with His grace. It is clear, however, that our state of life is more suitable for you, considering your type of mind, which would be bound to submission in a religious Order at least as much as it would be among us. Before you go any further, I entreat you, Monsieur, to make your prayer on what you must do to fulfill God’s plan for you, and do nothing but what you would want to have done at the hour of death. Nevertheless, rest assured that wherever you are, I shall be all my life, in the love of Our Lord. . . .

2394. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

Have no fear that you are in any way a burden on the Company because of your infirmities. Rest assured that you will never be so

Letter 2394. - Abelly, op. cit., bk. III, chap. XII, sect. I, p. 188.
for that reason because, by the grace of God, the Company does not find those who are ill a burden; on the contrary, it is a blessing for it to have them.

2395. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, September 28, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Your letter of August 28 has overwhelmed us with grief by the sad news announcing to us that God has taken to Himself Messieurs Blatiron, Duport, Tratebas, and the others. Oh! what a loss! What a sorrow! It is indeed in this extraordinary event that we must adore God and sacrifice our own feelings, conforming them to His most loving guidance and submitting our will to His ever adorable Will. We do so with our whole heart, but I confess that I am inconsolable over the loss of so many good servants of God because I have good reason to believe that my sins have obliged the justice of God to take them from us. Please ask Him, Monsieur, to be merciful to me in His infinite goodness. We have had a requiem offered here for all those dear departed men.

I thank God that your health is a little better. You said nothing to me about it, but I think that it is, since you wrote to me in your own hand.

I am worried about good M. Lambin’s illness. If he is still alive, may God be pleased to restore him to health; if His Divine Majesty has taken him to Himself, may He be pleased to glorify him!


1A banker at the Court of Rome.
I showed the Provincial of the Mercedarians what you wrote me about his affair, for which I thank you. If he sends me any documents, as he said he could do, I will forward them to you to be used as he intends; you will be told about that.

I informed you that M. Martin is badly in need of immediate assistance. The Madame Royale has ordered him to give a mission in a large hamlet on her land, where there are a great many members of the nobility; the crowds will be large there and the inhabitants are at variance with one another. That poor man is committed to give it and has only M. Planchamp and Brother Demortier to help him because M. Richard has abandoned him to go back to his hometown, and since M. de Musy is tempted to return to his, he cannot or will not apply himself to our works. That, Monsieur, is why I ask you to see if you can send him someone, just to assist him during this large mission, which is supposed to be given around All Saints’ Day. I am very much afraid you may not be able to help him soon enough.

M. Blatiron was the titular Prior of Saint-Nicolas de Champvaut in the Poitiers diocese. The late Cardinal gave it to our house in Richelieu and, with the death of M. Blatiron, it is now vacant. The priory belongs to the Benedictines. Please procure a letter of provision for it in the name of M. Leonardus Le Boysne, dioecesis

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Armand-Jean du Plessis, Cardinal de Richelieu, was born in Paris on September 9, 1585, the youngest of five children of François du Plessis and Suzanne de la Porte. As Bishop of Luçon he acted as a spokesman for the clergy at the Estates-General of 1614. Raised to the cardinalate in 1622, he entered the Council of the King (1624) and quickly became its head. His guidance of foreign affairs helped to raise France to the highest echelon among European powers. In the administration of French internal affairs Richelieu imposed useful reforms in finances, the army, and legislation (Code Michau). He was the author of royal absolutism: he destroyed the privileges of the Huguenots and of the Provinces and reestablished the authority of the Intendants throughout France. He died on December 4, 1642, attended by—among others—his niece, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon; and King Louis XIII, who followed the Cardinal’s deathbed advice in appointing Mazarin as Chief Minister.

Leonard Le Boysne, born in La Chapelle-Janson (Ille-et-Vilaine), was received at Saint-Lazare on May 6, 1638. Sent to Luçon, then to Richelieu, he went to Saint-Méen in September 1645 and died there on February 25, 1670. Monsieur Alméras, Superior General, praised him
Rhedonensis. I ask you also to have a perquiratur made to see if it was obtained by request at the Court of Rome, either before or after the death of M. Blatiron, or to be handed down to someone, or as vacant through death. In that case, it will be a good idea for you to reckon the date of this benefice two or three days later for M. [Le Boysne].

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2396. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT 
WITH THE SAINT'S REPLIES

September 28, 1657

Most Honored Father,

I most humbly entreat Your Charity to be convinced that your daughters are always in the state of obedience of little children, never raising any objection to the orders of their Most Honored Father and never thinking that they are dispensed from them at any time. In accord with this, we will

highly in his circular letter of March 13, 1670: "We have just lost a hidden treasure of grace and holiness.... He excelled in piety, meekness, mortification, regularity, obedience, and good example, but especially in humility and charity. I consider myself fortunate to have made my seminary with him.... He was very virtuous and one of the most talented Missionaries in the Company." A biographical sketch of Le Boysne is given in the Lyons manuscript, pp. 234-37.

4Of the Rennes diocese. The first redaction read, M. Charles Ozenne, priest of the Amiens diocese.

5Text of the original: "Ozenne." Obviously, this was scratched out and replaced by "Le Boysne."

Letter 2396. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter. Saint Vincent wrote his replies on the same letter.
welcome the persons Your Charity mentioned to us, about whom I take the liberty, Most Honored Father, of asking the following questions:

Q. - May we have them take their meals in their rooms because my ailments prevent me from following a fixed schedule, and the community would notice the religious habit? Nevertheless, if you think it advisable, we would set a little table for them there.

A. - They can eat in their rooms.

Q. - Do they plan to make a retreat?

A. - No.

Q. - Will they be going to Mass; if so, where?

A. - Here in this house or wherever they wish.

Q. - How often must we keep them company?

A. - A little in the morning and the same after dinner.

Q. - Will they come and work with our Sisters?

A. - If they wish.

Q. - If they ask for a Sister to accompany them to the city, should we provide one?

A. - Give them a Sister.

Q. - If their acquaintances come to visit, may [we] allow them to speak with them?

A. - You have to let them speak to visitors.

Q. - If they want to go to prayer in the chapel with our Sisters, may they go?

A. - That would be a good idea.

Once all these points are clarified, we will do the best we can.

They will be here only three or four days.

Q. - Permit me, my Most Honored Father, to make a very humble request of you, and I ask you please to grant it. I ask you to be willing to take some tea, at least during your retreat; I am sure you can do so without any inconvenience. We have had some here for a while that is very good and quite inexpensive. If you do not make this little effort for the sake of your health, I will complain to our good God about it. You can take it after dinner, around four o'clock; I think you will find it very helpful.

I do not know if it would be appropriate to send Abbé de Vaux's Sister

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1Guy Lasnier. Abbé de Vaux, was one of the most remarkable priests of Anjou during the seventeenth century. For a long time his sole ambition was to satisfy his vanity and his passion for hunting and other worldly amusements. In February 1627, he was appointed to Saint-Étienne
Cécile's letter, in which she expresses her eagerness to come to Paris. If Your Charity could take the trouble tomorrow to write to the Bishop of Angers about this, we could move this business along. I am afraid that a delay will cause the Administrators in Angers to have our Sister return too quickly.

A. - I will do so.

Most Honored Father, I take the liberty of asking Your Charity to remember my needs before God, both with regard to my salvation and to the service I owe my neighbor. Also, please be so kind as to let me know if I can give the Sister who has brought a note to the meeting today another chance by sending her to Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas. She was there once before, and the late Mademoiselle de Montigny had asked for her for that place.

For the love of God, Most Honored Father, bless all your poor daughters often, as well as your most humble and very grateful daughter and servant.

L. de Marillac

Addressed: Monseur Vincent

For Mademoiselle Le Gras

de Vaux Abbey in Saintonge; in 1628 he was named Vicar-General of Angers, then Canon of Notre-Dame de Paris. In spite of the obligations imposed on him by these dignities, he continued to lead a very worldly life. In 1632, like many others he was curious as to what was going on in the convent of the Ursulines of Loudon. It was rumored that some of the nuns were possessed; Richelieu ordered their exorcism and the execution of the Pastor, Urbain Grandier, for the practice of witchcraft. abbé de Vaux had cause to rue the day; it is alleged that, to his great confusion, one of the nuns, penetrating his interior life, revealed faults that he had never mentioned to anyone. From then on, he was a new man. In 1635 he made a retreat at Saint-Lazare, where he met Saint Vincent, with whom he remained in contact. He also had dealings with Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, Jean-Jacques Olier, and Baron de Renty. In his native town, Angers, he established a Visitation convent, richly endowed the seminary, and founded the ecclesiastical conferences in his diocese. He was a prudent counselor and devoted protector of the Daughters of Charity of the Angers hospital, and gave hospitality to Saint Vincent, Saint Louise, and Jean-Jacques Olier. De Vaux died on April 29, 1681, at the age of seventy-nine.

2Sister Cécile-Agnès Angiboust.

3Henri Arnauld. Saint Vincent had already written him about Sister Cécile's departure from Angers (cf. no. 2360).
Dear Sister,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Your letters console me because they make me see that you truly belong to God and want to give yourself to Him more and more; I thank His Divine Goodness for this. I hope that one of our priests will pass through Nantes soon. Propose to him the renewal of vows you wish to make and, if he agrees to it, I hope God will find this action very pleasing. It would be desirable for you to make a little retreat to prepare yourself for it, as you suggest, since you have not made one for a long time. You can discuss this, too, with him, but I am very much afraid you have too many patients, which may prevent you from doing so. In that case, you will have to be more recollected in order to unite yourself to God by raising your mind frequently and surrendering your heart completely into His hands. The practice of charity, when necessary, such as assisting the suffering members of Our Lord, is to be preferred to all other exercises.

So, Sister, if you cannot conveniently make the retreat or observe the other customs of the Company, you must not worry about them. Seek God in all your actions, and have no doubt that they are pleasing to Him. I ask Him to bless you.

Letter 2397. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original signed letter.

