to conclude everything by this means. It is not, however, advisable to seek them out, but let M. de la Bataillère know that we want nothing better than to settle things this way and to live on peaceful terms with them.

I thank God for the opportunity Monsieur and Madame de Liancourt are giving you to show our obedience to them. I would be greatly consoled if other greater occasions of serving them were to arise.

May God bless the labors of your workers! We will try to send you one or two to increase their number.

Enclosed is a letter for Brother Guillaume. I have written to Sedan asking them to send him his copies of paintings.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Laudin

2719. - TO EDMUND BARRY, SUPERIOR, IN NOTRE-DAME-DE-LORM

Paris, November 13, 1658

Monsieur,

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

The last letter I received from you is dated October 13. I have not written to you for a long time. I praise God for the consolation

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5Administrator of the Le Mans Hospital.
6Guillaume Pintar.

Letter 2719. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter. The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.
M. Cuissot brought you by his visitation and by our Rules. I am sure your little family will make good use of them to become more closely united to God and among themselves.

I am greatly consoled that the seminary is growing. It would be a good idea if it were transferred to Montauban. Mon Dieu, Monsieur! Is there no way of doing this and for us to be released from the parishes? I am writing to ask M. Cuissot to go to see the Bishop of Montauban to find out his final decision, since it is not expedient for us to have things remain any longer as they are. Depending on the answer, we will consider the help you are requesting. Meanwhile, please encourage Messieurs Lucas and Treffort. I am thinking about them, and God will doubtless be pleased with their patience and their work. I embrace them along with you and the rest of the little family, with all the tenderness of my heart.

We have no news here. Things are going along as usual. Several of our priests are out giving missions, in particular, M. Bajoue, for whom I will have a power of attorney prepared on his return to authorize you to sell his annuity and collect its arrears because the transfer he already made is insufficient.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

It is inadvisable for me to write to the Bishop and for me to be

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1 The Common Rules, copies of which were distributed by Gilbert Cuissot during the visitation.
2 Pierre de Bertier.
3 Jacques Lucas, born in La Perelle (Manche) on April 10, 1611, was ordained a priest in 1635 and entered the Congregation of the Mission on March 10, 1638. He was Superior in Luçon (1650-56) and La Rose (1662-68).
4 Simon Treffort, born in Villiers-Herbie (Aube) on October 2, 1611, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 5, 1642, and took his vows on October 7, 1645. He was Superior in La Rose (1668-77) and died in Cahors on July 16, 1682. In a letter written a few days after his death, Edme Jolly, Superior General, highly praised his virtues.
5 Emerand Bajoue, title holder for the benefices of Notre-Dame-de-Lorm and Saint-Alignan.
the one to urge the union. M. Dehorgny and the other titulars are finding it very difficult to bear the title of Pastor for so long and are pleading to be relieved of it.

See if you can find out what he will oblige us to do by the act of union. You can tell him that, if he wishes, we will make the [same] commitment the Bishop of Cahors⁶ or the Bishop of Saintes⁷ had us make. I am sending you a copy of it.

_At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Barry_

2720. - TO JACQUES PESNELLE, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, November 15, 1658

Monsieur,

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

M. Turrneau¹ was very wrong not to send my letters on to you, in so far as it is his fault that you are not receiving them. I think that, since you have had charge of the family, I have written you by every regular mail but one. He is a man I do not know; he was suggested to us by the late M. Blatiron, to whom some other Genoese merchants who corresponded with him suggested him. So, you can get them to write to ask him to be more careful about our letters, or else find some other person.

May God bless the retreat exercises of the seminarians from the Cardinal’s² seminary and grant them the grace of making good use

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⁶Alain de Solminihac.
⁷Louis de Bassompierre.

¹A merchant in Lyons.
²Stefano Durazzo.
of the help and advice you have given them! May He also bless your work on the missions! Is there no other priest from outside the Company who could go to help you?

On All Saints' Day M. Berthe left Marseilles with his little band to go to Genoa, but bad weather forced them to take shelter four leagues from there. I will be worried about them until I am sure they are with you.

I willingly give my consent for M. Stelle to take vows. It is easy for me to believe the good things you tell me about him and to have high hopes for him; I have always felt he would make a good Missionary.

You were right to assure the Cardinal that we would welcome his nephew at Saint-Lazare, in view of the honor he has of being related to His Eminence, of being one of the leading Senators of the Republic, of his title of Resident in France, of the privilege he granted you, and of the endless obligations we have toward His Eminence, giving him sovereign authority over us and all that we have. We find it extremely difficult, however, to do what you have promised. First, because of a rule we have here in this house not to receive any layman from outside the Company except to make a retreat. For that reason we made our excuses to an English Prince who was married to a relative of Cardinal de Retz, our Founder and Prelate, and I have never been willing to allow any French noblemen to erect a building here, as they wanted to do, because each wanted to have a room reserved there for himself in which to retire. It would take me too long to tell you the reasons for this rule; you can imagine some of them.

Secondly, because we have only two rooms that might be suitable for the Resident, one of which is occupied by the Abbé de Chandenier, and the other has been promised to the Bishop of

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3 The Marchese Durazzo, recently appointed chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Genoa at the court of the King of France.
4 Word added by the Saint.
Sarlat, who resigned his bishopric to become Coadjutor of Cahors and wants to live here until the door is open for him to go to work there. Now, we cannot put him out without offending him and, in his sacred person, all the Prelates of the kingdom, who would resent such an insult. In addition, we have a house in Cahors, where he is Coadjutor, and that house is responsible for the seminary, which is one of the fullest and best regulated in the kingdom. As for the Abbés, we cannot send them away either. They are the nephews of the late Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld and are important benefactors, having given us two benefices worth four thousand livres each. If we had shown such ingratitude toward them, heaven and earth would take up arms against us.

That is why, Monsieur, it is advisable for you to make known to His Eminence as soon as possible our good will and powerlessness; do so gently and tactfully so that this change in your word does not take him by surprise. If the Resident had only one servant, and a small room with a fireplace would suffice for him, we would be delighted by the honor of his presence and the opportunity we would have to show the Cardinal, in the person of his nephew, the respect and obedience we owe him. In a word, Monsieur, tell His Eminence that he is above any Rule and that we will do, now and always, whatever he may command us.

You may accept into your seminary the young man you mention as having a good spirit and who wants to enter the Company but

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3Nicolas Sevin.

4François de la Rochefoucauld, born in Paris on December 3, 1558, became Bishop of Clermont on October 6, 1585, Cardinal in 1607, Bishop of Sens in 1611, and Commandary Abbot of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris in 1613. He resigned as Bishop in 1622 to dedicate himself to the reform of the abbeys dependent on the Benedictines, Augustinians, and Cistercians. With the support of men such as Saint Vincent, Father Grégoire Tarriase, and Father Charles Faure, he restored order and discipline. Saint Vincent assisted him at his death on February 14, 1645. He was buried at Sainte-Geneviève, but his heart was given to the Jesuits. (Cf. M.M. La Morinière, Les vertus du vrai prélat représentées en la vie de l'Eminentissime cardinal de La Rochefoucauld [Paris: Cramoisy, 1646]; Lallemand and Chatonnat, La vie du Révérend Père Charles Faure, abbé de Sainte-Geneviève de Paris [Paris: J. Anisson, 1698].)

5The benefices of Saint-Pourçain and Saint-Martin de Coudres.
cannot obtain a title. If he works hard at acquiring virtue and shows signs of persevering, we can get one for him after his vows. You suggest using the chapel of the late M. de Monchia for that purpose. Before settling that, however, I would like to know what it is worth and who has its title now. If it could bring in the pension needed for that young man to enter Holy Orders, we could have it created. That seems more suitable than to have him made titular of the benefice because, if he were provided with it, he might leave and keep it.

I told you that it is better to dismiss the young Brother cured of epilepsy than to keep him, since he might have similar attacks again, which would have very bad effects on the Company. Discuss this with M. Berthe, to whom I send greetings and embrace, if he is still with you, as I have no time to write to him.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Pesnelle

2721. - TO JEAN MARTIN, SUPERIOR, IN TURIN

Paris, November 15, 1658

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!
Since last writing to you I have received two of your letters. The

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Cristoforo di Monchia, a Genoese priest of noble lineage, had contributed to the foundation of the house in Genoa from his personal fortune and continued to assist it with gifts. (Cf. Abelly, op. cit., bk. I, chap. XLVI, p. 223.)

Letter 2721. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.
retreat I made, some minor illnesses, and my usual press of business have prevented me from writing to you.

You tell me you have made your retreat, renewed your offering of yourself, and decided on a place for a mission. All that consoled me greatly as a disposition for doing much good, and it will be all the greater the more faithful you are to your resolutions and to the Rules. I ask O[ur] L[ord] to grant all of you the grace to do so. Today in the refectory the reading told us that virtues on which we meditate but do not practice are more harmful than profitable to us.

Another thing that consoles me is that you make no mention of the slight coldness you noticed with some of the men; this is a sign that the members are now closely united to their head and among themselves. It is a result of the retreat and your gentle, wise leadership, by which you must have won their hearts.

I am most grateful for the way your Founder and the Marquis de Saint-Thomas \(^1\) were pleased to recommend the Sant’Antonio affair to the Ambassador who went to Rome.\(^2\) Now we must await the outcome patiently and hope that, if it is not as we wish, it will nevertheless be according to God’s Will, which is all that we should be seeking, [and in which we desire] \(^3\) to see you firmly and solidly established. This is something Providence must do with time, and often our cares and hopes are of little use in such plans. Just look at our poor family in Rome that still has no house, even though it has been there fifteen to twenty years.

If the court of Savoy comes to Lyons, I will take the honor of writing to the Marchese di Pianezza, as soon as I hear it, to offer him all that depends on us and to renew our obedience to him.

I am really worried about Brother Demortier’s long illness. How is he now and how is the rest of the family? I hope M. Berthe will

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\(^1\) Councillor and first Secretary of State for Savoy.

\(^2\) Jeure-Millet, assistant tutor of Monsieur, Philippe d’Orléans, the younger brother of Louis XIV.

\(^3\) One or two words at the top of the page are illegible here due to the ravages of time.
soon send me news of them. He should be in Genoa right now, if nothing has happened to him; and from there he is supposed to return by way of Turin.

Brother Pronetti has left the Company because, first of all, he seemed unwilling to want to put on its spirit, although he is a God-fearing young man with common sense, who has studied well enough. The most obvious reason, however, is that the doctor and the surgeon advised him to leave because he had an inflamed nerve arising from an impurity in the blood. This had gone to the lower part of his body, making him sick, and he had a hard time kneeling. The result was that he was often in the infirmary. He left satisfied with us, as he said. We did indeed treat him with greater support and affection than we would have done if he were from this country or had not been sent to us by you.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2722. - TO JEAN PARRE, IN RETHEL

Paris, November 16, 1658

Dear Brother,

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

Since we were out of the habit of writing to you every week, doing so last Saturday slipped our mind. Furthermore, I had nothing
in particular to tell you; also, Mademoiselle Viole wrote you a letter, which she addressed to M. de Séraucourt to be delivered to you. In it she instructed you to get some money—I do not know how much. I was not in a position to go to the meeting so she sent word to me yesterday that they would try to send you some vestments. I sent your letters to the meeting, but no decision was made, except that they would see at the first opportunity if they could get a small fund together to buy some wheat. The samples were viewed only by candlelight because it was night time, so they postponed discussion until next week. So much for that.

I thank God, dear Brother, that you arrived safely at the place where His service awaited you. If you give only very little to the poor out of helplessness, you give a great deal to God out of love, since you offer Him your own comfort, your heavy labors, and your life. Not only that, but you would like all people to make Him a sacrifice of their goods and their persons so that all the poor on earth may be assisted and all souls saved by Jesus Christ, who shed His Precious Blood for them. What more can you do, dear Brother? Is not that enough to console and humble you at the same time before God, who has granted you the grace of animating you with His charity, which consists in willing what His Son, our Divine Master, has willed, and in doing what He has done? You will tell me that you will it and do it only imperfectly. All right! Go on thinking this, and try to unite yourself more and more in action and intention with this same Lord, in whom I am, dear Brother, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, in Rethel
Most Honored Father, I think Your Charity really should speak to Sister Étienne, 2 who is supposed to go to Angers, to explain to her the dispositions she should have for the duty she will have there. She should make herself readily available to the Sisters wishing to speak with her; maintain confidentiality regarding all that is told her; divert as much as possible any tendency of mind or body that leads only to self-satisfaction; see to it that the Rules are faithfully observed, without detriment to the service of the poor; have a cheerful demeanor; respect the Administrators, and everything else, which you know better than I, who am incapable of doing anything worthwhile.

We hope, with your approval, Most Honored Father, to have our Sisters leave Monday. If Your Charity could give us the conference continuing the explanation of the Rule, it would also benefit three or four Sisters who are returning to the country on the same day.

I entreat Our Lord to give you the strength for this, and I ask you, for His holy love, for a small share in your holy prayers. I am, Most Honored Father, your very poor and unworthy daughter and servant.

L. de M.

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

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Letter 2723. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1 Brother Ducournau added “November 1658” on the back. Saint Vincent’s reply (cf. no. 2724) leads us to suppose that the requested conference was given the next day, which was November 17 (cf. vol. X, no. 105: “On Rising, Prayer, Examen, and Other Exercises”).

2 Étienne Dupuis was one of the elders in the Company of the Daughters of Charity. In 1658 she was sent as Sister Servant to Angers where she remained one year. She then went to Richelieu. In 1663 she returned to the Motherhouse and was at Maisons as Sister Servant in 1677.

3 Étienne Dupuis, Marie Bertrand, and Catherine.
2724. TO SAINT LOUISE

[November 16, 1658] 1

I have just sent Mademoiselle Le Gras a letter from the Vicar-General of Beauvais. 2

I have been thinking that I could give the conference here in this house tomorrow, God willing, if it is likely that all the Sisters could fit in our parlor. Please let me know what you think.

Madame de Mirepoix 3 will come to Mademoiselle Le Gras’ house this evening.

Tomorrow, God willing, I will speak to our dear Sister Étienne-

2725. TO FRANÇOIS-IGNACE LIEBE

Paris, November 17, 1658

Monsieur,

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

Since you left Richelieu, I have received three letters from you, which have two objectives: first, that I should dispense you from the vows you recently took in the Company, according to the Brief of His Holiness, or consent to your going to our house in Luçon, where you hope to work on the missions. Now, I will tell you,

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Letter 2724. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1This is Saint Vincent’s response to no. 2723.

2Claude Tristan, Seigneur de Maisonselles, Canon, Grand Archdeacon, and Vicar-General of Beauvais for forty years. His refusal to sign the formulary against Jansenism brought upon him in 1666 exclusion from choir and the loss of the income from his prebend. He died on June 29, 1692.

3Catherine Caulet, Baronne de Mirepoix, was going to make a retreat at Saint Louise’s house.

Letter 2725. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, seventeenth-century copy made from the original in the Saint’s handwriting.
Monsieur, that you know as well as I that no one can dispense a person from vows without good reason, and you have had no good reason to leave the Company, since you tell me you have not been treated badly by it in any way. In keeping with that, Monsieur, you see clearly that I cannot dispense you from those promises you made to God.

As for your second request, you do not explain clearly enough whether you intend to return to the Company by going to the Luçon house and working at our functions there or simply as a person outside the Company. If it is in the second way, do not even think about it. And if it is in the first way, you must explain further and manifest deep regret for leaving and a great desire to return, accompanied by humility and appropriate prayers for that purpose. Then we will ask God to inspire us with what we will have to do, as well as where and how it will be advisable to effect this reentry into the Company.

This is something that well deserves your reflection. We must have a very high regard for the promises we make to God and, even more, for carrying them out. What is at stake is your salvation, which should be very dear to you and make you think before God and in conscience about what you have to do in these circumstances.

