this. And that it may be a firm and stable fact, we have had our seal placed on these present letters.

Given in Metz, in the month of January, in the year of grace 1632, the twenty-second of our reign.

LOUIS
DE LOMÉNIE

81. - SALVATORIS NOSTRI, BULL OF ERECTION
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

(Now Doc. 84a)

81a. - DOCUMENT RELATIVE TO THE PONTIFICAL APPROVAL
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE MISSION

(Vol. I, no. 94a.)

82. - DECLARATION OF ADRIEN LE BON
ON THE CONTRACT OF JANUARY 7, 1632

(December 29, 1632)

Before the undersigned Jean Coustart and Étienne Païsant, royal notaries of our sire the King at his Châtelet of Paris, was present in person the esteemed Brother Adrien Le Bon, Prior and Administrator of the leprosarium of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, living in that place. He stated and declared that, being more and more edified by the exemplary life and outstanding charity practiced daily by the reverend Priests of the Mission, under the good, successful leadership of Reverend Father Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Congregation of those priests, he desires for this reason to contribute as best he can to their perpetual establishment in the Saint-Lazare house, in which

Document 82. - Arch. Nat., M 212, original.
they have already been living for several months at the earnest entreaty and request of Brother Adrien Le Bon, with his consent and that of all the religious of the house. This is subject, however, to the clauses and conditions stated fully in the contract drawn up and signed between them before Desnotz and Païsant, notaries at the Châtelet, on January 7, 1632, followed by letters patent of His Majesty issued in January 1632, with the consent also of the Bishop of Paris, mediate and immediate Superior of the house, dated February 12 of this year, that of the Provost of Merchants and Magistrates of this city of Paris, dated March 24 of this same year 1632, for the specific confirmation of the contract, with its clauses and conditions, and, lastly, by two decrees of the members of our Parlement court, dated August 21 and September 7, 1632. By the first of these latter decrees, the court, disregarding the opposition of the Prior of Saint-Victor, proceeding in his own name, and the intervention of the Abbot of Quincy, ordained that it would read the aforementioned contracts and letters in order to comply with them when everything had been communicated to the Attorney General, as might seem fit. By the second and later of the decrees, the court ordained that the letters and contract should be recorded in its registers so that the applicants may enjoy the effect contained in them and that, to carry this out, they should obtain from the Archbishop of Paris letters of establishment in perpetuity, with other things stated more specifically in the said decree.

To comply with that decree and to proceed to the perpetual and irrevocable establishment of the Priests of the Mission in the house and administration of Saint-Lazare, with its rights, profits, benefits, revenues, and emoluments, in whatever these may consist, without exception, even in the possession, use, and disposal of all the vestments, chalices, vases, crosses, candlesticks, thuribles, cruets, relics, and other silver articles for the use of the church, together with all the utensils, furnishings, and other things in that house, except

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1Cf. Doc. 77.
2Cf. Doc. 80.
3This document and the following ones mentioned are no longer extant.
4Louis de Mesgrigny.
for those belonging to Brother Adrien Le Bon and the other religious who are now at Saint-Lazare, including vestments, silver chalices, and the furnishings with which the bedroom and living room of M. Le Bon are now furnished, which he has reserved, and does reserve; items to be used and disposed of by him and the religious as belonging to them, Brother Adrien Le Bon relinquished and abandoned and does relinquish and abandon even whatever might be necessary, and remits and resigns into the hands of the Archbishop of Paris, his Vicars-General, or others holding this power, the administration of that house which had been entrusted to him. He does so in order to give, transfer, and entrust it to the Priests of the Mission, under the leadership of Messire Vincent de Paul and his successors, Superiors of the Priests of the Mission, with the express responsibility, and not otherwise, for the pensions reserved to them and which they reserve during their lifetime, namely, twenty-one hundred livres for M. Le Bon, and five hundred livres for each of the religious; for the clauses, responsibilities, and conditions regarding the residence and lodging of M. Le Bon and the religious, reserved for them at Saint-Lazare during their lifetime; for other things M. Le Bon reserves from the Rougemont estate, and other things expressly mentioned in the contract of January 7, 1632, which will remain, and still remains in force and vigor, together with all the Acts signed in consequences of it, except what concerns the union that was to be made of that hospital to the Congregation in the Roman court. M. Le Bon relinquished and abandoned them in accord with what he has since been informed by the deeds of this Institution: that it was only a simple temporal administration, which could be entrusted to a lay person and therefore could not be validly united in the Roman court, and, for the security and inviolable maintenance of the rest of the contract, pensions, and reservations, with the express responsibility to have new submissions and obligations furnished again by Reverend Father de Gondi, who will be constituted guarantor, surety, and fidejussor of the residences, reservations, and pensions of M. Le Bon and the religious and to obtain new letters patent from His Majesty confirming the present letters and the latest consent of the Archbishop of Paris. He was to have all
this approved in the court so that the contract and all it contains, together with the present letters, will henceforth be perpetual, firm, and irrevocable, and may not be altered, violated, or evaded for any reason or circumstance whatsoever.

The present declaration has been accepted by the priest Messire Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Congregation, and Messires Jean Dehorgny, Jean Pillé, Antoine Lucas, Joseph Brunet, and Jean Cuissot, priests of the Congregation of the Mission, present and appearing here, who have claimed and requested the Act of the above, promising, etc., obliging, etc., renouncing, etc.

Drawn up and signed at Saint-Lazare Priory, in the office of the Prior, before noon of December 29, 1632. Messieurs Le Bon, de Paul, and the other persons named above, present and appearing, have signed the draft, which has remained with Païsant, one of the notaries.

