SAINT
VINCENT DE PAUL

CORRESPONDENCE

VOLUME VII
SAINT
VINCENT DE PAUL

CORRESPONDENCE
CONFERENCES, DOCUMENTS

CORRESPONDENCE

VOLUME VII (December 1657 - June 1659)

NEWLY TRANSLATED, EDITED, AND ANNOTATED
FROM THE 1922 EDITION
OF
PIERRE COSTE, C.M.
To commemorate
the beatification of Frédéric Ozanam

This book is dedicated

to

Eugene B. Smith

Vice-President of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Council of the United States

and through him

to

the other committed men and women
of the extended Vincentian Family

who collaborate to accomplish the Mission of Christ
in the Church and the World today
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INTRODUCTION

The correspondence of Saint Vincent de Paul contains a wealth of information about the man, the Saint, and his milieu. To facilitate the informed reading of this volume, the editors felt it would be useful to preface the work with some explanatory remarks regarding language, style, and placement. In this way, a fuller image of the multifaceted personality and influence of the Saint will emerge from these pages, giving the reader a broader understanding of his life and the world in which he lived and worked.

In placing new letters within the volume or changing the placement of letters we have relied on Coste's corrections given in volumes VIII and XIII, the listings found in the Annales,¹ the dates on recently discovered letters or, in the absence of a date, on internal evidence. To facilitate research in Coste's work, we have chosen to keep the letter numbers of the original volumes and to indicate material newly added or relocated within each volume by adding a, b, c, etc., to the number of the preceding item. We have also decided to adhere to the span of years assigned by Coste for each volume.

In some cases, the finding of an original has enabled us to join fragments formerly considered separate letters. Such combined letters have been assigned a single number followed by a letter to differentiate the whole from the segments as published in the

¹Annales de la Congregation de la Mission (1937), pp. 234-237.
original Coste volume. Where variations of a single letter exist, only the most correct version has been included in the volume. Likewise, although Coste chose to publish letters originally written in Latin both in that language and in French, the present edition sometimes bears only the English translation of the original Latin.

Three different types of letters are presented in these volumes: letters from Saint Vincent, letters to Saint Vincent and, at times, mere summaries of letters where the existence of a letter is known but no text is available. The letters written by Saint Vincent appear in regular type, while those addressed to him are printed in italics. Smaller type has been used to differentiate the summaries.

As Coste states in his introduction, almost all the letters we now possess are either in Saint Vincent's handwriting or in that of one of his secretaries. The term original autograph found in the citation of a letter indicates that the manuscript was written entirely in the Saint's hand. If the citation uses the term signed letter, the manuscript was written by a secretary and signed by the Saint. For some letters only a facsimile, a handwritten copy, a photocopy, or a photograph is known. Such indications are given in the citation of the letters for which this information is available.

The citations usually state as well the actual location of the manuscript or copy used for the present edition. Great care has been taken to verify these locations where possible. Letters drawn from other publications and those belonging to special collections, private or museum, have not been checked due to the near impossibility of such a task. However, an attempt has been made to verify all letters belonging to private houses of the Daughters of Charity, the Priests of the Mission, other religious houses, churches, and various religious institutions. In checking these locations and in the search for unpublished letters, we have at times been fortunate enough to locate the originals of letters for which only copies were known formerly. In these instances as well no mention has been made of the correction—the citation simply states that the manuscript is an original.
We have updated as well the department names given in the footnotes. Several departments have had name changes since the time of Coste, while two others have been subdivided.²

Although the project has undergone many delays, each has contributed in some way to the overall quality of the work. The appearance, in 1983, of the revised edition of Saint Louise de Marillac’s writings³ has permitted us to check her letters to Saint Vincent and her spiritual writings for any corrections which may have come to light. We have also adjusted all the footnote references to the appropriate indication as given in the new edition.

In any work of translation the question of style invariably arises, so it was not strange that we should be faced with the problem. Should we smooth out clumsy or elliptical phrasing in the interest of producing a more “readable” translation or should we preserve the roughness and unpolished style of the original in order to reflect the flavor and spontaneous quality of Saint Vincent’s expression, supplying explanations where needed to make the sense clear? As our response to this question, we have attempted to make our translation as “readable” as possible while adhering closely to the style of each correspondent. For that purpose we have made an effort to give as literal a meaning as we could to the expressions used, while still adapting them to modern terminology. We have tried to reproduce even the grammatical constructions used by each correspondent unless the true meaning of the sentence would suffer thereby. Very long sentences have been shortened and short phrases joined together to render thoughts more readily intelligible.

³Department is the term used to designate each of the principal divisions of French territory. It denotes a geographical area similar to that of the American state. In the names of several departments, the word maritime, indicating near the sea, has replaced the word inférieure of the same meaning: Charente-Maritime, Seine-Maritime, Alpes-Maritime. In 1964, the Department of Seine was subdivided into Hauts-de-Seine, Paris, Seine-Saint-Denis, and Val-de-Marne; Seine-et-Oise became Essonne, Val-d’Oise, and Yvelines.
though still preserving the sense of the original. The vocabulary and expression have deliberately been kept simple. Saint Vincent's love for and practice of simplicity are no secret to anyone familiar with his life; therefore, it was judged fitting to follow his own simplicity in the choice of words and style unless he himself opted for more elegant forms.

To retain the French atmosphere of the work we have left certain terms and expressions in the original French. General terms of greeting such as Monsieur, Madame, etc., have not been translated, nor have we attempted an English version for expressions such as O mon Dieu!, O Jésus! Land-holding titles which often form part of a proper name—Comte, Duc, Marquis—have also been left in French. Other titles have been translated by the closest English equivalent possible. Proper names are given in the original language unless there is a familiar English form. This holds true for both people and places. Therefore, Sainte Jeanne-Françoise Frémiot de Chantal has been rendered as Saint Jane Frances Frémiot de Chantal, whereas Pierre Séguier remains in French. For places, Brittany is used instead of Bretagne, while Granada, Villeluneuve, and similar names remain in the original language. Proper foreign names within the text of the manuscripts have been left as written by the correspondents. However, the footnotes and index present the name in its original language form—Alessandro Bichi for Alexandre Bichi; Patrick Walsh for Patrice Valois.

An attempt has been made to standardize name variations appearing in the original manuscripts: Gondi is always used in this edition although the form Gondy is often seen in the manuscripts. We have, however, left the variations Pollalion and Poulallion. Although the correct spelling is the former, Saint Vincent always wrote the latter.

We have also standardized the various forms of the phrase used by Saint Vincent after his signature: unworthy priest of the Congregation of the Mission. Throughout this edition the abbreviation i.s.C.M. (indignus sacerdos Congregationis Missionis) has been used.
The word fille, meaning girl, daughter, young woman, appears in many of the manuscripts. In the seventeenth century, this word also denoted a woman religious or nun. We have tried to adjust the meaning of fille to the context of the various letters and have sometimes rendered the word as Sister rather than Daughter when referring to a member of Saint Louise's nascent community.

Monetary terms—livre, écu, etc.—have not been translated for it would be difficult to assign them an equivalent value in modern currency. Several other words and phrases have likewise been left in French—Parlement, Chambre des Comptes, collège—since English has no corresponding institution. These terms have been explained in footnotes. For other words of foreign origin used in English and found in English dictionaries no explanation has been given, for example, faubourg.

Saint Vincent often makes use of scriptural references which, however, are not always direct quotes. Where he has done so, the translation has been adjusted to flow with the meaning of the sentence. The scriptural quotations given in the footnotes are usually taken from the New American Bible, unless a passage cannot be found in that edition or a more suitable rendering of the phrase is found elsewhere. In such instances, the Douay-Rheims Bible has been used. In the case of the psalms, both versions have been cited because of the variations.

Coste almost always refers to Vincent de Paul as Saint Vincent or the Saint. In the present edition we have added this title to the names of Louise de Marillac and any other individual who has been canonized since Coste's time.

Generally speaking, in the titles of the letters, Coste gave the location of the addressee only when he was sure of it and when the locality was outside the then city of Paris. We have continued this practice and have attempted to make it more consistent. We have also followed Coste's custom of placing within brackets dates that are uncertain or conjectural. Brackets have also been used to indicate words either missing from the manuscript or inserted by the editors.
The capitalization forms of the original manuscripts have been adjusted to American usage as has the punctuation. Number forms—words versus figures—follow common American practice as well.

In addition to our goal of producing a smooth English translation which is faithful insofar as possible to the meaning and style of the original French, we have also purposed to present a work which is interesting and informative with regard to Saint Vincent, his correspondents, and his times. Both the scholar who may wish to use this work as a research tool and the ordinary reader unfamiliar with the Vincentian Family and with the religio-political history of the period have been kept in mind. A great effort has been made to update, correct, and amplify Coste's footnote material. Irrelevant notes have been eliminated and new annotation added whenever this has been deemed necessary or helpful. In the case of new matter, no indication has been given to distinguish Coste's footnotes from the annotation added by our editor.

A biographical sketch of each personage has been supplied throughout the work the first time that he or she appears in a volume. To facilitate reference to this data and also to the explanations of terms and places given throughout the text an index has been added to each book. The index indicates the number of the letter to which the reader should refer for the information sought. A general index will also be provided as an appendix to the entire work.

All references in the indices and the footnotes have been given by citing the volume and the number of the item rather than the page. Since Coste's volume span and his numbering of items have been retained, this practice should facilitate research in both his edition and the present translation.

In order to enjoy these volumes more thoroughly, the reader would do well to keep in mind that, as now, so then, one correspondent did not spell out to the other details that were already known and understood by both. Reading these letters at a distance of some three hundred years will often arouse a curiosity which in many
cases must remain unsatisfied. The allusions made will not always be clear, nor can they be. However, a familiarity beforehand with the life of Saint Vincent will greatly aid one’s knowledge and understanding of the situations mentioned and the people involved. The three-volume definitive biography written by Coste⁴ provides extensive information, but many shorter versions of the Saint’s life can be found. Placed against such a background, these writings take on still more a life of their own and make the Saint vividly present once again. The twinkle in his eyes and the smile or tenderness in his voice seep through the words and we meet the delightful, charming man known to his contemporaries. The severe, ascetic Saint takes on a new personality and somehow becomes more human.

Let us not fail to seek the man beyond these words, the man of compassion, warmth, humor, savoir faire, authority, and, most of all, the mystic whose sanctity was carved amid the bustle and involvement of very human situations. He will give us hope that we, too, can find holiness in an ordinary, busy life. May this personal acquaintance with the real Vincent de Paul lead us to encounter the dynamic force behind his life, Jesus Christ, who, for him, was all things.

NOTE TO THE READER

The editors felt that it was not necessary to reproduce in each volume the lengthy “Introduction to the French Edition” and the entire “Introduction to the English Edition,” which appear at the beginning of Volume I. They would like to remind the reader, however, that these introductions contain valuable information regarding the background and major sources of the letters and facilitate an informed reading of the correspondence.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks should be given to Vincentian Fathers Thomas Davitt, Ignatius M. Melito, and John E. Rybolt for their dedication in reading the manuscript of this volume and of the preceding ones. Their expertise in history, theology, Sacred Scripture, and/or English, and their knowledge of Vincentian history and spirituality have allowed us to correct errors, clarify the text, and make stylistic changes which render it more readable. By the invaluable contribution each has made to this translation of Saint Vincent’s correspondence, they have merited the gratitude, not only of the editorial staff, but of all who will be enriched by reflective reading of the Saint’s own words.
Manuscrit

[Handwritten text in French]

Letter 2728. — Rough draft in the handwriting of Brother Bertrand Ducournau, Saint Vincent's secretary.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letter concerning the arrival of Brother Jean Proust. It is clear to me that you are willing to do without him; besides, we need him here. For these reasons I ask you to send him back to us as soon as possible, unless you need him for something no one else can do; if so, you can keep him for another ten to fifteen days.

I praise God that you have gone back to giving missions. I ask His Divine Goodness to bless your work and fortify your health. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DE PAUL,
I.s.C.M.3

At the bottom of the page: Monsieur des Jardins

Letter 2475. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1Georges des Jardins, born in Alençon (Orne) on January 6, 1625, was ordained a priest in September 1649, entered the Congregation of the Mission on August 15, 1651, and took his vows on August 17, 1653. Later, he was Superior in Toul (1655-57) and Narbonne (1659).

2Brother Jean Proust, born in Parthenay (Deux-Sèvres) on March 12, 1620, entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 25, 1645, and took his vows on October 28, 1647.

Saint Vincent refers to clerical students as “Brothers.” The context usually determines whether the one referred to is a coadjutor Brother or a student destined for the priesthood.

3Saint Vincent subscribed the initials, i.p.d.F. (indigne prêtre de la Mission) [unworthy priest of the Mission], to his signature. It has been traditional in the Congregation of the Mission
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am replying to the letter you wrote me concerning the Mass stipends you want, saying that I will send them to you if we get any, but I must tell you also that it is rare that anyone comes to us to give us such alms. It is not that people do not request Masses of us—we are often overwhelmed with them, and right now we have about one thousand for the poor Genoa house, which owed them but could not take care of them because it lost six or seven priests—I mean, however, that we scarcely ever receive any money for them. So, Monsieur, I dare not give you any hope of a single one, although I will be happy to send them to you, if we do get any, so you can finish paying off the little debt that is worrying you.

I have nothing to say to you about the difficulty you are experiencing on the part of the persons with whom you are at present, except that we will remedy that as soon as possible, God willing. Meanwhile, I ask Our Lord to give you a share of His humility and patience to overcome these difficulties. I am, in His love

I praise God that the seminary where you are working is doing better and better, and I ask His Divine Goodness to make it grow in numbers and in virtue. I think this will not depend on you, since you are contributing to it by your instructions and example.
I ask M. Cabel to go to see Messieurs des Maretz, the sons of the Duc de Richelieu’s Intendant, who are in the army and are stationed at the Sedan citadel. I ask him to offer them his services.
and those of the house and to ask either M. Michel⁶ or M. Sevant⁷
to converse with them in the spirit of piety and devotion and to
encourage them to receive the Holy Sacraments once a month. I
assure M. Cabel that he and either M. Michel or M. Sevant will
console me more than I can say because they will give me the
means of acknowledging in some way the infinite obligations we
have toward the elder M. des Maretz.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
S.J.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Cabel, Superior of the Priests of the
Mission, in Sedan

2477. - TO EDME MENESTRIER,¹ SUPERIOR, IN AGEN

Paris, December 5, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] [Lord] be with you forever!
Enclosed is a short note of reply for Father du Bourg.²

become better and, by the example of a truly Christian life, dispel the preconceived ideas of the
Calvinists.

⁶Guillaume Michel, born in Esterville (Seine-Maritime), left his parish in Saint-Valery to enter
the Congregation of the Mission on June 19, 1646, at thirty-nine years of age. He withdrew from
the Congregation of his own accord before taking vows but later returned. In 1657 he was a
member of the Sedan house and was in Fontainebleau in 1666.

⁷Jean Sevant, born in Vaucelles, a faubourg of Caen (Calvados), on April 14, 1617, entered
the Congregation of the Mission on October 9, 1654, at the Paris seminary, took his vows on
January 20, 1657, in the presence of M. Berthe, and died in Richelieu on November 5, 1665.

Letter 2477. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

¹Edme Menestrier, born in Rugney (Vosges), on June 18, 1618, entered the Congregation of
the Mission on September 10, 1640, took his vows in October 1646, and was ordained a priest
in 1648. He spent the rest of his Community life at the Agen Seminary, where he was Superior
(1651-65, 1672-85) and Procurator (1665-72). Saint Vincent always called him by his first name
only.

²Moïse du Bourg, S.J., was born in 1598 and died in Limoges on March 3, 1662. He was the
author of the book entitled: Le jansénisme foudroyé par le bulle du Pape Innocent X, et l'histoire
Has the Bishop of Agen\textsuperscript{3} written to his clergy on your behalf, as he led you to hope?

Please give me a little more time to think about the Brother cleric you are requesting of us, and let me know what you think about M. Admirault\textsuperscript{4} because they would like to have him in Notre-Dame de Lorm for the seminary. Now, if he could be more suitable and effective there than with you, we would give you in his place M. Thieulin,\textsuperscript{5} who is a good priest.

We have no news here. I am always, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

\textit{Addressed:} Monsieur Edme

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\textsuperscript{3}Barthelemy d'Elbène, Bishop of Agen (1638-63).

\textsuperscript{4}Claude Admirault, born in Chinon (Indre-et-Loire), entered the Congregation of the Mission on September 20, 1648, at sixteen years of age, took his vows in 1651, was ordained a priest in December 1656, and was placed at the Agen Seminary. He was Superior of the Montauban Seminary (1665-75, 1686-90), and the Agen Seminary (1690-94).