I felt obliged to point all this out to you, Monsieur, since you have given yourself to God in the Company whose care He has entrusted to me and, consequently, along with it, the care of the souls of those who have entered it. Moreover, I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

V. D.
Reverend Father,

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

It is true that I had the honor of receiving several letters from you which I have not answered. I ask your pardon for this. I was waiting to find out from Abbé de Chandenier, who had gone to Metz, the state of the matter about which you wrote me. However, instead of returning to Paris, he has gone farther away. This obliges me to tell Your Reverence without further delay what I know about it, namely, that we never had any intention of paying you twice for the same thing. I have always thought it was reasonable that, since you were good enough to give the pulpit over to the Missionaries, they should give you the same remuneration you would have had if you had actually preached. That is what they did with the money from the Queen. On what Your Reverence told me when you honored me with a visit—that they had not reckoned your account correctly—I had six pistoles from our own money given you, with which you were satisfied.

I recall nevertheless, Reverend Father, that you had claimed at the time that you should be given also the money the diocesan tax officer usually gives to Lenten preachers. Even though I told you that it was not at our disposal, Your Reverence still wanted me to take the honor of telling the Bishop of Auguste that, although the

Letter 2726. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, unsigned rough draft in the secretary’s handwriting.

1Dominican preacher; Master of Theology.

2Louis de Chandenier.

3In Lent of that year, there was a scheduling difficulty in Metz: a conflict between the Lenten sermons to be preached by Father Guespier and the missions to be preached at the same time in Metz by a team led by Abbé de Chandenier (cf. no. 2520).

4Pierre Bédier, Titular Bishop of Auguste, Suffragan of the Bishop of Metz, and Administrator of the diocese.
Missionaries had given you one hundred écus, you were still hoping to get a similar amount from the tax officer. Then, if the Bishop judged it suitable to give you this double remuneration, he would know that, as far as I was concerned, I did not want to stand in the way of this. So, I gave you a letter stating these things in substance.

Now Your Reverence writes me, giving another side to this business. This, however, is what happened. I was in no way involved in it, having acted on our part according to the intention of the Queen, which was to give you thirty pistoles for not preaching, in place of a similar amount that the tax officer would have given you if you had preached. You received twenty-four in Metz from Abbé de Chandenier and six in Paris from the procurator of Saint-Lazare. I would not have been upset if you had also received what the tax officer had, but, as I told Your Reverence, that did not depend on me. In addition, I have just learned that this money, by order of Her Majesty and on the advice of the Suffragan Bishop, was used for the needs of the Confraternity of Charity in Metz, founded for the relief of the sick poor. I, however, was no way involved in the way the money was used.

I am really sorry, Reverend Father, that you did not obtain what you desired, either with regard to that money or with regard to a pulpit in Paris. If I had been able, I would gladly have been of service to you in this matter and will be so on every other occasion, whenever you are pleased to honor me with your orders. I assure you that I am, with all my heart, in that of O[ur] L[ord], Reverend Father, your most humble and very obedient servant.
November 21, 1658

Dear Sister,

I most humbly ask your pardon for not answering the letters you have written me since your arrival in Châteaudun. The pressure of business has prevented me from doing so, but from now on I will be more exact, God willing, and you will continue to write to me as usual.

Monsieur... did me the honor of telling me about the reception given you, the confidence shown you in both town and country, and the blessing God has bestowed on your work. I was greatly consoled by this and thank God for it, asking Him to continue to grant you these same blessings. He will doubtless do so if you continue to serve Him with the zeal, charity, and humility with which you have done so until now and which I hope you will do, with the grace of Our Lord, in whom I am...
Monsieur,

I read your letter with sorrow, seeing that you are asking my permission to withdraw. What have we done to cause you to leave us? What displeasure have you received from the Company to cause such a separation? The only reason you give me is that you are not well. I ask you to reflect that there is no one who is not sometimes sick and that, wherever we go, we bring our bodies, subject to illness, with us.

To this I will add that it will be difficult for you to find elsewhere the same treatment in your ailments as the Company gives its children. It has salaried doctors, remedies, and persons to apply them, and provides with great charity whatever else is needed for their consolation and relief. So, its intention is that the house where you are should take care of you when you are ill—and I think it has spared nothing to do so. Nevertheless, if there were anything to complain about, you should have let me know so I could remedy it. I would like to believe that you have a delicate constitution, but I have always seen you able to do what the others do, and I have not yet been aware that you have had any serious illness nor that anything prevents you at present from doing as you usually do.

Even, however, if it should be true that you might have some serious illness, that is not sufficient reason to break a promise you made to God to live and die in the Company. Mon Dieu, Monsieur, what are you trying to do? What! To be unfaithful to God, who has

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Coste originally notes that this letter must assuredly be placed between November 1658 and October 1659 and that, to all indications, it was sent shortly after the letter of October 26 (no. 2696). His subsequent corrections pinpoint the date to November 21, 1658. The secretary wrote the two rough drafts one after the other.
called you, to turn your back on your vocation, which provides you with so many means to save yourself, and to lose in one instant an eternity of happiness, which is granted only to perseverance! O Monsieur! what deep regret you would have at the time of your death if you had committed such a fault! For, it is of the nature of those that are irreparable, since, by abandoning the state in which God has placed you, you would be in great danger of His abandoning you to the one your own will would have caused you to embrace. Beware of following it. Make a few days of retreat to consider the importance of doing God's Will and of living the vows you have taken and renewed. You are bound to do so, as I explained to you in the letter I wrote you in October telling you that I cannot and will not, in word or in writing, allow you to leave the Company nor, consequently, grant you the rest of what you request because I am, in the right way, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

2729. - TO JACQUES PESNELLE, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, November 22, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I received two letters from you, dated October 29 and November 4. I am anxious for you to assure me of the arrival of M. Berthe and the others. By now, they must be in Genoa ten or twelve days. I am afraid you were in too much of a hurry to go off to give the mission; in that case, however, the Visitor will await your return or go to see you wherever you are.
I am consoled that M. Bruno has come to your rescue. This gives you the opportunity to get to know him well so you can judge whether it will be advisable to grant him the consolation he is seeking, which is to be readmitted to the Company. He is very devout, but sickly and very melancholic.

I replied to you long ago about how to receive the blessing of the Pastors. I think it would be well for you to continue to do what the late M. Blatiron did rather than introduce a new way because that change could provoke criticism.

If the Cardinal approves of giving the chapel of the late M. de Monchia to the young postulant who has no title, after his two years of seminary, so he can receive Holy Orders, I approve it also, despite what I said to you about it in my last letter.

Most willingly will we pray for that good Senator, that God may make known to him His good pleasure during the retreat he intends to make. May He also grant him the grace of being truly detached from all perishable things, in whatever state he may be, and give him a great desire to be united to His Sovereign Good.

I will tell you two things about the uneasiness and melancholy you say you experience when things do not go well: (1) that it is not men who make things go well, but God, who sometimes allows them to go differently than the way we would like so as to make us realize that we can do nothing about them, or to try our patience; and (2) that you trust your own guidance too much when you think that, because you love good order, it is up to you to see that it is observed.

The result is that, not being able to succeed in all that, you become excessively sad, whereas if you were truly convinced that you are capable only of spoiling everything, you would be sur-

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1Giovanni Antonio Bruno, born in Aprica, near Albenga (Liguria), on August 26, 1630, entered the Congregation of the Mission as a priest in Genoa on January 29, 1656, and took his vows on April 28, 1659, in the presence of M. Pesnelle.
2Stefano Durazzo.
3Cristoforo di Monchia.
prised that things do not go even much worse and would remain at
peace in every outcome and event that seem unpleasant or unfa­
vorable to you, since God ordains them thus.

I ask you, Monsieur, to consider all things in the order of His
Providence and, by doing humbly and carefully whatever depends
on you to see that everything goes well, to be submissive in all else
to the good pleasure of God, in whom I am, Monsieur, your most
humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Pesnelle

2730. • TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, November 22, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I received your letter of October 22, which requires no reply. I
thank God for the services you are rendering to Christianity in the
person of the students of Propaganda Fide. You are instilling in
them the spirit of prayer and the love of the Christian virtues so that
they will go to different parts of the world to produce the fruits of
these virtues by exercising priestly functions there. May God be
pleased to animate them with His Spirit and to send good workers
into His Church, which has such great need of them! ①

I am consoled about the man who has gone to Moldavia, which

Letter 2730. • Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter. The postscript is in the
Saint’s handwriting.

①Cf. Mt 9:37-38. (NAB)
you say is almost entirely Catholic and yet has only three or four priests. I have recommended to our community that they pray for this poor country and for that good priest who is going to its assistance. Oh! how willingly would I go as well, if I were of an age and state to do so!

I am also consoled to hear that you still have a good number of retreatants. You must be careful lest some, under the pretext of a retreat, come just for the free meals. There are persons who are only too glad to spend a quiet week or so at no cost to themselves.

I will be pleased to see the letter M. du Loeus ² has written to Spain.

It is a very great novelty for a Turk to be admitted to the ecclesiastical state and even more to be accepted into a Community. Still, there may be some exception to the general rule that excludes such sorts of persons from our holy ministries, and the one who is asking you to enter our Company to become a priest may have such good dispositions that it would be well to accept him. It is up to you, Monsieur, to examine thoroughly the depths of his soul, his motivation, the firmness and quality of his mind, and, based on that, to admit him or to thank him. He must, however, be in possession of a title before being received, if you should reach that point.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL

Please have the enclosed delivered to Cardinal Sachetti.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

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²James Dowley (Duley), future Bishop of Limerick (Ireland).
Monsieur,

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

I would like to think that you have now received the help we sent you and, consequently, have the means of paying your debts and of giving the mission in Sisteron.¹

I think I sent you word that there is now some hope of maintaining the hospital. A number of influential persons are working on it. I just sent your letter to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon so she could see how urgent the matter is and renew her entreaties to maintain this work—the work of her own hands—which is now in a desperate plight. I begged her once again to have letters written to the Court for the freedom of the Turks² in Tunis. She has already given a report of this to Madame de Vendôme³ to get her to speak or write about it to the Admiral, who had already left—or was on the point of leaving—to go see the King. We must patiently await the reply.

I am sure you are doing your best to show the lawyer—who, as creditor of M. Despennes, is giving you trouble—that the price of your acquittance was used to pay the first creditors who held mortgages. I am very apprehensive about lawsuits and lawyers. God grant that M. Despennes did not catch you off guard by concealing the fact that this man's debt is the oldest one!

We received two gold écus, worth eleven livres eight sous, for a convict named Nicolas Chocart on the galley Princesse, and six livres for Charles Ballagny, a convict on the Princesse de Morgue.

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Letter 2731. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Hains Family Collection, Marseilles.

¹Principal town of Alpes-de-Haute-Provence.
²The captives.
³Françoise de Lorraine, Duchesse de Vendôme, wife of César de Bourbon, Due de Vendôme, Director of Shipping and Commerce. Their eldest son married Laura Mancini, the niece of Cardinal Mazarin.
I am writing to tell M. Huguier in Toulon, or his representative, to give each of them his due and the letter I am sending. If by chance none of your men is still there, please give instructions to have this done.

You do not tell me whether M. Brisjone has gone to Agde or is still with you.

I had the two gold écus for Nicolas Chocart put into the packet we are sending to Toulon. They are the ones we received for him. I am doing so because they are a little light and we would lose something if we kept them here. So, do not put them on our account.

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

2732. - TO PIERRE CABEL, SUPERIOR, IN SEDAN

Paris, November 23, 1658

Monsieur,

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

God be eternally praised and glorified for having preserved our dear Brother Sirven! ¹ I will have others thank Him for His infinite goodness and, in my own name will ask Him to be pleased to restore him to perfect health.

We received Brother Pintart’s copies of paintings and have sent them to him.

¹Pierre Sirven, coadjutor Brother, born in Verdun-sud-Garonne (Tarn-et-Garonne), entered the Congregation of the Mission on March 12, 1640, took his vows on January 1, 1643, and died on July 12, 1660, in Sedan. His outstanding qualities had earned the confidence of the Bishop of Montauban, and he was highly esteemed by Saint Vincent, who considered him “the living Rule of the Company; a wise, intelligent man, benevolent towards everyone.”
I will reply to you at another time regarding the objection being raised at going to M. Lucas.\footnote{2}

I do not disapprove of your having M. Warin\footnote{3} preach in your church and letting him come to your house sometimes, since he makes good use of this and left the Company a long time ago. I cannot consent, however, to your going to supper at the new churchwarden's house the day he is elected. Let those who are accustomed to go there think whatever they like, and rest assured that those inside and outside your house will be more edified if you excuse yourself from eating in town than if you had done the contrary.

I persist in telling you what I told M. Daisne,\footnote{4} that whatever reason or pretext he may have for wanting to take a lapsed benefice,\footnote{5} I cannot tolerate that in a Missionary. In addition, if he wishes to remain in the Company, he must make up his mind as soon as possible to renounce the one he has taken. That is the reply I can make to his last letter. If he decides to leave your house rather than give up his parish, I consent to your giving him what you can for his bed and small furnishings.\footnote{6}

\footnote{2}{In his first footnote for this letter, Coste identified this man as Antoine Lucas. This cannot be correct since Antoine Lucas had died in November 1656 (cf. Notices, vol. I, pp. 136-45, and vol. V (Supplement), p. 396). Lucas Arimondo, whom Saint Vincent always called M. Lucas, had also died in 1656. It is, therefore, uncertain to whom he is actually referring.}

\footnote{3}{Simon Warin (Varin), born in Bazeilles (Ardennes), entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 6, 1645, at seventeen years of age, and took his vows on October 7, 1647. Notices, vol. I, p. 470, and vol. V (Supplement) p. 610, lists him as Simon Varin.}

\footnote{4}{Cf. no. 2716.}

\footnote{5}{This refers to the right of a Superior to confer a "devolved" (lapsed) benefice when a subordinate or customary collator has neglected to confer it within the approved time limit or had conferred it on an unfit person.}

\footnote{6}{The secretary had added: "so that he will not go away in need;" these words were subsequently crossed out.}
I sent your packet to M. Coglée, and I ask O[ur] L[ord] to sanctify your dear soul more and more for the sanctification of many others.
I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Cabel

2733. - TO JEAN PARRE, IN REIMS

Paris, November 23, 1658

Dear Brother,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I sent your letter to yesterday’s meeting, since I was unable to go myself. Nothing was decided there, except that you should take thirty écus to be used for the most urgent needs of Champagne or Picardy—either for clothing, grain, or food. Nothing more could be done this time, and no mention was made of the fabrics of which you sent me the samples. The funds are lacking.
As for me, I will never lack affection for you, God willing, since

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1 Of the Ladies of Charity. Parre was one of their agents in distributing aid to the devastated areas.
His Divine Goodness has filled me with it. I am, in His love, dear Brother, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

Draw a bill of exchange on Mademoiselle Viole for those thirty écus.

At the bottom of the page: Brother Jean Parre

2734. - TO SISTER ANNE HARDEMONT, SISTER SERVANT, IN USSEL

Paris, November 24 [1658] \(^1\)

Dear Sister,

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

I have good reason to thank God for the graces He has granted you and, through you, has granted the poor; for, from what I can see, the Duchess,\(^2\) who has perceived the excellent manner in which you have acted, is very pleased with it, and I am sure that God in His goodness is also pleased.

You have had a hard time getting used to the region, but you will also have great merit before God for having overcome your repugnance and for having done His Will rather than your own. Continue this, Sister, and you will see the glory of God, you will possess your soul in patience,\(^3\) and if you once possess it well, Our Lord will be its Master, since you belong to Him by His mercy and

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\(^1\)The year the Sisters arrived in Uszel. The postscript shows that the letter could not have been written as late as November 24, 1659.

\(^2\)The Duchesse de Ventadour.

\(^3\)Cf. Lk 21:19. (NAB)
you want to be His in time and in eternity. O Sister, how consoled you will be at the hour of death for having consumed your life for the same reason for which Jesus Christ gave His—for charity, for God, for the poor! If you only knew your good fortune, Sister, you would truly be overjoyed; for, in doing what you do, you are fulfilling the law and the prophets, commanding us to love God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves. And what greater act of love can one make than to give oneself, wholly and entirely, in one’s state of life and in one’s duty, for the salvation and relief of the afflicted! Our entire perfection consists in this. It remains for you only to join zeal to action and to conform yourself to God’s good pleasure, doing and bearing with all things for the same intentions Our Lord had and for which He suffered similar things. I pray that He will grant all of us this grace.

Please take care of your health, Sister, and send news of yourselves frequently to Mademoiselle Le Gras. Truly, she esteems and cherishes you tenderly. Take my word for it, honor her as your mother, and pray to Our Lord for me. I am, in His love, Sister, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.i.C.M.