COUSTART  PAÏSANT

83. - APPROVAL BY THE ARCHBISHOP OF PARIS
OF THE UNION OF SAINT-LAZARE TO THE MISSION

(December 31, 1632)

Jean-François de Gondi, by divine grace the first Archbishop of Paris, Councillor to our most Christian King of France and of Navarre in his Councils of State and for Sacred Affairs, and Grand

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Since the declaration of December 29, 1632, modified the contract of the preceding January 7 on an essential point, new documents had to be prepared, the first of which was this archiepiscopal approval, followed shortly after by new letters patent.
Master of the Royal Chapel, to all who will read and hear the present letters, sends greetings in the Lord.²

Among the other duties whereby, in virtue of our archiepiscopal dignity, we are able to guide the sheep entrusted to us into the way of eternal salvation, we must give the utmost importance to continuous zeal and care in traveling through the villages, where the harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few, sowing the Word of God, and, after the example of the holy Apostles and disciples of Christ the Lord, carrying out the work of the missions. Since, however, it is impossible for us to fulfill this task by ourselves because of the many heavy duties for the salvation of the flock confided to us, nothing should be more important to us than to choose persons outstanding in doctrine, eminent in piety, on fire with zeal for the love of God and the salvation of souls, and who are the good odor of Christ, to whom we may entrust this afflicted province, which has been nearly abandoned by everyone.

And indeed, God in His very great mercy, has raised up in our times in this kingdom of France the priest Maitre Vincent de Paul and the members of his Congregation, most profitable workers and apostolic men very dedicated to Christian humility, whom we have sent to this work to minister successfully in procuring the salvation of souls. They have devoted themselves to it by divine inspiration, leaving those who live in the cities, where there are many secular and Regular priests, in order to give themselves wholeheartedly to the salvation of souls, going instead, with a special purpose, to various parts of our diocese, seeking the interests of Jesus Christ. They remain for a time in each village, not using persuasive words of human wisdom, but manifesting spirit and truth, zealously exhorting everyone to make a general confession of all the sins of their past life, assiduously hearing confessions, recommending frequent reception of the Eucharist, and instructing in the Christian virtues those who are ignorant, so as to rid them of the depraved morals and abuses of the people. In each parish, they establish by our authority a confraternity to alleviate the needs of the poor and sick in a pre-

²The following text, as far as “the prayers and justifiable petition of all of them” is taken verbatim from the first contract, dated January 8 (cf. Doc. 79).
scribed manner and to prepare the people so that we may make fruitful parish visitations. In fine, they urge everyone, by word and example, to despise vice and strive after virtue, as almost all the illustrious and discerning people of the entire kingdom of France can attest.

It was our great concern, therefore, to give God, the Author of all good things, the many thanks we should, as we do even daily, for having provided for the needs of His Church of France at the opportune time and given us such diligent auxiliaries to sustain us in our pastoral duties. It was also in accord with our pastoral providence to entreat the same Supreme God to see that nothing necessary be lacking to such useful workers, who seem called by God to the outstanding Institute of this Congregation of the Mission, and who, without any stipend, expecting a reward from God alone, spend themselves wholly for the salvation of the country people by assiduous vigils and indefatigable work. God has heard our prayers, and in His infinite goodness has answered them favorably; for, although we had long tried in vain to establish some fixed, stable residence for them in the Paris diocese, the matter turned out exactly as we desired.

In fact, there was a certain man especially zealous for the salvation of souls, whose name is Adrien Le Bon, a professed religious of the Order of Saint Augustine, Prior or Administrator of the house and leprosarium of Saint-Lazare of our Paris diocese, in the faubourg Saint-Denis of the city of Paris. It was the will of our predecessor Cardinal de Retz, the most eminent Henri de Gondi, of happy memory, to entrust to him the administration of the revenue from the management of the aforementioned leprosarium, whose disposition by full right pertains and belongs to us by reason of archiepiscopal dignity. When the religious of this same house saw the very rich results derived from the missions of this Congregation, not only for this diocese of ours, but for all of France, they themselves asked us to have an acceptable contract presented to them for our agreement to the consent they gave regarding the union of the aforesaid house and administration of the leprosarium, and of all things pertaining to it, to the Community of the Congregation of the Mission, upon which, as they state, they had mutually agreed.
Since, moreover, by very certain knowledge and experience, we know that all people of every rank, especially those living in the villages, will receive very great benefit from this union, we cannot resist the prayers and justifiable petition of all of them.

Wherefore, having seen the letters patent of our most Christian Lord Louis XIII, King of France and of Navarre, given in Metz this past January, in which he praised, approved, and consented to the permanent union of the aforesaid house or leprosarium of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of secular priests of the Mission; likewise, the opinions of the highest court of Paris of this past August 21 and September 7, regarding the observance and execution of the contract drawn up and entered into between the Prior and the religious, Canons Regular of the Order of Saint Augustine, and Maître Vincent de Paul, in the presence of Maîtres Jean Desnotz and Étienne Païsant, royal notaries at the Châtelet of Paris, on Wednesday, the seventh of the aforesaid month of this past January;

Additionally, in the opinion and judgment of the Provost of Merchants and Magistrates of this city of Paris, who, negotiating on behalf of this same city, in accord with justice and equity, considered the union acceptable, and agreed to it this past March 24;

Having also taken into account the opinions concerning the aforesaid house or leprosarium, which we ourselves had discussed to this end; and having studied the conclusions of our Promoter, to whom all the aforesaid matters were communicated;

For these and other just and reasonable causes prompting us to be disposed toward this, and considering the excellent spiritual results the priests of the Congregation of the Mission have produced up to this point in the various provinces of this kingdom, especially in the Montauban diocese, by eradicating the Calvinist heresy, we, the Archbishop of Paris, for the greater praise and glory of Almighty God and the salvation of Christian souls, after the Prior willingly and freely resigned into our hands, abundantly and in all that may be necessary, the office of the priory and administration and every right belonging to him there, have united, applied, and annexed in perpetuity to Maître Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese, Superior of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, and to
the Congregation itself, represented through him as its head, the houses, gardens, profits, revenues, proceeds, incomes, rights, and property of that hospice or leprosarium, of whatever kind and by whatever name they are called, and to the same Congregation and priests who are placed there and will be so in the future so that, in this way, they and their successors may be permitted to enjoy and take possession of these same things in perpetuity, fully, and peacefully.