\textsuperscript{5}Rané Thieulin, born in Argenton (Orne) on January 29, 1629, entered the Congregation of the Mission on January 18, 1653, was ordained a priest on December 25, 1654, and took his vows in January 1655. He was Superior at the Collège des Bons-Enfants (1674-76, 1685-89) and acting Assistant General (1677-79). At the General Assembly of 1679 he was named Assistant General, remaining in office until the generalate of Nicolas Pierton (1697). Thieulin died in Paris on November 7, 1706.
Monsieur,

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

I received your two letters of November 20 and 26. I praise God for M. Berthe's arrival and the good results for which you are hoping from his visitation.

I have not yet been able to read the letters from Barbary you sent me because I received your packet just a few hours ago. I will try to answer them as soon as possible.

You were a little too hasty in drawing a bill of exchange on us for 500 livres, after writing us that you were unable to find that letter 2418. These letters are no longer extant. It is evident from innumerable references in the Saint's letters that a great many letters written to him are now missing. Except for what he himself might not have preserved, much of this loss can be attributed to the pillage of Saint-Lazare during the French Revolution.

Thomas Berthe, born in Donchery (Ardenne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on December 26, 1640, at the age of eighteen, and took his vows on December 8, 1645. After ordination in 1646, he was assigned to Sedan. Convinced that he had been sent there as Superior, he felt humiliated to see less important work entrusted to him, and he returned to his family. A short time later he came to his senses, and Saint Vincent, who recognized his virtues and appreciated his talents, joyfully took him back. He subsequently served the Community as Superior in Picardy and Champagne and in other important positions: Superior at the Bons-Enfants Seminary (1649-50) and in Rome (1653-55), Secretary of the Congregation (1660), Assistant to the Superior General (1661-67), Superior in Lyons (1668-71), at Saint-Charles Seminary (1673-82, 1687-89), and Richelieu (1682-85). In October 1659 Saint Vincent decided that among his Missionaries none was more suitable to succeed him as head of the Congregation than René Alméras or Thomas Berthe. He proposed the two names in advance, in writing, to the General Assembly that was to choose his successor. (René Alméras was elected.) There were some clashes between Berthe and Edme Jolly, the third Superior General (1673-97), which clouded his last years. Berthe died in 1697. (Cf. Notices, vol. II, pp. 247-313.)

Throughout this edition the various denominations of French money have been left in French, since no adequate, unchanging value in American dollars can be assigned. In the time
amount, and for having asked that Messieurs Simonnet be given here the money we had that was to be forwarded to you, which is only around 330 livres. For, in line with that, we had already sent you a letter to get 160 livres from M. Napoleon, so now you will be getting 660 livres, which is twice the amount we owe you. God willing, we will still pay the 500 livres to preserve your credit, but remember to credit us with this additional amount.

I approve of the reasons you give me for sending M. Le Vacher of Tunis the first money we will receive for Algiers, since it is only just that he be reimbursed for the sums he sent to Brother Barreau.

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of Saint Vincent, one écu equaled three livres; one thousand livres could support two priests and a Brother for one year on the missions (cf. vol. V, no. 1972, p. 485).

3Bankers in Paris.

4Jean and Louis Napoleon were bankers in Marseilles. As with the Simonnets in Paris, Saint Vincent often used their bank when transferring funds.

5Jean Le Vacher, born in Ecouen (Val-d'Oise) on March 15, 1619, entered the Congregation of the Mission with his brother Philippe on October 5, 1643. He took his vows in 1646 and was ordained a priest in 1647. When Julien Guérin, a Missionary in Tunis, needed help, Saint Vincent decided to send him Jean Le Vacher. On August 23, 1647, as the Founder and his young disciple were leaving Saint-Lazare, they met Nicolò di Bagno, the Nuncio. "Excellency," said the Saint, "you are just in time to give your blessing to this good priest, who is leaving for the Tunis mission." "What! this child!" exclaimed the astonished Nuncio. "Excellency," replied the Saint, "he has the vocation for that."

Le Vacher arrived in Tunis on November 22, 1647. Guérin's death on May 13, 1648, followed two months later by that of the Consul, Martin de Lange, placed on Le Vacher the double burden of Consul and head of the Mission. In 1650 he added Vicar Apostolic to these titles. Since the Holy See would not allow priests to be in charge of the consulate, Saint Vincent sent a layman, Martin Husson, a parliamentary lawyer, who arrived in Tunis in 1653 and left in April 1657, expelled by the Dey. For two years Jean Le Vacher acted as Consul. He returned to France in 1666, and was sent to Algiers in 1668 as Vicar-General of Carthage and Vicar Apostolic of Algiers and Tunis. His life in Algiers was that of an apostle, and his death that of a martyr. On July 16, 1683, Algiers was being bombarded by Duquesne. After the Turks had used every device to make Le Vacher apostatize, they finally tied him to the mouth of a cannon, which shot his body into the sea. (Cf. Raymond Gleizes, Jean Le Vacher, vicaire apostolique et consul de France d’Algérie et d’Alger (1619-83) [Paris: Gabals, 1914].) Frequent mention of the Le Vacher brothers appears in the letters. In this volume, unless stated otherwise, Jean is usually associated with Tunis and Philippe is mentioned in conjunction with Algiers.

6Jean Barreau was born in Saint-Jean-en-Grève parish, Paris, on September 26, 1612. While still a young man, he left the position of parliamentary lawyer to enter the Cistercian Order. He later asked Saint Vincent to receive him into his Community and began his novitiate on May 14, 1645. In 1646 Saint Vincent sent him, while still a seminarian, to Algiers as French Consul, in keeping with the wish of the Holy See not to have a priest in the office of Consul. There his
when he was in need. However, Brother Barreau should give us some assurance that he has received them. I will see if the letter says anything to me about this, and we will act in conformity with it.

God be praised for the payment that same Brother was about to receive of the 1600 piastres M. Gaspard Vancamberg 9 owed him! That amount, together with the 1000 écus his brother sent him and the 600 or so piastres M. Le Vacher of Tunis says he had him withdraw, should have helped to pay off his most pressing debts. With 9000 livres, he should have been able to fill quite a few holes.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
I.S.C.M.

2479. - TO CHARLES OZENNE, Superior, in Warsaw

Paris, December 7, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received your two letters of October 17 and 25, which gave me dedication to the slaves was limitless. The goodness of his heart moved him more than once to commit himself for sums he did not possess or which did not belong to him; for this he was ill-treated by local authorities and reproved by Saint Vincent. When his companion, Jacques Leage, became gravely ill, Barreau took his vows before him, although he had not yet been released from the simple vow of religion he had taken as a Cistercian. This dispensation was not requested until 1652. Finally, on November 1, 1661, he was able to take his vows validly in the Congregation of the Mission. He was in Paris at the time, summoned by René Almèras, second Superior General, and had only Minor Orders. He was ordained a priest in 1662 or 1663 and spent the remainder of his life at Saint-Lazare as Procurator. In 1672 he was associated with the Procurator General, Nicolas Talec. On May 24, 1675, during a serious illness, he made his will, to which he added a codicil on April 7, 1679. (Cf. Arch. Nat. M 213, no. 8.)

9A slave in Algiers from Antwerp.

Letter 2479. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.

1Charles Ozenne, born in Nihes (Somme) on April 15, 1613, was ordained a priest in 1637 and entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 10, 1638. After his Internal Seminary
both joy and fear: joy, in seeing that you, M. Desdames, and M. Duperroy are now together in Warsaw—to their great pleasure and yours—for which I thank God; and fear because of what you say about the countryside being contaminated and the city being in some danger. May God be pleased to deliver it from this scourge and from any new troubles, since it has already been tried by them so many times! I have recommended to the members of our community that they entreat Him earnestly for this grace.

I am consoled that good M. Falibowski continues to show his kindness to you; if God blesses his efforts to see that you have a house in Krakow, we should hope that His Divine Goodness will provide the other things necessary for an establishment.

You say that the war has ruined three houses you had in Warsaw and five in your area. That is a heavy toll, but it was not just that you should be exempted from the public affliction. God, who has allowed this, will have the goodness to restore these losses in due

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(novitiate), he was assigned to Troyes, where he took his vows on August 29, 1642, and became Superior in 1644. Saint Vincent recalled him in 1653 to direct the mission in Poland. "He is a zealous and detached man of God," he wrote to Nicolas Guillot, "with a talent for leadership and for winning hearts within the Company and outside of it." (Cf. vol. IV, no. 1624, p. 573.) Unfortunately, this excellent Missionary's career was brief: he died in Warsaw on August 14, 1658. (Cf. Notices, vol. III, pp. 148-54.)

2Guillaume Desdames, born in Rouen, entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 19, 1643, at twenty-three years of age, took his vows on March 10, 1648, and was ordained a priest on May 31, 1648. He was stationed in Toul shortly afterward, then sent to Poland where he arrived with Lambert aux Couteaux in November 1651. He worked there with praiseworthy dedication amid numerous difficulties, first as a simple conferee and, after the death of Charles Oznene (August 14, 1658), as Superior of the Mission. René Alméras recalled him to France in 1669, but he returned to Poland a few years later and assumed the direction of the house in Chelmno. He returned to France for the General Assembly of 1685. Desdames ended his days as Superior of the foundation in Krakow, June 1, 1692. (Cf. Notices, vol. III, p. 166, and Mémoires de la Congrégation de la Mission [11 vols., Paris, 1863-99], vol. I, pp. 24-33.)

3Nicolas Duperroy, born in Mailleverie (Seine-Maritime) on January 16, 1625, entered the Congregation of the Mission on September 13, 1651, was ordained a priest on April 4, 1654, and took his vows on December 13, 1663. After the capture of Warsaw, he was brutally treated by the Swedes and left for dead, caught the plague twice, and for a long period of time suffered from a painful bone condition. René Alméras appointed him Superior in 1670. His house sent him as delegate to the General Assembly of 1673. Returning to Poland, he continued as Superior until 1674, after which there is no further trace of him.

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time, if He so pleases. Oh! how kind is the Queen who, seeing that
your church had no vestments, has already given it some gifts! Our
Lord, whom she honors everywhere, will not let this good work,
nor any of the others she is constantly doing, go unrewarded.

We will do whatever Her Majesty commands us with regard to
M. Turin, the father of Mademoiselle Cornut. I am going to
commission someone to go to find out the place and situation in
which he is and to try to reassure him regarding his residence and
his religion. I will let you know about this.

I feel deeply indebted to Mademoiselle de Villers for the
generous services that she in her charity renders you on occasion.

M. Sergent came here recently, but I was away, to my great
regret, for I would have been consoled to see him and to hear some
news in detail from him. He brought me some letters that were
written a long time ago; nothing in them requires an answer.

We have no news here. We have more than forty seminarians, most of whom are very promising. A few of the men have been sick but they are better now. We sent the confreres out to open two missions at the same time—not to mention a third, which is being
given in Champagne.

I will send your packet on to Nibas.

4Louise-Marie de Gonzague, Queen of Poland, was the daughter of the Duc de Nevers. Despite her attachment to the Jansenist party, this former Lady of Charity, wife of King Władysław IV, then of his brother, Jan Casimir, held Saint Vincent in the highest esteem. She summoned to Poland the Priests of the Mission, the Daughters of Charity, and the Visitations. She gave them housing, took care that nothing was wanting to them, and never failed to protect them. She died in 1667.

5Lady-in-waiting for the Queen of Poland.

6In the Congregation of the Mission, those in the years of formation went through the Internal Seminary, which corresponded to the novitiate in Religious Orders. All new applicants were received there to be formed to the practice of the virtues of their state and to be trained for the lifestyle and duties of the Missionaries. Saint Vincent readmitted to the seminary Priests of the Congregation who felt the need to withdraw for a month or two from exterior occupations so as to recapture the first fervor of their vocation.

7Birthplace of M. Ozanne. It is situated in the Somme region.
I recommend myself to your prayers and to those of our dear confreres and our good Sisters, to whom I send greetings.

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

VINCENT DE PAUL,
I.S.C.M.

If M. Falibowski makes any progress with what his incomparable charity may procure for you in Krakow, please let me know so we can get a few members of the Company ready. O Monsieur, how fervently I pray that God will sanctify more and more the soul of that good gentleman! 8

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

2480. - TO EDME JOLLY,1 SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 7, 1657

Monsieur,

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

The regular mail from Lyons has arrived but not the mailbag from Rome, so I have not received any letters from you.

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8The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.

Letter 2480. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1Edme Jolly, born in Doué (Seine-et-Marne) on October 24, 1622, was acquainted in his youth with the Marquis de Pontenay-Mareuil, the French Ambassador in Rome, who took him to that city. He even entrusted Jolly with a delicate mission in the service of the King, which the young man handled most successfully. Before being admitted to Saint-Lazare on November 13, 1646, he had a post in the Apostolic Datary, an office of the Roman Curia in charge of examining the fitness of candidates for Papal benefices and of handling the claims of those with rights to pensions. After his seminary he returned to Rome, reviewed philosophy, theology, and
I am waiting for you to send me the letters of appointment for the Gignac benefice, for which you have registered the dates: one for M. Cuissot, as a graduate in Cahors, and the other for M. Grimal.

I have not yet received Cardinal Bagni's reply regarding the clarification I requested concerning the priests H[is] E[minence] had instructed me to send to Ireland and Scotland. Perhaps the plans

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1. This refers to Canon Law, and was ordained a priest on May 1, 1649. In May 1654 he became Director of the Saint-Lazare Seminary, and in 1655 he was appointed Superior of the house in Rome, from where Thomas Berte had just been recalled by order of the King. Jolly rendered immense service to his Congregation because of the concessions he obtained from the Holy See. After the Saint's death he became Assistant to the Superior General and Assistant of the Motherhouse. The General Assembly of 1673 elected him successor to René Alméras as Superior General. His generalate was one of the most fruitful the Company has ever known. Jolly died in Paris on March 26, 1697. His biography, written by a contemporary, was published with some alterations in vol. III of Notices, pp. 387-512.

2. The death of Elie Laissé de la Marguerie, archpriest of Gignac, left vacant this simple benefice of the diocese of Cahors. Gilbert Cuissot was named to succeed him. In his letter of November 9, 1657, to Edme Jolly, Saint Vincent requests that he obtain this provision from Rome for "Gilbert Cuissot, priest of the Autun diocese, designated a graduate of the said diocese of Cahors." (Cf. vol. VI, no. 2452.)

Gilbert Cuissot, born in Moulins (Allier), on November 5, 1607, had been a priest for six years when he entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 14, 1637. After serving as Superior of the Lyon house, he was appointed to the same office in La Rose (1640-44), then at the Collège des Bon-Enfants (1644-46), where he took his vows on November 11, 1644. From there he went to the Le Mans Seminary (1646), then to Saint-Lazare (1646-47). He was Director of the Cahors Seminary (1647-62) and Superior of the Richelieu house (1662-66). He declared that, at the time of the election of Saint Vincent's successor, he was hesitant about voting for René Alméras, who was in poor health. The Saint, however, appeared to him and determined his choice. He also said that in 1662, while exorcising a possessed woman, he drew from the demon an acknowledgment of the Founder's holiness and the reward reserved by God for Missionaries faithful to their vocation. Cuissot died in 1684.

3. François Grimal, born in Paris on March 6, 1605, began his Internal Seminary on June 6, 1640, and took his vows on October 9, 1646. He rendered outstanding service to his Congregation as Superior in Crécy (1645-46), Montmirail (1646-49, 1654-55), and Agen (1650-51), as Second Assistant to Saint Vincent (1652); and in more humble positions in Fontainebleau and elsewhere. The introduction of vows into the Company corresponded to his wishes, and he made every effort to have this measure accepted by those around him. He renewed his vows on October 3, 1665, in the presence of M. Portail.

4. Nicolò di Bagno (Saint Vincent always refers to him as Nicolas Bagni), Archbishop of Athens, Nuncio in France from June 25, 1643 to 1657, was made a Cardinal with the titular church of Saint'Eusebio, and Bishop of Senigallia on April 9, 1657. He died in Rome on August 23, 1663, at the age of seventy-nine. Saint Vincent, with whom he had a close relationship, was very pleased with his benevolence.
have been changed. On this point, I will tell you that God has not
granted me the same favor with the present N[uncio] as I had with
his predecessor, and I think he was a little annoyed that we were
approached about sending those priests. Still, I do not know this
for certain, but you can use this information in whatever way you
deem appropriate.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly, Superior of the Priests of the Mis-
son of Rome, in Rome

2481. - TO JEAN PARRE,1 IN RETHEL1

Paris, December 8, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

I have not had a letter from you since last week. This kept me
from going to the meeting yesterday, but no new orders for
allocating funds were given there.