This is the third letter I have written you since you have been in Ussel, not to mention one I also wrote to Sister Avoie. Enclosed is a second one for her.

Addressed: Sister Anne Hardemont, Daughter of Charity, in Ussel

*Cf. Mt 22:40. (NAB)*
Monsieur,

I received the letter you did me the honor of writing, with the respect I owe you and with a sentiment of special gratitude for the kind remembrance and benevolence with which you honor us. I thank you most humbly for this, Monsieur, and I ask Our Lord to make us worthy of them.

We will do whatever you command us to be of service to Monsieur . . . and will give him one thousand livres in three installments at the time you indicate to me. God grant, Monsieur, that the opportunity might present itself to obey you in something of greater importance! His Divine Goodness knows how gladly I would do so.

From what I hear from all the men there, the blessings God is giving you and your leadership fill me with admiration, and I am deeply consoled whenever I think of it. My hope is that Our Lord will not stop at that but will lead you, for the benefit of His Church, to other states more in conformity with your condition and worthy of the special graces He has given you. I pray for this with all my heart, and with this desire I renew to you, Monsieur, the offers of my perpetual obedience. I am, with all possible humility and affection, in the love of Our Lord, Monsieur, your . . .

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
I.S.C.M.

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1The name is missing in the text. It could well be Jean d'Aranthon's nephew, the Prior of La Pérouse (cf. no. 2615, n. 3), who was making his seminary at Saint-Sulpice.
Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of the ninth of this month, which tries to point out to us your need for help. I have given much thought to that before it and since. The problem is to send you a priest who will be suitable for you. We are working on a choice, and I hope to have the man leave very soon.

I am returning to you the letter from the Bishop that you request of me. From what I can see, the zeal of that good Prelate for the welfare and sanctification of his diocese, especially of his clergy, continues to grow; consequently, your work and your harvest are increasing. May God be praised for this, and may He will to strengthen and bless you more and more!

We have admitted to the seminary the priest you sent us. Everything here is going along as usual.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.e.C.M.

Our dear Brother Plunket left his dimissorial letter at your house. Please send it to him or, if it has gone astray, find out from the Bishop—who already saw the dimissorial when he conferred the subdiaconate on him—if he will consent to confer the other Sacred Orders on him.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Dupont
Monsieur,

[The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!]

You inform me in your letter of October 29 that no further thought should be given to the establishment in Lombardy. We must praise God for everything and remain at peace. His Providence alone must settle these kinds of affairs, and we should neither desire nor seek any of them on our own or through others. In addition, the custom of the Company has always been to wait and not to run ahead of the higher order.

I say this, since we are on the subject of establishments, in reply to what you tell me about the one in Toledo, where I see no call for us. True, M. du Loes us did approach us previously on behalf of the Cardinal Archbishop, who has the authority to call us there on the part of God; but he has not, in fact, called us, and we should make no further move to have him do so, except to tell M. du Loes us that we are prepared to respond to God's call, in the event that it does come.

That was my sole intention in asking you to mention it to him. If the Cardinal were to order us to send him some priests, and were it merely a question of travel expenses to put this into effect, we would gladly pay them—and something over and above that; but I would not want to go so far as to make the offer beforehand. Please tell M. du Loes us our maxim and leave matters at that. [We will try to pay your bill of exchange, which has not yet been presented to us.]

Letter 2737. - Bibl. de l’Institut Catholique, Paris, original signed letter; the last six lines are in the Saint's handwriting. Coste had first used a text published by Pémartin, op. cit., vol. IV, L. 1761, p. 234, from a copy made available by M. Charavay. Later he was able to check the original and noted additions to be made, which the editors have added here in brackets. Part of the letter is reproduced in Reg. 2, p. 243.

1Balthazar Mosaco y Sandoval (1646-65).
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I thank God that you have already assigned your men for the missions, and for the way you did it. All that seems good to me. We will ask God to bless them and their work. [I praise God also for the arrival of our dear Brothers Le Mercier, Le Gouz, and Dufestel.]

You say you have received the booklets of our Rules but not the circular letter telling what is to be observed in distributing them. That letter is from M. Alméras and not from me; in case you have not received it, I am sending it to you now.

Please have the interpretation² of our vow³ sent as soon as possible, Monsieur, if there is any way to do so. We know not the day nor the hour when God will dispose of this miserable sinner. I will be consoled to see this matter settled before I die, if it is feasible and in order.

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed:Monsieur Jolly

2738. - TO JEAN PARRE, IN REIMS

Paris, November 30, 1658

Dear Brother,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I have nothing to tell you because the Ladies ¹ have not allocated

²The original has “authorization.”
³The Papal Brief Alias nos, on the vow of poverty taken in the Congregation of the Mission, was issued by Pope Alexander VII on August 12, 1659 (cf. vol. XIII, no. 120).

¹The Ladies of Charity.
anything. I did, however, send them your letter yesterday because I could not be at their meeting, but I have had no reply to it. We are very well, and I ask God to keep you in good health and to give you an increase of His grace in order to be able to continue your services to Him. With this hope, I am, in His love, dear Brother, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

I heard that good Brother de Hauteville is sick in Reims. Mon Dieu, how this worries me! Please go to see him, offer him your service and everything he will need, and see that nothing is spared to have him well nursed and cared for. Assure him of our prayers and embrace him for me. Send me some news of him.

Addressed: Brother Jean Parre, of the Congregation of the Mission, at the home of Monsieur Séraucourt, Lieutenant for Criminal Affairs, in Reims

2739. - TO PHILIPPE LE VACHER, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, December 6, 1658

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
I have received no letters from Marseilles since last writing to

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2There is some confusion regarding this person. Coste identifies him here as "Francois de Hauteville, a student in the Congregation of the Mission." Notices, vol. V (Supplement), states that he was Superior in Montmirail in 1660. The personnel catalogue lists the Superior in Montmirail in 1660 as Francois Dorialul, who was received in Paris in 1655 and took his vows there on July 10, 1657. There is also a possibility that this is a Francois Dornault, C.M., who was born in Hauteville in 1600.

Letter 2739. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Haines Family Collection. This is one of the letters sold at auction by Xavier Charmoy (cf. no. 2505).
you. I am still going to send this one to you, in the absence of M. Get,¹ to ask you to send us some news of Algiers and Tunis, if you have any. I am more worried about them every day ² and, while we await the remedy for the present state of affairs, I ask Our Lord to grant us the grace of considering those matters as they are in God and not as they appear apart from Him; otherwise we might deceive ourselves and act other than He wishes.

When M. Get returns, please tell him that the Attorney General³ has had the Duchesse d'Aiguillon informed that the hospital for the convicts will not be abandoned; he will put the alms for her foundation on the account of the state so that it will be paid in the future. He will even have something given for the past and will do all this soon. His mother has taken the responsibility of reminding him of this, as he himself desired.

I am writing to tell M. Parisy to give four écus, which we have received here, to M. de Vassi, a convict on the Bailliebault, and thirty sous to Nicolas Bonner. I ask M. Get to keep count of all that for him, as we will do for him.

God bless you and keep you in perfect health, Monsieur! I am, in His love, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

¹He was away giving a mission at the time.
²The Saint feared the consequences of the Picquet affair, the fire at the Bastion of France, and the flight of the Governor, Thomas Picquet.
³Nicolas Fouquet.
Monsieur,

Thank you most humbly for the letter of November 23 with which you have honored me and for the good news it contains. I ask your pardon, Monsieur, for the liberty I take of replying to you by a hand other than my own.

I thank God, Monsieur, for having brought you safely and at such an opportune time to Tournus, for the satisfaction you have given everyone there by your fine leadership, and for that which you gave the Queen by your account of the things you did in Metz.² I ask His Divine Goodness, who gives life and movement to all your actions, to animate them more and more with His Spirit.

Your brother the Abbé³ is very well, thank God, except that he is suffering a little from your absence. I am greatly in arrears with him for not giving him all I owe him.

Mademoiselle de Chandenier⁴ was not feeling very well, but she is better now; she always shows great interest and affection for her relatives, especially you, Monsieur, who hold the first place in her heart. Right now, she is very much taken up with the interests of the Chief Justice,² who delighted everyone with a speech he made Monday at the Parlement. I learned this from several persons who heard him, especially M. de Moutiers-Saint-Jean. This great magistrate does everything so graciously and judiciously that he daily gives new reasons to hope that God will be glorified by his fine...
leadership, and the people will be more than satisfied. I tell you this, Monsieur, knowing that you love him for his virtue.

The condition of my legs, which is getting worse, is the reason why I am no longer allowed to go to the meeting, now that it is being held at the Bons-Enfants. The five conferences since All Saints' Day were on the first five beatitudes, and they are supposed to continue with the other three, following the usual method; namely, the first point, the meaning of the beatitude and its acts; second, the motives for acquiring it; and third, the means.

Speaking of means, every day I ask God for those of being able to acknowledge in some way our infinite obligations toward you. I ask for myself the grace of bearing more effectively than I do the title He has given me and which you tolerate in me, in His love, Monsieur—that of your most humble and very obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

The Bishop-elect of Chalon is making his retreat here the better to discover God's Will regarding his calling; he is counting on your help with these leadership responsibilities, and I am asking God to grant you the grace of corresponding with His eternal plan for you.

Addressed: Abbé de Chandenier, in Tournus

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6 Of the Tuesday Conferences.
7 Jean de Maupois.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letter of November 5 too late to reply to it in detail. When we receive the description of the house of Messieurs Mattei, for which you lead me to hope, we will take our final decision regarding the purchase and will weigh the reasons you give me. Meanwhile, let us try to be ever more firmly grounded in the confidence that, no matter what our situation, provided it is God who has placed us in it, we will be well off, even though it may seem to us that we would be better otherwise. If we had to make a choice, in order not to be mistaken we should always take the one that is more closely related to the state of O[ur] L[ord] on earth, where He had no house at all.¹

I agree with you that no further action should be taken regarding Saint-Sépulchre in Annecy, and please see that none is taken, no matter how M. Le Vazeux may insist on it. Please tell this to the banker's correspondent, whom he has put in charge of this business.

When we sent Brother Le Mercier to Italy, it was for Genoa and not for Rome because of the theology classes given there, and we wanted him to study there; but M. Berthe has had some reason since then to act differently. Please send him to study in Genoa, according to the original plan, and I will have someone from Genoa sent to you in his place.

I will have M. Doublard's² letter forwarded, and if money is brought to us for him, I will let you know when we have received it so you or he can draw it on us.

Letter 2741. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
¹Cf. Lk 9:58. (NAB)
²M. de la Bouvierie-Doublard, a priest in Angers.
Enclosed is a letter from the Abbot of Chancelade, who wanted me to recommend his affair to you again. I do so now, even though I know you do not need to have it recommended to you.

I told you my opinion regarding the proposal from Spain; that was in my last letter.

In all that I have just said, I think I have covered all the points of your letter.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

If you send us the reply to the letter I am enclosing for some doctor or surgeon, please remind me to send it to Brother Jean Parre, who is still helping the people of the poor border areas of Champagne and Picardy.

Addressed: Monsieur Jolly

2742. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

Sunday [December 8, 1658]

Most Honored Father,

I have not dared to express to Your Charity, in the name of the entire

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3Father Jean Garat.
4The monks of Sainte-Geneviève were continuing their efforts in Rome to have united to their Order the houses that were dependent on Chancelade Abbey.
5The Bishop of Toledo, Balthazar Moscoso y Sandoval, had proposed that the Congregation of the Mission establish a house there. Saint Vincent gave his opinion on this to Edme Jolly in no. 2737.

Letter 2742. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Brother Ducournau has indicated the month and the year on the back of the original. The contents show that Saint Louise was writing on the eve of a feast of the Blessed Virgin. This can only be December 8, eve of the Immaculate Conception; because it fell that year on a Sunday in Advent, the feast was transferred to Monday, December 9.
Company of our Sisters, how very happy we would consider ourselves if you were to place us under the protection of the Holy Virgin at the holy altar tomorrow. Nor have I dared to entreat Your Charity to obtain for us the grace of being forever able to acknowledge her as our only Mother, since, until now, her Son has never allowed anyone to attribute this title to her in a public act. I ask you for this authorization, for the love of God, and also the favor of doing for us what we should and will do, if Your Charity approves of this and instructs us how to do it.

On this feast two years ago, our little Sister Barbe took her final vows, after having made them for five consecutive years. She entreats Your Charity, Most Honored Father, to offer her renewal to God.

Another Sister has asked Monsieur Portail for permission to make them for the first time. However, I do not know her well enough to be able to assure you that the good Father has granted her request. Her name is Jacquette.

Allow me to entreat you most humbly to offer to God the renewal made by all the other Sisters, even if they did not take their vows on this feast. I beg you also to pardon me for all the faults I have the audacity to commit against the respect I owe you and to do me the honor of believing that I am, Most Honored Father, your most humble and very obedient daughter and servant.

L. de M.

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

Barbe Baily, born near Vitry-le-François (Marne) on June 1, 1628, and baptized the same day, entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity on October 8, 1645, and took her vows on December 8, 1648. Her first mission was with the foundlings, whom she helped install in Bicêtre in July 1647. During the Fronde, the constant presence of soldiers there and the difficulty in finding food caused great concern, but Sister Barbe handled these problems with great wisdom and devotion. In 1649 she went to the Motherhouse, where she worked as infirmarian and as secretary to Saint Louise. After the Saint’s death, Sister Barbe was sent to Poland (September 1660). Illness necessitated her return to Paris in 1668. She served the Company as Treasurer General (1671-74) and first Superior at the Invalides, where she helped design the infirmary wing. In 1685 she was sent to Alençon, where she reorganized the hospital. She died there on August 21, 1699.
Monsieur,

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

As you informed me previously, M. Molony has written us that he is very upset about his duty, to the point where he says that, if he is not relieved of the care of temporal affairs, he will go off to become a Carthusian, where he already has a place reserved. Therefore, Monsieur, I ask you to send him to help your workers who are out giving a mission. Do not put him in charge but let M. Cornaire 1 direct it. Just because he has been Assistant in the house, it does not follow that he has to be in charge elsewhere. If he refuses to go, you must not go either; you cannot leave the care of the family and business matters, where new problems arise daily requiring your presence. You can write to those priests, telling them to moderate their work, not take on more than they can handle, and that you cannot send them anyone just now. We, on our part, will try to send you someone as soon as possible.

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

It is important that you say nothing to M. Molony of what I have written you about him.

Letter 2743. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter. Pope Leo XIII had given the letter to the Archpriest of Bruges; it subsequently became the property of the Conference of Saint Vincent de Paul in that city before being returned to Paris. The postscript is in the Saint's handwriting.

1Guillaume Cornaire, born in the Besançon diocese on June 4, 1614, was ordained a priest during Lent of 1639. He entered the Congregation of the Mission on December 2, 1647, and took his vows in Le Mans on November 23, 1653, where he provided for the spiritual needs of the sick in the hospital. He died there, perhaps in 1660. Brother Chollier wrote his obituary, but it is no longer extant.
We must wait and see what will happen regarding the affair of the main hospital before asking M. de la Bataillère to make some arrangement with the Administrators.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Laudin

2744. - TO PHILIPPE LE VACHER, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, December 13, 1638

Monsieur,

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

I received your letters of November 26 and the third of this month. I am glad that Messieurs Napollon have given you payment for M. Simonnet’s bill of exchange and that you sent Berusset the sum that was for him. I have had your letters sent to Mesdemoiselles de Chandenier and de Lamoignon, and we will keep the one for the Abbé here until his return from Burgundy; he is there now but will be back soon.

I received M. Beaure’s letter. Let him know that I am consoled that he arrived safely in Marseilles, where I embrace him in spirit. I cannot reply to him today because I have many other letters to write; I will do so as soon as possible, God willing. I ask M. . . .

We are trying to retrieve the alms for the hospital and have some hope of success, as I informed you. Madame Fouquet has taken responsibility for getting that business settled.

I heard that M. Brisjonec has arrived in Agde.

Letter 2744. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Hains Family Collection, Marseilles.

1Vital Berusset, a slave in Nauplia, a citadel in southern Greece, in the Peloponnesus, near the head of the Gulf of Argolis.