1Françoise Menage belonged to an excellent family of Serqueux; she and three of her sisters—Madeleine, Marguerite, and Catherine—became Daughters of Charity. Françoise served the sick for several years at the Nantes hospital, where she had been sent in 1650. When the Sisters withdrew from there in 1664, she went immediately to the Montpellier hospital, where she remained until 1692.
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Recommend [me] to the prayers of all your Sisters, to whom I send my cordial greetings.
I am in O[ur] L[ord], Sister, your affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Sister Françoise Ménage, Daughter of Charity, Servant of the Poor, in Nantes

2398 - TO DENIS LAUDIN,1 SUPERIOR, IN LE MANS

October 3, 1657

I would like to think you have arrived in Le Mans, where I embrace you with all the tenderness of my heart. With that same heart I am sending you the patent for the office of Superior of that house, which I request you to fulfill, and I ask M. Molony to read it to the family. I ask Our Lord to grant you His Spirit that you may govern in that same spirit, which is humble, gentle, firm, and vigilant. Have confidence in Him and rest assured that He will help you. It will seem difficult to you in the beginning, but grace and practice will make its continuance easy. Furthermore, since the little community is composed of very good, well-intentioned persons, it will console you by its fidelity to the Rule and by the grace


1Denis Laudin was born in Provins (Seine-et-Marne) on January 15, 1622. He entered the Congregation of the Mission on April 21, 1647, took his vows in September 1649, and was ordained a priest on December 25, 1649. After ordination he asked and obtained permission to remake a little of his Internal Seminary. He was next sent to Montauban, then to Richelieu as Procurator (1651-57). He was Superior in Le Mans (1657-68), Troyes (1668-75), Angers (1675-79), and Fontainebleau (1679-90) and Visitor of the Province of Champagne (1682-86). In 1690 he was changed to Saint-Cyr, becoming Superior there the following year. Serious illness and poor eyesight prompted his return to Saint-Lazare, where he was given the direction of the coadjutor Brothers and where he died on April 12, 1693. (Cf. Notices, vol. II, pp. 365-88.) His brother Gabriel was also a Priest of the Mission.
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God will grant you to give the example in this, as I ask His Divine Goodness to do. Your knowledge of human weakness will cause you to act with prudence, discretion, and wisdom, and with greater recourse to God. I think you know that a local Superior should never change or make any innovations in his family without an order from the Visitor or the Superior General.

2399. - TO ABBÉ DE SAINT-JUST, VICAR-GENERAL, IN LYONS

Paris, October 5, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
The kindness Our Lord has given you for us inspires me with confidence to call your attention to a difficulty that may arise in the proceedings M. . . has begun here to obtain letters patent for the establishment of the Congregation that the Archbishop of Lyons has founded in his diocese to work under the title of Priests of the Mission. Because our insignificant Little Company also bears the same name of the Mission, and this similarity of names may result in many unfortunate inconveniences, I had someone point out to the Chancellor our modest objections to this, before I had the honor of writing to you, since I am sure the Archbishop has no intention of doing one good work to harm another.

Here are two or three of the difficulties that have already arisen with another Company bearing the same name and that could arise...

Letter 2399. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, unsigned rough draft.

1First redaction: "to inform you." The correction is in the Saint's handwriting.

2Camille de Neufville de Villeroy (1654-93).

3First redaction: "Monsieur, our insignificant Company is also named of the Mission." The correction is in the Saint's handwriting.
here. The Bishop of Bethlehem established a similar Company twelve or fifteen years after ours, which he named in the beginning *Priests of the Clergy*. Subsequently, he had it approved in Rome under the title of *Societas Presbyterorum Sanctissimi Sacramenti ad Missiones* and had it called *of the Mission*. Afterward, he obtained from the Pope the gift of two collèges in Avignon, founded by some Savoyards for students of the same area. It so happened that, when the Savoyards saw that these collèges had been taken from them by the Missionaries, who they believed belonged to our Company, the inhabitants of Annecy were so enraged that they gathered in crowds several times to throw into the lake our priests who are established in that town. For a long time the latter remained in hiding because of this, not daring to show their faces. Furthermore, the Senate of Chambéry has never been willing to ratify our establishment in Savoy for this reason, notwithstanding various orders of His Royal Highness.

Another difficulty that has arisen, Monsieur, is that a citizen of Marseilles—where that Congregation has one house and we another—bequeathed in his will some property to the *Priests of the Mission* and subsequently died without declaring to which *Priests of the Mission*. So, we are now about to go to law to determine to which of the two houses the legacy belongs.

In addition to those two inconveniences that have arisen with this Company, here is a third, due to an individual who for a time had worked in Toulouse on missions that the late Archbishop had inaugurated, and who was using the name *Missionary*. When this man was passing through Lyons, he visited a hospital for the sick.
Not finding in it the good order he would have wished, he wrote a long letter to the late Cardinal of Lyons, in which he pointed out the irregularities he thought he had discovered in this hospital. He urged him to put it in order; if he did not, he was calling him before the judgment seat of God. He signed this letter with his name: "Barry, Priest of the Mission." That good Prelate, who was then in Paris, indignant at such impudence, openly complained of our Company, believing that this priest was a member of it, which was not the case. He ranted and raved against us, with the result that, although I had him assured by our friends—and assured him myself—that this man was unknown to us, he always displayed his resentment whenever there was any talk of us.

Those, Monsieur, are some reasons, among many others, why we thought it our duty to point out to the Chancellor the difficulties to be feared if this Company of the Archbishop of Lyons takes the name of the Mission.

We have no fault to find with the Rules that worthy Prelate has prescribed for them, which are all good and holy, nor that there are Prelates who are founding such Companies, nor with the good priests who undertake the works we do; on the contrary, Monsieur, we pray every day at Holy Mass that God will send such workers into His Church. In fact, I think it would be necessary to renounce Christianity if one had other sentiments.

So then, Monsieur, the problem stems from the confusion of names, resulting in the fact that people often impute the doings of one Company to another of the same name, which has to suffer from it, and many other difficulties arise because of this. That is why God made differences among genera, species, and individuals. A mite is differentiated from all other creatures in such a way that none of them can be said to be a mite except that very mite, so true

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11 First redaction: "to another whose works are similar, when they do not have different names, but causes instead many other difficulties." The correction is in the Saint's handwriting.
is it that the wisdom of the Sovereign Creator has taken care to establish such distinctions between creatures in order that one may not be the other.

Assuming this to be true, Monsieur, it would seem that, if the Archbishop chose to give another name to these priests than that of Priests of the Mission—as, for instance, Priests of the Archbishop, of the clergy, or of the Lyons diocese—this name would better suit the situation, since they devote themselves to performing all those ecclesiastical services the Archbishop orders them to do.

To say that they could be called Priests of the Archbishop, Monsieur, and to add to work on missions in his diocese, would not prevent the difficulties that have arisen in the case of the Priests of the Blessed Sacrament—because of the phrase ad Missiones that I mentioned—from arising between these two Companies here because the word Mission is again used. Consequently, it seems that it will be a matter worthy of the wisdom of the Archbishop to remedy this and other similar difficulties in this time of beginning. This can be easily done by giving his Company another name, while still allowing it to carry out all the functions of the mission.

If the Archbishop is unwilling to accept this proposal, we will gladly change our name of Missionaries to something else, if the Archbishop so ordains and this can be done after the forty years or more since this insignificant Company began to work and was erected by the late Archbishop of Paris, confirmed by Bulls of Urban VIII and the present Pope and by royal letters patent,
registered in the Parlement. So, it will be up to the Archbishop to order whatever he pleases, and up to you, Monsieur, kindly to do us the favor of assuring him that I would rather die than do anything to displease him. Tell him also that, furthermore, we will do whatever he does us the honor of ordering us to do. I say the same for you, Monsieur, and am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble and very obedient servant.

2400. - TO JEAN MARTIN, SUPERIOR, IN TURIN

Paris, October 5, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I was deeply touched when I saw your emotion regarding our dear departed confreres. I am sure that you who knew them and know the worth of men of their caliber, and who have a special love for the Company and for servants of God like them, have felt their loss keenly. But may God, who gives both life and death, be praised! There is reason to hope that the ashes of these apostolic men will be the seed of many good Missionaries. I have had no letters from Genoa, but M. Jolly informed me that God has preserved M. Lejuge, M. Simon, a priest in the seminary, three or four students, and as many Brothers. Moreover, Monsieur, I very humbly thank the Marchese and you for the charity you want to extend to that afflicted house by welcoming and keeping the workers we are assigning to it, so they can learn the language and be formed for the missions with you, while waiting for the infected city to be cleansed and our family in condition to be reestablished. I thank

Letter 2400. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
God that this good nobleman is so kind to you and that, with your wisdom and effectiveness, you have the grace to make good use of this for the common good of the Company.

In ten to twelve days we will send you three priests: Beaure, Laurence, and Stelle, who are now on retreat, and a little later, M. Cruoly, who was Superior in Le Mans and whom we have brought here for this purpose. Of these four, two will be for you and the others for Genoa. Have all of them work on the language and then give them practice on the missions. Meanwhile, I have written to ask Rome to speed up the departure of M. Bonnet, who wants to go and work with you, and have written M. Le Vazeux, telling him to go and help you with the large mission the Madame Royale has ordered you to give. I hope that both will arrive in time and that God will grant you by this means the grace of satisfying this obligation. I ask Him with all my heart to do so and, above all, to preserve and bless you.

I still feel that it will be a good idea for you to follow the opinion of the Marchese regarding your establishment in Savigliano; but you must also point out to him that the inhabitants are laying down a condition contrary to our customs, which is to preach and hear confessions in the town. We cannot submit to this because of the consequences and because of the Rule that forbids us to do so. You know that at Saint-Lazare we do not preach or hear the confessions of people living in the city, or anywhere else where we do not have parishes.

1Jacques Beaure, born in Saint-Léonard-de-Noblat (Haute-Vienne) on March 22, 1627, entered the Congregation of the Mission for the second time on September 2, 1656.

2Yves Laurence, born in La Roche-Derrien (Côtes-du-Nord) on March 1, 1632, entered the Congregation of the Mission as a deacon on June 28, 1656, and took his vows in Turin on July 25, 1658, in the presence of M. Martin. He was Superior in Marseilles (1686-92) and Vicar-Apostolic for the Regencies of Algiers and Tunis (1693-1705). Laurence died in Algiers on March 11, 1705. (Cf. Notices, vol. IV, pp. 38-46.)