3Celio Piccolomini, a member of the ancient Sienese family that furnished many Bishops of
Siena and Pienza and several Cardinals and Popes, as well as political and military leaders.
Titular Bishop of Caesarea, and Nuncio in France (1656-63), he became a Cardinal in 1664 and
was Archbishop of Siena from 1671 until his death in 1681.
4First redaction: "that he was not approached." The change is in the Saint's handwriting.

Letter 2481. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
1Born in Châtillon-en-Dunois (Bure-et-Loir), Jean Parre entered the Congregation of the
Mission on April 16, 1638, at twenty-seven years of age, took his vows in 1643, and died after
1660. He and Brother Mathieu Regnard were two of the most intelligent and active instruments
that Divine Providence placed in Saint Vincent's hands. Brother Parre traveled all over Picardy
2Town in the Ardennes that had suffered greatly from the war, especially since 1651. Brother
Jean Parre made several trips there to organize the distribution of the aid sent from Paris. He
also started a Confraternity of Charity there.
3A meeting of the Ladies of Charity of the Hôtel-Dieu. Through Missionaries like Jean Parre,
they were assisting provinces devastated by the Fronde and its aftermath.
I pray to Our Lord that your health may always be good and your work pleasing to God. I am, in Him, dear Brother, your very devoted servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.e.C.M.

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

2482. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

[November or December 1657] ¹

So you have not heard about the losses we have suffered! O Monsieur! how great they are, not only because of the number of


Louis Abelly was born in Paris in 1604. From the earliest years of his priesthood he took part in Saint Vincent's apostolic labors. The Saint spoke so highly of him to François Pouquet, Bishop-elect of Bayonne, that the latter appointed him his Vicar-General. Abelly's stay in Bayonne was not long; he accepted a simple village parish near Paris, and shortly afterward (1644) was given charge of Saint-Joseph parish in the capital, where he formed an ecclesiastical community. He later became Director of the Sisters of the Cross (1650), chaplain of the General Hospital (1657), and Bishop of Rodez (1664). In 1666 he resigned his diocese for reasons of health and retired to Saint-Lazare, where he spent the last twenty-five years of his life in recollection and study. We have about thirty of his books on devotion, history, and theology. Abelly is not merely the sponsor of La vie du Vénérable Serviteur de Dieu Vincent de Paul, as has been asserted, but is truly its author. His task was greatly facilitated by Brother Ducournau, one of the Saint's secretaries, who collected and classified the documents. Abelly made a donation to the Saint-Lazare house of some property in Pantin, which became the country house of the students. He died on October 4, 1691, and, according to his wish, was buried in the church of Saint-Lazare, under the Saintes-Anges chapel. (Cf. Pierre Collet, La vie de St Vincent de Paul [2 vols., Nancy: A. Lesseur, 1748], vol. I, pp. 29ff.)

¹Saint Vincent wrote this letter after learning of the death of Dermot Duggan, i.e., after October 30, 1657, and very probably within two months after receiving this news.

Duggan (Saint Vincent spells his name Duiguan), born in Ireland in 1620, was already a priest when he entered the Congregation of the Mission on August 26, 1645. In November of the following year he was sent back to Ireland, returning to France in 1648. Two years later he left for Scotland, where he spent the rest of his life amid great dangers, animated with the zeal of an apostle and the courage of a martyr. He died on May 17, 1657 on the isle of Uist, where an ancient chapel still bears his name and recalls his memory. (Cf. Notices, vol. III, pp. 114-121.)
men—ten or eleven—whom God has taken from us, but also because of their high caliber, since all of them were priests and among the best workers in the Company! Moreover, all of them died in a very holy, extraordinary way, while serving their neighbor directly. They are Messieurs...; six of them and one of the Brothers died of the pestilence in Genoa, while nursing the plague-stricken. The others gave their earthly lives to procure eternal life for the islanders of Madagascar and the Hebrides. They are so many Missionaries we now have in heaven. There is no room to doubt this, since they all made the supreme sacrifice of their lives for charity, and there is no greater love than to give one’s life for the neighbor, as Jesus Christ Himself said and practiced. May God then be glorified, Monsieur, by the glory He has given our confreres, as we have good reason to believe, and may His good pleasure be always the peace and tranquility of our afflicted hearts!

I cannot tell you how grieved we were at receiving such sad news, all of which reached us almost simultaneously; it would be impossible for me to express it to you. You can judge from the sorrow you yourself will experience on hearing it—you who love the Company so much—that we could not receive a greater blow without being completely crushed by it.

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2 Many confreres died in the spring-summer of 1657; among those in Genoa were Luca Arimondo, Étienne Blatron, Domenico Boccona, Louis Duport, John McNerny, Antoine Trestas, François Vincent, and Brother Giovanni Damiani. At the same time Saint Vincent heard of the deaths of the above, he was also receiving news of the death of Mathurin de Belleville, en route to Madagascar, and of Claude Dufour and Nicolas Prévost, shortly after their arrival there.

3 Cf. Jn 15:13. (NAB)

4 This is evident from the many letters in vol. VI in which these deaths are mentioned.
Monsieur,

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

It is true that I have not written to you for a long time; please accept my apologies for this. Thank you for not failing to give me news of you, which always consoles me. I thank God for the good disposition He gives you and for Madame’s 2 gifts for your chapel.

It is much to be desired that the lawsuit 3 be settled soon so that you will not remain alone and unable to give missions, for which God has brought us together. I am not putting any pressure on the Bishop of Meaux 4 to speed up his proceedings because he did what he had to do in that matter, and I am glad not to get involved in it so that the less we have to do with the outcome, the more we may see the Will of God in it. Meanwhile, it is only right for you to turn to us for small expenses. That is why I ask you to let me know when

Letter 2483. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, unsigned rough draft in the secretary’s handwriting.

1Dominique Lhuillier, born in Barizey-au-Plain (Meurthe), entered the Congregation of the Mission as a priest in Paris on July 11, 1651, at the age of thirty-two. He took his vows there on May 5, 1659, in the presence of M. Alméras. Lhuillier was a Missionary in Crécy (1654-60) and in Toulon, where he died.

2Marie Séguiers, widow of César de Coislin; she later married the Marquis de Laval-Boisdauphin.

3When the house was first established in Crécy (1641), Pierre Lorthon, the King’s secretary, had promised the Congregation of the Mission a revenue of four thousand livres from five large farms he had obtained from the King and Queen. On further reflection, he preferred to give two thousand livres to the hospital in Crécy and to keep the balance for himself. This resulted in a lawsuit between Lorthon and the Bishop of Meaux, Dominique Séguiers, which did not close until 1659 in favor of the Missionaries. Saint Vincent would have preferred to renounce everything rather than bring a benefactor to court. Deprived of the resources on which he was counting, he left only one priest and a Brother in Crécy. The priest said Mass daily in the chapel, heard confessions of those who came to him, and visited the sick of the parish who asked for him.

4Dominique Séguiers (1595-1659), brother of the Chancellor, Pierre Séguiers, was named Bishop of Auxerre in 1631 and transferred to Meaux in 1638. He resigned in 1659 and died in Paris the same year.
you need something; with God’s help, we will provide it. The Montmirail house is not in a position to pay you. It will be a good idea for you to get what is owed you from elsewhere and use it for the little provisions you need the most.

So you have not heard about the losses we have suffered! O Monsieur! how great they are, not only because of the number of men—eleven of them—whom God has taken from us, but also because of their high caliber, since all but one, who was a coadjutor Brother, were priests and among the best workers in the Company! All of them died in a very holy, extraordinary way while serving their neighbor directly.

We had sent Messieurs Dufour, Prévost, and de Belleville to Madagascar, but all three of them went to God, after giving proofs of their zeal and good conduct during the voyage and after their arrival at the site of their mission. They have left there only M. Bourdaise, whom God is blessing in a marvelous way.

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5Claude Dufour, born in Allanche (Cantal) in 1618, entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 4, 1644, shortly after his ordination to the priesthood. He was first sent to Montmirail (1644), then put in charge of the seminary in Saintes (1646-48). He was very virtuous but of a rigid and unobliging kind of virtue. In his eyes the life of a Missionary was too soft; he persuaded himself that the life of a Carthusian was more suited to his love for prayer and mortification. Saint Vincent was of an entirely different opinion, so Dufour, always docile, abandoned his plans. To free him from temptations of this kind, the Saint put him on the list of priests to be sent to Madagascar. While awaiting the day of departure, the Saint assigned him first to Sedan, then to Paris, entrusting him with the Internal Seminary there during the absence of M. Almèras, and finally to La Rose as Superior (1654-55). Sea voyages were long in those days; Dufour left Nantes in 1655 and arrived in Madagascar in August of the following year, but died on August 18, 1656, just a few days after his arrival. (Cf. Notices, vol. III, pp. 14-23.)

6Nicolas Prévost, born in La Roche-Guyon (Val-d’Oise), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 20, 1646, at thirty-four years of age. He was sent to Madagascar in 1655 and died there in September 1656, leaving the reputation of being a very zealous and virtuous Missionary.

7Mathurin de Belleville, born in Brix (Manche), entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 1, 1654, at twenty-seven years of age. He contracted an illness as soon as the ship left the Saint-Martin roadstead, died on January 18, 1656, and was buried at sea off the coast of Sierra Leone (cf. Notices, vol. III, p. 160). On September 7, 1657, Saint Vincent gave a conference to the Congregation of the Mission on his virtues (cf. vol. XL, no. 173).

8Toussaint Bourdaise, born in Blois (Loir-et-Cher) in 1618, entered the Internal Seminary of the Congregation of the Mission in Paris on October 6, 1645, and took his vows there on October
In Genoa God has taken to Himself M. Blatiron the Superior⁹ and Messieurs Duport,¹⁰ Ennery,¹¹ François Vincent,¹² Tratebas,¹³ and Boccone,¹⁴ along with a coadjutor Brother.¹⁵ Of these seven who died of the plague, only one did not risk his life and catch the

7. 1647. He was ordained a priest in 1651, even though his talent and knowledge had been questioned a number of times (cf. vol. XI, no. 177). In 1654 he was sent to Madagascar, where he died on June 25, 1657 (cf. Notices, vol. III, pp. 180-214).

⁹Blatiron was born in Saint-Julien-Chapteuil (Haute-Loire) on January 6, 1614. He entered the Congregation of the Mission on January 6, 1638, was ordained a priest in 1639, and was placed in Alet (1639-41), Saintes (1641), Richeieu, Rome (1644-45), and Genoa (1645-57). He distinguished himself particularly in the latter post where, as Superior of a new house, he had to organize everything. Saint Vincent considered him one of his most competent Missionaries and "a very great servant of God." (Cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. III, p. 70.) Blatiron died in Genoa on July 24, 1657, a victim of his dedication to the plague-stricken. His biography was published in vol. II of Notices, pp. 151-203. In the Lyons manuscript there is a report on his virtues addressed to Saint Vincent.

¹⁰Nicolas Duport, born in Solvons (Aisne) on March 22, 1619, was ordained a priest on June 15, 1647, entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 5, 1648, and took his vows on May 6, 1650. He was assigned to Genoa in 1652, where he died of the plague on July 14, 1657. (Cf. Notices, vol. III, pp. 82-87, for an account of several Missionaries who died of the plague in Genoa that year.) A brief summary of Duport’s virtues is given in Ms. 774 of the municipal library of Lyons (fol. 232-33).

¹¹John McEnery (Saint Vincent refers to him as Jean Ennery), born in December 1616 at Castle Mak Ennery, today Castletown (Ireland), entered the Congregation of the Mission on September 23, 1642, and took his vows on October 11, 1645. According to Saint Vincent, he was "a wise, pious, and exemplary man" (cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. III, p. 48). He taught theology at Saint-Lazare (1652), aided the unfortunate people of Champagne impoverished by the war (1653), and assisted his compatriots who had fled to Troyes (1654). His last assignment was Genoa, where he died of the plague in 1657.

¹²François Vincent, born in 1611 in Gandelu, Maseux diocese (Seine-et-Marne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on April 2, 1649, and died of the plague in Genoa on July 13, 1657.

¹³Antoine Tratebas, born in Allauch (Bouches-du-Rhône), near Marseilles, in October 1632, entered the Congregation of the Mission in Paris on October 7, 1651, took his vows on October 20, 1653, and died of the plague in Genoa in August 1657. His family gave hospitality to Antoine Portail and other Priests of the Mission in 1649 during the plague that was ravaging the city of Marseilles.

¹⁴Domenico Boccone was born in Tirane, Albenga diocese (Italy), on November 12, 1613, and entered the Congregation of the Mission in Genoa on November 9, 1655. He was ordained a priest on December 25, . . . and died of the plague in Genoa on August 3, 1657. According to Notices, vol. I, p. 485, Boccone (Bacone) was ordained a priest on Christmas 1657 and died on August 3, 1657. Notices then states, "Therefore, there is an error either in the date of his ordination or in that of his death." Notices, vol. V (Supplement), gives no information about his ordination.

¹⁵In his Index (vol. XIV) Coste states that this is Brother Jean (Giovanni) Darniani, but gives no biographical data; none can be found in Notices, vols. I or V (Supplement).
disease while nursing the plague-stricken, but he was just as ready and willing as the others to go to serve them, except that he was one of the first to die of it. Only three priests are left in that afflicted house, and one is still in the lazaretto, where he is nursing the sick. He himself was sick but is completely cured, thank God.

So we have ten persons who, according to Scripture, have saved their lives by losing them; and the eleventh is M. Duiguin, who worked in the Hebrides with unusual and almost incredible success. He gave up his earthly life there to procure eternal life for those poor islanders, who all wept for him as for their own father. They are so many Missionaries we now have in heaven; there is no room to doubt this, since they all gave their lives for charity, and there is no greater love than to give one’s life for the neighbor, as Our Lord has said and practiced. If, then, we have lost something on the one hand, we have gained something on the other because God has been pleased to glorify our confreres, as we have good reason to believe, and the ashes of these apostolic men will be the seed of a large number of good Missionaries. At least, these are the prayers I ask you to offer to God.

I cannot tell you how grieved we were at receiving such sad news, all of which reached us almost simultaneously; it would be impossible for me to express it to you. You can judge from the sorrow you yourself will experience on hearing it—you who love the Company so much—that we could not receive a greater blow without being completely crushed by it.

I am, in the love of Him who gives life and takes it away, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

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16Cf. Mt 16:25. (NAB)
17Cf. Jn 15:13. (NAB)
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I have often told the Company, Monsieur, that no ill comes to it except through my fault. The difficulty being encountered in that mission makes this clear enough, and I ask your pardon for that, prostrate in spirit at your feet and those of the men who are with you.

It seems you are right, Monsieur, to wonder whether you should go on working or should leave what you have begun and return home, since you have no proper lodging, are obliged to stay at the inn, your congregation is very small—only about one hundred persons, most of whom are children—and, lastly, five or six hamlets are far away.

On the other hand, however, it seems that you should give yourself to Our Lord to persevere to the end of the mission because:

1) you have been welcomed by the Pastors;
2) the local lord has consented to it;
3) no authorities are opposing you;
4) those poor people—or many among them—are coming to the exercises, especially the young people, whom Our Lord was so glad to see at His sermons and who have such great need of them;
5) perhaps Our Lord intends to save some good soul whose salvation is in jeopardy and is to die soon but, being damned for...
lack of assistance, will make you—and me along with you—responsible for its loss, if we do not do His Will in these circumstances;

(6) this is a test God wants to make of your patience in the midst of the difficulties you present to me. In addition, the evil spirit is using this situation to divert the good He sees you do. He is taking advantage of the feelings of your nature, which is mortified because you have not been welcomed as you usually are in other places, such as Conflans, or because you are not lodged as elsewhere but rather at an inn.

All these reasons and several others, Monsieur, cause me to ask you to continue to the end the work you have begun, despite any reasons to the contrary, such as the refusal of the concierge to lodge you and your being housed at the inn. Remember that the Missionary of Missionaries did not have a stone on which to lay His head, that He was sometimes refused entry to places where He was going to work, and that He and His Apostles were driven out of some provinces. God has not yet found the Mission worthy of such treatment.

As for the remote hamlets, very few country parishes do not have some, and it happens at times that these are more zealous in participating in the exercises of the mission than the others. All you need in each hamlet is one or two persons whom Our Lord has touched, who will become the preachers to the rest of the people. In addition, if it should happen that attendance is poor there, recall that Our Lord preached to a very small number of persons—even to just one—and that perhaps Our Lord has permitted these causes of repugnance in order to preach to you yourself and to protect you from the empty satisfaction we imperceptibly seek in our work.

Now, this being the case, I entreat you in the name of Our Lord,

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3Probably Conflans-Sainte-Honorine, in the district of Versailles (Yvelines).
4Cf. Mt 8:20. (NAB)
5Cf. Mt 8:34. (NAB)
Monsieur, to continue to work, even if there should be only a single soul who might need you. Do so in keeping with the mind of Our Lord that the good shepherd should leave his flock of ninety-nine sheep to go in search of the hundredth that is lost. It rarely happens in these circumstances that a mission which starts out in this way does not succeed in the end, if the Missionaries practice the necessary virtues of patience, humility, prayer, and mortification. This, Monsieur, is what I hope you will do and that you will edify M. Caselet and M. de Fleury. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.a.C.M.