2Louis de Chandenier.

3The bottom of the original has been cut off in this place.

4The hospital for convicts in Marseilles.
You make no mention to me of Algiers or Tunis; is nothing being said about them in Marseilles? O my God, protect our poor confreres! Please send me news of them, Monsieur, if you have any. I recommend them often to the Company as one of its greatest needs—the one that worries me the most.

Everything is going along as usual here. Please pray for our ordinands and for me, who am, in O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Enclosed is a memo for a slave in Algiers, in case you have occasion to write to our dear Brother Barreau.

2745. - TO EDME JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 13, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I am replying to your letter of November 12. I await by the next regular mail the reply for the Bishop of Le Puy ¹ for which you lead me to hope and the opinion of the Prelate you are supposed to consult regarding the official proclamation of the Bull for Saint-Méen. Meanwhile, I thank you for the information you give me on this matter, which we will utilize, and we will soon begin to work on the verification in the Parlement for that and the other matters.

I already asked you not to make any move for the union of Saint-Sépulchre; for, besides the fact that the Annecy house has no

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¹Henri de Maupas du Tour.
money to pay for the Bulls, the official announcement would encounter insurmountable difficulties, since the religious and the Bishop of Geneva\(^2\) are against it. I say the Bishop of Geneva because the priests in that poor house are unanimous in saying there is no assurance of it in the arrangement that has been made but that, instead of inhibiting a lawsuit, it will be the source of several, which are inevitable, and the cause of its losing about twelve thousand livres. That is why Messieurs Coglée, Charles, and Deheaume\(^3\) insist strongly on not ratifying the transaction, without which it can have no effect. They say that, even should they lose that lawsuit, they will gain much more than if the transaction were carried out, and they will have nothing more to fear.

I told them to explain these things to the Bishop and ask that he himself be the judge of them so that, if he is unwilling to do so, he will not disapprove of their having a definite decision issued. I do not know what he will do, but I foresee clearly that he will not be favorable to us, either in this matter or with regard to the above-mentioned union. That is why I think it will be well for you to do nothing further regarding it.

I received Cardinal Brancaccio’s letter and great consolation at seeing that Brother Le Mercier’s temptation has abated. I am not retracting my request that you send him to Genoa, but if he has not left, I ask you to delay his departure until the men in Genoa have informed you whether they will be able to send you someone to replace him.

\(^2\)Charles-Auguste de Sales.

\(^3\)Mark Coglée (Marc Coglée) was the Superior in Annecy.

François Charles, born in Plémet (Côtes-du-Nord) on December 10, 1611, entered the Congregation of the Mission on March 12, 1640, and was ordained a priest during Lent of 1641. He died on January 26, 1673, after serving at Saint-Lazare as director of retraitants and of the coadjutor Brothers. Edme Jolly, Superior General, greatly praised his virtue in the circular letter addressed to the whole Company to announce his death.

Pierre Deheaume, born in Sedan (Ardennes) on August 20, 1630, entered the Congregation of the Mission on October 8, 1646, took his vows in 1651, and was stationed in Turin and Annecy (1656). He was Superior in Marseilles (1662-65) and Toul (1667-69).
I am waiting for the plan of the house of Messieurs Mattei, with the conditions of the sale for the price and the guarantee. Then we will make a decision. Meanwhile, my own is to be, all my life, as I am now and will be far beyond it, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

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

2746. - TO JACQUES PESNELLE, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, December 13, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I just received your letter of November 23. I thank God for the sentiments He gives you regarding the virtue of humility; they must be very pleasing to O[ur] L[ord] since they are the fruits of His Precious Blood. Please ask Him for the spirit of penance for me that I may lament my wretched past life, and I will ask Him to continue and increase those sentiments He is giving you.

Since God has inspired you to suggest to the Cardinal ¹ that he establish a conference for the priests in his city, go ahead. It will be a good idea, however, not to pressure him about this; for, if it were established, it would require a member of the Company having the grace, ability, and seriousness you have, who would always have to be in the house to preside over those meetings. That might be awkward if it prevented you from going to give missions;

¹Stefano Durazzo.
and if you did go, which of your men would be capable of taking
the place of leader with those priests? And if you were always there,
what would become of your missions? If His Eminence talks to
you about a plan to begin them, you can tell him, if you like, that
you will write to me about it to get my advice.

I ask O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, to grant your little family the grace
to profit from the visitation and to put its recommendations into
practice. I am writing to M. Berthe in Genoa and in Turin at the
same time. This is in case he is no longer with you. If he is, give
him the enclosed; if he has left, you can open it and do what I am
asking him to do.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

2747. - TO JEAN MARTIN, SUPERIOR, IN TURIN

Paris, December 13, 1658

Monsieur,

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

Since M. Berthe already arrived in Genoa some time ago, he
will be arriving without delay in Turin, which is why I am sending
you this letter for him. I received one from you written at the time
you were leaving to give a mission. I think you will return from it
soon enough for the visitation, and I hope God has blessed the one
and will bless the other.

We have the ordinands here in the house, and the whole family
is well.
That is all the news we have. I await yours and am, meanwhile, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.e.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Martin

2748. - TO GUILLAUME DESDAMES, SUPERIOR, IN WARSAW

Paris, December 13, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I received two or three letters from you, the last one dated November 7. I cannot tell you how grieved I am by the loss of M. Fleury, both for the sake of the Queen, who doubtless was deeply affected by it, and for the sake of the Company, which has lost a good protector and benefactor. As for him, I consider him fortunate to be out of the miseries of this world, after the good life he led in it. We are praying and having prayers offered for him and will continue, God willing, to pay him these last respects in gratitude for the great kindness O[ur] L[ord] gave him for us and for the great good he did and procured for you.

In addition to the young men I told you we are sending you, you feel it is necessary for us to send at least one older man with them, capable of guiding them and of doing all our works. That is what we are going to do, but, after all, this is not the right season: the weather is too severe for such a long journey; we will wait until it is milder. Meanwhile, the situation there may become clearer,

Letter 2748. - Archives of the Mission, Krakow, original signed letter.
1François de Fleury, chaplain of the Queen of Poland, had died in France at the beginning of November.
which is much to be desired before undertaking anything. I am
greatly consoled by the good dispositions God is giving people in
that regard. We will continue to pray for peace in the kingdom and
the preservation of Their Majesties.

The gain you say you should have in return from your land by
spending a thousand écus on it is too great not to use that amount
for this purpose. You estimate that it will bring you fifteen hundred
livres income in addition to what you are now getting from it. I
agree, then, if God gives you peace, to your borrowing that money
and trying to save two-thirds of this revenue so you can pay it back
gradually.

I ask O[ur] L[ord] to fill you with His grace in your direction of
the Daughters of Charity, who are giving you so much trouble by
their little dissension. Please do not send Sister Françoise back, as
you are planning to do. You will avoid the rumors that a return
might cause, the dangers of the journey, the trouble of sending
someone else there and, in short, many difficulties. Do as I asked
you to do: separate them; put Sister Françoise to work in some
hospital or at something else that obviates frequent communication
with Sister Madeleine.³

I am really distressed by what you tell me about the death of two
servants of the Sisters of Sainte-Marie,⁴ for I fear the latter might
catch the disease, God forbid! We are praying for them. Please
assure them of this and of my humble service. I will send their letter
to Lyons today. Thank God that their confessor is better and that
God is keeping you, Monsieur, and M. Duperroy⁵ in good health.
I ask O[ur] L[ord] to see that it remains strong.

²Françoise Douelle.
³Madeleine Drugson, daughter of a rich Parisian merchant, entered the Company of the
Daughters of Charity in 1647. She arrived in Poland on September 7, 1652, and died there in
February 1671.
⁴The Visitation nuns.
⁵Nicolas Duperroy.
Everything here is going along as usual, and I am, more than ever—if this were possible—in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
s.c.M.

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

2749. - TO MONSIEUR DE GAUMONT, ON THE ÎLE NOTRE-DAME

Saint-Lazare, December 15, 1658

Monsieur,

One of our Brothers had the honor yesterday of entreating you most humbly on our part to do us the kindness of coming here today to give us your advice on a matter of some importance to us. He told me that you can only come late in the day because some arbitrations will keep you busy almost the entire day. For this reason, Monsieur, I entreat you most humbly to postpone this honor for us to another day in the week that is more convenient for you because we are having some other persons come who are informed on the matter. Please do me the favor, Monsieur, of letting me know if you can do us that of coming here, and what day and hour you prefer. If I did not have a slight ailment preventing me from going out, I would have the honor of going to your office, Monsieur, to get your advice.

I ask Our Lord to preserve you for all the good you do for people and to make me worthy of serving you according to my obligation.

Letter 2749. - Municipal Library of Orleans, original signed letter.
and the desire He gives me to do so. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble and very obedient servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.e.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur de Gaumont, Parliamentary Lawyer, on the Île Notre-Dame

2749a. - TO MOTHER MARIE-AGNÈS LE ROY,¹ SUPERIOR OF THE VISITATION NUNS

Saint-Lazare, December 18, 1658

Dear Mother,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

M. Bucher² came here yesterday morning. He spoke to me in the same terms in which he spoke to you, saying that he is willing to give you only fifteen thousand livres and wants a prompt decision; otherwise he is determined to withdraw his daughter. I

¹Superior of the Second Visitiation Monastery of Paris (faubourg Saint-Jacques). Born in Mons (Belgium) in 1603, she was, through her mother, the niece of Philippe de Corpin, Bishop of Lisieux. In 1624 she entered the First Monastery, which she left at the request of the Marquise de Dampierre to join the group of Sisters who were sent to the Monastery in the faubourg Saint-Jacques at the time of its foundation. She became Directress there and then Assistant. Three times the votes of the Sisters entrusted to her the office of Superior (June 11, 1634-May 24, 1640; May 27, 1646-May 13, 1652; and June 6, 1658 to 1664). She went to inaugurate the Amiens and Mons Monasteries, remaining at the latter for three months; she also founded that of Angers and the Third Monastery in Paris, and played a prominent role in the establishment of the Warsaw Monastery. Mother Le Roy died on May 18, 1669. (Cf. Année sainte des religieuses de la Visitatin Sainte-Marie [12 vols., Annecy: Ch. Burdet, 1867-71], vol. V, p. 547.)

²The father of a young woman who had expressed the desire to enter the Visitatin Monastery in the faubourg Saint-Jacques.
must admit that I was as surprised at this as you were, although I was a little suspicious beforehand of what he might do.

Consequently, dear Mother, I do not see how anything else can be expected of him, nor that he is disposed to a postponement. That is why it will be a good idea for you to seek the advice of your councillors to find out what you have to do, and give him a definite answer, as he asks. I will say nothing to you regarding the amount you should request because I have never been willing to get involved in the dowry of Sisters. As for the person, however, I cannot conceal from you the fact that the father’s frame of mind causes me to fear that of the daughter; so, be careful of that.4

I ask Our Lord to help you to know and follow His Will. Please let me know the decision you take so that, when M. Bucher comes to see me again, as he told me he wanted to do, I can act in line with it.

As for the Demoiselles de Bouillon,5 I think it will be well for you to excuse yourself from receiving them. I am well aware that they are very fine young women and that it would be very advantageous to them to spend some time in your house to become better. I am also considering the circumstance you point out to me—that this retreat would safeguard them from the close contact and plans of their aunt, the wife of the Maréchal de Turenne,6 who belongs to the so-called reformed religion.7 But, since they want to come for only three months and are reserving to themselves the freedom of going out whenever they please, I think it will be less of an inconvenience just to thank them than to receive them for such a

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3 First redaction: “of your community.” The correction is in the Saint’s handwriting.
4 After writing this last sentence, Saint Vincent crossed it out; it has been inserted here, nevertheless, since it reflects the thinking of the Saint.
5 The daughters of Frédéric-Maurice de la Tour d’Auvergne, Duc de Bouillon: Louise, Émilie-Léonor, and, perhaps, Hippolyte.
6 Charlotte de Caumont, wife of Henri de la Tour d’Auvergne (1611-75), Vicomte de Turenne, Maréchal de France. She died in 1666.
7 This term was often used at the time to designate Protestantism. Bossuet eventually converted the Maréchal to Catholicism.
short period and under that condition of being able to come and go.

That, then, is my opinion. I am, in the love of Our Lord, dear
Mother, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Please do not mention my name when you reply to those young
ladies.

I almost forgot to tell you that M. Bucher also told me that, even
though he promised his daughter only fifteen thousand livres, he
intends, however, not to stop at that; but he does not want to make
any commitment. He has a house worth twenty thousand écus, and
he told me he wanted to save half of it. Yesterday he told me that
he also has a son, twenty-one years of age, who is in Lyons. The
young man wants to enter the Oratorian Fathers and, this being the
case, he could give his children an equal share of his property.

I am not sure if you should put any faith in the above.

He told me, furthermore, that, if his son does enter, his wife is
determined to come to your house. Together with your councillors,
weigh all that before God, dear Mother. 8

Addressed: Superior of the Visitation Monastery, in the faubourg Saint-Jacques

2750. - TO EDMÉ JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 20, 1658

We would almost prefer not to have any Irish priests than to have them without being able to use them as we wish. Now,

8This paragraph is in the Saint’s handwriting.

obliging them to go and work in their own country is to deprive us of making their assignments; for, even though the Sacred Congregation may not send them, later on this is a source of temptation for them to get themselves sent or a pretext for becoming independent of the Company, after it has formed them well. That is why I ask you, Monsieur, to make an effort to obtain another dismissorial letter for Brother [Butler] without the obligation of the mission to Ireland, or at least with the clause that he cannot go there unless he is sent by us.

2751. - TO JEAN PARRE, IN LAON

Paris, December 21, 1658

Dear Brother,

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

I had your letter delivered to Mademoiselle Viole, and the one you wrote me was read at the meeting. One of the Ladies there said she would send you by coach or by the Laon messenger three bolts of fabric to clothe the poor people of the villages of Picardy and Champagne. They also earmarked one hundred livres for you, which you will draw on Mademoiselle Viole and use for the most urgent needs. That is all for this time.

You may go to Saint-Quentin whenever you think it advisable. May God be pleased to deliver you from the soldiers and preserve you in good health and in His grace!

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1Peter Butler.


1A meeting of the Ladies of Charity of the Hôtel-Dieu, of which Mlle Viole was the treasurer.

2A town in Aisne.
I am, in His love, dear Brother, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

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

2752. - TO MONSIEUR DESBORDES, COUNSELOR IN THE PARLEMENT

Saint-Lazare, December 21, 1658

Monsieur,

We sent M. Cousturier our documents against M. Norais. He tells me he has examined them closely and thinks we will have solid grounds for filing an appeal in the civil courts. He wants to plead our case himself and is looking forward to winning it. He even goes further, Monsieur, and says that, if we lose, he will compensate us for the loss.

Our senior members, however, cannot bring themselves to take this legal action because:

(1) The lawyers we consulted before the decision that deprived us of Orsigny always assured us—as does M. Cousturier—that our


1A lawyer at the Parlement.

2The son of Elisabeth and Jaques Norais, the King’s secretary. They had given the Orsigny farm to Saint Vincent and the Congregation of the Mission; their son was now contesting this bequest.

3This was followed by: “and although he is fond of money, he will not accept any for this affair,” which was crossed out.
right was infallible, especially M. Deffita⁴ and M. Lhoste⁵ who examined it thoroughly.⁶ The former did so because he was supposed to plead our case if we could not reach a settlement on it, and the latter because he had worked on our documents. Both of them told us we had nothing to fear; yet, the court dispossessed us of that farm, as if we had stolen it. So true is it that opinions vary, and too much store must never be put in the judgment of men.

(2) We were not judged according to the law nor according to custom but on a maxim of the Parlement, which deprives the Church of whatever property it can and prevents it from accepting family property. That is why, when it saw the large pension we were giving the late Monsieur and Mademoiselle Norais, it paid too much attention to a calumny of our opponent, who convinced them⁷ that we were trying shrewdly to ensnare others with this bait. That is what caused us to lose our case, as several of the judges admitted. Now, since we would have to deal with the same judges in the civil court, they will judge us also by the same maxim.