For that purpose we have introduced and, by these present letters, do introduce them into the hospice or leprosarium of Saint-Lazare, near Paris, and constitute and establish them there in perpetuity and for the future, with the liberties, franchises, and privileges that this same hospice has used from of old, up to this time and hitherto, with no exceptions or reservations, subject to the burdens, reservations, clauses, guarantees, and conditions declared and expressed through the aforesaid royal letters given in Metz in January, the prescriptions of the Parlement of Paris of August 21 and September 7, and our letters of the past January 8, and subject to the other clauses and reserved conditions in the aforesaid contract and those things on which they have agreed. By the present letters, we agree and consent that those Priests of the Mission supply every year to Adrien Le Bon, the previous Prior, the sum of twenty-one hundred livres tournois, and also that he may convert to his own use the revenues and agreements of the estate or house commonly known as Rougemont, and receive an annuity. The Priests of the Mission are also bound to give five hundred livres annually to the rest of the religious living in the aforesaid house. In addition, so that the salvation of the religious and the observance of their vows may be taken into account, Brother Adrien Le Bon will fulfill the role of Superior of his own religious, see to their care, and keep his own administration; and we enjoin those professed religious to obey us and the Prior;

Moreover, we desire, approve, and confirm the union under the following conditions: first of all, that we and our successors the Archbishops of Paris have total jurisdiction, authority, and the right of visitation, in spiritual as well as in temporal matters, over the
aforesaid house or leprosarium and the members of the Congregation living in it, one of whom will be chosen from the Congregation as Superior, and that these same priests and seminarians of the Mission be bound to recite the canonical Divine Office in choir, in a moderate voice, without chant and with the doors of the choir closed, and to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in a low voice in order not to be detained from their duty and ministry of going through the villages; and the residents of the faubourgs of the city of Paris will have no reason to leave their own parishes but will instead be present in them for the Divine Office and the Sacrifice of the Mass which will be celebrated in them; that these same priests of the Congregation of the Mission will also be bound to fulfill all the foundations of that house and to admit lepers of the city of Paris, its inhabitants, University, and faubourgs;

That at least twelve members of the Congregation reside in this house or leprosarium, of whom at least eight will be priests of the Congregation and will reside there continuously. Nevertheless, some quiet time, necessary for sustaining such heavy work is permitted, especially at harvest time, when the country people are busy gathering in the crops. They should spend their time traveling through the villages of the diocese, at the expense of their Congregation, staying one or two months in individual areas, according to the need of the place, where they will teach the mysteries of faith, hear confessions—especially general confessions—instruct those ignorant of Christian matters, prepare souls for the worthy reception of the Eucharist, and arrange peace terms between persons at odds with one another. All this will be done according to our will and that of our successors and the order prescribed by us and our successors;

Next, at the times when Orders are usually conferred in Paris, these Priests of the Mission are bound, without prejudice to the missions that will also be taking place at that time, to admit candidates for Orders from the Paris diocese who will be sent to them by us, and to provide, for a two-week period before the actual date of Orders, what is necessary for room and board for those who will be engaged under their direction in spiritual exercises, namely, general
confession, daily examination of conscience, meditations on the change of their state of life, and those things proper to each Order and suitable to the clergy, along with the observance of the ceremonies of the Church.

Furthermore, so that those priests of the Congregation of the Mission might be able to meet and satisfy more promptly and conveniently the costs and necessary expenditures to be made in order to comply with all of the above, since those same Priests of the Congregation of the Mission promised and accepted this through Maître Vincent de Paul their Superior, we have granted, and do grant, perpetually and irrevocably by these present letters, that they may receive and apply to the proper uses of the Congregation of the Mission in Paris each and everything whatsoever that will be left over and remain from the expenditures, profits, revenues, proceeds, rights, annuities, incomes, and emoluments to be generally derived annually from the hospice or leprosarium. And, in view of the above, we have freed and exempted and do free and exempt the same Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, completely and for the future, from giving a financial report of this administration or of the profits, income, and revenue of the hospice or leprosarium and its annexes and dependencies.

Moreover, to commemorate this union of ours, created for the convenience and profit of the Congregation of the Mission, we will that annually, on the anniversary of this union of ours, each priest of the Congregation of the Mission be bound to celebrate one Mass for our well-being, that each will celebrate three Masses on the day of our death, and each year thereafter celebrate one Mass for the salvation and repose of our soul, and that all these things be engraved on a marble tablet as a perpetual memorial, to be placed in the choir of Saint-Lazare Church.

If, however, for any cause and pretext whatsoever prejudicial to this union, the administration of the Saint-Lazare leprosarium, contrary to the law and our intention, should be erected as a benefice, or if anyone in any way whatsoever should resign that leprosarium or the administration of Saint-Lazare, and if another by virtue of that resignation should claim it as his own and take possession of it, or if,
perchance—God forbid!—the Priests of the Mission should be unwilling to allow clerics of the Paris diocese desiring to be promoted to Sacred Orders, to be instructed in the manner mentioned above; or should they refuse to carry out the functions of the missions throughout the villages of the Paris diocese, in these instances and in any others whatsoever, we will that they be deprived of every right we and our predecessors had to the house and administration of Saint-Lazare and that it be returned to us and our successors the Archbishops of Paris, who, as previously, will be able at will to entrust the rule and administration of the aforementioned house to anyone they wish and to exercise full ecclesiastical jurisdiction and authority in spiritual as well as in temporal affairs, as they did previously.

In fidelity to and in witness whereof, we have ordered these present letters, signed in our own hand, to be drawn up and signed by the regular secretary of our archdiocese of Paris, authenticated by having the seal of our chancery affixed to them.