If you need furnishings, you can rent them from the landlady of Châtres—the one across the street from the church. Do not expect any lodging from the priory. I venture to tell you that this wretch that I am has never given better missions than when he was lodged in inns.

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6Cf. Lk 15:4. (NAB)
7Michel Caselet, born in Vautortes (Mayenne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 31, 1649, at twenty-four years of age, took his vows in November 1651, and was ordained a priest in 1653. He was Superior in Toul (1659-60), then in Crécy (1662-70), after having spent some time in Fontainebleau. He later became a diocesan priest and died as Pastor of Crouy-sur-Ourcq (Seine-et-Marne).
8Antoine Fleury, born in Bully (Rhône) in September 1624, entered the Congregation of the Mission as a priest on August 28, 1657, and took his vows in Saintes on January 18, 1660, in the presence of M. Dehorgny.
Monsieur,

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

I am replying to Mademoiselle de Santeuil that Mademoiselle Le Gras ¹ cannot send a third Sister to Sedan because she has none left and that it is better for her to get a woman or girl from there to help the sick Sisters than to subject one from here to a difficult journey at great expense.

Father Annat ² sent here two copies of a book he wrote,³ one for

Letter 2485. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

¹Saint Louise de Marillac, Foundress, with Saint Vincent, of the Daughters of Charity, was born in Paris on August 12, 1591. Her father was Louis de Marillac, brother of the devout Michel de Marillac, Keeper of the Seals (1616-30), and half-brother of another Louis, Marechal de France, renowned for his misfortunes and tragic death. Louise married Antoine Le Gras, secretary of Queen Marie de Médicis, on February 5, 1613, and they had one son, Michel. Antoine Le Gras died on December 21, 1625. The devout widow had implicit confidence in her spiritual director, Vincent de Paul, who employed her in his charitable works, eventually making her his collaborator in the creation and organization of the Confraternities of Charity. The life of Saint Louise, whom the Church beatified on May 9, 1920, was written by Gobillon (1676), the Comtesse de Richemont (1883), Comte de Lambel (n.d.), Monsignor Baumard (1898), and Emmanuel de Broylie (1911). Her letters and other writings were copied and published in part in the work entitled: Louise de Marillac, veuve Le Gras: Sa vie, ses vertus, son esprit (4 vols., Bruges, 1886). Saint Louise was canonized on March 11, 1934, and on February 10, 1960, was named the patroness of all who devote themselves to Christian social work. Therefore, in this English edition of the letters of Saint Vincent, Saint° has been added to her name in titles of letters and in the footnotes. To the above bibliography should be added some of her more recent biographers: Alice, Lady Lovat, Life of the Venerable Louise de Marillac (Mademoiselle Le Gras) (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917); Monsignor Jean Calvet, Louise de Marillac, a Portrait, translated by G. F. Pullen (1959); Joseph I. Dirvin, Louise de Marillac (1970); the compilation by Sister Anne Regnault, D.C., editor: Louise de Marillac, ses écrits (1961), of which the section containing the letters was translated by Sister Helen Marie Law, D.C.: Letters of St. Louise de Marillac (1972); and the revised edition of Sister Regnault's work entitled: Sainte Louise de Marillac. Écrits spirituels ( Tours: Mame, 1983), ed. Sister Elisabeth Charpy, D.C., trans. by Sister Louise Sullivan, D.C., Spiritual Writings (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1991).

²François Annat, born in Estaing (Aveyron) on February 5, 1590, entered the Society of Jesus on February 16, 1607. For thirteen years he taught philosophy and theology in Toulouse and was Rector of the Collège de Montpellier and the Collège de Toulouse. He became Assistant to the Superior General, Provincial of France, and confessor of King Louis XIV (1654-61). To him we owe many works against Jansenism. Annat died in Paris on June 14, 1670.

³Annat wrote several books. In 1657 he published: Défense de la vérité catholique touchant
you and the other for the Pastor in Stenay. I had them forwarded to you on the coach that left here yesterday, I think. Please pick them up and have the one for the Pastor delivered to him.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2486. - TO JEAN MARTIN, 1 SUPERIOR, IN TURIN

Paris, December 14, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I am replying to your latest letters. Your absence from Turin may deprive me of receiving any others for a while. Provided God keeps you in good health and blesses your missions, I will willingly accept this deprivation that is due to such a good reason. This letter, then, is simply to accompany the enclosures. There is one for M. Berthe, who is going to make the visitation of your house. I think I informed you of this so that you may welcome him and

les miracles contre les déguisements et artifices de la réponse faite par MM. de Port-Royal d'un écrit intitulé: "Observations nécessaires sur ce qu'on dit estre arrivé a Port-Royal au sujet de la Sainte-Espine," by the Sieur de Sainte-Foy, Doctor of Theology (Paris: F. Lambert, 1657); and Rabat-joie des Jansénistes ou Observations nécessaires sur ce qu'on dit estre arrivé au Port-Royal au sujet de la Sainte-Espine. In the same year, in collaboration with his conferees Fathers Jacques Nouet, De Lingendes, and Biaisier, he published Réponses aux "Lettres provinciales" publiées par le secrétaire de Port-Royal contre les PP. de la Compagnie de Jésus sur le sujet de la morale desdits Pères (Liège: J.M. Hovius, 1657).

Letter 2486. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1Jean Martin, born in Paris on May 10, 1620, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 9, 1638. He was ordained in Rome on April 25, 1645, and that same year was sent to Genoa to found a new house. Saint Vincent probably had no Missionary more gifted in drawing crowds and converting souls. In 1654 Martin was recalled to France and placed in Sedan as
prepare your family to profit by his visit. He has greatly edified and consoled all the houses through which he has passed. I think he has just left Marseilles to head for your house. I do not know if he will go to Annecy first or will save it for the return trip; I left all that up to him.

We have no news here except for the ordinands. Our men are out giving three missions simultaneously, and I am, in Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.i.C.M.

At the bottom of the page: Monsieur Martin

2487. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 14, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
I am writing to you to observe the custom, and not to reply to

Superior and Pastor, then he was sent to Turin in 1655 for the new establishment founded by the Marchese di Pianezza, Prime Minister of State. There, as in Genoa and Sedan, the zealous Missionary knew how to soften the most hardened hearts. He was given the name "Apostle of Piedmont," and his fellow Missionaries were called "the holy Fathers." In 1665 René Almeiras asked him to head the house in Rome. This was a painful sacrifice for Martin, but he resigned himself to it. Subsequently, he was named Superior in Genoa (1670), Turin (1674), Rome (1677), Perugia (1680), and again in Rome in 1681, where he died on February 17, 1694. His obituary, written by one of his contemporaries, is in the Archives of the Mission in Paris. It was published, with some corrections, in vol. I of Notices, pp. 269-372.

2Saint Vincent often uses the term family to designate the local community of confreres.

Letter 2487. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1It was Saint Vincent's desire to establish a regular pattern of communication between the confreres and Superiors. To one he wrote, "It will be a consolation for me to receive letters from you every month" (cf. Vol. IV, no. 1627, p. 578); Étienne Blatiron and Edme Jolly usually wrote to him every week (cf. Vol. VI, no. 2142, p. 99).
any of your letters, since I received none either this week or last. I am a little worried about this. Maybe the snow or floods have delayed the mail.

As for news, I can tell you that Messieurs Portail,² Alméras,³

²Antoine Portail, born in Beaune (Côte de Beaune) on November 22, 1590, came to Paris to study at the Sorbonne. He met Saint Vincent there around 1612 and became devoted to him. From the time of his ordination (1622) to that of his death (1660), he was the Saint’s auxiliary. Vincent employed him in the service of the galley slaves, received him as the first member of his new Congregation, initiated him into the ministry of the missions and the work of the ordinands, chose him as First Assistant in 1642, and entrusted to him the direction of the Daughters of Charity. In 1646 Portail left Paris to make visitations in the houses of the Congregation. He began in the west of France, then went south, crossed into Italy, and did not return to Saint-Lazare until September 1649. Except for a fairly long absence in 1655, he hardly ever left the Motherhouse again and died on February 14, 1660, after an illness of nine days. (Cf. Notices, vol. I, pp. 1-94.)

³Rene Alméras, nephew of Madame Gouassault, was born in Paris on February 5, 1613, and was baptized the same day in Saint-Gervais Church. By coincidence Saint Louise was married in this church that very day. A Councillor in the Great Council at the age of twenty-four, Alméras left everything—family, position, and hope—despite the opposition of his father (who was to follow him later) to enter the Congregation of the Mission, into which he was received on December 24, 1637. He was ordained a priest at Easter in 1639. Saint Vincent entrusted to him important positions, such as Assistant of the Motherhouse and Seminary Director. He appointed him to his council and often relied on his prudence to deal with lay persons in delicate matters; he also gave him charge of the restorators. So much work ruined Alméras’ health. The Holy Founder, convinced by personal experience that a change of air could improve one’s health, sent him in 1646 to make the visitation of several houses in France and Italy. When he reached Rome, Alméras was notified that he had been appointed Superior of the house, where he remained until 1651. On his return to France he took over the direction of Saint-Charles Seminary. In 1654 he was involved in distributing relief to the poor of Picardy and Champagne. He made visitations of several houses of the Congregation and was again named Assistant of the Motherhouse, in which position he remained until the death of Saint Vincent. He was also Visitor of the Province of Poitou. Alméras was in Richelieu when the Saint, realizing that his own death was near, begged him to return to Paris immediately. Alméras was ill and was brought back on a stretcher but had the consolation of receiving a last blessing from the Saint. Appointed Vicer-General by Saint Vincent, then elected Superior General by the Assembly of 1661, he governed wisely the Congregation of the Mission and the Company of the Daughters of Charity until his death on September 2, 1672.
Brin, and Perraud, who have all been very ill, are convalescing right now, thank God. The rest of the community are well; they are now busy with the ordination retreat. The Bishop of Pamiers is giving one of the talks, and it is being very well received; a young Doctor of the Sorbonne is giving the other. Our seminary is more crowded than ever; there are forty seminarians, most of whom are very promising. God is also blessing the one in Richelieu. M. De-

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4Gerard Brin, born near Cashel (Ireland), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 14, 1639, at the age of twenty-one. He took his vows on November 2, 1642, and was ordained a priest in 1644. Of all the Irishmen whom Saint Vincent received into his Congregation, Brin was perhaps the most accomplished. He was sent from Le Mans in 1646 to the mission in Ireland, which was financed by the Duchesse d'Aiguillon; there, with several other confrères and compatriots, he did boundless good (cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. II, chap. 1, pp. 154-55). Driven back to France by persecution, Brin went as a missionary to Saint Vincent's native region. Some time later he was named Superior in Le Rose (1652-54), and subsequently held the same position in Troyes (1657-58), Meaux (1658-60), and Toul (1660-62). He returned to Ireland in 1662 or 1663, resuming his apostolic work with a zeal that age had not slackened. Neither illness, which brought him twice to the brink of the grave, nor a month in prison could stop this heroic missionary. Brin died in Thurles (Ireland) sometime between October 9, 1683, the date of his will, and February 25, 1684, the date of its admission to probate.

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

6François-Étienne de Cauet, born in Toulouse on May 19, 1610, was endowed in 1627 with Saint-Volusien Abbey in Foix. Attracted by the spirit of Jean-Jacques Olier, he accompanied him on his missions in Auvergne, in the Chartres diocese, and in other places in the kingdom. He supported him in his parish ministry and, together with him and du Ferrier, founded the Vaugirard Seminary. Saint Vincent, who knew the Abbot of Saint-Volusien, thought he would make a good Bishop. Thanks to him, de Cauet was consecrated Bishop of Pamiers on March 5, 1645. In 1638 he had testified against Saint-Cyrans; as Bishop, he continued for a long time to combat Jansenism, forbade in his diocese the reading of books by adherents of the movement, and made every effort to bring back those who had strayed from the truth. However, his association with Nicolas Pavillon, Bishop of Alet, won him over to Jansenism. The Bishop of Pamiers died on August 7, 1680, without having made an act of submission to the Church. (Cf. Jérôme Besoigne, Vie des quatre évêques engagés dans la cause de Port-Royal, d'Alet, d'Angers, de Beaunans et de Pamiers [2 vols., Cologne: n. p., 1756]; Georges Doublet, Un prélé janséniste. F. de Cauet, réformateur des châtières de Foix et de Pamiers [Paris: A. Picard et fils, 1893].) M. Gazier, an authority on Jansenism, had, among the rare manuscripts in his extensive library, one entitled: Histoire abrégée de la vie de M. François de Cauet, évêque de Pamiers, by Father Gabaret.
horgny \(^7\) is still Superior at the Bons-Enfants,\(^8\) where the seminary is filled with diocesan priests. They are short of rooms, not persons. Saint-Charles Seminary \(^9\) is also doing well. Many of our priests are giving missions; they went out in three bands. God has been pleased to bless the visitations of M. Berthe, who is now in Savoy, I think. He will go no further in Italy than Turin this time because we need him here.

M. Le Vacher,\(^10\) who came from Algiers, has not yet gone back there but will do so as soon as we have the money needed to release

\(^7\)Jean Dehorgny, born in Estrées-Saint-Denis (Oise), entered the Congregation of the Mission in August 1627 and was ordained a priest on April 22, 1628. When Saint Vincent made the move to Saint-Lazare in 1632, Dehorgny took over the direction of the Collège des Bons-Enfants, which he retained until 1635, then took up again (1638-43, 1654-59). He was Assistant to the Superior General (1642-44, 1654-67); Superior of the house in Rome (1644-47, 1651-53); and Director of the Daughters of Charity (1660-67). In 1640, 1641, 1643, 1644, 1659, and 1660, he made the visitation of several houses of the Company, reestablishing good order wherever necessary. His sympathy for Jansenist ideas merited for us two beautiful letters from Saint Vincent, who had the joy of seeing him return to sounder beliefs. Dehorgny died on July 7, 1667. We still have twenty-three of his conferences to the Daughters of Charity and several letters.

\(^8\)On March 1, 1624, Jean-François de Gondi, Archbishop of Paris, turned over to Saint Vincent the direction of the Collège des Bons-Enfants so that he might have a place to lodge priests wishing to join him in giving missions in the country. Situated near the Porte Saint-Victor, on the site of the building now standing on the corner of rue des Écoles and rue Cardinal-Lemoine, this collège, over three hundred years old, was one of the oldest of the University of Paris. It was not a teaching center, but simply a hostel in which students were provided with shelter and sleeping quarters.

\(^9\)In 1645 Saint Vincent established, within the enclosure of Saint-Lazare, Saint-Charles Seminary (also known as the Petit Saint-Lazare) for youths completing their studies in the humanities; not all the students, however, aspired to Holy Orders. Before he died, Cardinal Richelieu endowed twelve students; others paid room and board.

\(^10\)Philippe Le Vacher, born in Écouen (Val-d'Oise) on March 23, 1622, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 5, 1643, and took his vows on August 5, 1646. He was part of the first group sent to Ireland in 1646. Recalled to France in 1649, he was sent to Marseilles, where he was ordained a priest on April 2, 1650, and sailed for Algiers as Vicar Apostolic and Vicar-General of Carthage. He returned to France in 1657 to collect alms for the slaves. His absence, which was supposed to last only a few months, was prolonged for two years. He set out again in September 1659, reached Barbary, and in 1661 accompanied Brother Jean Dubourdieu to Algiers, where the latter was destined to replace Jean Barreau, French Consul in that city. Le Vacher paid Barreau's debts, settled a number of business matters, and finally left Barbary in 1662, accompanied by seventy slaves whom he had ransomed. He was sent to Fontainebleau, where he led a most exemplary life until August 5, 1679, the day of his death. (Cf. Notices, vol. III, pp. 595-606.) In this volume, the Le Vacher brother mentioned in connection with Algiers is usually Philippe, unless stated otherwise.
the Consul. His faculties have expired; I think the same is true for his brother in Tunis. Please have them renewed for both of them, Monsieur. I say nothing more to you about the permission for priests to take charge of the consulate because I know you have presented this request to the Sacred Congregation.

I hope to send you with this letter the report on Madagascar that we are getting copied. We thought a ship would be going there this fall, but its departure has been postponed until spring.

I cannot conclude without reminding you again about your packets that are late in coming; I have a special reason for wanting to receive them soon. I hope to get two or three of them the day after tomorrow.

I ask Our Lord to sustain your health and to bless your leadership and your missions. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2488. - TO FIRMEN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, December 14, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I am writing to you to observe the custom, and not to reply to any of your letters because I have not yet received the ones from

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11 Jean Barreau.