(3) We would cause great scandal if, after such a solemn verdict, we were to go to law to have it overturned. We would be criticized with being too attached to possessions—which is the reproach being leveled against priests—and, by making a public spectacle of ourselves in the law courts, we would do harm to other Communities and cause our friends to be scandalized in our regard.

(4) Since the Marsollier brothers, heirs of the late Mademoiselle Norais, sold to M. Norais, our opponent, any right they might have to the farm, one of their cousins is trying to have that right restored and has begun proceedings for this. He is a man recently appointed

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⁴A lawyer in the Paris Parlement.
⁵Jean-Marie Lhoste was administrator of a number of hospitals in Paris.
⁶Saint Vincent had also consulted Messrs. Ozanen, de Gaumont, Martinet, Pucelle, Billian, and Musso, lawyers to the Parlement, who had given him the same opinion. M. de Savenes, its court reporter, had no doubts about the justice of the cause. (Cf. Manuscript of Brother Louis Robineau, pp. 96-97, published in Dodin, op. cit., p. 89.)
⁷First redaction: “who slipped into the lawsuit.”
Counselor in the Parlement of Rouen and is very skilled at lawsuits, so we would have two strong adversaries to combat.

(5) We have reason to hope, Monsieur, that, if we seek the kingdom of God, as the Gospel says, we will lack nothing and, if the world takes something from us on the one hand, God will give us something on the other. We have even experienced this since the Grand'Chambre deprived us of that land, for God permitted that, when a Counselor of that same court died, he left us almost as much as that property is worth.

(6) Lastly, Monsieur, to speak plainly, I have a very hard time—as you can imagine—going against the counsel of Our Lord, who does not wish those who have promised to follow Him to go to law. And if we have already done so, it is because I could not, in conscience, abandon a property so lawfully acquired—a Community property of which I was administrator—without doing my utmost to preserve it. However, now that God has relieved me of this obligation by a sovereign decree that makes all my efforts useless, I think we should leave things as they are, Monsieur, especially since, if we fail a second time, it would be a mark of disgrace on us, which might be harmful to the service and edification we owe the people.

I most humbly entreat you, Monsieur, you whose spirit is filled with Christian maxims, to ponder all these reasons and be pleased to write me your opinion on them. This will be one more obligation we will add to the many others we have toward you.

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

Since one of our practices during missions is to settle differences, it is to be feared that, if the Company were to persist obstinately in a new dispute by this request to the civil court of law,
which is the refuge of those persons who love lawsuits the most, God might deprive us of the grace of working at reconciliations.

2753. - TO A PRIEST OF THE MISSION OF SAINTES 1

Paris, December 22, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I learned of M. Rivet's illness from two of your letters. This caused me great sorrow, but it would have been even greater had you not assured me at the same time that the doctor said he was out of danger. I thank God for this, and I thank you also, Monsieur, for the great care you take of him. I do not ask you to continue because I know that the same charity that made you begin will make you use every possible remedy for his relief. All I ask is that you spare nothing for this and do not allow him to return to work until he is completely cured. So then, please tell him that I ask him to moderate his zeal inside and outside the house so he will not overdo it and injure his health. We will ask God to keep him well.

I thank His Divine Goodness also for having preserved Brother Marin 2 and for the good health of mind and body He gives you. You find fault with your own proficiency, thinking that you are incompetent; but God has enough for both you and Him. Have no doubt, Monsieur, that if you have good will—as you do by His


1In an earlier letter to Louis Rivet, Superior in Saintes (no. 2565), Saint Vincent refers to Louis Briant as a member of that house. It is probable that this letter was addressed to him since it also mentions Antoine Fleury, another member of the house.

2Martin Baucher, born in Épône, in the Chartres diocese, entered the Congregation of the Mission as a coadjutor Brother in January 1653 and took his vows in Saintes on January 15, 1656, in the presence of M. Berthe. Coste refers to him as Martin Baucher, but in the catalogue of Coadjutor Brothers (1627-1786) he is listed as Martin.
grace—He will give you what you need to serve effectively the ecclesiastical state to which He has given you. Trust in His goodness.

Please tell M. Fleury that I was very consoled by his letter and that I thank O[ur] L[ord] for the good dispositions He gives him.

For lack of time, I am writing to you alone. I am having more trouble than usual with my leg, which prevents me from going downstairs and obliges me to remain seated at all times.

The rest of this family is very well, and I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

2754. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

December 22 [1658]

Most Honored Father,

Fearing that the frost may return, I am taking the liberty of telling you that I think the pain in your leg will subside when you have been purged. Let me tell you about a method I was taught, which produces no upset. Take some senna, the weight of an écu, infused for about an hour in a pint of ordinary bouillon, the first from the pot, drawn when it is at a full boil. Drink it at the beginning of the meal, or eat some soup after taking this small dose, good and hot, by itself.

Repeated for two or three days, this will have the same effect as a strong purgative but will not leave you feeling washed out. If you find it does you some good, continuing it once or twice a week will bring some relief to those poor legs of yours. I almost forgot to mention that this does not interfere with taking bouillon in the morning or having dinner at the first table.

Letter 2754. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

¹Year added on the back of the original by Brother Ducournau.
I think it was Monsieur de Lorme or some other skilled doctor who taught me this secret, which he has been using for more than thirty years. We would be very happy to prepare it for you to try out and even happier to continue to do so if God blesses its use. I think that experience has shown that trying it can do no harm.

Forgive me, as Your Charity has done so many other [times], for taking this liberty. Believe me, Most Honored Father, to be your most humble daughter and very obedient servant.

L. de Marillac

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

2755. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[Between 1645 and 1660] ¹

I thank Mademoiselle Le Gras most humbly for the many and varied acts of charity she does for me, and I ask Our Lord to be her reward.

I have taken the two remedies she sent me. The one I took before dinner worked on me four times with each dose. Since it is taken with the meal, however, I think it was the consistency of what we ate—except for the last two times, when it produced just a small amount of some sort of liquid.

Her charity will judge from that what she thinks advisable for me to take tomorrow, and at what time. I will do so, God willing.

I was feverish last night and this morning. I have just taken the tea.

¹There is no internal evidence by which to date this letter correctly. Marie de la Guiche de Saint-Génis became the Duchesse de Ventadour by her marriage to Charles de Lévis, Duc de Ventadour, on February 8, 1645; Saint Louise died on March 15, 1660. From a letter of Saint Louise to the Daughters of Charity in Ussel (cf. Spiritual Writings, L. 598, p. 617), dated October 26, 1658, we know that the Duchesse de Ventadour had just come to Paris from her ancestral lands in Corrèze.
I am more annoyed with myself than I have been in a long time because I was unable to give Madame de Ventadour the satisfaction she was seeking from us. We are compelled to act that way; all our Bulls oblige us to do so, and we would be offending God by doing what they forbid us to do. God forgive me if I have done so for her at some other time!

I ask Our Lord to sanctify her dear self and to bless her retreat.\(^2\) I entreat her to offer, at the birth of Our Lord, the pain I have caused her. I renew to her the offers of my perpetual obedience; she is my only Lady, since Divine Providence has made me her subject by my birth\(^3\) and even more so by my affection.

*Addressed: Mademoiselle Le Gras*

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**2756. - TO LOUIS DUPONT, SUPERIOR, IN TRÉGUIER**

Paris, Christmas Day, 1658

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I was deeply grieved to hear of the Bishop of Tréguier’s illness, and I shall be extremely anxious about him until you send me word that he is better. I have prayed and have had others pray for this, and we will continue to ask God for his preservation and complete recovery. Please send me news of him as soon as possible.

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\(^2\)The Duchess de Ventadour was making her retreat at the home of Mademoiselle Le Gras.

\(^3\)This part of the sentence would be sufficient to allay any doubt concerning Saint Vincent’s place of birth, were it necessary. The Barony of Pouy, the village where the Saint was born, became the property of the Duc de Ventadour through the marriage of Charles de Lévis to his first wife, Catherine-Suzanne de Lavaüres, the daughter of Suzanne de Monluce and Antoine, Marquis de Thémoises.

Letter 2756. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.

\(^1\)Balthazar Grangier de Liveredi.
It is true that we have been a little tardy in sending you the priest you need, but this delay was against my will, for I really hoped to send you some relief and to give the Bishop this satisfaction. The various occupations that turned up unexpectedly for us, and the men we have had to send here and there—I mean the places for which we were strictly obliged, especially in Italy, where M. Berthe took eight or nine of them—have prevented us from meeting every need. Now that the ordination is over, we are going to prepare someone for you who will leave soon after these feast days.

I hope you will lose nothing for having waited so long. May God be pleased to strengthen you in the meantime! I am deeply consoled that He has blessed your leadership and the retreat exercises of those priests in the seminary, along with your own.

I am not sure if I asked you to send Brother Plunket’s dimissorial letter to him in Saint-Méen and, in the event that it may be lost, to find out if the Bishop will agree to conferring on him the remaining Orders, since the former has already seen the dimissorial. If I had forgotten this, I ask you by the present letter to take care of it.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.l.C.M.

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

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

Your letter of December 7 was a great consolation to me; it was even greater when I saw the various results of your fine leadership, which seems to me very wise and well received. I thank God who is using you for the various good works He accomplishes both inside and outside your house. I ask His Divine Goodness to continue and to increase in you the courage to bear the responsibility His Providence has laid on you.

I praise God for the arrangement that was supposed to be made with the priests of Castelferrus, and I pray that a settlement may result from it.¹

I was informed that the Bishop of Montauban² would like to have some assurance about the two thousand livres that were previously offered to help with setting up the seminary in Montauban. On this I will tell you, Monsieur, that the person who mentioned doing this act of charity is still disposed to donate this sum but first wants to see the seminary transferred and the conditions settled. Make use of this information with your usual prudence. It is to be desired that the Bishop establish you in his town as soon as possible or that he confirm you in Lorm.

M. Bajoue is still out giving a mission; when he returns, I will see that he is given the power of attorney authorizing you to receive the capital and arrears of his income.

I tell you once again, Monsieur, that I cannot think of you

Letter 2757. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.

¹There was some rivalry between the Priests of the Mission, who were the Directors of the shrine of Lorm, in the commune of Castelferrus, and the lord and the clergy of the locality.

²Pierre de Bertier.
without a deep sentiment of joy and tenderness, especially with regard to the good state of your family in general and of the present disposition of M. Lucas¹ in particular, which consoles and edifies the others. I am sure you have contributed to this happy change in him, even though you attribute it to his retreat.

It is true that this practice of the retreat, which God has given to the Company, is one of the most effective remedies we have for picking ourselves up again and moving forward, and I hear from elsewhere, especially from La Rose, that many other members of the Company have profited more from it this year than in others. I hope that, if we are faithful to God, His blessings will be multiplied for everyone in general and each one in particular.

Continue, Monsieur, to govern wisely, gently, and humbly, and you will see the glory of God. I am, in Him, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Barry, Superior of the Priests of the Mission, in Lorm

2758. - TO EDME MENESTRIER, SUPERIOR, IN AGEN

Paris, Christmas Day, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I have not written to you for a long time nor have I received any letters from you. I heard that the Daughters of Charity arrived in

¹Jacques Lucas.

Cahors but have heard nothing so far about Brother Didolet's arrival in Agen, even though theirs gives me reason to believe he has arrived. How are you, Monsieur, and how is your little family?

You informed me that you see almost no women or nuns. That is a good thing. The more we avoid associating with them the better it will be for us.

You do well to consult M. Le Cat for your business affairs, provided it does not inconvenience him; and, if this is not satisfactory, write from time to time to the Bishop about them.

I do not disapprove of your giving part of what is due you to get the other part; that is the right way to do things today.

I ask Our Lord to be your spirit and your guide. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.c.M.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Edme

2759. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[December 1658] 1

I must humbly ask your pardon, Most Honored Father; our remedy was ready at ten o'clock, and I completely forgot about it at ten-thirty. I consoled myself by the fact that, if Your Charity forgives me, we will start again tomorrow. If the preceding remedies helped you by drawing off the heavy fluids, then, if you think it advisable, the dose could be increased and taken tomorrow morning to finish drawing off the fluids. Use for this either twenty-four grains of cornachin powder or the weight of two écus

Letter 2759. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

1Date added on the back of the original by Brother Ducournau. The table of contents has December 25 [1658]; Spiritual Writings, (cf. L. 604, pp. 623-24) has December 25, 1658.
of senna, a few crystals, and some rhubarb in an infusion of our good peach blossom syrup. I think this would do you good, Most Honored Father, and would help us have the honor once again of seeing you soon.

I hope that you in your goodness will give me a reply about this and will also help me so that my indifference to my interior state and everything pertaining to the service of God and my salvation will not lead to my condemnation. I flatter myself in the erroneous belief that God is willing to put up with everything from me—even my careless life—in what concerns my personal conduct. This leads me to fear, Most Honored Father, that I am, in name only, your most humble daughter and very obedient servant.

L. de Marillac

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

2760. - TO EDMÉ JOLLY, SUPERIOR, IN ROME

Paris, December 27, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I just received your letter of November 26 and the one from M. du Loeus, together with the copy of what he wrote to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Toledo. I think it leaves nothing to be desired but rather that the contents and style of his letter show great wisdom and discretion. God be praised, Monsieur, for the benevolence with which this good Doctor honors us and for the evidence he gives us of it on this occasion! I will take the honor of writing to thank him as soon as possible, if I cannot do so today, as I fear. Meanwhile, you can thank him a thousand times on our part for all his acts of kindness and assure him of our entire gratitude.

Letter 2760. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original signed letter.
1Balthazar Moscoco y Sandoval (1646-65).
What you tell me about Brother Le Mercier makes me feel very sorry for him. He is a young man who is basically a good soul, the son of a father who was a very fine man with keen intelligence, which the son does not lack. When he was here, however, I noticed that he was becoming attached from time to time first to some little thing, then to another, but this had no bad results, thank God. He is a very good soul. Be that as it may, he now has become extraordinarily obstinate about studying, to the point of wanting to interrupt and leave everything if his request is not granted.

What shall we do about that? As for me, I find it very difficult. I thought he would be satisfied with studying moral and scholastic theology, which is why I asked you to send him to Genoa. Since then, however, he has thought of nothing but wanting to study philosophy again. That is what troubles me because it is not being taught in Genoa this year, and the class here has already begun. Given these difficulties, I think that, if you have not already sent him to Genoa, it will be well to keep him in Rome until next year, when we will have him go to Genoa or bring him here to begin philosophy at the same time as the others. Meanwhile, he can be useful to you, even if he did nothing else than follow the seminary exercises with the new seminarian you have received, who might be bored at being alone.

If he is unwilling to wait, there is nothing we can do. It would be wrong for us to give in to his obsession, which has all the signs of a diabolical temptation, and I am amazed that he does not see this himself. Desires that come from God are gentle and leave the soul at peace; whereas inspirations of the evil spirit are, on the contrary, harsh and troubling to the person who has them. Now, since his determination to study is turbulent and accompanied by the anxious fear of a refusal, he can conclude that this unsettled state can come only from the devil, who is the author of disorder.

2First redaction: "to one thing." The correction is in the Saint's handwriting.
3This sentence is in the Saint's handwriting.
Furthermore, if he wants to be a Missionary, he must consider himself a member of the Company and, as such, allow himself to be guided. It is up to the Company to assign individual members either to studying or to the works, at the time and in the manner it deems appropriate; otherwise, if each man were at liberty to choose whatever he likes, it would no longer be a body composed of parts which constitute that beautiful harmony of well-regulated Communities, but rather a division of persons following their own inclinations. It is better to remain in the world to do that than to introduce, by this liberty, worldly maxims into a Company that has withdrawn from it and in which subordination is established.

So, that cleric's lack of submission can only come from the spirit of hell, which is a rebellious spirit and which, seeing him on the right path to render service to God and His Church, is doing its utmost to withdraw him from it. O my God, do not allow it to triumph over that poor Brother!

If he is still with you, Monsieur, please point out to him the wiles of the enemy and the malignity of his temptation so that, by allowing himself to be guided by the Spirit and example of Our Lord, he may fulfill God's plans for him. I ask this of His Divine Goodness.