Given in Paris, the thirty-first and last day of December, 1632.

J. FRANÇOIS,
Archbishop of Paris

By mandate of the aforesaid Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Archbishop of Paris.

BAUDOUYN

84. - LETTERS PATENT CONFIRMING THE UNION OF SAINT-LAZARE TO THE MISSION
(January 1633)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to all present and to come, greetings.

Our beloved Priests of the Congregation of the Mission have informed and made known to us that, by virtue of our letters patent at-
attached herein under the counterseal of our chancellery, given in Metz in January 1632\(^1\) and bearing the approval and confirmation of the union of the priory, leprosarium, and administration of Saint-Lazare, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis of our fine city of Paris, they had obtained a decree from our Parlement last August 21, whereby order was given that, disregarding the oppositions lodged to prevent that union, our court would examine, along with our letters, the contract for this union between the Prior and religious of Saint-Lazare and the priests of the Congregation of the Mission, in order to comply with it after everything had been transmitted to our Attorney General. In consequence of this, by another decree of the following September 7, our court had our letters and the contract registered so that the Priests of the Mission might enjoy the effect of them and what they contain. It also directed that, in order to carry it out, they should go to our beloved and loyal Councillor in our Councils and Grand Master of our Chapel, the Archbishop of Paris, to have him issue for them letters of establishment in perpetuity in the Saint-Lazare house.

In compliance with that decree, the Prior, by his declaration of this past December 30, received by Coustart and Paisant, notaries at the Châtelet, withdrew from and relinquished the administration of the Saint-Lazare house which had been consigned to him, and handed it over to the Archbishop to be given, transferred, and entrusted in perpetuity to the priests of the Congregation of the Mission, under the governance and leadership of M. Vincent de Paul, Superior of that house, and his successors in the future. In consequence of those decrees and the declaration of the Prior, the Archbishop united, annexed, and incorporated the Saint-Lazare house and leprosarium in perpetuity to the Priests of the Mission on the last day of the month of December. For the greatest surety and validity of the affair, they most humbly requested us to give them once again our letters of confirmation and approval of the union.

For these reasons, desiring on this occasion and on every other one that will arise, to manifest to the Priests of the Mission our esteem for their outstanding piety, good living, morals, and behavior,

\(^1\)Cf. Doc. 80.
and how pleased we are with the constant charity they practice in
the instruction, conversion, and salvation of the souls of our sub-
jects residing in the rural areas, we have had the aforementioned
documents, attached under our counterseal, examined in our Coun-
cil. By our special privileges, full power, and royal authority we
praised, accepted, confirmed, and approved, and, by these present
letters signed by our hand, do praise, accept, confirm, and approve
that union effected by the Archbishop, of the priory, leprosarium,
and administration of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Mis-
sion. We will, and it pleases us, that those Priests of the Mission and
their successors in the future should enjoy it in perpetuity, together
with all profits, rights, revenues, and emoluments whatsoever be-
longing to it and dependent on it, with the responsibilities, reserva-
tions, clauses, and conditions stated in the contract and decrees and
the declaration of the Prior, as well as the approval and union of the
Archbishop, which we will to have its full and entire effect.

Today we give orders to our beloved and loyal Councillors,
those holding court in our Parlement of Paris, the local Provost, his
Lieutenant, and our other dispensers of justice and the officers con-
cerned, to have these present letters registered and that the priests of
the Congregation of the Mission enjoy and use what is contained in
them fully, peacefully, and forever, placing no hindrance or distur-
bance to them, nor allowing any hindrance or disturbance to be
done to them contrary to this. And that it may be a firm and stable
fact, we have had our seal affixed to these present letters.

Given at Saint-Germain, in the month of January, in the year of
grace 1633, the twenty-third year of our reign.

LOUIS

DE LOMÉNIE
Urban, Bishop and Servant of the servants of God, to our beloved son, the Officialis of our venerable brother the Archbishop of Paris, greetings and apostolic benediction.

We, though unworthy, representing on earth our Savior the Lord Jesus Christ, Author of our salvation and Teacher of all knowledge leading to salvation, have at heart, as our pastoral office demands, the increase of divine worship, the spread of religion, and the salvation of souls. We embrace with fatherly affection the pious and salutaric desires of all the faithful, but especially of those endowed with nobility of origin who freely donate their means to achieve these ends, and of those devout priests who give themselves to the service of God and the salvation of souls, desirous of establishing religious Congregations through which the uneducated can be instructed in the knowledge of God, salutary teachings and commandments instilled, and the practice of pious works procured, with the result that greater worship is given to God and salvation is brought to souls. We support these Congregations, granting them our approval and establishment, and other very special grants and favors, to the degree that we see in the Lord that these will help them flourish.


Subsequent to the publication of vol. XIII, Coste learned that Giovanni Mazzini, of the Vatican Library, had found a document in the Archives of the Congregation of Religious, which settled some vexing questions of chronology: the Bull Salvatoris nostri, for the erection of the Congregation of the Mission, had been issued "on the eve of the Ides of January, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1632, the tenth year of our pontificate." With the publication of Mazzini's discovery, in Annales C. M. (1926), pp. 140-44, it was noted that the "year of the Incarnation" began not on January 1 but on March 25. Therefore, the "eve of the Ides of January, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1632" is actually January 12 of the civil year 1633. Furthermore, Urban VIII was elected Pope on August 5, 1623, so the "tenth year of our pontificate" would be 1633, making the date of Salvatoris nostri January 12, 1633. For this reason, the editors have repositioned this Bull as Document 84a.