Letter 2488. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Sister Haina Collection, original signed letter.
the last regular mail. I am expecting it to bring me the results of the visitation M. Berthe made to your house and the news of his departure for Turin or Annecy.

Since writing the above, I received your letter of December 4. I praise God for all the things you tell me, which require no reply. I thank Him above all for the grace He grants you of abandoning yourself entirely to His guidance.

Since you have not drawn a bill of exchange on us, I will send you one by the next regular mail, God willing, for the 183 livres M. Huguier ¹ advanced to the convicts.

You say that a boat has gone to Algiers and another to Tunis. You do not say whether you sent any money there. I have asked you, and I ask you once again, not to send any unless I tell you to do so, especially the one thousand écus of the Basques.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Get

¹Benjamin-Joseph Huguier, born in Sézanne (Marne) on March 10, 1613, was an attorney at the Châtelet of Paris before his admission into the Congregation of the Mission on September 15, 1647. He served in Tunis (1649-52), returning to France by way of Marseilles in May 1652, took his vows that same year, and was ordained a priest in February 1655. After ordination, he became chaplain of the galleys in Toulon; however, he felt drawn to Barbary, and on September 19, 1662, was sent to Algiers with the title of Vicar Apostolic. While nursing the plague-stricken there, he contracted the illness and died of it himself in April 1663. (Cf. Mémoires C.M., vol. II, pp. 221-30.)
Dear Brother,

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

The letter you wrote me on October . . . has revived my sorrow by the losses you have sustained and has consoled me by the good report you give me of our living and deceased confreres. God be praised, dear Brother, that some have given their lives for charity and the others have given their attention to the relief and consolation of the sick and the good order of the family. I know you have done your part in this, for which I thank His Divine Goodness, who has given you His own good heart for the service of the Company. It is no surprise that it is moved by the death of good M. Blatiron, who loved you and was so dear to you. He is now in heaven with the others, in a position in which we have good reason to hope that he will be a great help to us before God. You see, dear Brother, how they persevered to the end in corresponding with God's plan in the place where His Providence had led them. Let us ask Him to grant us the same grace. We have prayed much to Him for your preservation, and we will still do so.

Continue always to be a consolation and relief to everyone, for the love of Our Lord; by this means you will make yourself very pleasing to Him. Your mother is still a Sister with the Daughters

--- 31 ---

2489. - To Jacques Rivet, in Genoa

Paris, December 14, 1657

Dear Brother,

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

The letter you wrote me on October . . . has revived my sorrow by the losses you have sustained and has consoled me by the good report you give me of our living and deceased confreres. God be praised, dear Brother, that some have given their lives for charity and the others have given their attention to the relief and consolation of the sick and the good order of the family. I know you have done your part in this, for which I thank His Divine Goodness, who has given you His own good heart for the service of the Company. It is no surprise that it is moved by the death of good M. Blatiron, who loved you and was so dear to you. He is now in heaven with the others, in a position in which we have good reason to hope that he will be a great help to us before God. You see, dear Brother, how they persevered to the end in corresponding with God's plan in the place where His Providence had led them. Let us ask Him to grant us the same grace. We have prayed much to Him for your preservation, and we will still do so.

Continue always to be a consolation and relief to everyone, for the love of Our Lord; by this means you will make yourself very pleasing to Him. Your mother is still a Sister with the Daughters

--- 31 ---

2489. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, seventeenth-century copy.

1Jacques Rivet, coadjutor Brother, born in Houdan (Yvelines) on September 11, 1620, entered the Congregation of the Mission on December 16, 1641, and took his vows on April 22, 1646.
of Charity and is working with the elderly of the Nom-de-Jésus. Both she and your brothers are well.

As for me, I am always, in the love of Our Lord, dear Brother, your most affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.e.C.M.

--- 32 ---

2The Nom-de-Jésus [Name of Jesus] hospice. The foundation was made by an anonymous rich merchant of Paris, who one day brought 100,000 livres to Saint Vincent for a good work of the Saint's choice. After discussing his plan with the benefactor, the Saint decided to spend 11,000 livres for the purchase of the house called Nom-de-Jésus, which belonged to Saint-Lazare, and 20,000 livres for enlarging the living space, should it become too small. He also constituted an income of 60,000 livres, to which 20,000 were added from Saint-Lazare, which later retrieved them; he allocated 5400 livres for chapel furnishings, and 3600 livres for room and board for forty poor persons for a year. All this was on condition that the Superior General of the Priests of the Mission, together with the laymen from Paris whom he would employ, would have the spiritual and temporal direction of the hospital, and in this position would have the authority to receive and dismiss the poor. The contract was accepted on October 29, 1653, approved by the Vicar-General on March 15, 1654 (the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal de Retz, was in exile in Rome), and ratified by the Parlement by letters patent in November. (Cf. Arch. Nat., M 53.) The work was already in operation in March 1653. Saint Vincent chose twenty male and twenty female artisans, because of old age or infirmity, could no longer earn their living; to occupy their time, they were provided with looms and tools. Men and women were housed in separate wings; although they came together in the same chapel for Mass, they were not permitted to see or speak to one another. The Daughters of Charity served them; a Priest of the Mission, in conformity with the terms of the contract, acted as chaplain. Saint Vincent often used to come to visit and instruct them. (Cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. I, chap. XLV, pp. 211-13.) The Nom-de-Jésus later became the municipal health center (1802-16); its buildings were on the site now occupied by the offices of the Gare de l'Est.

3Fathers François and Louis Rivet.

François Rivet, born in Houdan (Yvelines) on July 28, 1628, 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.

Louis Rivet was born in Houdan (Yvelines) on February 19, 1618. He entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 13, 1640, took his vows on October 16, 1642, and was ordained a priest on September 19, 1643. In 1646 he was placed in Richelieu, then at the Saintes Seminary which he directed for several years (1648-50, 1656-62, 1665-73).
2490. - TO THE SUPERIOR OF THE SECOND MONASTERY
OF THE VISITATION, IN PARIS

I ask the Reverend Mother Superior of Sainte-Marie in the
faubourg to allow Mademoiselle de Lamoignon 1 to enter her
monastery to see our dear Sister Marie-Élisabeth.2

2490a. - TO JEAN PARRE, IN RETHEL

Paris, December 15, 1657

Dear Brother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

At our meeting yesterday three hundred livres were allotted you
for the needs of the Rethel area. Please get them and draw a bill of
exchange for them on Mademoiselle Viole.1 Your letter of Decem­
ber 6 gives me reason to praise God for the journey you made for

Letter 2490. - Reg. 1, fol. 66.
1 Madeleine de Lamoignon was born in Paris on September 14, 1608, of Chrétien Lamoignon,
a Presiding Judge of the Parlement of Paris, and of Marie des Landes, who initiated her from
childhood in the traditions of the Confraternity of Charity. Mother and daughter were both very
zealous in their dedication to the poor. They often went to visit them in their homes, dressed
their wounds, cleaned their rooms, made their beds, and gave them clothing, linen, food, and
money. She supported and took an active part in all the works the Saint founded. Saint Vincent
used to say that she forged ahead so fast with her charitable works that nobody could keep up
with her. Mademoiselle de Lamoignon died on April 14, 1687, at seventy-nine years of age; her
life has been written by Father d'Orléans (Vie de Mademoiselle de Lamoignon, Bibl. Nat., Ma.
fr. 23895) and by Mademoiselle Louise Mazon (Madeleine de Lamoignon [Lyons, 1846]).
Abbé Guy-Toussaint-Julien Carron gave her a place in Vies des Dames françaises qui ont été
les plus célèbres dans le XVIIe siècle par leur piété et leur dévouement pour les pauvres (2nd.
2 Madeleine de Lamoignon's sister, who died in Paris on August 12, 1658.

Letter 2490a. - Congregation of the Mission, Florence (Italy), original signed letter; photocopy
310, and reprinted in Mission et Charité, 19-20, no. 96, p. 121. This edition uses the latter text.
1 Marguerite Deffita, widow of Jacques Viole, Counselor at the Châtelet in Paris. A very
intelligent and active Lady of Charity greatly appreciated by Saint Vincent, she died in Paris in
1678.
the relief of the poor people and for the strength He gives you to continue your services for them. May His Divine Goodness be pleased to give you His blessings of body and mind.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2491. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, December 21, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I have not yet received your letter from the last regular mail. While awaiting it, I will tell you that a bill of exchange on Messieurs Napollon for two hundred livres is enclosed to reimburse M. Huguier for the advances he made and will make for the poor convicts. I say “will make” because, since all of this sum is not due him, he will have a little left over for the basic items we will ask him to supply them.

Work continues here on the affairs of the Consul of Algiers. The early stages gave us some hope of success, but we do not see much progress; this requires time and patience.

May God preserve and bless you! I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Letter 2491. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Haine Family Collection, Marseilles.

1Jean Barreau.
Monsieur,

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

I did not write to you last Friday so as to begin to put your advice into practice, namely, that we write to one another only every two weeks. On that day I received your letter of December 3. I praise God for the disposition He has given you to do willingly whatever is His good pleasure. This is an effect of the grace He has granted you and not of any virtue there might be in my words, for my sins make me unworthy that His Divine Goodness should bless what I say.

I approve of your admitting to your seminary classes the priests of the town who would like to attend them, provided they have the right intention and the Vicar-General has no reasons to the con-

Letter 2492. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, unsigned rough draft.

1Antoine Durand was a chosen soul. Born in Beaumont-sur-Oise (Val-d'Oise) in April 1629, he entered the Congregation of the Mission on September 15, 1647, took his vows in 1651, and was ordained a priest in September 1654, a few days after his arrival in Poland. He returned to France in 1655, was assigned to Agde, and became Superior there the following year. The Savoy Province sent him as its delegate to the General Assembly in 1661. In 1662 he was put in charge of the house and parish in Fontainebleau, a very important and delicate position because of the dealings the Pastor was obliged to have with the Court. In his interesting memoirs, published by Abbé Octave Estournel (Journal de Antoine Durand, prêtre de la Mission, premier curé de Fontainebleau (1661-67) [Fontainebleau: Libr. cathol., 1900]), he retrace the events in which he was involved during his stay in Fontainebleau. From there Durand went to Agde (1679-81), then to Dijon (1681-83), Sedan (1683-90), Saint-Cyr (1691-92), and the Arras Seminary (1692-95); in all these places he was Superior. Despite his age, he was given the duty of Secretary General, which he performed until 1707. For two years he was also Director of the Daughters of Charity. Besides his memoirs, he wrote three books, still in manuscript form: Vie de la Sœur Julienne Lorez, Fille de la Charité: Livre contenant les marques d'un homme juste (Bibl. Maz., Ms. 1250); and Réflexions sur les masques, le bal et les danses, avec quelques praxies pour les trois jours qui précèdent le carême. Ms. 1679. The exact date of his death is not known. His biography is in Notices, vol. II, pp. 389-424.

2In this place some words are scratched out: "It would be desirable for everyone to have the same love for learning."

3First redaction: "and M. le Breton."
trary. As for me, I see none, but rather many that make me wish that they all had the same desire.

We are awaiting the contract you led us to expect regarding your foundation. We have no news except that there are about eighty ordinands, and the Bishop of Pamiers is giving them the two talks, which are very well received.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.,C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Ozenne

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2494. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 21, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I received no letters from you this week nor in the two weeks previous to it, except for an old one that I should have received five months ago because it is dated July 10. There are still one or two delayed since that time. This one was accompanied by the indulgence you obtained for a Pastor in the Aire diocese, for which I thank you.

Enclosed is the report from M. Bourdaise\(^1\) that I failed to send you by the last regular mail. I do not know what God will do with our Madagascar mission. Someone told me that the Maréchal de la Meilleraye\(^2\) asked the Capuchins for twelve of their priests, and they have promised to give them. There may be some truth in that because I had the honor of writing to inform him that we will have

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\(^1\)Probably Toussaint Bourdaise's letters of February 19, 1657 (cf. vol. VI, nos. 2215 and 2216).

\(^2\)Charles de la Porte, Due de la Meilleraye, born in 1602, owed his rapid advancement as much to the protection of Cardinal Richelieu as to his personal valor. He was appointed Grand Master of Artillery in 1634, Maréchal of France in 1637, Superintendant of Finance in 1648, and Duke and Peer in 1663. It was he who gave Saint Vincent the idea of sending Missionaries to Madagascar. He died in Paris on February 8, 1664.
two or three priests ready for the first ship to go out—which they say will be soon—and to entreat him to let us know the best time to have them go to Nantes, but he did not give me any answer. Then I wrote to a devout person who is close to him, and even had Abbé d'Annemont write to another man to find out his plans and what we should expect, but I still have learned nothing certain. Things will be as God so chooses.3

I just now received two of your letters, dated November 12 and 19. I will notify the Bishop of Le Puy4 and the Provincial of the Mercedarians5 of what you have written me concerning their affairs, and I will even send each of them an extract of it. The Provincial came while I was writing this, and I informed him of what concerns him.

I thank God for the good status of the Saint-Pourçain affair6 and for the fact that the Cardinal Datary7 has pronounced in favor of it. May God make us worthy by His grace of the benevolence with which H[is] E[minence] is pleased to honor us! We will gladly pay

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3The arguments between the Duc de la Meilleraye and the Company of the Indies went back several years. This Company had received from the King the exclusive right to trade with Madagascar and the nearby islands, and this right was renewed in 1652 for a twenty-year period. But the disagreement among the members and a lack of funds paralyzed its operation. In November 1655 the Duke, on his own initiative, sent four ships to Madagascar. There was a lawsuit, soon followed by an agreement. Sébastien Cazet reconstituted the Society along other lines. (Cf. Bibl. Nat., Ms. fr. 10,209.) The rift seemed mended, but they did not reckon with the Duke's haughty character: he was confident of the backing of the Court, and the two Commandants he himself had established in Fort-Dauphin—MM. du Riveux and Chamargou—were devoted to him. In November 1656 he ordered the Saint-Jacques to set sail without waiting for the Company's merchandise. From that day on the rift was complete. (Cf. Arthur Malotet, Étienne de Flacourt ou les origines de la colonisation française à Madagascar (1648-61) (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898), pp. 268ff.).

4Henri Cauchon de Maupe de Tour, a member of the Tuesday Conferences, Bishop of Le Puy (1641-61), and of Évreux from 1661 to August 12, 1680, the day of his death. He was a renowned orator and preached the funeral panegyrics for Saint Jane Frances de Chantal and Saint Vincent. He also wrote biographies of Saints Francis de Sales and Jane Frances, and was one of the two Bishops who approved Abelly's life of Saint Vincent.

5The Order of Mercy, whose members are commonly known as Mercedarians, was founded for the redemption of captives by Saint Peter Nolasco in the thirteenth century.

6Abbé Louis de Chandelier wanted Saint-Pourçain Priory united to Saint-Lazare.

7Giacomo Corradi, a very important member of the Roman Curia and one of the Pope's closest collaborators.
the thousand livres that this union is supposed to cost; it will be well for you to pay them without asking for a reduction, not only for the reason you mention but also to speed up the expedition of the Bull. Have no doubt that there will be difficulties in its execution, but Providence will remove them when God so pleases.

Since the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide was unwilling to give its consent for our priests to be in charge of the consulates in Tunis and Algiers, we must acquiesce in its decision. I would really like to know if this lack of consent carries a prohibition or if, while refusing to allow it openly, it is at least disposed to tolerate it in the case of the Le Vachers, so that they can have a clear conscience about it. Otherwise, they may as well come home and abandon the slaves entirely, since it is impossible to help them, as has been done, without the backing of the consulates. Furthermore, suitable laymen cannot be found to carry out the office with the steadfastness and disinterestedness needed to sustain the work of God, after the harsh treatment the last ones have received there. Nevertheless, we will not resort to this total abandonment until the last possible moment; for it will be a great misfortune if this happens. So, please send us apostolic faculties for those two brothers.

I think your reply to Cardinal Ludovisio⁸ concerning the Bishops' proposal is very good and judicious, and I do not think you could give one that is more in conformity with our Constitution. May God bless you!

You did the right thing if you went to hear Cardinal de Sainte-Croix,⁹ since he wanted this so much and you need to take some fresh air in the country from time to time.

I approve of your receiving the young French gentleman who made his retreat at your house, and as many priests who come to

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⁸Nicolò Albergo-Ludovisio, appointed Cardinal in 1645, was Grand Penitentiary (1649–87); he died in 1687.
⁹Marcello di Santacroce, born on June 7, 1619, was appointed Cardinal on February 9, 1652, at the urging of the King of Poland. He was made Bishop of Tivoli in October of that same year and died in Rome on December 19, 1674.
enter the Company, as long as they have their titles and the requisite qualities, and especially that they have the right intention.