I fully approve of your way of acting with regard to the new work God is offering you. I also approve of the fact that, while assuring the Secretary of the Congregation of Propaganda Fide of your entire, perfect attachment to following the orders and intentions of the Pope, with regard to the place and manner of serving these priests, you nevertheless pointed out to him the things to be done in order to direct and instruct them more effectively. After that, you must remain at peace and believe that, no matter how the affair turns out, the work will go well and God will bless those you assign to it. I have written to tell M. Berthe to go to Rome for that

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4Probably the ordination retreats.
5Marius Alberici.
purpose. Meanwhile, the choice of M. d’Eu and Brother Le Gouz seems very good to me.

If God is not pleased to see that the proposal about the seminary is accepted, in nomine Domini, that is a sign that Our Lord has not willed it. If His Holiness absolutely wants it, we must obey; and if such is the case, write to M. Berthe about it in Turin, where I am writing to him, even though he is leaving for Rome, unless you send him word to the contrary.⁶

Your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

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

2761. - TO SAINT LOUISE

[December 1658] ¹

I am better, thanks to the remedies of Mademoiselle Le Gras. I thank her most humbly for them. The only problem is that the tea acts as a stimulant on me and prevents me from sleeping.

I am very sorry about the state she² is in, which is such, they write, that it seems inadvisable to send a Sister there, nor even a priest (that is how I would act if there were question of a priest from here), because either Our Lord has taken her to Himself or, if she

⁶This paragraph is in the Saint’s handwriting.

Letter 2761. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

¹Reference to the failing health of Sister Barbe Angiboust prompts us to assign this date to this letter.

²Barbe Angiboust, Sister Servant in Châlonsur-Marne.
is still alive, she will probably get better. It will be well to write
tomorrow morning, by the Châteaudun coach, to ask the Sister who
is with her\(^3\) for news about her. Then we will see what it will be
well to do. Meanwhile, let us honor the Blessed Virgin’s acquies-
cence in God’s good pleasure regarding the death of her Son.\(^4\)

2762. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, December 27, 1658

Monsieur,

The grace of O[ur] L[ord] be with you forever!
May God be glorified for the results of your mission and for
your safe return! If the troubles persist, it will be well for you not
to go far away.

I am glad that the Turks from Tunis are in your hospital,
awaiting the order and opportunity to be sent back. This will then
give you the means of writing to our dear confrères in Barbary and
perhaps to give them some help. See if that can be done safely. I
think you are right in saying that sending things by the Spanish
Mercedarian Fathers is very uncertain.

In my last letter to M. Le Vacher,\(^1\) I included a note from

\(^3\)Anne Bocheron, who entered the Company of the Daughters of Charity in 1654. She is
mentioned in a letter of Saint Louise in 1657 as being in Châteaudun (cf. Spiritual Writings, L.
544, p. 568). Perhaps she was one of the Sisters from there who were in Paris in November 1659
and gave testimony to the virtues of Sister Barbe during a conference of Saint Vincent (cf. vol.
X, no. 114).

\(^4\)Barbe died on December 27, 1658. “Those who had seen her during her illness,” relates
Saint Louise (cf. Spiritual Writings, L. 634, p. 634), “confessed that they could not believe they
were looking at the same person after her death; and the people, who came for two days in such
numbers that the doors had to be closed, declared that she was so beautiful that she must have
been wearing make-up.”

Letter 2762. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Hains Family
Collection. This is one of the letters sold at auction by Xavier Charmoy (cf. no. 2505).

\(^1\)Phillippe Le Vacher.
Madame Fouquet stating that the Administrators of the hospital for the captives may take two thousand livres to continue assistance to the patients, and they should draw a bill of exchange on M. Bruand² who is with the Attorney General. I will send the letter from the Administrators to the Duc de Richelieu for the new election.

We do not yet have the results of the consultation from the Sorbonne on the case you sent us. I will have someone request them at the first opportunity.

I have nothing to tell M. Le Vacher, except that I received his letter.

I am glad M. Huguier has returned to Toulon and M. Parisy to Marseilles.

I am writing to you in haste because I received your packet just at the time my letters had to be sent to the post.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

2763. - TO JACQUES FESNELLE, SUPERIOR, IN GENOA

Paris, December 27, 1658

Monsieur,

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

I just received your letter of December 9; it was written from Ceranesi, where I ask O[ur] L[ord] to bless your work, and through it, the poor people. Since your acknowledgment of the need for the Divine Assistance is a motive for humbling yourself, it will also

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²Clerk for Nicolas Fouquet, the Attorney General.

serve as a request to obtain from God the grace you need, especially if you accompany it with great confidence in His goodness.

It is the custom here that all official documents drawn up on behalf of the Community be done in the name of the Superior and not of the procurator. In line with that, any documents you sign before a notary must be signed by you—and not by your procurator—or by the entire assembled family for contracts involving important affairs concerning the Community; but, for receipts and farm leases, the Superior is the one who does it.¹

We should want all our disputes to terminate by mutual agreement rather than by lawsuits. That is why I am glad you are signing a compromise with the relative of the late M. de Monchia to settle by arbitration the inheritance question, especially since this is the opinion of the Cardinal.²

I want to believe that M. Berthe is now in Turin or is on the verge of leaving for there. He will find a letter there in which I have asked him to go to Rome. I have sent you a similar one in which you will see the reason for this order.

I am hurrying because it is night. I am, in the love of O[ur] L[ord], Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
I.S.C.M.

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

¹The words from “for contracts involving important affairs” are in the Saint’s handwriting.
²Stefano Durazzo.
Monsieur,

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

I received your letters of the eighth and the eleventh of this month. When you wrote the last one, I think you had already received mine, in which I asked you to send M. Molony to give a mission. However, you make no mention of receiving it and have not told me since then whether M. Molony went to give the mission. It is true that you said something about it to Brother Robineau. Please acknowledge my letters so I will not be anxious about them.

If M. Molony seems different to you when he gets back—more content, submissive, and regular—please let me know, as well as whatever satisfaction he will have given his conférences; then we will see. But if, on the contrary, you find him as ill disposed as he was before, I think you will do well to speak to him about the valise he sent away; but do so respectfully and gently. Say to him, for example, “Monsieur, do you mind if I say something to you?” and tell him what you know about that business. Then ask him to tell you what was in it and where the books and other things he put in it came from. This is to see what he will reply and, in a word, to persuade him graciously to give everything back.

We will try to send you some help as soon as we can.

I consent to your having someone demolish the shed that is falling down, provided that has no serious consequences and you are being advised to do so.

We will see the young gentleman who wants to go to Genoa.

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1Cf. no. 2743.
May God grant us the grace to finish this year well and to begin and continue the next one in a holy way.

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

My advice is that, no matter what state M. Molony is in when he returns from the mission, it will be a good idea for you to speak to him in the way I told you.

At the bottom of the first page: Monsieur Laudin

2765. - TO PIERRE CABEL, SUPERIOR, IN SEDAN

Paris, December 28, 1658

Monsieur,

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

The distribution being made of some pamphlets dealing with the opinions of the day¹ and my knowledge that some of them have been brought into one of our houses oblige me to warn you that, if any are brought to your house, neither you nor any other of your men should allow them in because reading these articles serves little purpose. They may even be very harmful, especially to persons in the Community who may discuss them with others and say what they think about them. Since everyone has his own interpretation, differences of opinion arise, leading to disputes and divisions.

¹The rest of the letter shows that the propositions of the Jansenists, already condemned by Rome, were not involved here; it was a question of liberal opinions.
We must know and be firmly grounded in matters of faith but should leave those scholarly questions alone. Our Lord did not want the Apostles to argue with the Scribes and Pharisees because of the leaven of their teachings, which might have given them the wrong impression; and Saint Peter forbids the first Christians to argue over the Scriptures because, as he said, there are obscure, difficult things in them, even in the Epistles of Saint Paul.

This being the case, we have much greater reason to avoid discussing those useless matters. By the grace of God, we do not talk about them here in this house because we have a thousand fine topics of conversation that are more edifying and more appropriate. We must, however, respect the diverse inspirations of those who stir up those questions, but we should not declare ourselves on one side or the other. Everyone has his reasons, and God allows them to have differing ones, as He did with Saints Peter and Paul, Saints Paul and Barnabas, and also among the angels, when He revealed certain things to some differently than He did to others. That is why, Monsieur, I ask you once again not to allow any of those leaflets into your house, or any of those propositions to be put forward that can serve only to sow discord among the confreres and disedify persons outside the Company. The latter would criticize our curiosity and prattling if they saw us reading and discussing those scurrilous writings and novelties—and even more so if they saw us taking sides.

I told you already that, if M. Daisne takes possession of his lapsed benefice, he is detaching himself at the same time from the Company because we cannot tolerate among us anyone who aspires to benefices—and even less those who want to gain posses-

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2Cf. Lk 12:1. (NAB)
3Cf. 2 Pt 3:15-16. (NAB)
4Cf. Gal 2:11-14. (NAB)
5Cf. Acts 15:36-40. (NAB)
6Cf. Rv 12:17. (NAB)
7Cf. no. 2732.
sion of them in that way, which is odious. So, Monsieur, ask him to leave, and give him something rather than permit him to eat and sleep in your house, after that action, which is bound to put him in conflict with his competitor and would do the same in your family, if he were one of its members. We will send you another priest in his place as soon as possible.

We have not been able to get the results of the consultation concerning your tithes, although we have given three écus for it. I will send someone after it again.

There is no way of putting at the Incurables\textsuperscript{8} the converted woman of whom you wrote me because all the places in that hospital are taken, and a large number of patients are waiting for the first vacancy.

There would be no major inconvenience if the administrators of your church were to assemble in your rectory only on Sundays and holydays, when the students are away. Nevertheless, because of the conclusion they might draw from this that they could meet there any time, it will be a good idea for you to dissuade them from doing so altogether, as tactfully as you can.

It is the distinctive duty of priests to procure mercy and to be merciful to criminals, so you must not always refuse to help those who seek your intervention, especially when there is more misfortune than malice in their crime. There is a letter in Saint Augustine on this topic (I forget which one it is), which points out that to free sinners and prisoners by way of intervention and leniency is not promoting or condoning vice; it also points out that it is part of the propriety and charity of priests to plead for them. Therefore, you may do so whenever you see that the case merits it, and you can prepare the minds of the judges by telling them that it is not your intention to defend crime but rather to practice mercy, by seeking it for the guilty and demanding it for the innocent, according to the obligation of your state.

\textsuperscript{8}The Hospital for Incurables in Paris, known today as Laennec Hospital.
It is the function of the Visitor to restore the practice of interior communications. We will soon send you one, God willing. You can tell him that your family has grown lax in this practice, so he can find a remedy for this.

Do not refrain from visiting the school just because the teacher does not like this or you fear that the students may think less of him. The Superiors of the Jesuits disregard these reasons because they have stronger ones for keeping abreast of what is going on in the classes.

As I was finishing this letter, I opened yours of December 23. We will try to pay your bill of exchange.

I am sending your packet to Annecy and will have prayers offered for the restoration of your health and that of those priests you mention who are ill.

You tell me that you gave M. Daisne a testimonial of his morals and ability so he can get his certification in Reims for the lapsed benefice in question. In so doing, you were too hasty; you should have written to me about it beforehand. And that gives me reason to ask you to do nothing from now on, in extraordinary matters that arise, without getting my opinion on them, especially when they are of some importance, as that one is. It has far greater consequences than I can tell you; for, if the Company has been publicly criticized in some dioceses for having had some persons who have taken parishes from the Prelates—to the extent of its being reproached during missions for going there only to be on the lookout to skim off all the good benefices—what will they not say if they see that there are others who not only take the parishes the Bishops give them but, in addition, take lapsed benefices with the authorization of their Superiors? I must admit that this distresses me greatly.

When I say you should give something to M. Daisne, I mean only once.
Most Honored Father,

I praise God with all my heart that Your Charity foresees the expression of our needs, and I thank you most humbly for this. My heart is so reassured by it that, without it, I would find it very difficult to endure such a long deprivation. Reflect a little, Most Honored Father, on what means I might take so as not to go astray or be lost, living as I am without making known to you my state and without any advice or communication.

Permit me to ask if your leg is any better and if we can hope that it will soon be cured.

The last hours of the year are upon us. I throw myself at your feet to entreat Your Charity to obtain mercy for me, since I await only the one when God will call me to render an account to Him. It is for that moment alone that I implore Your Charity because my constant infidelities and lack of mortification cause me to offend Our Lord so often.

I think something still remains to be done for the spiritual strengthening of the Company. If Your Charity would allow me to send you a report on this, I would do so even if I should have to blush for shame because of it.

All our Sisters anxiously await the honor of seeing you. Offer us to God in the way He wishes, and do me the honor of believing, Most Honored Father, that I am your most humble and very obedient daughter and servant.

Louise de Marillac

My ailment prevented me from finishing this letter yesterday, and I am beginning the year with great weakness and suffering of mind and body. I ask the blessing of Your Charity for this and for all my needs, as well as for the entire Company.

I had asked Monsieur Portail to ask Your Charity, for the love of God, to have a High Mass celebrated in your church for our deceased Sister Barbe, since she was one of the oldest members of the Company and was very faithful to her vocation. All our Sisters would be assembled for it; I think it would be a great consolation for them and an encouragement to do good.

Letter 2766. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

Barbe Angiboust, who had died on December 27, 1658, in Châteaudun.
Enclosed are our holy pictures and maxims for the year. I am sending them to Your Charity so that, if you agree, we can distribute them as usual on your behalf, after you have blessed them to obtain for us the grace of using them well.

First day of the year 1659

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

2767. - TO SISTER AVOIE VIGNERON, IN USSEL

January 4, 1659

Dear Sister,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

My letter to Sister Anne ¹ will serve as a reply to the one you wrote to Mademoiselle.² You go a little too far in the things you tell us, and you have sometimes failed in the respect you owe to Mademoiselle. I am well aware that your heart is not lacking in the latter, but you spoke too freely in justifying yourself for some slight reproach she made to you.

Mon Dieu! Sister, if you have no reverence and submission for your Superior, for whom will you have them? She is not complaining about this, but I have to tell you about it so that you will act with her as with your good mother, who esteems and cherishes you. Write to her when you have occasion to do so, but humbly and cordially, as becomes a Daughter of Charity. Observe confidentiality with everyone other than her or me concerning what you have to say about your Sister, your duties, or your trials. Rest assured

¹ Anne Hardemont (cf. no. 2768).
² Saint Louise.

that, instead of finding elsewhere the remedy or the consolation you seek, you will only make matters worse because you will be acting contrary to the order established by God, who wills that in difficulties which may arise you have recourse to your Superiors. It is also to be hoped, Sister, that you will live on good terms with Sister Anne, act only on her advice, and do nothing against her wishes.

I ask Our Lord to give you a share of His own humility and love.

2768. - TO SISTER ANNE HARDEMONT, SUPERIOR, IN USSEL

January 4, 1659

Dear Sister,

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

I received two letters from you which have distressed me deeply and with good reason, seeing how you are behaving there. Who, indeed, would not be distressed at seeing a Daughter of Charity—one of the oldest in the Company—brought to Limousin by Divine Providence to do the works of mercy, no sooner arrive on the spot than she wants to return out of sheer caprice and constantly complains of being left there, although she has no difficulties to endure other than the ones she makes for herself?

True, if these complaints did not go outside the Company, there would be no great harm in that; but everyone knows of them; people have written to the Duchess ¹ about them, and you yourself tell me of another person who is aware of them. With all that, there is no reason to doubt that the entire province knows of them.

Letter 2768. - Reg. 1, fol. 22v.
¹The Duchesse de Ventadour.
Now, I ask you to consider the scandal you are giving and the insult which Our Lord, who has called you to His service, receives from it. Look at the harm you are doing to the Duchess, who brought you to her estates for the relief of the poor and the edification of her subjects. Must she not find your behavior strange and so contrary to her intentions? Must she not be surprised to see your anxiety, to hear your murmurings, and to know that you are not acting in conformity with your vocation? You are doing more harm to the Company in this than any good you have ever done for it. In addition, you are doing great harm to yourself by giving in to nature. Once it has the upper hand you will have a harder time overcoming it in order to live according to the spirit and to do God’s Will—which is, however, what we must do to save ourselves. Otherwise, “if you live by the flesh,” as Saint Paul says, “you will die."