4Donat Crowley.
The young man from that town has arrived here safely, thank God. He seems to us well formed, wise, intelligent, and having good will. He will begin his retreat tomorrow or the day after and then enter the seminary. He wanted to see Paris and visit some Piedmontese there, but he has not told them his intention.

The dissension that has arisen among the Sisters of Sainte-Marie in Turin is causing a commotion throughout the Order. I had heard about it before you wrote to me. You told me before that you really did not want to get involved in working with nuns, and I see from your letter that you seem to have little inclination for it. I thank God for this because it is a disposition we should all have. Nevertheless, Monsieur, the order given you by the Archbishop and your founder to see those Sisters and to hear their confessions occasionally in order to try and reunite them, and the hope that God will give you the grace to restore peace and good order among them, must cause you to disregard our practice. I ask you, then, to do so and to persuade the Sisters who refuse to recognize the Superior to accept her as such and to obey her as the one chosen by God; to do otherwise would give rise to painful consequences. They can give her their vote interiorly and so preserve union in the family. I ask O[ur] L[ord] to bless your manner of acting in this and in everything else, to be glorified by your work, and to give you the strength to continue it.

Thank you for the offers you made M. de la Pesse of your house and your services. On another occasion I will thank M. Thouvenot for the help he gave him and the letter he wrote me. I cannot do so today because I am making my little retreat.

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5Michelangelo. Despite some reservations, he entered the seminary, but he did not persevere.
6The Archbishop of Turin, Giulio Cesare Bergera, had appointed Sister Marie-Thérèse de Valpurgue Superior of the Visitation Monastery in that city on March 17, 1657, without troubling himself about the Constitutions, which give the nuns the right to elect their own Superior. The Chapter protested and appealed to Mother Françoise-Madeleine de Chaugy. Out of deference for the Prelate, she advised submission to his will.
7Master of Requests in Chambery.
I send greetings to your little family, especially M. Le Vazeux, if he has arrived. Please tell him that I am sending to him in Annecy by this mail the ratification he requested at the bottom of the two copies of the legal settlement I received. I am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

M. Alméras, who went to take the waters in Bourbon, has become seriously ill there. We are really worried about him, although M. Perraud who is with him, tells me he is a little better.

Addressed: Monsieur Martin

2401. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, October 5, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I am worried because I did not receive in this regular mail a letter either from you or from M. de la Fosse, although I did get one from M. Le Vacher of Tunis, which passed through your hands. I greatly fear your illness has become worse; but, if so, why did M. de la Fosse or M. Parisy not inform me? I ask O[ur] L[ord] to restore you to perfect health. If you are in no condition to write to me, have one of those priests send me news of you punctually every week because I have an even greater desire to hear something while you are ill. On your part, please do your utmost to get better.

Letter 2401. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Hains Collection, original signed letter.
We have received a louis d'or for Pierre Monthuis, a native of Montreuil, who used to be a convict on the galley *Reine* and is now on the *Montolieu*, which people say is at Marseilles and not at Toulon. That is why I ask you to let him have those eleven livres and to send me a letter from him assuring his mother that he received them. We will put this on your account, as well as the three livres I ask you to forward to M. Huguier to be given to a convict named Martin de Lancre on the galley *Princesse*. I am asking him to do this in the letter I am writing to him.

M. Alméras, who went to take the waters at Bourbon, has become seriously ill there. We are really worried about him, although M. Perraud, who is with him, tells me he is a little better.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

I just received a letter from M. de la Fosse.

*Addressed*: Monsieur Get

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2402. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, October 5, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Thank you for the observations you sent me on our Rules, together with your letter of September 4. We are going to put those

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Letter 2402. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
same Rules in good order so they can be sent as soon as possible to the commissioner.

I also received your letter of September 11, with the short summary of your family's work and good results during the past winter, which consoled us. May God be praised for this!

I highly approve of your receiving the Rector of the Salviati college and that good young Portuguese man, who want to enter the Company, and also the Spanish priest who was a Jesuit, if he returns to you for that purpose. You can give them a try, and their example may attract others. It is advisable to appoint someone to direct them and try to lead them to enter into the spirit and customs of the Company. I leave the choice to you. I am all the more of this opinion, considering that we are sorely in need of men to replenish the house in Genoa and to reinforce the Turin house. We are sending four priests from here to the last-named place; two to remain there permanently, and the others to learn the language, while waiting for the city of Genoa to be cleansed. This is in line with the advice of M. Martin, who informed me that the Marchese di Pianezza approves of his doing an act of charity for that afflicted house in Genoa by welcoming the persons we assign so they can be formed before going there. Three of them: Messieurs Beaure, Laurence, and Stelle, are already on retreat in preparation for their departure and will leave in ten to twelve days. The fourth will be M. Cruoly, whom we brought here from Le Mans, where he was Superior. He is now giving a mission, so he will not leave until after the others.

It will be a good idea for you to hold on to M. Baliano, especially if M. Bonnet is prepared to go as soon as possible to Turin to give missions, as he requested. I have also asked M. Le Vazeux, the Superior in Annecy, to go there to help M. Martin with the mission the Madame Royale has ordered him to give.

We have to send another two priests to Madagascar; a ship is being readied and may sail this very month of October.

The Queen of Poland is now talking of recalling the priests whom the war sent back to us in France—I mean Messieurs Guillot,
Éveillard, Durand, and Simon. She is even thinking of establishing them in Krakow, which is now subjugated to the King. All of them, however, cannot return there. M. Ozenne told me he was going to rejoin M. Desdames in Warsaw and send for M. Duperroy, who is a little better.

In no way do I think you should receive into the Company that young man from the country, who is asking to become a coadjutor Brother. No matter how much good will he has, no reliance can be placed on a man who has committed three murders.

If you can manage without Brother Oderico, let him go, since he is asking for this and is not very suitable for you. Get a domestic in his place to serve you.

I would have been very sorry if the affair of the Mercedarians had caused you to fall out with M. Gueffier, who is such a good, gentle, wise man. I thank God it did not happen. I showed the Provincial what you wrote to me about it so that, if he wants to send you a power of attorney, he will not put your name on it.

Please have the faculties of M. Le Vacher of Algiers renewed, as well as those of his brother in Tunis; he is determined to return there as soon as we collect the money needed to release the Consul from his obligations. This will be very hard for us to do. I think it is impossible.¹

I do not remember what I said to the Nuncio about the multiplication of Congregations, except perhaps that I had no objection to granting Abbé de Lalutumière’s seminary the usual faculties customarily granted to a private individual—like the ones you obtained for M. Coglée, for example.

I sent to Angers the letter you wrote to M. Doublard and gave M. Brousse the one for him.

The two cases of plague that you say have broken out recently

¹This sentence is in the Saint’s handwriting. Jean Le Vacher was in Tunis; Philippe Le Vacher was in France but was planning to return to Algiers.
in Rome give me reason to fear that the city is still not thoroughly cleansed of it. Still, I pray Our Lord that it is.

I am not receiving any letters from Genoa and know nothing about it other than what you write me. If the Divine Goodness grants us the grace of preserving Messieurs Lejuge, Simon, and the others, may His Holy Name be blessed for it!

When M. Almeras went to take the waters at Bourbon, he became seriously ill there. We are really worried about him, although M. Perraud, who is with him, tells me he is a little better.

M. Ozenne informs me that the Queen is glad that he is keeping up a correspondence with you.

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

2403. - TO LOUIS SERRE, SUPERIOR, IN SAINT-MÉEN

Paris, October 6, 1657

Monsieur,

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

M. Le Moyne \(^1\) has arrived and we have welcomed him. I have not yet interviewed him because I was on retreat when he came, but I am going to speak with him so he can begin his retreat and enter the seminary afterward.

It will be a good while before we can send you the priest you

\(^1\)Jean Le Moyne entered the Congregation of the Mission in October 1657 and took his vows on October 18, 1659, in the presence of M. Langlois.
request because I think your foundation takes care of only four—and there are five or six of you—and because we are obliged to replace our most recently deceased men, of whom there are a large number. This prevents us from sending very many to other houses.

I already told you that God has taken to Himself Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, who had gone to Madagascar, and that the plague in Genoa had snatched Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent from us. Now, God has chosen since then to crown our sorrow by taking from us also Messieurs Boccone, Tratebas, Duport, and Blatiron, and a coadjutor Brother as well. Oh! what a loss, Monsieur! Oh! what an affliction! It is surely in this that we must adore the ways of God and offer Him a sacrifice of our feelings, out of respect for the hand that strikes us, by submitting ourselves to His ever-loving Will. We also try to do this wholeheartedly, but I must confess that I am inconsolable at being deprived of so many good servants of God because I have reason to believe that my sins have obliged the Divine Justice to take them from us. There are now only three priests, three or four clerics, and as many Brothers in that afflicted house. The former are M. Lejuge, who had caught the disease but is cured of it; M. Simon, the only Frenchman; and a priest in the seminary.

I recommend to your prayers both the living and the dead, along with M. Almeras, who went to take the waters at Bourbon and has become seriously ill there. On the same day on which they wrote me the last letter about him, he was supposed to receive Extreme Unction. You can get an idea of how this grieves us from the sorrow I know you yourself will experience, loving the Company as you do. There is reason to hope from the goodness of God, who gives life and takes it away, that the ashes of so many apostolic workers, who gave their lives for the salvation of others, after the example of O[ur] L[ord], their Good Master, will be the seed of many good
Missionaries. I ask this of O[ur] L[ord], in whom I am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Serre

2404. - TO PIERRE CABEL, IN SEDAN

Paris, October 6, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received three letters from you.¹ I did not think it would take me so long to answer you, but the pressure of business and then my retreat prevented me from doing so any sooner.

I thank God for restoring M. Sevant's² health and for the care you took of him. If he has not quite recovered, there is no need for me to recommend him to your care because you in your charity spare nothing for his recovery. Tell him I embrace him in spirit with all the tenderness of my heart, as I also embrace good M. Michel, who I think is with you now, very much consoled by the services he has rendered O[ur] L[ord] in the person of the sick poor. As for me, I am deeply edified and thank God for this.