Thank you for the letters of appointment for the Champvant priory that I received for M. Le Boysne.10

I have nothing to say about the reasons you gave Cardinal Bagni for not using your influence to gain entrance to the palace of Saint John Lateran, since it is a place that does not suit you. Still, if God in His Providence, through the Pope’s order, were to lodge you there, I think some good could come of it, both because it would be a means of allowing the Company to be of service in the primatial see of the Church,11 and also because it would be an opportunity to undertake the retreats for the ordinands. This would not prevent the Missionaries in time from having another more convenient house in the city.

I am not surprised at the difficulties you are encountering in the Sépulchre affair,12 for it got off on the wrong foot. M. Le Vazeux 13 took it on without asking our advice and without taking the necessary precautions that had to be observed.

10Léonard Le Boysne, born in La Chapelle-Jenaon (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. Monseigneur Alméras, Superior General, praised him highly in his circular 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.

11First redaction: “of making the Company known.” The correction is in the Saint’s handwriting.

12An unsuccessful effort to unite the Saint-Sépulcre Priory to the Annecy Seminary. Saint Vincent abandoned these efforts.

13Achille Le Vazeux, born in Bonneval (Eure-et-Loir) on June 22, 1620, entered the Congregation of the Mission on August 24, 1639, took his vows on June 7, 1643, and was ordained a priest on April 3, 1649. Shortly after ordination he was sent to Rome, where he remained until 1653. He was Superior of the Annecy Seminary (1653-58), then was recalled to Paris and sent to the Collège des Bons-Enfants. He left there a few days before the Saint’s death and returned to his family. To certain good qualities Le Vazeux added such noticeable failings (including doubts regarding the validity of the vows) that Saint Vincent regarded his withdrawal from the Congregation as a blessing from God. Hasty and obstinate in his decisions, he found it hard to take advice from Superiors and to submit his will to theirs. Saint Vincent had frequent occasion to reproach him.
Please seek counsel to find out if there is any danger in priests getting involved with dispensing remedies to the poor for certain diseases they have. I, for my part, see none, and I think that if others find none in it you will do well to allow M. d'Eu to exercise his charity in such circumstances, provided these bodily remedies do not keep him from his spiritual duties and do not cost him too much trouble and expense.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.I.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

2495. - TO HIPPOLYTE FÉRET,¹
PASTOR OF SAINT-NICOLAS-DU-CHARDONNET

Saint-Lazare, December 22, 1657

After having an extract made of the letters from the Bishop of Boulogne² concerning the misfortunes of his diocese, I took it to

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¹Louis d'Eu, born on April 8, 1624, in Fresnay-sur-Sarthe (Sarthe), entered the Congregation of the Mission on May 20, 1651, left it, and reentered on March 6, 1655, taking his vows in Rome on March 7, 1657. After Saint Vincent's death, he again left the Congregation, for some important business, by order of the Archbishop of Paris, but returned as soon as he was able after the Archbishop died. The Bibliothèque Nationale has acquired one of his manuscript works, L'homme accompli (fr. 9625).

²Hippolyte Féret, born in Pontoise (Val-d'Oise), was a Doctor of Theology and later became Pastor of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnnet, Vicar-General of Alet, and then of Paris. Saint Vincent thought so highly of Féret that he proposed him as Coadjutor Bishop of Babylon.

Francois Perrochet, a cousin of Jean-Jacques Olier, was born in Paris on October 18, 1602. Animated by the spirit of Saint Vincent, he was one of the devout, zealous priests who worked under the Saint’s direction and gave missions in several places, especially in Auvergne, Joigny, and the faubourg Saint-Germain. He was a member of the Tuesday Conferences and was present at the meetings at which retreats for ordinands were organized. As Bishop-elect of Boulogne, he was invited to give conferences to the ordinands at the Bons-Enfants and was so successful that the Queen wanted to hear him. Moved by his words, she gave the Saint a generous donation.
the meeting of the Ladies of Charity. They decided to donate three hundred livres to be used for clothing, and I was given the responsibility of notifying that good Bishop that, if he would take the trouble to get this amount from some merchant in his town and draw a bill of exchange on Mademoiselle Viole, it would be paid promptly. I most humbly ask the Pastor of Saint-Nicolas to inform him of this, since these alms are the result of his recommendation. There is no need to tell him that they are to clothe the most destitute of the poor; his paternal charity for them is too compassionate to use them for anything else.

The Ladies have not yet earmarked anything for the two religious houses because their funds are completely exhausted. We shall see whether a little relief can be sent to them in a while.

2496. - TO LOUIS DUPONT, SUPERIOR, IN TRÉGUIER

Paris, December 26, 1657

Monsieur,

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

I received your latest letter, but I could not read the date on it. There is reason to be consoled by the return of the person you mention. Since I was very surprised by his fall, I will also be

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to help defray the retreat expenses. Perrocher was consecrated in the church of Saint-Lazare on June 11, 1645. His episcopate was one of the most fruitful and glorious known to the Boulogne diocese. In 1675, worn out by age and infirmity, and unable to govern his diocese properly, the Bishop resigned; he died on April 8, 1682. (Cf. Van Drival, Histoire des évêques de Boulogne [Boulogne-sur-Mer: Berger frères, 1852].)

Letter 2496. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter. The rough draft is also in the Turin Archives.

1Louis Dupont, born in Nemours (Seine-et-Marne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 23, 1641, at twenty-two years of age, and took his vows in November 1644. He was Superior in Toul (1652-53), Tréguier (1654-61), Annecy (1662-63), and at Saint-Charles (1664-71).
overjoyed if he recognizes his faults. You must not, then, be too
hard on him but welcome him and treat him cordially so as to give
him the confidence to come to see you and consult you. Show him
that you are happy to be of service to him, as if it were your idea,
without telling him that I wrote to you about this—unless you think
it is advisable. You can even advise him to come here to distance
himself from the causes.  

I approved the settlement of accounts for the Canon Theolo-
gian, but it is still with the notary. I will send it to you by the first
regular mail or will put it in the Bishop’s hands to be forwarded
to him, since it was given to him.

I greet your heart and your family tenderly and affectionately,
asking O[ur] L[ord] to bless them so abundantly that the seminary
will also share in the blessing, and all those priests in whom you
are trying to instill and nurture the ecclesiastical spirit will ulti-
mately be filled with it. I do not recommend them to you; you know
that they are the treasure of the Church.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Dupont, Superior of the Priests of the
Mission, in Tréguier

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2First redaction: “to come here, and once he is here, we shall see.”

3Maitre Michel Thépault, sieur de Rumelin, Licentiate in Civil and Canon Law, Rector of
Pleumeur-Bodou and of Plougasnou, then Canon of the Tréguier Cathedral, and Penitentiary of
the diocese. Thépault was a great benefactor of the Missionaries and founded the Tréguier
Seminary. He died on August 30, 1677. (Cf. Discourse of Canon Daniel in Annales C. M., vol.
LXIII [1908], pp. 191-201.)

4Balthazar Grangier de Liverdi.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letter, which consoled me more than I can tell you. Thank you for the advice you give me; I will make good use of it, God willing.

I am very concerned about M. Le Boysne's illness; I ask O[ur] L[ord] to preserve him for the Company and to restore him soon to perfect health, since he uses it so effectively. I am not recommending him to you, in the absence of M. Serre, because I am well aware that your charity is careful to see that he lacks nothing that may help to console and cure him. I ask only that you continue to do so and to embrace him for me.

I praise God, Monsieur, that you have about twenty seminarians and are working to help them make progress. I cannot prevent myself from entreating you, in the name of O[ur] L[ord], who wants all of them to be good and perfect priests, to do your utmost to make them such, sparing neither prayers, reprimands, spiritual exercises, nor good example for this. [You] see, Monsieur, they are the treasure of the Church, which [God] has entrusted [to you], and the
field where you must know how to bring to fruition the graces He has given you. This is the prayer I make to God.

When M. Serre returns, tell him I received the book he sent me for M. Dolivet, who will have it forwarded. However, I am waiting for a favorable opportunity because postage is too expensive; it costs thirty-two sous from here to Rennes.

I send greetings to the dear Saint-Méen family. We have no news. I am, in Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Laisné, Priest of the Mission, in Saint-Méen

2498. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 28, 1657

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

Thank you for the privileged altar for Saint-Sauveur of Melun and the faculties for those priests in the Hebrides, which I received with your letter of November 26. Since then, you have heard that God has been pleased to take M. Duiguin to Himself. I think I informed you of that.

3The original, damaged by mites, is missing a few words; these have been supplied here between brackets.

4Julien Dolivet, born in Cardro (Ille-et-Vilaine), was ordained a priest on March 30, 1652, entered the Congregation of the Mission in Richelieu on January 2, 1653, and took his vows in Agde in March 1656 in the presence of M. Berthe. He was Superior in Sedan (1668-73) and in Narbonne (1673-82).

Letter 2498. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1An altar to which apostolic authority attaches the privilege whereby a plenary indulgence may be applied to the soul of a deceased person for whom Mass is celebrated on that altar.
So then, do not request an extra tempora for Brother Plunket, since the reasons you give me are important enough to leave matters as they stand. He is in Tréguier right now; I think he must have received the subdiaconate at the last ordination there and will be able to receive the other Holy Orders between now and Easter. As for Brother Deslions and the others from the same area, for whom I will ask you later to send us the extra tempora and who will not fulfill one of the requisite conditions for receiving them—either that of being subdeacons, nobles, professors in theology, or thirty years of age—please make an effort to get them, explaining the Company's need for priests. If that does not suffice, add to it ob solatium parentum senio confectorum or any other reasons you deem proper, and do not worry about the cost.

We will pay your bill of exchange of 32 livres 15 sous for the money you gave Jean Félix and will forward to his mother in Villenauxe the letter he is writing to her.

I asked you to find out if our priests can in conscience take charge of the consulates in Tunis and Algiers, given the fact that the Sacred Congregation, which refuses to grant this permission, nevertheless does not forbid them to do so, although it knows that they are already carrying out the duties.

You were right to remark that, in Cardinal Bagni's proposal to you of an establishment in his diocese, he did not let you know his

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2Luke Plunket, born on October 18, 1630, in Girly, Meath diocese (Ireland), entered the Congregation of the Mission in Richelieu on September 24, 1653, and took his vows there in the presence of M. de Besumont. In 1659 he was in Saint-Meen.

3Jacques Deslions, born in Arna (Artois), entered the Congregation of the Mission in Paris on December 28, 1654, at the age of twenty-three, and took his vows there in 1656 in the presence of M. Berthe. On December 28, 1657 (cf. vol. VII, no. 2498), Saint Vincent asked Edme Jolly to apply for a dispensation extra tempora for Deslions, and he was ordained in 1658.

4For the consolation of his parents in their old age.

5A servant in the Rome house.


7Saint Gallia, to which he was appointed on April 9, 1657.
thinking regarding his foundation. He did me the honor of writing me a letter in which he offers to give a house for this purpose, but he says nothing about living expenses. Perhaps H[is] E[minence] assumes that the Rome house will support the Missionaries in his diocese or that we will find the means of funding them from here in the way that the Rome house itself is funded. But do not expect either one or the other. This is a long, drawn out affair, and it will be well for you to act accordingly, without, however, letting that good nobleman know that you have this plan.

As for what you tell me about several good proposals already made that have gone up in smoke, let me tell you, Monsieur, that the persons who made them may have had good intentions; however, no matter how holy new works may be, they amount to nothing if they do not have a promoter who follows them up. Since those in question did not, they have remained at a standstill. Thanks be to God, Monsieur, we have seen the affairs of which you were the prime mover succeed through the attention and good leadership you brought to them. We have, then, reason to believe that whatever was proposed would have had the same success if you had been the instigator of them—but there are some matters in which we must take only a passive role.

How do we know, Monsieur, whether God is not at work in the Saint John Lateran proposal? If you were to reside there, you would be citizens of Rome and in a position to render new services to God. Furthermore, that would not prevent you from having another house in the city for the summer. Since people are after you for that, you should not be too quick to reject the proposal but should listen to the overtures being made and seek counsel.

If you find any good priests there who are willing to work in the missions, and you have solid references for them, it will be well for you to accept them, without waiting for my reply. That is how the Company acted in the beginning, bringing in outside priests to work with it because it could not do everything. Furthermore, by this means those priests are formed in the service of souls.
I praise God that the Saint-Pourçain petition has been signed. We will try to pay the bill of exchange you have to draw on us for it.

The books requested by Cardinal Brancaccio—for which we received the note only twelve to fifteen days ago, although you addressed it to us more than five months ago—will cost seven or eight hundred livres, according to the estimate of M. Soly, the bookseller, whom we brought to this house expressly for the purpose of pricing them. This does not include the ones you request for Father Hilarion. I do not know, Monsieur, if these are to be given as gifts to both of them, or whether they intend to pay for them. I will await your answer before doing anything about this.

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.o.C.M.

It was only ten or twelve days ago that I received your letter of July 6, mentioning the books for Cardinal Brancaccio and Father Hilarion.

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

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8The Bull uniting Saint-Pourçain Priory to the Congregation of the Mission bears the date of December 13.
9Francesco Maria Brancaccio, Bishop of Viterbo, Porto, and Capaccio, was created Cardinal in 1634, and died on January 9, 1675. He is also the author of a collection of Latin essays.
10Abbot Hilarion, born Bartolomeo Rangini in Milan on September 2, 1594, was the son of Baltasar Rangini and Margherita di Bagno. He entered the Cistercians in Milan on March 10, 1608, and taught in Salamanca (1614-18), then in Milan. In May 1619 he was sent to the Convent of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome. Among the offices he held in the Curia was that of Consulor for Propaganda Fide, in which he provided many services for religious Orders and Founders. Saint Vincent considered him a friend and protector (cf. Annales C. M. (1951), p. 374).
11This sentence is in the Saint’s handwriting.
Monsieur,

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

I received your two letters, dated December 11 and 18. I will gladly use my influence with the Duc de Richelieu for the choice of the new Administrators and will do whatever I can so that you will have the answer you desire as soon as possible.

We sent you a bill of exchange for two hundred livres for the money M. Huguier advanced to the convicts. I am sure you have received it by now.

You tell me that, if M. Le Vacher\(^1\) hurries, he will still be able to get on the boat that is supposed to be going to Algiers. If it were question only of him, he would be ready to leave, but money is needed, and we do not have any. He is very worried about this, and so are we. We are doing our utmost to find some but are not making much progress. A collection is being taken up to supply for what we lack. All this requires patience.

M. Delaforcade\(^2\) wrote to us by the last regular mail but made no mention of the chest you sent him; perhaps he had not yet received it.

M. Berthe has arrived in Turin; I received a letter from him.

I praise God for the opportunity He gave you to render service to Him with the ordinands and for the care you took to prepare them for the Orders they received. God grant that they have profited from your instructions and example and that this beginning will help them to continue to grow!

I am deeply indebted to the Bishop of Marseilles\(^3\) for the

Letter 2499. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
\(^1\)Philippe Le Vacher.
\(^2\)A merchant in Lyons.
\(^3\)Etienne du Puget, Bishop of Marseilles (1644-68).
remembrance with which he honors me and for the favor he granted me through you. I thank him most humbly for this, and I ask you, Monsieur, to renew to him the offer of my obedience whenever you have the occasion to do so. Be assured of the affection of my poor heart and paltry prayers for you in particular, for Our Lord does not want me to be to no purpose, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

We received a gold louis for Marbais, known as La Source, a convict on the Mazarine; please ask M. Huguier to give it to him.

I will reply to M. de la Fosse, whom I embrace tenderly for now because I am very busy.  

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

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4Jacques de la Fosse, born in Paris on November 25, 1621, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 8, 1640, took his vows on April 7, 1643, and was ordained a priest in September 1648. Immediately after his ordination, Saint Vincent entrusted him to the humanities at Saint-Charles Seminary. He “often reenacted there Christian tragedies,” wrote Collet (op. cit., vol. I, p. 326), “whose spirit and sublimity drew the applause of connoisseurs in Paris.” In 1656 he went to Marseilles, where he served in turn as Missionary and seminary professor. Two years later he was sent to Troyes. He died in Sedan on April 30, 1674. De la Fosse was as generous as he was capricious, becoming easily enthused and just as easily discouraged. Several times he almost left the Company; only Saint Vincent’s paternal encouragement kept him from doing so. His writings, all in Latin, made a name for him among the Latinists of the seventeenth century. Collet says he was “an orator, philosopher, and theologian all in one, and such a great poet that Saintuill considered him his rival and sometimes his master” (ibid., vol. I, p. 277). Dom Calmet added: “In general, there is great passion and many noble, generous thoughts in de la Fosse’s poetry, but his penchant for mythology, even in his sacred verses, sometimes renders them obscure because of his unusual expressions and frequent allusions to fable.” (Cf. Augustin Calmet, Bibliothèque lorraine [Nancy: A. Lareure, 1751], p. 376.) His works are found in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Ms. L. 10.331, 11.365), in the Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal (Ms. 1137, 1138), and in the Bibliothèque Mazarine (Ms. 3910-19, 4312, imp. 10. 877). See also [Edouard Rocquet, C.M.] Notices bibliographiques sur les écrivains de la Congrégation de la Mission (Angoulême: J.-B. Baillarger, 1878).