“But, Monsieur,” you will say to me, “I told you from the beginning that I could not last in this region; I dislike it too much.” My reply to that, Sister, is that no one likes being in a strange place; yet, they go there and they stay. How many young women who have married far away are unhappy with their homes and their husbands as well! But they do not return to their parents’ house because of that. They have to mortify their preference. Do you think that the nuns and the many other girls and women who have gone to Canada really enjoy being in that place? On the contrary, they have a strong aversion to it—and rightly so—still, they remain because God has called them there.

You will tell me also that you do not have enough to do. My

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2 Cf. Rom 8:13. (NAB)

3 When Saint Vincent was writing this letter, Mademoiselle Mance and Sister Marguerite Bourgeoys had returned to France from Canada and were trying to find volunteers to go to that distant country to work for the education of children or in health care. (Cf. Étienne-Michel Paillon, *Histoire de la colonie française en Canada* [3 vols., Ville-Marie: Bibli. paroiss., 1865-66], vol. II, pp. 306-13.)
reply is that, if you are humble in a few things, God will set you over many. Do well the little you have to do, and rest assured that work will not be lacking to you. Besides, since you are not strong, too much work might overwhelm you, and you would have greater reason to complain about that than you would about having too little to do, which gives you time to think about yourself. Furthermore, you should not always stay in your room, but take turns with your Sister—or go with her—visiting and serving the poor. That is one way of not getting bored.

If you reply that you do not get along well with your Sister, I will tell you that this is a great evil which must be remedied, not by avoiding her—since that would be pleasing the devil who does everything he can to separate you—but by being united by mutual affection. Love one another as sisters; esteem and respect one another as daughters of Our Lord made in the image of God; bear with one another’s little weaknesses as you would wish to be borne with; lastly, comply graciously with one another’s wishes and never argue. Sister Avoie should, above all, take your advice, since you are in charge; but you, for your part, should be humble, gentle, and wise in your leadership.

In the name of God, Sister, be patient; try to enter into the sentiments of this letter, and make up your mind never to do your own will; otherwise, you will fall into the misfortune of souls who are being lost because they do not submit themselves to the persons God has established to direct them in the ways of their salvation. And with regard to this, you must never lose the confidence you should have in Mademoiselle. She is your mother, who has the right to give you the instructions she thinks advisable, and she has received graces from God to do so. Yet, you are so displeased by this that you say you no longer wish to write to her. Beware, Sister. That is the resolution of a rebellious, proud spirit, capable of

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4 Cf. Mt 25:23. (NAB)
5 Avoie Vigneron.
— 450 —

depriving you of the graces of God, who gives them only to the humble and peace-loving. I ask His Divine Goodness to include you in that number.

I am, in His love, Sister, your very affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,  
I.C.M.

2769. - TO LOUIS RIVET, SUPERIOR, IN SAINTES

January 5, 1659

You speak of returning on mission, but I ask you not to be in such a rush; wait until you have fully recovered, and then moderate your efforts for the love of Our Lord. It is better to have some strength left over than not to have any at all, and God will bless your work—even if it seems little to you—if you avoid overwork in order to serve Him better. True, it is a great happiness to die in the actual practice of charity, as you hope to do, and this will undoubtedly happen to you, since you want to live only to work at this.

It is also true that something extra is given at table four times a year at Saint-Lazare—an egg on Easter, a cake for the Epiphany, a little pâté on the feast of the patron saint, and a few fritters on Quinquagesima Sunday. You may have the same given at your house.

We must never accept any remuneration for our missions, either from persons absent or present, rich or poor. I am not saying that you may not accept money as an alms if anyone sends you some, but you may not accept it for having given a certain mission or on condition of giving one.

You tell me that you decided during your retreat not to ask again to be relieved of the office of Superior but to be content with representing your inadequacy to God. That is what should be done, Monsieur. Value this practice and continue to govern as you have done in the past. All has gone well with God’s blessing, and all will go even better with the trust you will have in His grace and the experience you have acquired. It is not that we do not need you elsewhere, but we are waiting for a greater need before taking you from Richelieu, where a wise, vigilant, gentle, regular man like you is needed.

I do not know how M. [Lièbe] ¹ has the nerve to dare to show his face in Richelieu, where he has given reason for gossip against his reputation, and I know even less on what grounds he claims to base the dispensation from his vows. As for me, I cannot release him from them without a legitimate reason, and his so-called infirmities—even if they were genuine—must not be taken into account, no more than his mental upsets, which proceed only from his allowing nature to get the upper hand. When God gives him a firm determination to return to the Company, He will also give him indifference with regard to houses and the desire to stay away from places which now give him pleasure.

¹As mentioned in no. 2692 (October 20, 1658), M. Lièbe had recently left the Company. Saint Vincent had given Pierre de Beaumont specific instructions on how to deal with him.
2771. - TO FATHER PHILIPPE-EMMANUEL DE GONDI

[January 9, 1659]

My Lord,

My declining state of health and a slight fever I had cause me to take this precaution in your regard, My Lord, in the uncertainty of what is to come. I would like to prostrate myself in spirit at your feet to ask your pardon for the displeasure I have given you by my boorishness and to thank you most humbly, as I now do, for your charitable forbearance in my regard and the innumerable favors our little Congregation and I in particular have received from your kindness. Rest assured, My Lord, that, if God is pleased to continue to grant me the power to pray to Him, I will use it in this world and in the next for you and your family, desiring to be, in time and eternity, your...
I also venture, Monseigneur, to recommend to Your Eminence your Little Company of the Mission, which you have founded, maintained, and favored. Since it is the work of your hands, it is also most submissive and very grateful to you, as to its father and Prelate. In addition, while it will be praying on earth for Your Eminence and the house of Retz, I will recommend the one and the other to God in heaven, if His Divine Goodness grants me the grace of welcoming me there, as I hope from His mercy and your blessing, Monseigneur, which I ask of Your Eminence. Prostrate in spirit at Your feet, I am, in life and in death, in the love of Our Lord.

2773. - TO SAINT LOUISE

Tuesday evening

I thank Mademoiselle Le Gras most humbly for her care of me and for the little remedies she in her charity suggests. Recently M. Dalencé\(^1\) told me that frequent purging is not good for my condition. Brother Alexandre\(^2\) wanted me to take a little something from him tomorrow. Nevertheless, I offer a thousand wishes that Mademoiselle Le Gras and her dear Daughters will be more and more sanctified, and I recommend myself to her prayers.

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Letter 2773. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original autograph letter.

\(^1\)A renowned surgeon, whose name is linked to the story of the miracles attributed to the Holy Thorn (la Sainte Épine) of Port-Royal.

\(^2\)Alexandre Véronne, infirmarian of Saint-Lazare.
Monsieur,

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

I thank God a thousand times for the extraordinary benefits that have come from your latest mission and for the fact that all of you have returned in good health and just in time to welcome the Visitor and the visitation. I hope the house will receive both good results and consolation from them.

The outcome of the affair being pursued in Rome ¹ depends more on what God wants than on the recommendation of men. That is why we must trust in God alone and ask Him to settle it according to His good pleasure. That is what we will do. We must await patiently your entire establishment. God’s works are not done all at once, but little by little.

We have no news here. I have been sick but am better now, thank God. I offer you frequently to Him, in whom I am, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL, i.s.C.M.

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

¹The Sant'Antonio affair (cf. no. 2670).
Monsieur,

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

While awaiting your letter from the last regular mail, I am sending you a bill of exchange from Messieurs Simonnet on Messieurs Napolion for 1966 livres. They come from the Attorney General, who is giving them as alms to the hospital for the convicts. I received them in payment of the bill of exchange the Administrators sent me on M. Bruand, agent for the Attorney General. This note was for 2000 livres; however, I am sending you only 1966. The reason is that, on the one hand, Messieurs Simonnet took 20 livres for the exchange at the rate of one per cent, contrary to their usual way of acting, saying that money was scarce in Marseilles, and, on the other, 14 livres were missing from a bag of 1000 francs.

When Madame Fouquet’s man, who brought it here, saw the miscount, he wanted to take it back to M. Bruand to have this rectified, which I was unwilling to allow him to do. I felt we should not haggle over such a trifle with persons of their caliber and for something that is a gift. Despite our request that he say nothing about it, the man still mentioned it to Madame. Then he went off and complained to M. Bruand and to his agent, who told him that, if he brought his bag back, he would give him a full one and that he knew well from whom he had received it. So he returned here yesterday on behalf of Madame to ask for the bag in order to have it exchanged, but we had already sent it to Messieurs Simonnet. These are the reasons for the lesser amount.


1Nicolas Fouquet.
We received 4 livres 10 sous for a convict named Lesueur on the Ducale; I am notifying M. Huguier of this so he will give them to him.

I just received your letter of the seventh. You say you have heard nothing from Barbary, and M. Le Vacher tells me that Brother Barreau is a prisoner. If that is the case, God be praised! Things are not as bad as I feared. I am glad M. Le Vacher is ministering to the sick in the hospital. May God in His mercy bless you and your work!

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

VINCENT DEPAUL,
C.M.

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2776. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

[January 1659]¹

A young man came and told us quite simply of his obligation to see that a baby, twenty-one months old, who had been taken from its mother, be well brought up. The man wants to join a religious Order and has set forth the terms he is willing to meet to be relieved of his responsibility. He will pay seven livres a month to the hospital and make an outright gift of one thousand livres to the child, to be invested for the time when he is old enough to learn a trade.

Some sensitive persons in the Company have a repugnance for the term Confraternity and want only Society or Community. I took the liberty of saying that that word [Confraternity] was essential for us and could be very helpful in remaining firm against innovation. I also said that it signified secularity for us; and since Providence had added to it the words

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¹Date added on the back by Brother Ducourneau.

²Philippe Le Vacher.
Society and Company, we understood by this that we must live regular lives by observing the Rules we received at the time of the establishment of our Confraternity, as has been explained to us. I think, Most Honored Father, that M. Portail should discuss this with Your Charity. I ask that, if you think it advisable, this be done without it being obvious that I said anything to you about it.

Sister Louise Ganset's money is cleared to be handed over. However, since it changed hands on the death of Monsieur Bézé, the person who has it wants to hear from M. du Fresne. If you judge it appropriate, I most humbly entreat you, Most Honored Father, kindly to let him know. Sister is growing weaker by the day, and we are afraid she will not last much longer. What she wants to give to the Company might then be lost.

I think I am obliged to take this little precaution and to ask your pardon most humbly for all the trouble I have caused you recently. This is my usual way of acting; with your assistance, I want to correct it along with all my other faults. I am, Most Honored Father, your most humble daughter and very grateful servant.

L. de Marillac

Addressed: Monsieur Vincent

2777. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, January 24, 1659

Monsieur,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

We have received ten livres for Charles Ballagny, a convict on

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2A native of the environs of Villerpreux, she was sent to Richelieu in 1638 and remained there until 1644, when she returned to Paris to work with the galley slaves. In 1657 she was sent to Maule.

3Charles du Fresne, Sieur de Villeneuve, former secretary of Queen Marguerite de Valois, was one of Saint Vincent's closest friends. After the Queen's death in 1615, he became secretary, then intendant, of Philippe-Emmanuel de Gondi.

Letter 2777. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, copy made from the original in the Hains Family Collection, Marseilles.
the galley *Princesse de Morgue*. I ask M. Huguier to pass them on to him.

Enclosed is a bill of exchange for three thousand livres from Messieurs Simonnet on Messieurs Napolion, payable in your name. This money is to be used for the Missionaries of Tunis and Algiers, where you will send it at the first opportunity in two installments. I greatly fear that no safe way will present itself for a long time, but we finally have the wherewithal to maintain our poor confreres. It is up to you to figure out how to get this money to them. If M. Le Vacher of Tunis supplied the money for Algiers, it is only right that you send him that amount.

A week ago I sent you another bill of exchange for 1966 livres, which the Attorney General\(^1\) gave us for the hospital for the convicts. If you have not received the first one, the second bill of exchange is enclosed from the same Messieurs Simonnet on Messieurs Napolion.

After writing the above, I received your letter of the fourteenth. I have not yet seen the letters from Algiers, but according to yours we have reason to praise God for the present state of our Brother.\(^2\) It consoled me greatly, and I thank the Divine Goodness for having thus disposed things so well.

Before saying anything more to you on that, I will wait for the translations you lead me to expect, and I think that, before making any decision on M. Le Vacher's\(^3\) return, it will be better to see what reply the King will give the Pasha and the Customs House of Algiers. Meanwhile, if you have the possibility of so doing, you can send Brother Barreau some clothing and whatever he requests, up to two hundred livres. You can take this money from the fifteen hundred earmarked for him in this bill of exchange. I do not know what else to do to prevent him from spending and lending the funds

\[^1\]Nicolas Fouquet.
\[^2\]Jean Barreau.
\[^3\]Philippe Le Vacher.
deposited with him by the slaves; for, even after my writing to him several times not to do so, he still contravenes this order because he lacks firmness.

I cannot reply to M. Le Vacher today.

I am ...

2778. - TO CANON CRUCHETTE, IN TARBES

January 29, 1659

I saw, from one of your letters, your remembrance of and your charity for us, especially for me, who do not deserve it, and I thank you most humbly. I am deeply edified, Monsieur, to hear that you are still doing good, enlightening town and country by word and work, and spreading good graces and gentleness everywhere.

It is true that our Little Company was considered for Bétharram; the late M. Charpentier was the first to propose it to me.

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4Philippe Le Vacher.

Letter 2778. - Reg. 2, p. 64.

1Bétharram is situated in the commune of Lastelle (Pyrénées-Atlantiques), not far from Lourdes. In 1614, Jean de Sales, Bishop of Lescar, had a chapel built there which, under the direction of the Missionaries of Garsion (1615-21), had rapidly become the center of a very popular pilgrimage. Léopold de Trapes, Archbishop of Auch (1600-29), once led there a pilgrimage of ten thousand persons. He erected three crosses on the top of the hill and left in the sanctuary a statue of the Blessed Virgin, which he himself had carried there. Hubert Charpentier, whom the Bishop of Lescar had put in charge of the chaplain there, was a man of great virtue and integrity. In 1621 he founded in Bétharram the Congregation of the Priests of Notre-Dame-du-Calvaire, which was still serving at the shrine in 1659. The increasing renown of Notre-Dame-de-Bétharram won the favor of Popes and the aristocracy. Louis XIII, Anne of Austria, the Biron and Montmorency families, and the leading families of Bearn and Gascony became its benefactors. The history of the shrine was written by Canon Dubarlat, to whom we owe many valuable works on the Pyrénées-Atlantiques. (Cf. Victor-Pierre Dubarlat, Bétharram et le Mont-Valérien [Paris, 1897].)

2Hubert Charpentier, a graduate in theology of the Sorbonne, was born in Coulommiers on November 3, 1565. After contributing to the foundation of Notre-Dame de Garsion, he founded two shrines honoring the Cross of the Savior: one at Bétharram, the other at Mont-Valérien, near Paris. He died in Paris on December 10, 1650.
almost twenty years ago, and it has been discussed with us from time to time. Up until now, however, God has not found us worthy to serve Him in that holy place; furthermore, it is true that we are only poor folk, as you know. Still, people persist in wanting us there, especially some gentlemen from the Parliament of Navarre; and M. de Laneplan, a gentleman delegated to the Court by the Estates of Béarn, explained to us recently that he was responsible for finding out what we think. I was told that the Bishop of Lescar, who has just been consecrated, wants to do me the honor of coming to talk it over with me. Now, to tell you my thoughts on the question:

(1) I fear that our insignificance, which is great as to the number, quality, and virtue of the workers, will prevent us once again from accepting the honor being offered to us.

(2) The custom of those priests in Bétharram is to wait for penitents to come there, and ours is to go and seek them out where they are. It would be difficult for our priests, who have given themselves to God to go from village to village to evangelize the poor, to renounce giving missions in order to attach themselves to a single church, and to work only for the devotion of people who come and go and cannot receive properly the necessary instructions to be converted to God. All of them, however, could go to the house on major feast days when there is a large crowd, but a means would have to be found in between times so that, while some of them would take care of obligations in the house, the others could work at exterior ministries.

(3) Only three priests in the chapel are willing to yield their places to us, and there are four who do not want to admit us; yet, they must all give their consent for us to be established there; otherwise we could not agree to this. If those who have a hard time with this want to continue to live and perform their spiritual

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2Jean du Haut de Salies (1658-81).
exercises in that house and still consent to our being brought in, we could in that case come to an agreement with them about what is needed for their upkeep, and they could live with us, as did the religious who received us at Saint-Lazare.