I am really worried about the illness of the Sister who has had a relapse. I ask O[ur] L[ord] to restore her to health. Please console them both by telling them how consoled I am to hear of their fine

Letter 2404. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
¹As with many other letters the Saint acknowledged receiving, none of these three is extant.
²Jean Sevant, born April 14, 1617, in Vaucelles, a faubourg of Caen (Calvados), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 9, 1654, at the Paris seminary. He took his vows on January 20, 1657, in the presence of M. Berthe, and died in Richelieu on November 5, 1665.
manner of acting and the excellent way Sister Christine 3 has nursed the sick poor of Stenay, and the other Sister the sick in Sedan. Everyone is very satisfied with them, and Mademoiselle Le Gras is greatly consoled. I recommend myself to their prayers, and I ask you to see that the sick Sister is well cared for.

We will try to pay the 350 livres you have drawn. I do not know whether the bill of exchange will be payable just one week after we get it. Please do not give any from now on, unless this is stipulated in writing, so that we will have time to look for the money.

I ask that at least two of you make your retreats together, Monsieur, if more of you cannot do so each time.

We cannot send you any relief because you are seven priests and we are obliged to replace those whom God has called to Himself. I already told you that Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville are among these, together with Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent, whom the plague has carried off in Genoa. Here is more news: God has also chosen to take from us Messieurs Boccone, Tratebas, Duport, and Blatiron, and a coadjutor Brother. This is an irreparable loss and must be attributed to my sins. However, there is reason to hope that, having given their lives for the salvation of others, after the example of Our Lord, their Master, His Divine Goodness will cause the ashes of those apostolic workers to be the seed of many good Missionaries. I have also been informed that M. Alméras, who had gone to take the waters at Bourbon, became so seriously ill there that, at the time they were writing to me, he was to be given Extreme Unction. Since your parish obligations prevent you from each saying three Masses for each of those who have died, say only one. If you cannot do that, be satisfied with making the repose of their souls a second intention.

3Jeanne-Christine Prévost.
I have no doubt of the rivalry of the person you mention, but please live content on that matter. I know enough about your leadership to hope that God will be more and more honored by it, and the Company edified. That is the prayer I offer O[ur] L[ord], in whom I am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
i.s.C.M.

Please let me know what news you have of the Governor; if he has returned, renew to him and Madame the offers of my obedience.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Cabel

2405. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN LAON

Paris, October 6, 1657

Dear Brother,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever! I am writing to you at Laon because I saw from your letter of October 1 that you were leaving Saint-Quentin the next day, but I have nothing new to tell you. I was not at the meeting yesterday because I am on retreat, and the Ladies who heard your letter read gave no orders except that they would wait for a report on the poor

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4Abraham de Fabert.

Letter 2405.- Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
in Laon. I pray that O[ur] L[ord] has brought you there safely and will continue and augment His blessings for body and soul.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Mission, at the home of the Cantor, in Laon

2406. - TO GEORGES DES JARDINS, SUPERIOR, IN TOUL

Paris, October 6, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I praise God for the journey you made and the business you transacted at Quatre-Vaux.¹ What you tell me about the inequality among the houses of the Company confirms me in the fear I have always had of Saint-Lazare being too attractive because of the good bread and the good food eaten here. Then, too, there is the clean air breathed, the wide paths for walking, and the other amenities it provides, which are not to be found in every other house and which cause sensual persons to enjoy being here. Not indeed, that there have been any who have not willingly changed residence when the works called them elsewhere, thank God, but I mean that I have always been afraid that persons brought up too delicately might find it hard to accustom themselves to living in a small, poorly-built house, where the food is coarse and nature gets nothing out of it. That is why I have been unwilling to allow fine buildings to be erected here, or beautiful avenues, or other conveniences. Further-

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¹Today, Quatre-Vaux is part of the commune of Rigny-Saint-Martin (Meuse).
more, if I could have cut back on other things that are not actually superfluous for those who make good use of them, I would have done so in order that people would not be attached to being here rather than elsewhere.

To say that we keep the men who are infirm in the small houses is a complaint hard to swallow and would embarrass whoever said it, if those in this house were as free as he is with making public what they suffer.

I am sure, Monsieur, that you have had a great deal to put up with from the person you mention.\(^2\) He has a rather difficult character. True, he does have his good points, but it takes both wisdom and patience to handle him. I had explained my intentions to him clearly enough \(^3\) by telling him to obey his Superior and to do nothing without his advice.

I do not know why you inform me that you absolutely must not give over your parish to be serviced by some outside priest right now. You know, nevertheless, how burdensome it is for you, and how often I have asked you to put a good assistant priest there. I ask you once again to do so and even to entrust the parish in Écrouves \(^4\) to some outside priest, if you can. I am well aware that your income will thereby be lessened, but you will also be free to give missions, which must be our principal work, and in between times you will get more rest.

I strongly doubt that we can send you any time soon the priest you ask for, since we have an obligation to replace the many good Missionaries who have gone to God. In addition to them, we may have also lost good M. Alméras, who had gone to take the waters in Bourbon and became seriously ill there. In consequence of this, they were going to give him Extreme Unction the day I received the last letter written to me from there.

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\(^2\) Probably Nicolas Demoche, who was Superior in Toul before M. des Jardins.

\(^3\) Cf. no. 2345.

\(^4\) Commune in the district of Toul (Meurthe-et-Moselle).
I am very sorry that M. Demonchy had to leave Toul when the Court was due to arrive, since there are now so few of you. Please go to see M. Annat, the King’s confessor, and M. de Saint-Jean, the Queen’s chaplain, who are good to us, and offer them your house because I think you have rooms in which to lodge them. Consult M. de Saint-Jean about whether you should go to pay your respects to the Queen and the Cardinal. If he advises you to do so, take M. Demonchy with you, if he is still in Toul; if not, take someone else. Do it the way M. de Saint-Jean indicates to you.

That opportunity should oblige M. Emfrie to practice patience; tell him that I ask him to do so.

We have no Germans in the Company, except one who is elderly and in poor health. That is why it would be difficult for us to supply men who speak that language for the proposed foundation in Alsace. Moreover, if the proposal is to be considered, we should know the name and location of the priory being offered, what Order it is, the income, its obligations, on whom it depends, whether there are any monks there, what buildings, etc.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur des Jardins, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Toul, in Toul

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5Cardinal Mazarin.
7Notre-Dame-des-Trois-Epis (cf. vol. VIII, no. 2894, letter of July 5, 1659, to M. Favier).
Monsieur,

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

This letter is to thank you for the help you gave our house in Toul for the ordination retreat, which I thought would be very large; it is also to ask you to work on the mission in Sézanne with M. Monvoisin. Since the population there is large, many workers are needed. There are two or three men from Troyes, and we have sent six, but that is not enough. If the preachers need to be relieved, you could preach sometimes or alternate with one of them, and do whatever else M. Brin deems advisable.

I think you heard about the great losses we have suffered in Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville in Madagascar, and Messieurs Ennery, François Vincent, Boccone, Tratebas, Duport, and Blatiron, and a coadjutor Brother in Genoa. They all died, after the example of O[ur] L[ord], to save others and, having lost their lives for that purpose, they have saved them. So they are doubtless very happy; at least we have reason to think so and even to hope that God will make the ashes of those apostolic men the seed of many good Missionaries.

We also have good M. Alméras hovering between life and death; perhaps he is now before God. He had gone to take the waters at Bourbon, and became so seriously ill after doing so that he was given Extreme Unction. True, he has improved somewhat since then, although, according to the latest news we received, he was not out of danger.

There are now only three priests, three or four clerics, and as many coadjutor Brothers left in Genoa. I recommend the living and

Letter 2407. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
the dead to your Holy Sacrifices and am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Guillot, Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Montmirail, in Montmirail

2408. - TO JACQUES CHIROYE, SUPERIOR, IN LUÇON

Paris, [October 10] 1657

Monsieur,

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

I thank God for the consolation you received from the visitation and for your peace of mind at being relieved of the parish. I share your joy, hoping that the pace of the family will be better regulated and the work of the missions more frequent and effective because you will be free to go on them. This is what I ask of His Divine Goodness.

I have written to Troyes to see if M. Nivelle, on whom the Bishop of Luçon has conferred this benefice, has the qualities necessary for the direction of souls. Since that good Prelate sent me the letters of appointment, with orders to send or retain them...
as I would see fit (these are the words of M. Berthe's letter), I take it from this that His Excellency intends for me to look into the qualifications and morals of M. Nivelle and, if he has the requisite qualities, to send him the letter of appointment for this parish, which I will do promptly. If, however, he does not have them, then I will return the document to the Bishop to allow him to find someone else who will carry out well the duties of Pastor.

M. Berthe sent me word from Saintes that M. Rivet 4 will be useful and content in Richelieu, if we send him there for the chant. So, please give him the money he needs for the journey; tell him we need him in that house and that I ask him to go there as soon as possible.

Right now, we cannot possibly reimburse M. Cramoisy for the money the Bishop gave you because we do not have it. With the help of God, however, we will pay this debt shortly. I will be very careful to do so. I must confess that I thought it had been paid.

You knew, of course, that God chose to take to Himself the last three Missionaries who had gone to Madagascar: Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville, and Messieurs Ennery and François Vincent in Genoa. Perhaps you are not aware, however, that His Divine Goodness has also taken from Genoa Messieurs Boccone, Tratebas, Duport, Blatiron, and a coadjutor Brother named Damian. 5 I am sure you are cut to the quick by these losses, which seem irreparable to us; but we must kiss the hand that strikes us, out of respect for the ways of God, who does everything only most wisely and for the best. That is what we are trying to do with all our heart, but I admit that I am inexpressibly grieved at the loss of so many good workers because I have good reason to believe that my sins have obliged the Divine Justice to take them from us.

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4 François Rivet, brother of Louis, Superior in Saintes, and Jacques, a coadjutor Brother. Born in Houdan (Yvelines) on July 28, 1628, François entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 12, 1647, took his vows on November 6, 1650, and was ordained a priest on April 1, 1656.