5This sentence is in the Saint’s handwriting.
Monsieur,

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

Madame de Herse, the President's wife,¹ is very worried about the second bundle she sent you for the Carmelite nuns of Neufchâteau and about getting no reply from you to the letters she wrote you on this matter. Neither has she had any news from them to let her know whether they received this alms. She expressed to me her deep distress about this and has distressed me at the same time, since I see how she is suffering through our fault.

Please write to her as soon as possible, Monsieur, to assure her that you have received and delivered those clothes—if that is the case, which I do not doubt. Act very respectfully with her, and please apologize to her for having taken so long. I attribute this delay to the mission you gave, which prevented you from returning or from sending that bundle to those nuns. If that is true, tell her so; for, if she knows that you were absent for such a good reason, she will be satisfied, provided you did on your return what she asked you to do.

Be very careful, Monsieur, not to mention the transportation expenses for either the first or the second parcel; I promised her that you would pay them. Do not take anything from those poor

¹Madame de Herse, née Charlotte de Ligny, was the daughter of Jean de Ligny, Seigneur de Ranticy, Master of Requests. She was also the widow of Michel Vialart, Seigneur de la Forest de Herse, Counselor to the King in his Parlement Court, President of Requests of the palace, then Ambassador to Switzerland, who died in Solothurn (Switzerland) on October 26, 1634. Madame de Herse was the mother of Félix Vialart, Bishop of Châlons, as well as a relative of Jean-Jacques Olier; Francis de Sales, a good friend of hers, was her son's godfather. A Lady of Charity, she was one of Saint Vincent's chief auxiliaries and a great benefactress of the poor of Paris, Picardy, and Champagne. Works for the ordinands and for abandoned children received her support, and she established the Daughters of Charity in Chartre (Val-d'Oise). During the wars that ravaged the capital, the Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, entrusted to her and some other Ladies the distribution of her personal alms. Madame de Herse died in 1662.
Sisters either, even if they try to give you something; for if that Lady heard about it, she would be greatly disdified, knowing their poverty and our obligation to inconvenience ourselves for the relief of the poor. She is one of our Company's greatest benefactresses; for this reason, we must obey her and try to please her, but graciously. That is why, Monsieur, I ask you once again to write her a letter letting her know that you have this desire. Enclosed is one she has had written to you again and another for the coach mistress, asking her to explain about the bundle, if she has not delivered it to you.

We have not finished with the business of the letters of union but are still working on it and are hoping to get them. Has God blessed your work in this latest mission? How are you? I ask His Divine Goodness to preserve and sanctify you, along with the little family, to whom I send greetings. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.e.C.M.

2501. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

Our Congregation does not allow those who have given themselves to God among us to go back home. This is because of our experience that a visit to relatives may lessen their first fervor and because Our Lord, who knew the harmful effects of too much contact with relatives on those who profess to follow Him, was unwilling to allow one of His disciples even to go to bury his father, or another to return home to dispose of his property. After

2The woman in charge of the coach station.


1Cf. Mt 8:21-22. (NAB)
examples such as these, you cannot fail to ask your family to excuse you for not going to see them, and I can give you no better piece of advice than what Our Lord Himself gave you, namely, to leave father, mother, brothers, sisters, and possessions, if you want to follow Him and be numbered among His disciples.²

If you are worried about a division in your family, try to remedy it by letter, asking some upright person there to mediate the reconciliation. If there is question of some temporal good which involves you, send your power of attorney to a relative or friend to do in your absence what you would do if you were there.

If you yourself were to handle the affairs of your relatives, there would be reason to fear that, instead of settling matters as you would wish, they might drag you into their disputes and embroil you in their affairs. This happens only too often to priests who try to interfere in them. If you say that it is only to have them profit spiritually by this, remember that frequent association with those who are close to you diminishes the spirit and often destroys it altogether. That is why a person is rarely a prophet in his own country.³ Our Lord returned only once to His town of Nazareth after He had begun His preaching ministry, and that very time the inhabitants tried to hurl Him off a cliff.⁴ Perhaps He allowed this to teach evangelical workers that by returning home they are in danger of falling from the high esteem to which their works have raised them and of plunging into some deadly abyss.

³Cf. Lk 14:26. (NAB)
⁴Cf. Mk 6:4. (NAB)
Monsieur,

I ask O[ur] L[ord] that this new year may bring you a thousand blessings to serve you as steps to attain a blessed eternity.

Enclosed is the Duc de Richelieu's letter with his choice of two new Administrators.

I have not yet received your letter from the last regular mail. In the meantime, please credit M. Huguier with twenty-one livres, which I ask him to give to Denis Dubois, a convict on the Captaine; we have received them here from his father.

The elder M. Alméras is seriously ill; everyone else in this house is in very good health.

Since writing the above, that good Brother has gone to God; he was around eighty-three years of age. We have reason to believe he is now in heaven, after the acts of virtue we saw him practice since he entered the Company, which edified the whole house. Nevertheless, since God's judgments are unknown to us, I recom-

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2.502. TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, January 4, 1658

Letter 2502. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter. The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.

1René Alméras the elder was born in Paris on November 12, 1575. After the death of his first wife, Marguerite Fayet, he married Marie Leclerc, the future mother of his six children. He was Secretary to the King, became Treasurer of France in Paris on January 19, 1608, Secretary to Marie de Médicis, Comptroller (1622-56), Postmaster General (1629-32), and Secretary for the execution of the orders of Marie de Médicis, filling all these positions in a worthy manner. After he had given his son to the Congregation of the Mission, he himself entered it on March 2, 1657, at the age of eighty-one, and died at Saint-Lazare on January 4, 1658. (Cf. Notices, vol. II, pp. 453-61.)

2Cf. Rom 11:33. (NAB)
mend his soul—and mine as well—to your prayers. I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

Since writing the above letter, I received yours, which mentions only the effort to find some boats for Algiers.

We are working on taking up a collection for M. Le Vacher. The end of that is still a long way off. We will lose no time in doing it.

I ask M. de la Fosse to excuse me for being unable to write to him this time; we are busy with the funeral of our dear Brother Alméras.

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2503. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

January 4, 1658

I am consoled that you have finally received the Rector of the Salviati College and the young postulant from Alençon for a trial period. So there you have the beginning of a seminary. May God be pleased to water these new plants and raise on this foundation the edifice of this good work so that gradually it will be able to supply a large number of good workers for the Church of God, especially for all of Italy! These are simply wishes, which I willingly submit to God's guidance.

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2Philippe Le Vacher spent about two years in France (1657-59) collecting money for the Algiers mission.

The virtues I saw him practice make me believe that he has
gone to God, and I do not think that the saints can die with greater
confidence and resignation.

2505. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, January 11, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I told you in my last letter that the elder M. Alméras became ill
on New Year's Day and died on the fourth and that the virtues he
practiced in this house prepared him for a happy death after such a
long life.

Since that time, God has chosen to call to Himself one of our
good Brothers, named François Hémet, who died the following
day, the fifth of this month, at the age of forty-five or fifty. His
death corresponded to his life, for he manifested in both that he was

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Letter 2504. - Collet, op. cit., vol. II, p. 29. According to Collet, these same words are in another
letter, dated January 12, 1658, which we no longer have.

1René Alméras the elder.

Letter 2505. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Hains Family
Collection, Marseilles.

On October 28, 1989, Xavier Charmoy, an appraiser and seller of rare books and autographs,
sold at public auction in Nîmes, France, thirty-four letters written by Saint Vincent: thirty-two
to Firmin Get, one to Philippe Le Vacher (December 6, 1658), and one to Dominique Lhuillier
(November 13, 1658). These were all part of what was called the Hains Family Collection. Two
letters remained in France; the rest went to foreign buyers. The Archives of the Mission, Paris,
has copies of all these letters.

1François Hémet, born in Camprey, in the Beauvais diocese (Oise), entered the Congrega-
tion of the Mission as a postulant Brother on January 27, 1650.
ready for anything and filled with such fine sentiments that none better can be expected from a devout man. The last two times I saw him I was permeated with the fragrance of the fulness of his faith, his confidence in God, and his resignation to God's good pleasure.

We received word that the chest M. Le Vacher is expecting from you has left Lyons and that he may have it in two or three days.

I have not yet received any of your letters from this regular mail, so I have nothing more to say to you except to ask O[ur] L[ord] to draw His glory more and more from your leadership and your family.

One of your good brothers has come to Paris on business, and we are expecting him today to make a few days of retreat here in this house. I think Brother Get prepared him for this.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

2506. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION

[January 11, 1658] 1

The Saint mentions a rumor concerning the Maréchal de la Meilleraye, whose displeasure he had incurred. 2 The Maréchal had asked the Capuchins for missionaries, and they had promised him twenty-four of them,

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2Philippe Le Vacher.
2Firmin Get's brother, Nicolas, was born in Chépy (Somme) in May 1635, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 5, 1655, and took his vows on October 6, 1657, in the presence of M. Berthe. He left for Poland in September 1660, before his ordination to the priesthood.

1The date Collet seems to favor. Moreover, this letter seems to fit near no. 2509.
2See the Saint's letter to the Duc de la Meilleraye, no. 2509. More detailed information is given in no. 2494.
who were supposed to sail on the first ship going to Saint-Laurent Island. The Saint says that “if the Maréchal makes an arrangement with those good religious,” he is ready to recall M. Bourdaire from Madagascar. “Our maxim,” he states, “is always to give place to others, confident that they will do better than we.”

2507. - TO JEAN MARTIN, SUPERIOR, IN TURIN

Paris, January 11, 1658

Monsieur,

I ask O[ur] L[ord] that this new year may be a happy one for you for eternity and be followed by many other similar ones that will lead you to God, our last end.

Good M. Almeras the elder has reached his at the end of the eighty-three years he lived on this earth. He became ill on New Year’s Day, and on the fourth he went to God. We have reason to believe this, after the acts of virtue we saw him practice since his entrance into the Company, which edified the whole house and prepared him for a happy death after such a long life. Nevertheless, since God’s judgments are unknown to us, it will be well for us to pray for his soul and for that of our good Brother François Hénet, who died the following day, the fifth of this month, at the age of forty-five or fifty. His death corresponded to his life, for he manifested in both that he was ready for anything and was filled with such fine sentiments that none better can be expected from a devout person. The last two times I saw him, I was permeated with the fragrance of the fullness of his faith, his confidence in God, and his resignation to His good pleasure.

I received two letters from you, dated December 10 and 29. I praise God that you were pleased with the visitation and are hoping

Letter 2507. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
for good results from it, also for the fact that the last three priests
we sent you are already in a position to help you with your missions.
This is a great consolation to me. After the Bra mission, the Genoa
house will need two of those priests; you know that we sent them
to you with the intention that they go to help there, once they
become a little accustomed to the climate of the country.

I have nothing to say to you about M. de Musy’s departure.

We will gladly keep on praying for your continued good health
and the success of your work.

You must leave to God the time and manner of your foundation
and, in the meantime, endure patiently the inconveniences of
housing and other needs.

I have not been too well but am better now, thank God.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2508. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

January 11, 1658

I am consoled to hear that a person who has made a vow to
become a religious fulfills his promise by entering our Company,
even though it is not a religious Order. Nevertheless, we will be
careful not to accept such persons anymore, unless they are well-
balanced and persevering.

1M. de Musy was a very gifted priest on whom Saint Vincent had placed great hopes. He was
sent to Turin in 1656; there he allowed boredom to get the better of him and left the Company
the following year. His name does not appear in the personnel catalogue.

My Lord,

I had the honor of informing you in two letters that the former Company of the Indies had met once and was to meet a second time to settle the proposed union, thanks to Messieurs de Lamoignon and Cazet. Now, My Lord, I will tell you that, because I had a fall and a head injury, I have not been able to continue my efforts, but M. de Lamoignon, who has taken responsibility for writing you what those gentlemen have decided, notified me this morning that he would do so today.

I received a letter from M. Couplier, who informs me that he has been negotiating with you, My Lord, about going to make a settlement on one of the Mascarene Islands, and he wants me to send him a priest and a Brother to go there with his men. My reply to him is that I will gladly do so if you, My Lord, agree to our sending at the same time one or two other priests for Madagascar. The manner in which we were called there to work for the salvation of those poor people, which was not by our own choice but at the wish of His Holiness; the loss we have sustained there of six good priests, together with expenses amounting to eight thousand livres...

Letter 2509. - Reg. 1, fol. 35.

1 Both Guillaume de Lamoignon and Sébastien Cazet were members of the Company of the Indies. No further information is available on Cazet.

Lamoignon, Marquis de Béville and Counselor in the Parliament of Paris, was a devout man of outstanding character. In 1644 he became Master of Requests and in 1658 Chief Judge of the Parliament of Paris. When announcing his appointment as Chief Judge, Louis XIV said of him: "Had I known a better man, a worthier subject, I would have chosen him." Lamoignon was a friend and patron of literary men, especially of Bolleau, who addressed to him his sixth epistle and wrote the Lutrin at his request; he was also a close friend of Saint Vincent and gave hospitality to the Missionaries who fell ill while caring for the poor in Étampes. His mother and sister were very active in the Saint's works. Lamoignon died on December 10, 1677. (Cf. Vie de M. le premier président de Lamoignon [Paris, 1781].)

2 Former name for the archipelago made up of Réunion (Île de Bourbon) and Mauritius (Île de France). Today it also includes Rodrigues.
entailed in this mission; the assistance we have to give to the only surviving Missionary remaining there; the experience he has acquired of the country and language; and the blessing God has been pleased to give him have prompted me, My Lord, to ask whether it is your good pleasure that we continue this good work or, if not, that we recall M. Bourdai, who is still there.

You did me the honor of writing me that our men have shown greater attachment to the former Company than to you. I entreat you, My Lord, to allow me to tell you that someone has done us a disservice with you. For my part, I have considered nothing but the service of God in this work, and I think they have also held this same view. Indeed, My Lord, all of us were consoled that God in His Providence looked to you to establish His empire in those countries, and we have asked God—and ask Him often—to bless you and this undertaking. If the reply that M. de Lamoignon is supposed to give you is not in conformity with your intention, it is to my great regret. I most humbly entreat you, My Lord, to believe that I have done my utmost in this and that only my sins may have made me unworthy of serving you effectively in this matter according to your desire.

If then, My Lord, it pleases you to do us the favor of allowing us to continue our modest services to God in Madagascar and to grant passage to the workers we have designated for that purpose, I most humbly entreat you, My Lord, to let me know as soon as possible so that we can have them leave quickly.

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

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

M. de Champin\(^1\) has informed me of your charity for this region, prompting you to send an important mission here; that you had proposed this to the Company; \(^3\) and that you and all those priests had such a high

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\(^1\)Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, Bishop, preacher, and author, was born in Dijon on September 27, 1627, into a family whose ancestors, both paternal and maternal, occupied judicial posts in France for over half a century. He pursued a classical education at the Collège de Navarre, where he came under the influence of Vincent de Paul, whose guidance prepared him for the priesthood, which he received on March 18, 1652. He was a Canon of the Cathedral Chapter of Metz and for seven years was engaged in preaching, discussions with the Protestants, and study of the Bible and the Fathers of the Church. In 1659 he went to Paris on Chapter business and was persuaded by Saint Vincent and the Queen Mother, Anne of Austria, to remain there as a preacher. In 1670 he was consecrated Bishop of Condom but had to resign later that year when he was named tutor and guardian of the Dauphin. He wrote a number of works for the latter, of which he considered the most important his "philosophy of history": Discours sur l'histoire universelle. After the Dauphin's marriage in 1681, Bossuet was named Bishop of Meaux but continued to have great influence at Court, especially on Louis XIV's religio-political policy with regard to the Protestants (revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685). It was he who inspired the promulgation of the Gallican Principles in 1682, which he also wrote at the behest of the Assembly of the Clergy of France. Bossuet was involved in the disputes both with the Jansenists and the Quietists of Fenelon. He died on April 12, 1704.

\(^2\)Omer de Champin, Doctor of Theology, member of the Tuesday Conferences, was appointed Dean of Saint-Thomas du Louvre on November 4, 1666.

\(^3\)The meetings known as the Tuesday Conferences began on June 13, 1633, as an outgrowth of the retreats for ordinands. They were to serve the clerical and spiritual development of priests selected for their proven holiness and learning. By the rules devised at the initial organizational meetings (cf. vol. XIII, no. 35), the members committed themselves to meet every Tuesday at Saint-Lazare or the Boru-Enfants "to honor the life of Christ the Eternal Priest"; to celebrate daily Mass and confess once a week to a regular confessor; to make a spiritual retreat annually; to spend some time each day in mental prayer and the Divine Office; to read the New Testament; to make an examination of conscience; to attend the funerals of members; and to offer three Masses for the souls of the deceased.