After publishing this text, Coste had occasion to compare it with numerous copies. A number of minor variants were noted, and the corrections have been incorporated in this translation of the text.
Along these lines, the petition recently laid before us on behalf of our beloved sons, Vincent de Paul, priest of the Dax diocese in the province of Aquitaine, Superior General, and all the clerics, priests, and members of the Congregation called "of the Mission," of the city of Paris, contained the following: our beloved son, the noble gentleman Emmanuel de Gondi, Comte de Joigny, Prefect General of the Galleys of the whole kingdom of France, and our beloved daughter in Christ, the noble woman Françoise-Marguerite de la Rochepot, spouses, both had the following convictions: that instruction in the divine precepts and matters of the Catholic faith, assiduous preaching and hearing of the Word of God, frequentation of the sacrament of Penance, and worthy reception of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist are especially conducive to the salvation of all Christians; that those who live in the principal cities and towns have access to preachers, counselors, and directors who are men of notable learning and piety, inspiring them with their preaching, and teaching them all those things necessary for salvation with great approval and profit for souls; but those who live on the estates, on farms, in the countryside, in hamlets and in the more humble places, especially the peasants, do not get the same care and do not know the precepts of the Catholic faith, how to confess their sins devoutly and correctly, or all the things needed for salvation. These people need greater help, since their Pastors can hardly accomplish such a task; and as a result there is a deplorable loss of souls, for the sake of whose redemption Christ our God and Lord, having assumed our human flesh, deigned to undergo death on the cross.

They thought, therefore, that it would be most effective for the salvation of souls and most pleasing to the infinitely good and great God if a devoted Congregation of virtuous and capable men were established, who would have as their responsibility such instruction of the peasants and inhabitants of the countryside and hamlets, and of those places that are more deprived. For this purpose they donated from their own funds forty-five thousand livres tournois for the establishment and foundation of this Congregation, that is, its house in the city of Paris.
When this salutary resolution had been put into effect, the afore-mentioned Vincent, whom God the Author of all good had inspired with the same desire, began this apostolate which, although so important for a Christian state, had been undertaken by so few, and in this way he laid the foundation for this Congregation. By God's gracious Will, he soon found a good number of devout, generous priests desirous of joining such an Institute. Permission was obtained from our venerable brother Jean-François de Gondi, present Archbishop of Paris, who, solicitous for the salvation of the flock committed to his care, as a devout and vigilant Pastor should be, and hoping that from such a practical Institute the greatest fruits for the salvation of souls would be produced, encouraged its founders with his fatherly good will, strongly commending their devout intentions in the Lord. These men then took up residence in a certain house located in the city of Paris, which was suitable and practical for their purposes; there they lived—and still live—a common life under the authority and direction of the aforesaid Vincent, who was chosen or elected for life as Superior General of this house and Congregation, which is called Congregation of the Mission, and he prescribed that they observe the precepts and Rules written below.

The principal purpose and special goal of this Congregation and its members is, by the grace of God, along with their own salvation, to dedicate themselves to the salvation of those who live on the estates, in the countryside, on farms, in hamlets, and in insignificant places. In cities and towns, however, that are endowed with titles of archbishoprics, bishoprics, Parlements, and courts of assizes, the clerics and priests of this Congregation perform no public functions of their Institute; privately, they may, nevertheless, instruct those who are to be promoted to Orders and have been sent to them for a two-week period before ordination. So that these Orders may be received worthily, they make a spiritual retreat and a general confession of their whole lives; these priests also foster in them special devotion to the Most Holy Trinity, to the sacred mystery of the Incarnation, and to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God.

Although the members of this Congregation are subject to the Superior General and other Superiors in matters pertaining to disci-
pline and direction, they are also subject to the local Ordinaries, but only in matters pertaining to the missions, insofar as the Ordinaries can send those designated by the Superiors to those parts of their dioceses that seem best to them.

In those places to which they are sent, they teach the un instructed the commandments of God and the rudiments of Catholic doctrine, hear general confessions, administer the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, preach simple sermons that are easily understood by the people, and teach catechism. Beforehand, however, they obtain the permission of the Pastors, without which they may not become involved in the aforementioned ministries.

In places where they exercise the function of catechizing and preaching, they foster, under the authority of the Ordinary, the establishment of what are known as Confraternities of Charity to aid the sick poor. They also try with the greatest charity to settle and resolve quarrels, enmities, and divisions.

They receive into the houses of the aforesaid Congregation the Rectors of parish churches who wish to be helped in making their retreats and in governing their churches. Lastly, they do their best to have these Rectors meet together once a month, when this can be done conveniently by reason of proximity and without detriment to their responsibilities, to treat of cases of conscience and administration of the sacraments. They offer all these services free of charge and with no hope of any human recompense, expecting only a divine reward.

Furthermore, the Congregation shall consist of laymen, clerics, and priests. The laymen, restricted to the duties of Martha, shall take care of household affairs. Clerics shall be received no younger than seventeen or eighteen years of age. If, after completing a year of probation, they have been judged suitable and intend to remain in the Congregation for the rest of their lives, they can be incorporated into the Congregation and admitted as members. They will participate daily in the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, frequent the sacrament of Penance, and receive the sacrament of the Eucharist weekly. The priests, however, shall celebrate Mass daily. But everyone, priests as well as the others, shall meditate for an entire hour and also make use of the examination of conscience.
After the death of the aforesaid Vincent, another Superior General shall be elected from the body of the Congregation by this same Congregation. This Superior General shall then have complete authority and superiority to appoint all other Superiors as well as lesser officials, in any of the houses of the Congregation; to remove and transfer them; and to visit and correct houses, affairs, and persons of this Congregation, which Superiors General of other similar Congregations have, can have, or will be able to have, over the houses, affairs, and persons of their Congregations.

And so, from the very beginning of this same Congregation of the Mission, its priests have been engaged with untiring energy of mind and body in traveling around the Paris diocese, staying one or two months in each hamlet and village; concentrating on the planned instruction of the country people and the uneducated; teaching them the Commandments of God, the rudiments of the Catholic faith, and how to confess their sins correctly and with devotion; catechizing; preaching to them frequently about the mysteries of faith; administering the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist; giving thorough instructions to the Rectors of parish churches and other priests about matters pertaining to their office, urging those who do not live far apart to get together from time to time to discuss and treat of cases of conscience and the administration of the sacraments; helping them not only by their presence at these meetings and discussions but also by their actual participation in their ministry; seeing to the establishment of Confraternities of Charity; and bringing about settlements and reconciliations in quarrels and enmities.