5 As mentioned earlier (cf. no. 2347, n. 6), this is probably Giovanni (Jean) Damiani.
As for the men, they are surely very fortunate because, having died for the salvation of others, after the example of our Good Master, they saved their lives by losing them, as He Himself said. We have reason to hope that the ashes of those dear deceased, who carried out their apostolic work so well, will be the seed of many fine Missionaries. In that afflicted house there are still three priests, three or four clerics, and as many coadjutor Brothers. The priests are M. Lejuge, who was stricken by the plague but was cured and then took the place of his deceased confreres in ministering to other victims of the plague; M. Simon, the only Frenchman; and a priest in the seminary. I recommend both the living and the dead to your Holy Sacrifices.

We do not know whether M. Alméras is among the living or the dead right now. He had gone to the waters in Bourbon and became seriously ill there. However, M. Perraud, who is with him, informed me in his latest letter that, after receiving Extreme Unction, he improved a little but was not out of danger. He is—as we are—in the hands of God, who will do with him as He wills and who deserves to be adored in whatever state He puts us.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
i.s.C.M.

I am writing to inform M. de Beaumont that we have assigned M. Rivet to Richelieu.7

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

6Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
7This sentence is in the Saint's handwriting.
Monsieur,

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

I am writing simply to send greetings to you, to good M. Desdames, and to M. Duperroy. The last regular mail brought no letters from you. I am very anxious to receive some so as to hear some good news about the state of affairs. We are hoping and constantly praying that the Divine Goodness will continue and extend the change for the better He has made in them. Please take care of yourself and look after the health of the other priests I mentioned above, whom I greet very affectionately. We have no news here since I last wrote you.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2410. - TO HUGUES PERRAUD, IN BOURBON

Paris, October 12, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I am answering your last letter but I do not have it before me

Letter 2409. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.
Letter 2410. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
because M. Alméras the elder has it. He is very sad—and, I might say, grieved—by his son’s condition. In fact, so are all of us, and I do not know if I have ever been more so, because I fear that my sins have prompted God in His justice to take His servant from us. Still, you have given us good hope that His Divine Goodness will preserve him for us, and we are grateful to Him. Without ceasing to pray for his perfect recovery, we will try, like him, to resign ourselves to the wise and ever-adorable disposition of Providence, who is also always solicitous for our well being.

Please tell that dear patient that I ask him, in the name of Our Lord, to do his utmost to get well, to follow the orders of the doctors—and your orders as well—in all the little forms of relief they will want to give him, and to spare neither the time nor expense it will take to be completely cured. I really wish he were in Moulins because the air there is better, and there are greater conveniences. But do not try to move him, until he can support the trip and the doctors order it. Thank you, Monsieur, for all you are doing for his recovery. Please do a little to take care of your own health. The person who has already given you some money has orders to provide you with more.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

.i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Perraud, Priest of the Mission, with the Pastor of Bourbon-l’Archambault, in Bourbon
Monsieur,

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

I learned in your letter of September 18 that the plague is out of Rome and that those who are left in our devastated house in Genoa are well. I thank God for this, and I ask Him to give health to the towns that do not have it and to preserve it for those who do. When you informed me of the inestimable death of those whom God took from us in Genoa, you spoke as if M. Simon were still living, but I have some reason to fear that he is no longer so because M. Lejuge has written to you but the other did not, and I have received no letters from him. May God be pleased to give us good news about him!

Since God has chosen to restore Cardinal Chigi to health, I will take the honor of writing to him at the first opportunity.

I highly approve of your prudence in giving only the old Rules to those good Bishops who requested them because they plan to open a seminary to prepare workers to be sent to non-Christian lands. I think that will be a very useful work; however, it will be a good idea for us not to be too concerned that they may be thinking of us to run it, partly because we must never aspire to any new work, and partly because of the difficulties and changes that will occur in that one.

If the Bishop of Bergamo continues to ask us for priests for his diocese, we will have to make the effort to give him some, since he is thinking of making a foundation for them there.

We forwarded your packet to Coulommiers, where your power of attorney was supposed to set up opposition to the decree of goods

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Letter 2411. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

Gregorio Barbadigo (1657-64).
of M. Paris. We also sent your letter to M. Jaillard,2 asking him to 
pay two hundred livres to the nuns of Montmirail, where two of 
your nieces are boarders. I was happy to grant permission for both. 
I had decided not to burden you anymore with other people’s 
affairs but I cannot avoid this one because of its importance and 
the persons involved. The Bishop of Le Puy, who is very good to 
us, has been delegated by the Holy See to gather information de 
non cultu of the great servant of God, Francis de Sales.3 He did in 
fact do so and, at the same time, prepared a new life of this Prelate 
and just recently had it published.4

Now, several things have been remarked in this book that have 
caused someone at the Roman Court to send word to the Sisters of 
Sainte-Marie to stop pressing for the canonization of their worthy 
Patriarch, until this book is either corrected or suppressed or the 
commission of the above-mentioned Bishop of Le Puy has been 
canceled. I am sending you the report of those remarks, the most 
salient of which are that the book calls the Bishop of Geneva 
“blessed” four hundred times and “saint” more than eighty times. 
It appears that the author has contravened not only the intention of 
his commission but also the express prohibition of a decree of 
Urban VIII.5 The question now is to find out if, because of these 
defaults, there is a chance that the Holy See might revoke the 
commission it gave to the Bishop of Le Puy and nullify the 
information he has already collected and is about to take to Rome. 
If so, what should be done to avoid this distressing reversal and 
annulment? Should he, for example, correct his book, or suppress 
it altogether, or should he see the Pope to hand back his commis-

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2A cousin of M. Jolly.
3Henri de Maupas du Tour, Bishop of Le Puy, had been assigned the task of determining 
whether there had yet been any public cult in honor of Francis de Sales.
4Henri de Maupas du Tour, La Vie du Vénérable Serviteur de Dieu, François de Sales, 
5In 1642 Urban VIII (1623-44) ordered the one-volume publication of all the decrees and 
subsequent interpretations issued on the canonization of saints during his pontificate, Urbani 
VIII Pont. O.M. Decreta servanda in canonizatione et beatificatione sanctarum.
sion? Lastly, find out what seems most advisable not only to preserve the honor and reputation of such a good Bishop, whose only fault was to think he was doing the right thing, but also to further the canonization of the blessed one.

I ask you, Monsieur, please to discuss this with persons who are very knowledgeable and experienced in such matters and to let me know their opinion as soon as possible. This must be done, however, as secretly as possible on their part and on yours. I ask this of you with all my heart, and I am, in that of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
is.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

2412. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN LAON

Paris, October 13, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

I have been worried about you ever since you told me you were going to leave Saint-Quentin to go to Laon and that the roads were dangerous. Since I did not receive any letters from you this week and do not know where you are, I am afraid something has happened to you, God forbid!

I was at the meeting yesterday, but nothing was done there. We need to hear from you in order to act, and we are anxiously and

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An order went out to suppress the book, i.e., not to put it on sale and to repurchase, as soon as possible, any copies that had been sold. The result was a slight delay in the cause of the holy Bishop of Geneva. The Brief of beatification came out on December 28, 1661.

Letter 2412. · Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
patiently awaiting this. I pray that the news will be good and that O[ur] L[ord] will continue to protect and bless you everywhere.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, at the home of the Cantor of Laon, in Laon

2413. - TO MONSIEUR DUPORT, IN SOISSONS

Paris, October 13, 1657

Monsieur,

I thank God for your exactness in trying to do all things well. It motivates me to ask the same grace of His Divine Goodness—I, who am so far from this and who would like to turn to you, Monsieur, for advice in matters of piety. I would hesitate to say what I think about the matter you did me the honor of proposing to me, had you not ordered me to do so.

So as to obey you, I will tell you then, Monsieur, that I agree with you and think it would be better to have low Masses said and

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I, who am so far from this” are in the Saint’s handwriting.
to pray for our dear deceased confrere ² in private, rather than to have a solemn, public service. If he himself were able to express his opinion, I think he ³ would say the same thing because God will be just as satisfied with the former way as with the latter. Still, we have done the latter here for all the deceased members of our Genoa house; besides that, however, every priest has said three low Masses for each, according to our custom.

There is reason to believe that good M. Duport, who served God with so much love and purity, is now among the blessed. If so, this charitable help offered for him will be more like an act of thanksgiving for the graces God granted him than prayers for the repose of his soul. I will tell you once again that we never noticed any imperfections in him but a constant tendency toward his perfection. This was recognized by the Cardinal of Genoa,⁴ who esteemed his virtue so highly that he wanted to entrust his soul and his salvation to him. May God grant us the grace, Monsieur, to abandon ourselves completely, as he did, into the arms of His Divine Goodness! May He grant me the grace to be resigned, as you are, to all the afflictions of this life!

With this wish I renew to you the offers of my obedience. I am, in life as in death, in the love of O[ur] L[ord] . . .

2414. - THOMAS LUMSDEN TO SAINT VINCENT

October 1657

The people of these northern districts are now much better disposed to receive the true faith than they formerly were. . . . The grace of God was

²Nicolas Duport, son of the addressee of this letter.
³The words "I think he" are in the Saint's handwriting.
⁴Stefano Cardinal Durazzo.

not at work in vain this past summer. Thanks to it I had the happiness of bringing back to the Church some persons of noble rank, who abjured their heresy. In general, I strengthened the Catholics more and more by my instructions and the sacraments I administered to them. I even went to the Orkney Islands and traveled through the districts of Moray, Ross, Sutherland, Cande, and Caithness, where there has been no priest for several years, and there are almost no Catholics remaining.

Just as I was beginning to get to work, however, and had received into the faith an upright man from a place near Caithness—who had invited me to stay awhile in that province, where he was hoping for the conversion of many others—I was forced to leave everything and return here quickly. This happened because the enemy of our salvation had stirred up a new persecution against Catholics, at the instigation of the ministers. The latter had obtained a mandate from Protector Cromwell, addressed to all judges and magistrates in the kingdom of Scotland, stating that he had been informed that several persons, especially in the northern provinces, were becoming Papists. It went on to say that, since it was advisable to put a stop to this and to prevent such a conversion, he was commanding them to conduct a thorough search, particularly for all priests, whom he ordered to be thrown into prison and subsequently punished in accordance with the laws of the kingdom. Now, because the minister of Bredonique is very hostile toward me in particular and is out to get me arrested, I have had to leave the places where I was not safe and seek shelter until we see the outcome of this persecution.