They met at three o'clock in the afternoon from All Saints' to Easter and at three-thirty from Easter to All Saints', beginning with the Veni Creator, followed by discussion on the topic proposed at the previous meeting. In his letters and conferences, Saint Vincent mentions some of these topics proper to priests, such as the Beatitudes, the sanctification of Lent, modesty, humility, the spirit of poverty in the use of ecclesiastical goods, and censures. Members also gave reports on the works undertaken: confession for the sick at the Hôtel-Dieu, exhortations for prisoners, missions, etc.
opinion of me as to believe I would willingly use my influence in favor of such a salutary work. When he informed me of this, I asked him to assure you that I would spare nothing on my part to cooperate in it in whatever way I might be judged capable.

Since the Bishop of Auguste and I had to make a short journey to Paris, I asked him also to find out the time of arrival of those priests so that we could plan accordingly. We both felt that we would be very guilty before God if we abandoned the harvest at the time His Sovereign Bounty was sending us such faithful, charitable workers. I do not understand, Monsieur, why I have not received a reply to that letter, but I am not sorry that this opportunity presents itself to renew my respects to you, assuring you above all else how well-disposed the Bishop of Auguste is to cooperate in this work.

As for what regards me, Monsieur, I acknowledge that I am most incapable of rendering it the service I would like to give, but I hope from God in His goodness that the example of so many holy priests and the lessons I formerly learned in the Company will give me the strength to act together with such good workers, if I can do nothing on my own. I ask you the favor of assuring the Company of this, and I send it my wholehearted greetings in Our Lord, with a request that it give me a share in its prayers and Holy Sacrifices.

If you feel that something is necessary here to prepare the people, I will, by the grace of God, accept willingly and carry out faithfully the orders you give me.

I am, Monsieur, your most humble and very obedient servant.

BOSSUET,
Priest, Grand-Archdeacon of Metz

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The Superior of the Congregation of the Mission or his delegate directed the Conferences at Saint-Lazare, which were attended by more than 250 priests during Saint Vincent’s lifetime. Of these priests, twenty-two became bishops. Similar conferences, modeled on those of Saint-Lazare, were organized in dioceses throughout France and Italy.

4Pierre Bédacier, a monk of Cluny, was Suffragan and Administrator of the Metz diocese from 1649 until his death on October 19, 1660. Auguste may refer to the second-century diocese of Augusta Treverorum, present day Trier.

5The mission of Metz was one of the most famous organized by Saint Vincent, both for the quality and number of the missionaries who participated in it and for its excellent results. Bossuet did the preparatory work; Louis de Chandenier (Abbé de Tournus) directed it, aided by such collaborators as Omer de Champin, Nicolas Gédoy, Claude de Chandenier (Abbé de Moutiers-Saint-Jean) and some fifteen other outstanding priests. From March 6 to May 22 the inhabitants of that ancient town in Lorraine flocked around the pulpit to hear the preachers.
The eagerness of that large number of young women who want to enter your Company is not a sure sign that God is calling them to it, especially if they have been motivated to do so by some human persuasion rather than by divine inspiration. Still, God’s action may be present in this; that is why it will be well for you to encourage them in that good will, but it is not advisable to send all of them at the same time. Choose two or three of the best disposed and most suitable; Mademoiselle Le Gras will take them for a trial period, while you test the others. However, make them understand very clearly the following things:

(1) that your Company is not a religious Order, nor your house a hospital from which they must not budge, but rather a Society of Sisters who come and go constantly to various places and at definite times for the assistance of the sick poor, regardless of the weather;

(2) that, since the Daughters of Charity are servants of the poor, they too are poorly dressed and fed and may not change their white headdress or clothing;

(3) that they must have no other intention in coming to the Company than that of the service of God and the poor;

(4) that they must live in it in continual mortification of mind and body, with a firm will to observe all the Rules exactly, especially unquestioning obedience;

(5) that, even though they may go here and there in Paris, they


1Saint-Fargeau, a commune some thirty miles southwest of Joigny (Yonne). The Daughters of Charity went there in 1657, at the request of the Duchesse de Montpensier.

2Some of the recommendations given here are almost identical to those in a letter of January 1658 from Saint Louise to Brother Ducournau, for a reply to be given to the Sisters in Saint-Fargeau (cf. Spiritual Writings, L. 561, p. 563). It seems reasonable, therefore, to assign this date to Saint Vincent’s letter.
are not permitted to go to visit their acquaintances without permission, nor allow any man to visit them in their houses;

(6) lastly, that they must have the wherewithal to pay for their journey and their first habit.3

In one of your letters you asked me if you might receive as a postulant in your house a woman of the upper class, while awaiting instructions to send her here. I am not in agreement with this, Sister, because experience has shown, with women who associate with Sisters working at a distance from the Paris house, that before receiving the habit and the instructions given them here, they usually do not succeed. The reason is that they are convinced that they will have to do only what they have seen practiced by those Sisters living at a distance. So, please do not take any of them into your house.

You make no mention of your work, except to say that you have many girls as pupils and two little girls as boarders. Please let me know if you have any patients in your hospital and, if so, how many; whether you take care of the sick poor in the town and its environs, and if there are many or few of them; your main occupations; and why you are requesting a third Sister.

It is to be feared that those little boarders may occupy too much of your time. You know that it is not customary in your Company to take them because it detracts from other more necessary work. In addition, you would have done well not to accept the care of those children without consulting us. If you say that Her Royal Highness4 ordered you to take them in, perhaps it is because you did not explain to her that your Rule does not allow it; for had she known this, she would have given you time to write to Mademoiselle Le Gras and await her reply.

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3This first part of the letter is almost identical to that of Saint Louise mentioned in note 2.
4Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, Duchesse de Montpensier, was the daughter of Gaston d'Orléans, Louis XIII's brother. Born in Paris on May 29, 1627, she played an active part during the troubles of the Fronde. The Duchess wrote memoirs, composed two novels, and sketched portraits. She died in Paris on April 5, 1693.

In the period preceding the French Revolution, Mademoiselle was the stylized title given to
I ask you, Sister, not to undertake anything new on your own initiative but to do everything with consultation and the blessing of obedience. God will be honored by that, and your leadership will produce good, edifying results by this means.

2512. - TO SISTER NICOLE HARAN, SISTER SERVANT, IN NANTES

Paris, January 16, 1658

Dear Sister,

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

I received your letter of December 22. All I can do just now is to sympathize with you in your present dejected state and ask O[ur] L[ord], as I do, to inspire the Fathers to see that you get some relief. If they ask us for another Sister to increase your number, we will try to send one. If you have no one there to explain to them that there are too few of you to serve so many patients, we will soon send a Missionary to Nantes, God willing, to make them aware of your excessive workload and the danger of your being overwhelmed by it. Meanwhile, I ask God to be Himself your strength.

You are right in having no scruple about missing Mass to assist the poor, for God prefers mercy to sacrifice.\(^2\) I ask only two things of God for you and your Sisters. The first is that He give you great

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\(^1\)Nicole Haran, born in 1627, entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity on July 28, 1649. In October 1650 she was sent to Montmirail and in 1653 to Nantes, where she encountered many difficulties over the years. In May 1655 the Administrators of the hospital proposed her as Sister Servant; she was still in Nantes at the death of Saint Louise (1660). In 1673 she was named Superioress General for three years, after which she served the foundlings in the faubourg Saint-Antoine in Paris, where she died on June 5, 1679.

\(^2\)Cf. Mt 12:7. (NAB)
concern for the salvation and relief of the sick; the second is that
He grant you the grace to love and support one another. If you have
these two things, you will practice the virtues O[ur] L[ord] has
recommended to us the most, you will be a source of edification to
everyone, and you will enjoy great peace.

People say that a ship is preparing to go to Madagascar. If so,
we will be able to send a few priests there, who will visit you when
they pass through.

Let me know if the clothes salvaged from last year’s shipwreck
are in good condition. I am not asking you to look after them
because I know you will do your utmost to preserve them.

Mademoiselle Le Gras is very well, thank God, and your Com-
pany is doing better and better. May Our Lord be pleased to unite
your hearts and bless your spiritual exercises! I recommend myself
to the prayers of all in general and of each in particular, and I am,
in the love of O[ur] L[ord], [Sister], your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Sister Nicole Haran, Daughter of Charity, Servant
of the Sick Poor of the Nantes Hospital, in Nantes

2513. - TO CHARLES OZENNE, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

Paris, January 18, 1658

Monsieur,

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

Since writing to you two weeks ago, I have not received any of
your dear letters. I do not write to you weekly for fear that someone

3The original text has “Monsieur.”

Letter 2513. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.
say that this is too much. Since then, I have had a fall from my carriage and was injured slightly. I am better now, thank God, but am still confined to my room. My indisposition is also the reason why I have asked M. Alméras to reply—for him and for me—to M. Duperroy, who wrote to us; and I ask you, Monsieur, to embrace good M. Desdames for me.

Enclosed is a letter from M. Guillot, who is writing to you; he is Superior in Montmirail.

I think I told you that God has taken to Himself good M. Alméras the elder, who died on the fourth of this month. The next day we lost one of our coadjutor Brothers, named François Hémet, who was about fifty years of age; in his younger days he was in the army in Poland. His death corresponded to the life he led in the Company, since in both he seemed ready for everything and filled with such fine sentiments that none better can be expected from a devout man. The last two times I visited him during his illness, I was permeated by the fragrance of the fullness of his faith, his confidence in God, and his resignation to God's good pleasure. I recommend his soul to your prayers.

A ship is being prepared to leave for Madagascar; God willing, we are going to send two or three Missionaries there. We have no

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1 This happened after a visit in the city. Saint Vincent was returning to Saint-Lazare in his little carriage, accompanied by one of his confessors; suddenly, the brakes broke, the carriage turned over, and the Saint hit his head very hard on the pavement. A few days later his temperature rose, and he became so ill, stated Abelly (op. cit., bk. I, chap. I, p. 246), that the Saint thought he was dying. Abelly mistakenly placed this accident at the end of 1658. Saint Vincent mentioned the episode for the first time on January 11 (cf. no. 2507).

2 Cf. Appendix I in this volume.

3 Nicolas Guillot, born in Auxerre (Yonne) on January 6, 1627, entered the Congregation of the Mission on June 12, 1648, took his vows on June 11, 1651, and was ordained a priest on December 24, 1651. While still a subdeacon, he was sent with the first group of Missionaries to Poland. There he devoted himself to the works of his vocation, but after the death of Lambert aux Couteaux he became discouraged and returned to France in May 1654. Saint Vincent gently reproved him for his fault, inspired him with regret, and persuaded him to go back in July. This was not for long, however: the misfortunes of Poland, which was invaded by the Swedes, obliged four of the seven Missionaries, including Guillot, to leave the country in November 1655. The Saint made him Superior of the Montmirail house, then in 1658 called him to Saint-Lazare to occupy the chair of philosophy. René Alméras later appointed him Superior in Amiens (1662-67); he filled the same duty in Le Mans (1667-70).
news in the Company. Everything is going well everywhere, thank God. We are working on filling the Genoa house again. We are greatly in need of men because we have requests for them from several places, even for new establishments. Pray that God will send good workers into His vineyard. We continue to pray for you and your family, as well as for the King and Queen and their States, that His Divine Goodness may be pleased to preserve Their Majesties and bless their plans.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, 
I.I.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Ozenne

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2514. - TO FIRM IN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, January 18, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I received two letters from you, dated January 1 and 8. I thank

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4Cf. Lk 10:2; Mt 9:37-38. (NAB)
5Jan Casimir and Louise-Marie de Gonzague.

Few Princes experienced as many vicissitudes of fortune as did Jan Casimir. Born in 1609, he went to France in his youth and was thrown into prison by Richelieu. He became a Jesuit, received the Cardinal's hat, and ascended the throne of Poland on the untimely death of his brother, Władysław IV. Obtaining a dispensation from his vows, he married his brother's widow, Louise-Marie, and ruled Poland under the title of Jan Casimir V. His reign was unfortunate: Poland, attacked in turn by the Cossacks, Sweden, Brandenburg, Russia, and Transylvania, and torn asunder by internal dissensions, was forced to surrender a large part of its territory to its enemies. Jan Casimir lost his wife in 1667; he abdicated and withdrew to Flanders. From there he went to Saint-Genmain-des-Prés Abbey and afterward to Saint-Martin Abbey in Nevers, dying in that city in 1672.

Letter 2514. - Niagara University Library, Niagara University, NY (USA). The original of this
God that the Bishop of Marseilles ᵃ has decided to establish his seminary ᵄ and to entrust it to the care of the Company. I hope this good work will be the source of many benefits and the blessing of his diocese. If he does me the honor of writing to me about it—as you say he intends to do—I will gladly congratulate him on the effort he is trying to make.

I sent you the Duc de Richelieu's reply on the appointment of the new Administrators. I do not know if he has commissioned someone by the same letter to receive in his name the accounts of the administration, for I had not had anyone mention this to him. I will do so if those gentlemen so desire, once they have been notified.

M. Le Vacher ᶅ is writing a letter to a Capuchin Father from Marseilles about a Turk ᵅ who is here and wants to convert. Please get his reply on that as soon as possible.

We have received six livres for Pierre Goubert, a convict on the galley Reine. Please have M. Huguirer give them to him. At the first opportunity we will reimburse him for the money he advances.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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¹Etienne du Puget.

²Countless difficulties delayed the establishment of the diocesan seminary, which did not open until fifteen years later. In 1658 the Priests of the Mission were directing only a kind of collège (cf. no. 2582).

³Philippe Le Vacher.

⁴Saint Vincent used the term "Turk" both for the inhabitants of the Ottoman Empire and for the members of the Muslim religion. The context of the letter usually dictates to which group he is referring.
Monsieur,

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

I am concerned about your telling me that you will have the children's communion next Sunday to close the mission, although only about 150 of the five or six hundred communicants have made their duty, and that I should send someone to give notice that there will be a mission in Montlhéry. Now, I will tell you, Monsieur, that I think it advisable—unless you think better—to postpone leaving the place where you now are until those good people have benefited by the grace Our Lord is offering them through you. There is reason to hope they will do so if you will please give them time, especially if we send you workers, as we will do, God willing. We will send two priests from here, God willing, and will leave Montlhéry as it is, in the meantime. Our Lord saw the Gentiles perishing, and He wanted to help them; yet, He did not abandon the people of Israel, to whom He had been sent. Let us finish what we have begun, Monsieur, and Our Lord will help us.

It will be well for you to go to see those good Fathers, whom I admire and honor so much for their gratitude to their benefactor. It is one of the most touching and edifying acts of gratitude witnessed in the Church. I hope they will pray for you. Please assure them of

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1The name of the recipient and his whereabouts were given by Pémartin (Jean-Baptiste Pémartin, Lettres de Saint-Vincent de Paul [4 vols., Paris: Pillet et Dumoulin, 1880], vol. IV, p. 12, L. 1590). He probably knew these details from the address, which was not photographed. Marcoussis is a locality of Esonne in the district of Rambouillet.

2District of Corbeil (Esonne).
my obedience. I am, in the love of Our Lord, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.C.M.

I embrace tenderly M. d'Huitmille and M. Hurpy.

2516. - TO LOUIS RIVET, SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

January 20, 1658

From now on, Missionaries passing through your house will stay there only a day or two, unless they have instructions or a need to stay longer, and it will be a good idea for you after that to get them to agree to leave for the place where they are obliged to go.

Because the seminarian whose furnishings you are storing in your house had no other place to put them, you had to do him this charity, since you could do so conveniently.

If you had refused M. Rassary, who is ill, the charity he asked of you, I would be very annoyed because two things make him, above anyone else, worthy of our esteem: (1) his virtue is extraordinary (I know no one alive who is a finer man than he); and (2) we are indebted to him. In addition, I recommended him to you previously and, because you welcomed him when he was in good health, you would have acted badly if you did not do so now that

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3Philippe Huitmille, born in Arras, entered the Congregation of the Mission as a priest on October 25, 1645, at the age of twenty-nine. He took his vows in Amiens on February 9, 1664, in the presence of M. Guillo.

4Pierre Hurpy was born in Beausaute (Seine-Maritime), entered the Congregation of the Mission on November 10, 1656, and took his vows on November 12, 1658, in the presence of M. Delepiniy. He died in Saint-Méen in July 1679; Notices, vols. I and V (Supplement), lists him as Dehurpy.

Letter 2516. - Reg. 2, p. 112.

1Above the “20” someone else has written “10,” probably because the number on the original is hard to decipher.