For this reason, those to be promoted to Sacred Orders have been welcomed into their house in Paris in the way prescribed and have been instructed with charity and diligence in the importance of the Orders they are to receive and the manner of receiving them worthily. Various other spiritual works in accord with their Institute have been performed by the members of this Congregation and continue to be performed by them without interruption.

From these gratifying accomplishments it seems clear that this devoted Institute is not only very acceptable to God but also very ef-
fective and absolutely necessary for the people, for, because of it, the use of sacramental confession—even general confessions—and of the Most Holy Eucharist, previously rare, has by the grace of God become frequent in a relatively short time. Confraternities of Charity have been established in many places for the relief of the sick. It is well known that clandestine marriages have been convalidated, public sins have been corrected, and stolen goods have been restored. Places of worship are noticeably kept much more beautiful. Church ceremonies are performed more carefully. It is clear that the Divine Office is performed and attended with a sense of greater devotion and that many other spiritual blessings have been realized.

Because of this, the reputation of this devout Institute throughout France has led many Bishops of various jurisdictions and provinces to call to their dioceses some priests and members of the Congregation of the Mission, whose services they have used with great effectiveness to animate their subjects to the practice of virtue and devotion; in other areas, many have earnestly requested new foundations of houses of this Congregation. In order to satisfy their devout and laudable desire, and so that the spread of this effective Institute may be hoped for—or better, it would seem, procured—our approval and that of the Holy See has been seen as a step to be anticipated.

Since, however, as this petition adds, experience has shown that the greatest results have come from this Institute, and it is hoped that these very happy beginnings will bring about even happier progress in the future, and since those Institutes that are strengthened by the protection of the aforesaid See are more firmly established, it was humbly asked of us, on behalf of Vincent and the aforesaid clerics, priests, and members, that we deign by apostolic kindness to approve the Congregation and to respond appropriately to the other matters mentioned in the petition.

We, therefore, who sincerely desire to see divine worship flourish, religion extended, Church ministers increased, zeal for souls enkindled, and pious works multiplied, absolve Vincent and the clerics, priests, and members of the Congregation, considering both their physical persons, singularly and collectively, to be absolved in
the future—but only to the extent necessary to make these present
letters effective—from all ecclesiastical judgments, censures, and
penalties imposed on them, automatically or by a judge, on what­
ever occasion and for whatever cause, if any of these persons are
burdened by such. Through this apostolic writing we commission
you, in your discretion, by our authority, to approve and confirm
forever this Congregation of the Mission; its Institute and Rules and
everything contained in them; all the things and everything that has
been done by the Congregation, its members, and persons, in obe­
dience to and in observance of the Institute; the election and installa­
tion of the said Vincent as Superior General for life of the
Congregation of the Mission, already carried out as stated above; to
add to these things the stability of inviolable apostolic firmness, and
to remedy each and every defect of law or fact, defects of formali­
ties, even substantial ones and those required by law, and any other
defects whatsoever if there happen to be any.

And for greater surety, we also commission you once again in
your discretion, perpetually, with this same authority of ours, and
without prejudice to the Pastors, parochial rights, or the rights of
anyone else, to set up and establish in the city of Paris and in the
house in which this Congregation of the Mission has been insti­
tuted, as mentioned above, a Congregation of the aforesaid Insti­
tute. It shall be called the Congregation of the Mission, and shall
consist of laymen, clerics, and priests, who are bound to observe
and fulfill the Institute and all that is contained in its Rules and Stat­
utes, and are obliged to be subject, in matters of discipline and di­
rection, to the aforesaid Vincent, whom we appoint once again, by
the apostolic authority of these letters, Superior General of the Con­
gregation of the Mission as long as he shall live, and, after the death
of the said Vincent, to be subject to the Superior General of the Con­
gregation of the Mission while he is in office, who must be elected
from its members; however, in regard to the missions only, they are
obliged to be subject to the local Ordinaries also, as stated above. In
other matters the Superior General will have complete superiority
and authority over all the houses of the Congregation of the Mis­
sion, wherever they have been established or will be established, and over their affairs, Superiors, ministers, and persons.

By our authority, we also commission you in the same way to apply and appropriate to that Congregation thus erected and instituted, as its endowment, all the goods, singularly and collectively, donated and assigned to it successively and at any time from now on, according as they will have been donated, bequeathed, and assigned. This will be done in such a way that it will be the right of its Superior General on his own authority, or of his deputy or deputies by themselves or by another or others, to take freely physical possession of all these goods in the name of this Congregation of the Mission; to retain in perpetuity those so acquired; to receive, exact, and levy taxes on the fruits and emoluments derived therefrom; and to convert them for the use and utility of the Congregation of the Mission.

If, in virtue of these present letters, you confirm, approve, erect, establish, apply, and appropriate, and do all the other things mentioned above, then we, by the aforesaid apostolic authority, according to these present letters, grant and approve in perpetuity for this Congregation of the Mission, its houses, Superior General, other Superiors and persons, and all its goods and affairs, that they may be able and empowered freely and lawfully to use, take advantage of, possess, and enjoy each and every one of the privileges, prerogatives, advantages, benefits, indulgences, and favors, which any other similar or dissimilar Congregations, their houses, their Superiors General and other Superiors, ministers and persons, and their affairs, properties, and whatsoever of their goods use, take advantage of, possess, and enjoy, and are able and will be able to use, take advantage of, possess, and enjoy them in an equal degree and in the same manner and with no difference whatsoever, provided, nonetheless, that these be in use, not revoked or included in some revocation, and are not in opposition to the sacred Canons, the decrees of the Council of Trent, other apostolic Constitutions, or the particular Statutes of the Congregation of the Mission, just as if they had been granted specifically and particularly to them.