(4) Lastly, Monsieur, I have great difficulty with the vigils that are often held at night in that church. I am well aware that the intention in having them is good, and I want to believe that no distressing trouble has occurred with them; but I am also aware that this could happen and that it is not without good reason that the Church, which allowed these vigils in the beginning, has stopped them since then. I entreat you to let me know how often they have them in Bétharram and on what days they take place.

Since you wish to be informed about the state of this affair, I am very glad to tell you, Monsieur, the difficulties involved. In addition, I can assure you that, if they can be eliminated, the plan could also be carried out. In which case, it will be a great blessing for us to be able to contribute something to the honor rendered to Our Lord and His glorious Mother in this holy place and to know that we will receive there your protection, your help, and your advice, as you offer us in advance.

2779. - TO DOMINIQUE LHUILLIER, IN CRÉCY

Saint-Lazare, January 31, 1659

I received your letter and learned of your illness, which has grieved me deeply. I have prayed and have had others pray for you that it may please God to restore you to health and, in the meantime, to grant you the grace to make good use of your present state for yourself and for others. Since it seems that Our Lord loved God and redeemed humanity more through suffering than in any other

Letter 2779. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, Marseilles manuscript.
way,1 He has shown His servants that they can serve humanity more effectively by this same means. You must, however, do all in your power to get well, and I ask you to do whatever depends on you for this purpose.

And because you are not in a place where you can be properly cared for, we thought of bringing you here, and I am sending the bearer of this letter for the express purpose of finding out how to do this. See, Monsieur, if you are well enough to go to Meaux to get a seat in the coach, or if you could stand the fatigue of traveling on horseback, or if we should send a stretcher for you, which I will do as soon as I am told which way. Please consider it a duty to do so without waiting for any further decision from us. On Monday morning we will send a priest to take your place; he will arrive in the evening.

I repeat to you that I am deeply grieved by your illness; mais quoi! we must conform ourselves to God's good pleasure, and hope from His goodness that it will be nothing serious. It will be a great joy for me and for the whole house to see you.

2780. - TO JEAN BARREAU, CONSUL, IN ALGIERS

Paris, January 31, 1659

Dear Brother,

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

I received your letter sent on three dates, the last being the second of this month. For a long time we were between hope and fear in your regard, but hope always prevailed because it was founded in God who protects His own.1 He has indeed delivered

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1Cf. Heb 2:10. (NAB)

Letter 2780. - Archives of the Mission, Turin, original signed letter.

1Cf. Ps 31:24-25. (NAB)
you—not only from death and the acts of violence we feared, but even from the prison where they put you because of the Bastion. Even though you are not yet free from the claim of the Turks in this matter, they will perhaps leave you in peace in their hope that the men M. Picquet\textsuperscript{2} kidnapped will be returned to them. We are working on that.

I will say nothing in particular to you regarding the things you tell me except that we will extricate you, God willing, from your former commitments and from those you mention in your new list. But you must practice a little patience until there is a safe way of sending you the money. Right now, we do not feel there is one, whatever the Turks may pretend, and there is certainly wisdom in waiting until the present obscure matters are cleared up. You have reason to fear not only Picquet’s creditors but Rappiot’s as well, who are undoubtedly on the watch to see if anything will be sent to you so they can pounce on it. We are being advised not to send anything by way of Tunis either, until M. Le Vacher\textsuperscript{3} assures us that there is nothing to fear. He has not written for a long time, which is a bad sign.

A week ago I sent M. Get three thousand livres for the living expenses of the Missionaries in Algiers and Tunis. If M. Le Vacher has advanced any money for you, it is only right for you to reimburse him from your share; if not, M. Get will forward your half to you by the first safe occasion.

Dear Brother, please manage well what the good God is sending you and be exact in keeping the deposits so you can return them on demand. It is the money of the slaves that is entrusted to you; their freedom—and perhaps their salvation—depends on it. If you are going to use this money for other purposes or lend it out to ransom other slaves, to the prejudice of those to whom it belongs, you put yourself in the grave danger of being unable to give it back when

\textsuperscript{2}Thomas Picquet, Governor of the Bastion of France.
\textsuperscript{3}Jean Le Vacher.
they need it. Consequently, you will make yourself blameworthy before God and before others. All you need is a little firmness to rid yourself of those obtrusive persons who borrow from you. Tell them you have nothing of your own nor the means of paying your own debts, that you are forbidden to commit yourself for others, and similar reasons against which you cannot act in conscience.

I had your letters delivered to your brother. Everything is going very well here. We have prayed hard for you and will continue to do so, God willing. If the Bastion is reestablished, we will have the interests of the Consul recommended.

I embrace you with all the tenderness of my heart, filled with gratitude to God in His goodness for the patience and protection He gives you. I am, in His love, Monsieur, your most humble servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

2781. - SAINT LOUISE TO SAINT VINCENT

February 1, 1659

Most Honored Father,

If God did not make me insensitive to my suffering at seeing myself so forsaken, I would be enduring great pain. The one that does affect me is that of not having sufficient light to make good use of this according to God's plan and to make this deprivation—which I have perhaps merited—useful to me. This opportunity is a consolation to me, since I can ask for your blessing for myself and for all our Sisters, as I now do, especially for Sister Marie of the Hôtel-Dieu, Sister Anne of Angers,¹ who has been in

Letter 2781. - The original autograph letter was formerly the property of the Daughters of Charity, 28 rue Louis Ulbach, Troyes. Its present location is unknown.

¹Anne Vallin, of whom little is known; she was in Paris in 1659.
the Company for eighteen years, and Sister Geneviève from near Maule. After their recent retreat, they expressed to Monsieur Portail their desire to be allowed to renew their vows tomorrow. The Sister who came from Brienne with Sister Catherine very humbly asks for the simple attire of the Daughters of Charity.

Several persons recommend to your prayers a matter of very great importance for the glory of God and the salvation of souls redeemed by the blood of His Son. You are aware of my need for them as well. That is sufficient for me, since I am, Most Honored Father, your most humble daughter and very obedient servant.

L. de Marillac

2782. - TO DENIS LAUDIN, SUPERIOR, IN LE MANS

February 5, 1659

We are sending you a Brother who is new in the Company but not in virtue. We could not give you one more clearly called by God, more firmly grounded in his vocation, or more suited to your need. He is upright and prudent, and I hope, Monsieur, that since he will edify your family, you will take care to see that he is not discredited by it, for nothing repels and unsettles beginners more than to see that their seniors do not give them good example.

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2Geneviève Callou, a native of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, entered the Daughters of Charity in 1638. In March 1640 she left the Motherhouse for Angers, where she remained until the end of 1644, when she returned to Paris. During 1645-46 she was Sister Servant at Saint-Gervais parish; in May 1646 she went to Le Mans but returned to Paris because of the difficulties experienced in trying to establish the Daughters of Charity there. She subsequently served in the parishes of Saint-Médard, Saint-Roch, and Saint-Benoît, and on August 8, 1655, was among those who signed the Act of Establishment of the Company. In May 1680 her health failed, and she left active duty to reside in the house in Pantin.

3Brienne-le-Château (Aube).

4Catherine Bauchet, born in Épône (Yvelines), was stationed in Nantes (1649-53) and in Brienne (1654-59). In September 1660 she was sent to Poland, where she remained until she died unexpectedly some time after 1682.

2783. - TO PIERRE DE BEAUMONT, SUPERIOR, IN RICHELIEU

February 6, 1659

We have recommended to the Daughters of Charity here never to allow men into their rooms—not only laymen but diocesan priests and the members of our Congregation as well. Even if I myself were to present myself to enter their rooms, I have asked them to shut the door in my face. I forgot to tell you that, and I am doing so today so you will recommend the same thing to the Richelieu Sisters and inform all the members of your house of it, who might otherwise sometimes go into their rooms, and that is inadvisable. I make an exception for when the Sisters are ill; for, in case of necessity, your infirman may go there on your orders, accompanied by a priest, and a priest may go with a Brother, but never otherwise.

I have been informed that your Sisters know everything that goes on in your house. This may stem from the fact that some of our confreres have too many contacts with them. It takes only one who tells one Sister everything for others to know it, too. This must be avoided; when they happen to meet them or otherwise, they should speak to them only of necessary matters.

Since writing to tell you not to send any confessor to the monastery you know,¹ I have spoken to a priest of the Order, who is aware of the disorder in that house. He told me we should not refuse to go to the aid of those souls when they call on us and that it would be a great pity if, when the ordinary means for saving themselves are lacking, the extraordinary ones were denied them. In line with that, Monsieur, I approve of your going or sending someone to them, whenever you are asked to do so, to hear only one of them each time—or two at the most—and, if possible, to do so secretly so the others will not know it.

¹Possibly the Monastery of the Sisters of Notre-Dame in Richelieu.
2784. - JACQUES PESNELLE, SUPERIOR IN GENOA, TO SAINT VINCENT

February 6, 1659

We have just given two small missions, which God has blessed abundantly, especially the last one.

It was a parish of only 240 communicants in a very isolated spot; yet, for the general Communion more than seven hundred persons came from neighboring places that were very far away. Among the reconciliations is the case of an extraordinary peace made by a father, whose eldest son had recently been murdered in his sleep for no reason. Several prominent persons had used their influence to get him to forgive the man who had committed the murder, but to no avail. The very day before, he had refused me when I tried to make the same request of him, and he asked me never to mention it to him again. But God accomplished by His grace what men had been unable to do by their remonstrances and pleading: for, the following day I took the risk of asking him once again, with prayers and tears, to extend this pardon and peace for the love of Our Lord. Suddenly he was a changed man and granted me what I was asking, doing so with truly Christian sentiments that brought tears to the eyes of all those who were present.

2785. - TO FIRMIN GET, SUPERIOR, IN MARSEILLES

Paris, February 7, 1659

Monsieur,

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

I just received your letter of January 28. I will send someone to ask the Duchesse d'Aiguillon and Madame Fouquet to entreat the Attorney General to get the state to provide money for the salaries at the hospital and have some of it sent to the Administrators soon.

Letter 2785. - Archives of the Soeurs Augustines de l'Assomption, 18 rue de Lourmel, Paris, original signed letter.
If another boat is leaving for Tunis, you will have reason to console M. Le Vacher by sending him the fifteen hundred livres you have for him. If he has supplied Brother Barreau with anything, you can forward to him what is due him on the other fifteen hundred livres. I praise God for the good news he sends us.

Do not expect anything from the Mercedarian Fathers for the avania endured by the Consul in Algiers on their account. They have let us know that, if the collections taken up for him here are not sufficient to get him released, they will pay the eight hundred écus they owe, but not otherwise.

I thank God for the peace and joy He has given the city of Marseilles by keeping the new Consuls.¹

You think it advisable to send Brother Barreau some help at the first opportunity—at least the amount of what he received to ransom some slaves but used for his own affairs—so he can free those poor people and save his own reputation.² That seems right in one sense but, because it is to be feared that he may use that money for other things that are more urgent—as he did with other sums I had very particularly entrusted to him—I think we must be patient until we see a little more clearly how to settle this affair safely. If M. Le Vacher of Tunis has not advanced him any money,

¹Despite a decree of the Council, postponing the elections of the Consuls, the people of Marseilles had appointed Baussat, Vacon, and Lagrange to that post on October 28, 1658. This displeased the King, who forbade the new magistrates to carry out the duties of their office and ordered the Consuls and the rebel leaders to give an explanation to the Court in Lyons. He received them coldly but had the good sense not to take any harsh measures against them. An amnesty was granted the culprits, and it was decided that the Duc de Mercœur, Governor of Provence, would go to Marseilles to have new elections carried out in his presence. Anxious above all else to avoid further trouble, the Duke had the wisdom to give the majority of votes to the Consuls who had been named the previous October 28. (Cf. Augustin Fabre, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 280-85.)

²The rest of this paragraph is in the Saint's handwriting.
you can send him his share of the three thousand livres, or part of it.

Your most humble servant.

Vincent DePaul, 
I.C.M.

It has been some time since I asked the Pastor in Le Havre if you should have the one hundred livres intended for Nicolas Renouard from Le Havre, who has returned to France, given to his son, who is still a slave. I have not received any answer to that. I will have someone write to him again.

Addressed: Monsieur Get

2786. - TO SISTER ANNE HARDEMONT, SISTER SERVANT, IN USSEL

Paris, February 9, 1659

Dear Sister,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

We have seen that good gentleman who brought us your letter. He made his retreat here and plans to enter the Bons-Enfants Seminary afterward.

You ask my advice on the request a lady made you to go to nurse her in her home in her illness. Let me tell you, Sister, that I am pleased with your reluctance to do anything extraordinary without our orders. The Daughters of Charity are only for the sick poor who have no one to help them, and not for ladies who have the means of getting someone to nurse them. When some ladies in Paris of the upper and middle classes were sick, they asked us for some of

Letter 2786. - Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity, original signed letter.
your Sisters. We excused ourselves from that for many reasons, and whenever the same request is made to you, I ask you, Sister, to excuse yourself as well, unless you have express permission from Mademoiselle Le Gras or from me. Have no fear that the Duchess \(^1\) will complain about this, for she certainly wants you to keep your Rules. If she wishes you to disregard them on some occasion, she will ask us to write to you about it.

I praise God, Sister, that you are striving to overcome yourself in your difficulty, and I think His Divine Goodness is very pleased with the way you are resisting nature in its inclination for change. After such a long trial, God can only give you peace and quiet. I really hope it will be in the way you wish, but you see clearly how hard it would be to send a Sister such a long distance to take your place. Nevertheless, if the opportunity to do so presents itself, and if you continue to find life wearisome, we will willingly do so to give you this satisfaction. But, in the name of God, be patient in the meantime and do not rebel against Mademoiselle Le Gras any longer by refusing to write to her. She loves and esteems you, and you must give her an account of yourself and your exercises. So, please do so, and pray to Our Lord for me. I am, in His love, Sister, your most affectionate servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,

i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Sister Anne Hardemont, Daughter of Charity, in Ussel

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\(^1\)The Duchesse de Ventadour.
Dear Sister,

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

I praise God for the good dispositions He gives you to make yourself more and more pleasing in His eyes. You will attain this happiness if you practice faithfully humility, gentleness, and charity toward the poor and toward your Sisters. I ask Our Lord, who has given us the example of these virtues, to grant you this grace.

It suffices to renew your vows for one year, after which you may renew them for another year, if you have this devotion. I give you permission for that. You ask me if you may make this renewal monthly; however, if you do it for a year, you do it for twelve months at a time, so it is not necessary to do it every month. Still, you can make it during this year as often as you like—not to assume a new obligation to live them, since the first one is commitment enough to do so, but to witness to God that you are happy to have given yourself entirely to Him and to spur yourself on to renew your desire to be faithful to Him.

There is no need for anyone to tell me about your conduct, for I know it is good and that you want to make it even better. You do well to consider yourself weak and, if you really believe this, Our Lord will be your strength. Continue to mistrust yourself and to trust in Him.
The two Sisters you have in the Company are striving to be virtuous, thank God, and are very much attached to their vocation, as you are to yours. May it please God to preserve and bless you in it!

I thank God for the trust you have in your Director and that he is helping you with so much concern and charity.

I am not sending the medal you requested because I do not have any. When they send me some from Rome, I will send you some of them. Meanwhile, I recommend myself to your prayers. I am, in the love of Our Lord, Sister, your most affectionate brother and servant.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
i.s.C.M.

Addressed: Sister Françoise Ménage, Daughter of Charity, in Nantes

2788. - TO SISTER NICOLE HARAN, SUPERIOR, IN NANTES

Paris, February 12, 1659

Dear Sister,

The grace of Our Lord be with you forever!

I received your letter of the first of this month. The next time I am speaking to Mademoiselle Le Gras we will see if it is time to relieve you of your office of Sister Servant, or whether it is advisable to leave you there awhile longer. I will also suggest to her to do now what was done in the beginning, namely, to appoint an Assistant. Furthermore, I will point out to her your need for some

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4Since Marguerite Ménage had died in Calais in 1658, Saint Vincent is referring here to Madeleine and Catherine.