I cannot give you any further details of the state of our affairs for fear lest our letters fall into enemy hands.

2415. - TO GUILLAUME DELVILLE, IN ARRAS

Paris, October 17, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I have received several letters from you. Thank God Sister
Radegonde I has recovered her health and Sister Marguerite II is well. I send greetings to both of them and recommend myself to their prayers.

M. Philippe is in Paris, but he has not come to this house; he went to stay at Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet and became ill there. I have had someone visit him several times.

We received the good young man who came to become a Brother; he is on retreat right now. We have enough coadjutor Brothers; please do not send any more.

I spoke to our assembly about the report you sent me. We will speak to M. Jacquier about paying the poor two sous for each ration of bread the King gives them. It is very doubtful that he will be willing to do this. We will keep on trying and will let you know the outcome. There was also some talk of sending a third Daughter of Charity to relieve the others, as you suggest; even the Ladies agree to this, on condition that Mademoiselle Le Gras is able to give one. I will talk to her about it to find out.

I am glad you saw the Duc de Navailles. I approve of your keeping after the relatives of our Brothers Lejeune and Carpentier to send them their certificates, as they led us to expect, or else pay their room and board, since we are maintaining them. Lejeune is doing well, but the other one is somewhat unstable.

I highly approve of the resolution you have taken of not sending anyone else here who does not have his certificate. Please keep that in mind and add to it that you will not send anyone who does not

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1Radegonde Lenfantin.
2Marguerite Chetif.
3Philippe de Montaul-Bénac, Duc de Navailles, Peer and Maréchal de France. He died on February 5, 1685, at sixty-five years of age.
4Jean-François Lejeune, born in Bapaume (Pas-de-Calais) on June 9, 1637, entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 1, 1654, to study for the priesthood, and took his vows in Le Mans on September 23, 1656, in the presence of M. Crowley.
5Auguste Carpentier, born in Bapaume (Pas-de-Calais) on October 18, 1637, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 19, 1655, to study for the priesthood, and took his vows on October 23, 1657, in the presence of M. Delespiney.
have the money to clothe himself for the first time. We cannot supply cassocks, robes, cloaks, caps, slippers, etc., for all those who enter the seminary. So, when Le Grand, Masson, Caron, and the other two whom you do not name—one who has completed philosophy and the other his secondary school courses—have their certificates in hand, approved and signed, and have at least twenty écus for their clothing, you may send them, provided they fulfill the requisite conditions.

If the good priest people call Father Joseph is suspected of adhering to the new opinions, and that is why the Jesuits are against him, you should not send him because we will not receive him until he renounces completely all such ideas.

I have just seen the letter you wrote to M. Alméras during his absence. He is still in Bourbon, where he had gone to drink the waters but became so seriously ill there that he received Extreme Unction. We have heard that he is better, thank God.

Thank you for the notification you gave us with regard to Brother Fr. . . . God willing, we will make use of it as you advised, and will also use it for those persons who might write to us concerning postulants. We will send them to you; if I did not do this last time, it was because you were away and I thought that the person who had written to me was in communication with you. I am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

M. Berthe is making visitations of our houses in Guyenne. If the person who cannot afford his first habit, as you say, has the

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6Of these three it appears that only Caron presented himself at Saint-Lazare. He is not listed in Notices, but in vol. XIV Coste makes reference to his ordination and later to his dismissal from the Company.
requisite qualifications, please send him, provided he has his certificates.\footnote{This sentence is in the Saint's handwriting.}

Addressed: Monsieur Delville, Priest of the Mission, at the home of Mademoiselle Deslions, in Arras

2416. - TO THE DUCHESE DE LIANCOURT \footnote{Letter 2416. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, autograph rough draft.}

Paris, October 18, 1657

Madame,

I renew to you here the [offers of] my perpetual obedience and, through you, to the Duc de Liancourt as well; I do so with all possible humility and affection. I most humbly entreat you, Madame, to accept them, and I take the honor of speaking to you about the work of the Providence of God, which the late Mademoiselle Poulaillon \footnote{Jeanne de Schomberg, daughter of Maréchal Henri de Schomberg and wife of Roger du Plessis, Duc de Liancourt. A pious, talented woman, she helped Saint Louise considerably in her charitable works, encouraged the zeal of Adrien Bourdoise, and took under her patronage the Daughters of Providence. Pascal, Arnauld, and Le Maistre de Sacy finally succeeded in winning her and her husband over to Jansenism. She died in the Château de Liancourt on June 14, 1674, at the age of seventy-four.} had promoted and which you, Madame, have sustained

\footnote{Marie de Lumague, Mademoiselle de Pollaison (Saint Vincent always wrote Poulaillon), was the widow of François de Pollaison, a gentleman-in-ordinary of Louis XIII's household. She was among those devout widows whom Saint Vincent put to work in the apostolate. Born in Paris on November 29, 1599, married at the age of eighteen, and widowed shortly after, she made a vow of celibacy and placed herself under Saint Vincent's direction. Together with Saint Louise and other charitable Ladies, she visited the Charities, instructed little girls, and took alms to the poor. She especially wanted to gather together and reform delinquent girls; to this end she founded the Daughters of Providence. Saint Vincent worked on the Rules of this Institute, procured funds and good directors for it, and obtained its approbation by the King and the Archbishop of Paris. Mademoiselle de Pollaison died on September 4, 1657. (Cf. Hyacinthe Collin, \textit{Vie de la Vénérable Servante de Dieu Marie Lumague, veuve de M. Pollaison} [Paris: Cl. J. B. Héissant fils, 1744]; Abbe L. Teillet, \textit{Histoire de l'Union chrétienne de Fontenay-le-Comte} [Fontenay-le-Comte: L. F. Goursaud, 1898].)}
and protected by your benevolence and authority. You are an outstanding benefactress, which is tantamount to saying that you are a foundress of this good work, as stated in the rules of this work that were approved by the Archbishop.

Perhaps you have heard, Madame, of the death of that good servant of God and the meeting that was held a few days later at the Duchesse d'Aiguillon's house. The Chancellor's wife, Madame de Brienne, Mademoiselle Viole, M. Duplessis, M. Drouard, and I were present to see if it was advisable to try to sustain and regulate that work, and, if so, how to go about it. Now, after the reading of the approved rules, it was decided that efforts would be made to sustain this good work and to direct it according to the intention of those rules and that a meeting would be held of the outstanding benefactresses among the Ladies considered the foundresses of the work. These include the Queen, in first place; you, Madame; the Chancellor's wife; Madame de Senecéy; the Duchesse d'Aiguillon; and the Duchesse de Brienne. The purpose is to discuss this matter and to inaugurate the leadership of this work in a harmonious way so as to perpetuate it, with the help of God. It was He who chose you among the first Ladies, Madame, along with the late Duchesse de Maignelay. It is also He who apparently

3Madeleine Fabri, Madame Ségurier, wife of Pierre Ségurier.
4Christophe du Plessis, Baron de Montbard, lawyer in the Parlement, a very active member of the Company of the Blessed Sacrament, and one of the most charitable men of his time. He founded Le Magasin charitable, gave generously to the Montauban hospital and the Hospice for Incurables in Paris, and was director of the General Hospital. He died at the Missions-Étrangères Seminary on May 7, 1672.
5Bertrand Drouard, gentleman-in-waiting of Gaston, Duc d'Orléans, brother of Louis XIII. Drouard, together with Saint Vincent, assisted the Daughters of Providence after the death of Mademoiselle Pollion, their foundress. Speaking of the second mission given at La Chapelle for the Lorraine refugees, Collet states that "a layman named Drouard spread the fire of charity there" (cf. op. cit., vol. I, p. 309). He was also Intendant for the Duchesse d'Aiguillon.
6Marie-Catherine de la Rochefoucauld, Comtesse and then Duchesse de Rendan; first lady-in-waiting to the Queen, Anne of Austria, governess of Louis XIV during his early childhood; wife of Henri de Bauffremont, Baron de Senecéy, who died in 1622. She herself died on April 10, 1677, at the age of eighty-nine.
7Claude-Marguerite de Gondi, sister of Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi and widow of Florimond d'Halluin, Marquis de Maignelay, whom she had married on January 7, 1588. Her husband
wants you to be, for time and for eternity, one of the principal instruments He has used to preserve the purity and holiness of many virgins, who will adore and glorify His Divine Goodness in time and eternity and who, without this work, might offend and curse Him. Meanwhile, we would go to the Providence to try to organize the most urgent affairs and to dismiss the nuns living there, the boarders, and the girls of the community who could leave, reducing the number to forty, if possible, and increasing it as funds become available.

Much has actually been done in this area, with the result that several nuns and boarders have left, as well as fourteen or fifteen girls whose parents have withdrawn them, reducing the number of persons in that house to around eighty.

Because the above-mentioned Ladies thought it advisable for me to inform you of all this, I have the honor of doing so, Madame, with the joy that you in your goodness can imagine, and for three reasons, Madame: first, to ask if you would kindly inform me whether you agree to honor this good work with your continued patronage. If so, would you be so good, Madame, as to come to this city one day next week? Lastly, if you cannot do so, would you send a blank power of attorney, authorizing the person of your choice to fill in her name on it, and declare that, as a benefactress of that house, you wish to continue the assistance that you have given that house since its foundation until now—or at least put something in writing along these lines?

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was assassinated three years after their marriage; her son died in the prime of his manhood; her daughter's husband, Bernard, the eldest son of the Duc d'Epernon, Comte de Candale, brutalized her. Prevented by her family and Pope Paul V from entering religious life, the Marquise de Maignelay devoted herself to the service of the poor. She faithfully visited hospitals, prisons, churches, and convents. The Capuchins, Carmelites, Daughters of Providence, Oratorians, and her parish church all benefited from her generosity. To Saint Vincent she gave her time, service, and money, contributing to all his works, especially that of the ordinands. She died on August 26, 1659 and was buried in the convent of the Capuchin nuns, clothed in their habit. (Cf. P. Marc de Bauduen, La Vie admirable de très Haute Dame Charlotte-Marguerite de Gondy, Marquise de Maignelay (Paris, Vve N. Buon, 1666).)
This, then, is the reason for my letter, Madame. I renew once again to the Duc de Liancourt and to you the offers of my perpetual obedience and am, in the love of O[ur]L[ord]. . . .