In like manner, we also impart in perpetuity to the said Vincent, and to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission in
office at the time, the permission and faculty to be able and empowered to issue and establish any Statutes and Ordinances concerning the successful rule, government, direction, and organization of the Congregation of the Mission and of its houses, persons, and goods, as often as it seems expedient to them, provided however that these are lawful and morally good and in no way contrary to the sacred Canons, apostolic Constitutions, decrees, and institute of the Council of Trent, or any Rule of this kind of the aforementioned Congregation of the Mission, and are approved by the Archbishop of Paris, as well as to revoke, alter, change, and modify them and establish anew, with, however, similar preliminary examination and approval.

We decree that these present letters are, and shall be, valid, always and forever, and not included in any revocations, suspensions, limitations, or other contrary dispositions of similar or dissimilar favors, but rather always exempted from them.

We decree that as often as they are published, they shall be restored, unchanged, and preserved in their original and valid condition, and granted anew, even on any subsequent date chosen at any time by a Superior General currently in office and the members and persons of the Congregation of the Mission.

We decree that they must be judged and defined in this way by all judges, Ordinaries, and delegates whomsoever, enjoying whatsoever authority, and that whatever is attempted otherwise concerning them, by whatever authority, will be invalid, notwithstanding special or general apostolic Constitutions or Ordinances, or laws enacted or to be enacted in provincial, synodal, or universal councils, or anything else to the contrary.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter’s, on the eve of the Ides of January, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1632, the tenth year of our pontificate.
84b. - CONTRACT FOR A PLACE AT THE SAINT-LAURENT FAIR

(Monday, May 23, 1633)

To all who will read these present letters, Brother Adrien Le Bon, former Prior of the priory and convent of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, and Maître Vincent de Paul, priest and Superior of the venerable priests of the Congregation of the Mission established at present at Saint-Lazare, seigneurs of the Saint-Laurent fair held each year in the faubourg Saint-Martin of this city of Paris and its environs on the day and feast of Saint Lawrence and other days following, send greetings.

We make it known that, by reason of the domanial rights and income that belong to us from the Saint-Laurent fair, we have permitted and by these present letters do permit Charles Constant, glass merchant, to take and occupy a place at this Saint-Laurent fair, in the faubourg Saint-Martin, on the side of and below Saint-Laurent Church, and that place will be two toises in length, with the width according to the alignment that will be given to him by our surveyor, in conformity with these present letters. He will occupy the place on the side of Saint-Laurent Church, past the house of Nicolas Sibert [or Libert], and this place is to be enjoyed by Constant only during his lifetime. The heirs of Constant shall claim no right to the place after the death of Constant, and Constant shall be obliged to register at the Saint-Lazare fair every year on the feast of Saint Mary Magdalen or another day close to the Saint-Laurent fair, and pay annually two

Document 84b. - Annales C. M. (1939), pp. 414-15. Joseph Catteau, C.M., made a copy of this 1633 deed, written on parchment and signed by the Prior of Saint-Lazare and Saint Vincent, which he had discovered in Châtillon-sur-Seine. For the notes on this document, we are indebted to Bernard Koch, C.M.

1Saint-Lazare Priory, as a seigneurié, had rights over the St-Laurent Fair, which was held just opposite the priory, on the other side of the rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis. The former Prior, Adrien Le Bon, predecessor of M. Vincent, instructed him regarding his rights and obligations concerning this fair. In the beginning, certain documents were drawn up in the name of both these men and bear both signatures, as is the case with this one.

2August 10.

3A unit of measure equal to about 6½ feet.

4This registration was required to prove that the person in question was not dead and that his heirs had not violated the contract.

5July 22.
sous six deniers rent for each toise, not including in this the fee for our surveyor. Constant may not sell or dispose of any portion of this place without our agreement, will, and consent, and, in the event that Constant should discontinue payment of this rent for three consecutive years, we will and intend that the place be returned to the estate of the Saint-Lazare Priory to do with and dispose of it as we choose, safeguarding in all else our right and that of others. In witness whereof we have signed these present letters and have had the seal of Saint-Lazare Priory affixed to them.

Drawn up and given at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris on May 23, 1633.

LEBON
VINCENT DEPAUL

84c. - PETITION FOR INDULGENCES

(March 19, 1635)

Cardinal Ginetti, on behalf of the Priests of the Mission of France, requests the faculty to grant a plenary indulgence to those who have made a general confession to these Fathers, and the faculty to establish the Forty Hours devotion, with its customary indulgences, in those places where this would seem appropriate. The

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6Since 1262 the word autrui [others] had been used in Acts to mean “the good of the neighbor.”

7Written in the margin, at the beginning, with no date: Constant handed this place over in favor of Filipes Quinibert. Four livres.


1On July 25, 1634, Saint Vincent had written to François du Coudray in Rome asking him to apply to the Holy See for a plenary indulgence for those making a mission: “... In the name of God, Monsieur, do all you can to obtain the indulgences which His Holiness has granted the Jesuits and the Oratorians when they give a mission in rural areas...” (cf. vol. I, p. 246). Du Coudray was recalled to France shortly before May 1, 1635. The sources that are available cannot prove that the petition was ever actually presented, but perhaps the present document from the Acta states the action taken on that request.

2Marzio Ginetti (1585-1671) was appointed Cardinal on January 19, 1626, then Legate in Ferrara, Legate a latere in Germany, Bishop of Albano, Sabina, and Porto. He was also Cardinal-Vicar and, when he died at eighty-six years of age on March 1, 1671, he was Subdean of the Sacred College of Cardinals.
Sacred Congregation directed the request for the indulgence to the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences. The Fathers were inclined to grant the requested faculty for only a period of three years, and that of the Forty Hours devotion was to be limited to two occasions annually.  