2417. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, October 19, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Once again I thank God that Rome is free of contagion and that trade has been reestablished. I am still worried about our men remaining in Genoa, particularly M. Simon, because I have received no letters from him. I am also worried about M. Bonnet’s delay in leaving for Turin because M. Martin is due to open a very large mission and has almost no one to assist him. I wrote M. Le Vazeux, asking him to go and help him, but I do not know whether he will be able to do so. Then, too, there would be enough work to keep ten to twelve good workers busy, if they were there.

Thank you for the summary you sent me, with your dear letter of September 25, of the conferences you held on the virtues of good M. Blatiron.¹ We here are going to talk about those of M. Dufour; that covers a wide range.

Thank you for the marriage dispensation requested by M. Mignot, the Pastor in Laon; I will send it to him tomorrow. I will see that your little bill for sixty-one livres for expenses is paid.

God be praised that M. Abelly’s book has finally been presented to the Pope ² and for the progress you have made in getting Cardinal

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¹The summary of these conferences is in the Lyons Manuscript, fol. 230ff.
²For information about this multivolume work see no. 2305, n. 7.
Bagne to make us known to the Nuncio! For your information, His Lordship did us the honor of coming here two or three times, and I visited him at least that often. He asked me for a list of Companies formed in France since ours was founded, which bear the same name and perform the same works. I have prepared it, but have not yet sent it to him.

As for those priests who are talking about going to Tonkin and Cochin-China, I heard that they have no other plan. We had one of them here in this house these past few days, making a retreat in preparation for the journey.

I am both consoled and humbled at seeing the great goodness God has chosen to give Cardinal de Sainte-Croix and Cardinal Brancaccio for our Little Company and the outstanding proofs of this they have recently given you. I thank O[ur] L[ord], asking Him to make us worthy recipients of it.

Enclosed is a packet from the Provincial of the Mercedarians, which was brought to us too late last Friday. He wrote me that it is a request asking Rome for judges in partibus. The packet contains a blank power of attorney and a letter from M. de la Vrillière for M. Gueffier, and he wants me to ask you to see that the forwarding agent uses the necessary diligence in this matter.

Enclosed also is a note I found in a letter written to me by M. Doublard from Angers; you can see that it explains what he wants of you. We paid him all the money he had left you in Rome to be returned to him here, as well as the sum he had entrusted to M. Maillard when he arrived, so now we have finished our business

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3Marcello di Santacroce (Marcel de Sainte-Croix), born on June 7, 1619, was appointed Cardinal on February 19, 1652, at the request of the King of Poland. He became Bishop of Tivoli in October 1652 and died in Rome on December 19, 1674.

4Francesco Maria Brancaccio, Bishop of Viterbo, Porto, and Capaccio was created Cardinal in 1634 and died on January 9, 1675. He is the author of a collection of Latin essays.

5In pagan countries.

6Louis Phelypeaux, Seigneur de La Vrillière and de Châteauneuf-sur-Loire, Councillor of State in 1629, Commander, Provost, and Master of Ceremonies in 1643. He died on May 3, 1681, at the age of eighty-three.
with him. He would like a job, but I really do not have anything suitable for him.

M. Alméras is out of danger, thank God. He is still in Bourbon and is about to leave for Moulins to convalesce.

As for the proposal of the College of Propaganda Fide, may God be blessed that they are thinking of this poor, insignificant Company for the service of the universal Church! If His Holiness approves the suggestion, in nomine Domini, we must obey him. I think it will be well to find out whether the present governing body will be reduced to two or three persons and whether the Secretary will be one of them. If so, it will be difficult to work effectively in that good work. Families where there are two heads that are not subordinated, have no head. Subjects who do not like the leadership of one, turn to the other. Past experience shows what the future will hold. Nevertheless, we will consider what persons will be needed for that.

Meanwhile, M. Jolly will direct the affair with his usual wisdom and will give us a detailed report on the intentions those good Prelates have regarding both plans—for the priests and for the students of the college—and will also have a pilgrimage made to the seven churches so that God may be pleased to grant us the grace to know and do His Will in this important matter. We will pray to Our Lord for this, asking Him to preserve and sanctify M. Jolly and, through him, the rest of his family.

I am, in the love of His Divine Goodness, Monsieur, your most humble and very obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

"The rest of the letter is in the Saint's handwriting."
God has called good M. de Colmoulin to Himself. There is no longer any need to send him anything.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

2418. - TO CHARLES OZENNE, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

Paris, October 19, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I just received three of your letters, the last one, dated September 9, giving us confirmation of the recapture of Krakow and the solemn entrance the King and Queen made there. It also indicates that people and affairs seem well disposed toward full restoration. May God be praised and glorified for this! It is due to the wisdom of the King and the piety of the Queen, which I hope will draw down renewed blessings on their sacred persons and their States, which are the envy of others. We constantly pray to the Divine Majesty for this.

I thank God with all my heart for the arrival of the nuns of Saint-Marie and of M. Duperroy in Krakow, and especially that the patient has improved and that you and the others are in good health. May God keep you that way! I send my humble greetings to those good Sisters, our dear confreres, and the Daughters of Charity. As far as I know, M. Sergent has not yet arrived. When he does, I will be most happy to hear from him personally the details of everything.

Letter 2418. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.

1In 1656 Sweden, allied with the Elector of Brandenburg, invaded Poland. In consequence of that, Russia, Denmark, and the Holy Roman Empire declared war on Sweden, and Brandenburg soon deserted the Swedish cause (Poland recognized the Elector's sovereignty over East Prussia). In 1657 Sweden was driven out of Poland, and the King and Queen were able to return to Krakow, to which the Saint refers here.
It has already been three weeks since I sent word to M. Lévêque, in the absence of Madame des Essarts, that we will gladly pay him the postage on our letters. It is not right for us to put this expense on the Queen, who is so good to us. We will see, then, that it is paid, God willing, and I will take care to pray and have others pray for you and your leadership.

You did not say a word to me about M. Desdames; God grant that M. Duperroy and you will soon be able to join him!

I am, for you and for them, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

I almost forgot to tell you that M. Alméras is out of danger, thank God. He is still in Bourbon, where he had become ill.

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

PARIS, OCTOBER 19, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Since writing to you, I have received two of your letters, dated September 29 and October 5. Since you cannot pace your work in the missions according to your strength because the people are overwhelming you, we must hope that O[ur] L[ord] will sustain

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2Agent in France of the Queen of Poland.

Letter 2419. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
you to prevent you from collapsing. We pray for this often, and I thank God for giving M. de Musy a change of heart—or at least for disposing him to give things another try by going to help you with the mission in Bra. I told you that I have also asked M. Le Vazeux several times to go to your rescue, and I am still urging M. Jolly to be prompt in sending you M. Bonnet. I have not heard that either of them has left, but God will not fail to consider your need, since it concerns His service, and will remedy the situation one way or another.

I also informed you that we would soon be sending you four or five priests to reestablish the Genoa house and to reinforce yours. I told you, too, that we are very grateful for the favor the Marchese does us in his willingness to help you to lodge and maintain the ones who will not be for your own house, so that they can learn the language, while waiting for Genoa to have a clean bill of health and for our family to be in condition to work. Please thank him very much for us, assuring him of our obedience and prayers. Unworthy though they be—given his merit and our insignificance—they will always be accompanied by deep sentiments of reverence, gratitude, and the love that children owe to their good parents and benefactors.

Since this good lord is still considering the Saint-Antoine affair and wants to hear from Rome about it before negotiating the house in Savigliano, wait until news arrives and make the effort to do whatever is ordered. Perhaps he will be the first to excuse you with those gentlemen in Savigliano for not going to live in their town, when you explain to him that the conditions they lay down make this impossible because our Rules and customs do not allow us to preach and hear confessions in the towns where we are established. I will be anxious to hear from you how he reacts to this objection.

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1 Measures were being considered for uniting Sant'Antonio Abbey in Piedmont to the Congregation of the Mission, which was responsible for a seminary there.
and the decision that will then be made regarding the proposal of this new establishment.

I praise God that the Archbishop wants you to be in charge of retreats for the ordinands and the direction of a seminary and that the Marchese, who undertakes all kinds of good works, approves of your taking on those. As you can imagine, Monsieur, we will be greatly consoled if God chooses to have you work at them, but I do not think you should commit yourself to either, before the men we are preparing for you have arrived. At that time you will see whether the situation justifies our taking on those works and adding them to the others you are already doing.

I ask Our Lord, Monsieur, to bless your holy intentions and to sanctify more and more your soul, your leadership, and your family, whom I esteem and cherish highly and embrace tenderly. Please take care of your health, while we will continue to pray for this. God in His infinite goodness has preserved M. Alméras, who was at death’s door in Bourbon, where he had become seriously ill, but he is now out of danger.

That is all the news we have. I no longer hear anything about Genoa, except that I have learned from Rome that the men whom the plague has spared are well.

The young man from Savigliano who has been here with us for about three weeks does not appear to us to have the dispositions needed to embrace our way of life. He complains that you did not tell him all the practices and difficulties involved in it. He admits his repugnance to several things and his curiosity to see Paris, which was partly the reason for his undertaking the journey here. He was more undecided at the end of his retreat than at the beginning. He often goes to visit his compatriots, and I think he would already be with them, if he had any money. He is still here in this house but is not telling us clearly what his plans are. He is waiting for your reply to the letters he wrote you, which he seems impatient to receive. I wonder if he is expecting some assistance from his father, either to return home or to find a place to board. Be that as it may, we have little hope from him for the Company.
Nevertheless, we have welcomed and treated him as kindly and cordially as possible and will continue to do so until the end. He is very good-natured, but if God has called him to the Company He has not yet given him the courage to make up his mind in this regard.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

I was thinking of sending you three priests at the first opportunity and another later to learn the language, with the intention of leaving one or [two] with you and sending the others to Genoa; however, one of them does not seem very suitable for that country. M. Jolly sent me word that that good priest of the Bishop of Bethlehem has gone to Notre-Dame-de-Liesse, but he will send him to you as soon as he returns. He wrote me also about a proposal made to him in Rome regarding a new work for the Company. I am telling you this in confidence. Meanwhile, we must wait and pray for God's Will to be made known.

I embrace you and your dear family with all the tenderness of my heart.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Martin

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2The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letter and rejoiced in the joy that the Le Mans house experienced at your arrival. With its members I welcome and embrace you in spirit with all my affection, asking O[ur] L[ord] to bless you and your leadership there. The lowly opinion you have of yourself leads me to hope that He will do so because your knowledge of human frailty will cause you to act with more prudence and tact, and with greater trust and recourse to God.

I think you are aware that a local Superior must not change or introduce anything new in his family except by order of the Visitor or the General. You acted wisely, then, in not advancing the time of your Friday Conference without consulting us; you will also do well not to make this change right away.

We will try to send you the preacher you are requesting or at least a good cantor. Meanwhile, please do the best you can.

M. Alméras, who was at death’s door in Bourbon, is now out of danger, thank God. I am, in Him, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Please excuse us for not sending you someone more appropriate for your major and minor seminaries; use the most suitable men you have to work in both areas. We can do no better than that this year when we have to fill so many empty places.

The last cleric we sent is very wrong in not applying himself to the study of humanities and to insist on doing philosophy, which

Letter 2420. - Archives of the Mission. Turin, original signed letter.

Jean Descroizilles (cf. 2440).
he should obviously defer until he knows the humanities well. He has given himself to God to do His Will and not his own; if he acts otherwise, he will never do anything worthwhile.  

*At the bottom of the page: Monsieur Laudin*

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**2421. - TO BROTHER JEAN PARRE, IN REIMS**

*Paris, October 20, 1657*

Dear Brother,

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

Yesterday the assembly saw the letters and reports you sent from Laon and Reims, dated October 10 and 15. The Ladies are allowing you to use 500 livres and to draw the money on Mademoiselle Viole's account: 172 livres for the poor Pastors and poor sick persons and for the other needs you mentioned in the first letter for the deaneries of Guise, where you visited; and 328 livres for the poor you find in the greatest need. That comes to a total of 500 livres.

Besides that, draw from Mademoiselle Viole's account another 21 livres to be used to have Masses said by the poorest priests for the intentions of the benefactors. That is all I can tell you for now. May God bless and keep you!

Brother Ducourneau received the letters you sent him in a black linen sack, which had been opened; he found a crucifix inside it.

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2The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.

Letter 2421. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], dear Brother, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Mission, at the home of Monsieur de Séraucourt, Counselor of the King and Lieutenant for Criminal Affairs, in Reims

2422. - TO EDME MENESTRIER, SUPERIOR, IN AGEN

Paris, October 21, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I received your letters of September 13 and 20, which contain nothing requiring a reply. If the Bishop of Agen has not done anything about your suggestions, I hope that your friend, M. Le Cat, will call his attention to your needs and can afford you some consolation. As for me, who have not had the honor of seeing him nor of writing to him about his affliction, I would not have the courage to mention it to him. I have not yet seen M. Le Cat either, and I do not know if he has arrived nor where that good Prelate is. May God in His adorable Providence provide for your affairs and grant you the grace to resign them and yourself to His holy guidance. On your part, however, continue to do all you reasonably can in this matter!
We have no news here except that M. Alméras, who almost died, is now out of danger, thank God. He is doing better and better since receiving Extreme Unction in Bourbon, where he had become ill.

Letter 2422. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
Barthelemy d'Elbène (1638-63).
We have heard from Rome that the men whom the plague spared us in Genoa are in good health, thank God.

Has M. Berthe been to your house? I embrace your heart and your family with all the affection of mine and am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

After writing this letter, I received yours of the twelfth, with the book by the Jesuit, whom I thank. I cannot make any observations to you about it yet because I have just received it.

Addressed: Monsieur Edme

2423. - TO LOUIS RIVET, SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

Paris, October 21, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received your letters of September 30 and October 3. I praise God for the consolation you received from the visitation and similarly for the consolation M. Berthe received from your house. I hope the house will make good use of his advice.

We are waiting for M. Langlois to settle his lawsuit so we can

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Moïse du Bourg, S.J., was born in 1598 and died in Limoges on March 3, 1662. He was the author of *Le jansénisme foudroyé par la balle du Pape Innocent X, et l'histoire du jansénisme, contenant sa conception, sa naissance, son accroissement et son agonie* (Bordeaux: I. Mongiron-Millanges, 1658). As stated in the preface, the author's intention was that this book would be useful primarily "for zealous Catholic missionaries . . ., especially during their missions in the rural areas."

Letter 2423. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy.
send him back to you with another priest. Please be patient until then.

Brother Robineau says that he sent you word that he formulated an opposition to the decree on the Abbeville estate for the purpose of attaining separation, and since then no notice has been served us. He says that this indicates that, if the adjudication has been made, the separation has been granted you, or if it had been omitted, the decree would not apply to you.

We thought we were going to lose M. Alméras with a serious illness he had in Bourbon, but he is now out of danger, thank God.

We heard from Rome that the men the plague has spared us in Genoa are well, thank God. I am, in Him, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
is.C.M.

At the bottom of the page: Monsieur Rivet

2424. - TO BROTHER MARTIN BAUCHER, IN SAINTES

Paris, October 21, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

Although it has been a long time since I received your letter, I

Letter 2424. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, seventeenth- or eighteenth-century copy.

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

1Martin Baucher, born in Epône, Chartres diocese, entered the Congregation of the Mission as a coadjutor Brother in January 1653 and took his vows in Saintes on January 13, 1656, in the presence of M. Berthel.
still experience the consolation it gave me. I thank God for the charity He has granted you, which goes beyond the seas in desire at the same time you are practicing it in fact. Extending your attachment for God’s service in this way is the means of making yourself pleasing to Him. With Him, good will is taken as the deed. Why would He lavish such marvelous glory on the saints for a little suffering undergone in this life, which is passing, unless they desired to suffer and please Him infinitely, if that had been possible for them? It is because of this love that God rewards them infinitely.

Be assured, dear Brother, that He will not fail to reward the zeal that is prompting you to go to Madagascar to work for the salvation of souls and to Genoa to assist our suffering confreres. I even hope that He will grant you an increase of His grace so that you may serve Him in Saintes with greater peace and benefit for your soul, while waiting for His Providence to call you elsewhere. Continue to offer yourself to Him for anywhere on earth and for anything in which His Goodness chooses to employ you, for He is honored by this complete surrender to Him. Continue also, however, to place all your desires in His hands, considering yourself unworthy that Providence should think of you and happy that God wants you only in the place you now are. I was certainly most edified to see at the end of your letter that you place your will in His Divine hands. This is an indication of the grace God has given you to do His Will everywhere and in all things. Amen.

Brother Le Roy did not remain faithful. He has left the Company for the second time. They say he is living with a farmer near Villepreux, where he is working as a carter. Your cousin Aubin

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2Jean Roy, born in Argenteuil (Val-d'Oise), entered the Congregation of the Mission as a coadjutor Brother on August 7, 1644, at twenty-three years of age, and took his vows on July 21, 1648. He left the Company twice.

3Aubin Gautier (Gontier), who was in Turin at the time.
is doing very well in Piedmont, and Brother Joustel\(^4\) in Toul. I recommend them and myself to your prayers, and I am your affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
iss.C.M.

2425. - TO GUILLAUME DESDAMES, IN WARSAW

Paris, October 22, 1657

Monsieur,

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

Two reasons oblige me to write to you: the first is the opportunity afforded me for this by the return to Poland of one of the Queen's servants who is here; the second is the pleasure I enjoy in conversing with you.

How are you, Monsieur? Are you more at peace since the last letter I received from you? In that letter I saw, on the one hand, that you were in good health, and on the other, that you were concerned about the trouble and damages that the most recent attack of the Swedes had brought to the poor city of Warsaw. It is likely that you are more at peace, by the grace of God, since those people have been driven out, and M. Ozenne has sent me word that he hoped to be with you soon and to bring with him M. Duperroy, who is better. Oh! what good news! I am greatly consoled by it but will be incomparably more so when I know for certain that you are consoled by their presence and are enjoying the sweetness of peace, after the long, painful troubles that have separated you. May it


Letter 2425. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.
please God, then, to bring you together again, Monsieur, and to
give you all the physical and spiritual strength you need to carry
our His plans for you!

I am sure that the steadfastness He gave you in the midst of the
past dangers and upsets will be the foundation on which He will
establish the Company in Poland and that the good use you have
made of so many trials will draw blessings on it and its works. We
have all been edified by your patience and leadership, and I never
think of this without a profound sentiment of gratitude to God and
tenderness for you. May O[ur] L[ord] be pleased, Monsieur, to
carry out the plans He has for you!

You heard about our great losses of Messieurs Dufour, Prévost,
and de Belleville, who had gone to Madagascar and have now gone
to God. In addition, the plague in Genoa snatched from us Mes-
sieurs Blatiron, Dupont, Ennery, François Vincent, Tratebas, and
Boccone. They were excellent workers, who saved their lives by
losing them for the salvation of others, as O[ur] L[ord] has said 1
and practiced. We hope they will be like so many grains of wheat
sown in the earth, which will produce a large number of other good
Missionaries.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Desdames, Priest of the Mission, in War-
saw

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1Cf. no. 2355, n. 2.
Monsieur,

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

God alone, who gives life and takes it away, can make you understand how consoled I was to hear that only one of the three fistulas you had in your stomach is still there and that it is healing like the others, allowing you to travel, since you have gone to Krakow. May God be ever glorified for having removed you from the danger in which you were, and may He in His infinite goodness finish what He has begun, by restoring you to perfect health!

I have often shared with the Company the graces God has granted you and the good use you have made of them in the midst of the painful sufferings you have undergone. I did so to console the members, to motivate them to thank God for this, and to ask Him to preserve someone as dear to us as you are. So then, Monsieur, take care of your health and do your best to stay well. I have asked M. Ozenne to spare nothing to get you back on your feet, and I hope God will not refuse us this grace, since it is a question of His service, and He seems to be arranging matters to allow the Missionaries to work in Poland in a way other than what they have been doing until now. We are living in this hope, and I am more and more, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Duperroy, Priest of the Mission, at the Court of the Queen of Poland