85. - REGULATIONS FOR PRIESTS OF THE MISSION
SENT AS ARMY CHAPLAINS

(1636)

The Priests of the Mission who are with the army will reflect that Our Lord has called them to this holy work: (1) to offer their prayers and sacrifices to God for the success of the King's good plans and for the preservation of his army; (2) to help soldiers who are in sin to withdraw from it, and those who are in the state of grace to remain in it; and, lastly, to do their utmost so that those who are going to die will leave this world in a state of salvation.

For this purpose they will have special devotion to the name God takes in Scripture, that of God of Armies, and to the sentiments Our Lord had when He said I came not to send peace, but the sword; and this is in order to give us peace, which is the goal of war.

They will reflect that, even if they are unable to rid the army of all its sins, God will grant them the grace of decreasing the number of them, which is as much as saying that, if Our Lord was to be crucified a hundred times more, perhaps He would be so only ninety times; and, if a thousand souls were to be damned because of their bad dispositions, they will act in such a way that, with the assistance of God's mercy and grace, some of that number might not be damned.

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3 We have no documents concerning the reply to this petition.


1 Cf. Ism 17:45. (NAB)

2 Cf. Mt 10:34. (D-RB)
To do this, they have great need of the virtues of charity, fervor, mortification, obedience, patience, and modesty. That is why they will practice them constantly, both interiorly and exteriorly, especially in carrying out the Will of God.

They will celebrate Holy Mass daily or receive Holy Communion for this purpose.

They will honor the silence of Our Lord at the customary times, and always with regard to affairs of state; they will tell their troubles only to their Superior or to the person he designates.

If they are assigned to hear the confessions of the plague-stricken, they will do so from a distance, taking the necessary precautions; they will leave the bodily assistance of these and of the other sick men to the persons Providence uses in those duties.

They will often hold conferences, after reflecting before God on the subjects proposed; for example:

(1) How important it is for priests to assist the armies;
(2) In what this assistance consists;
(3) The means to do it well.

They can use this same method to treat other topics that will be appropriate for them in this ministry, such as assistance to the sick, how to act during the fighting and battles, humility, patience, modesty, and other practices required with the armies.

They will observe as exactly as possible the little regulations of the Mission, especially with regard to times of rising and retirement, prayer, Divine Office, spiritual reading, and the examinations of conscience.

The Superior will assign each one his duties, giving to one the sacristy; to another, that of hearing the confessions of the members of the Company and reading at table; to another, the sick; to another, financial matters and the preparation of meals; to another, seeing that the tent and furnishings are loaded, unloaded, and set up in their place. Others will be given preaching and confessions, as the Superior thinks it advisable.

They will be billeted and live together, if possible, although they may be parceled out to the regiments. If they are assigned to different places, such as the vanguard or the rear guard, or in the body of
the army, the Superior who makes the assignments will see that they sleep in the tents, if possible.

85a. - ALAIN DE SOLMINIHAC AND THE CAHORS SEMINARY

(April 22, 1638)

At the Synodal Assembly held in the episcopal palace of the town of Cahors on April 22, 1638, presided the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Bishop Alain de Solminihac, Baron and Comte de Cahors, assisted by his Vicar-General, the members of his Chapter and of the one in Le Vigan, and the Archpriests, Priors, and Rectors of his diocese. The Procureur Fiscal of the Bishop, pointing out to the Assembly the need for a seminary in the present town of Cahors, and that the Council of Trent expressly commands this, requested His Excellency to give orders that the chapter of the Council of Trent concerning the erection of seminaries be read so that, after hearing and acknowledging its importance, the Assembly might more easily deliberate on the opening of the seminary in the town, called for by the Procureur Fiscal.

The order was given by His Excellency, and the reading of the chapter from the Council was done, after which the Assembly deliberated on the above and unanimously agreed to the opening of the seminary in this town of Cahors. Whereupon His Excellency, in line with the terms of the Council, appointed for it some priests of the town, namely: from his cathedral Chapter, Maître Antoine-Claude Hebrard de Saint-Suplice [sic] his Archdeacon, some priests from the town, and M. Barthélemy Daurat, Rector of Soubirous. Next, the Assembly also unanimously named Maître Antoine Bouzon, Archpriest of Cahors and Procureur Fiscal of the

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1As indicated here, within a year of taking over the Cahors diocese on October 17, 1637, Alain de Solminihac held a presynodal assembly, at which, among other things, he manifested his strong desire for a seminary in Cahors.
Bishop, to help the others named above to find the necessary means for opening the seminary, in conformity with the Council of Trent.

ALAIN OF CAHORS

By order of His Excellency

J. GARAT, Secretary

85b. · PETITION FOR INDULGENCES¹

(1640)

Most Holy Father,

The Priests of the Mission, approved by you, the very devoted petitioners of Your Holiness, most humbly make known that they find great difficulty in the missions they often give in various parts of Christendom, because of the lack of devotion of some ignorant Christians concerning certain reserved sins and vows that have been taken lightly. To overcome such difficulties, they humbly petition Your Holiness to grant a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who make a general confession, if necessary—or at least a personal one—during the mission, receive Holy Communion, and pray for the exaltation of the Holy Church, the preservation of Our Lord, the eradication of heresy, and peace among Christian princes; to those who listen devoutly to the instructions and exhortations they are usually given in those missions, an indulgence of ten years every time; to the Superiors of those missions, the faculty to absolve from all sins, no matter how serious they may be, including those reserved in the Bull In coena Domini; and to commute vows, with the exception of chastity, religion, and the pilgrimage to

²A monk of Chancelade and Vicar-General of the Cahors diocese.

¹On October 12, 1639, Saint Vincent directed Louis Lebreton to present to the Holy See a petition for indulgences and to inform him of the results (cf. vol. I, p. 585).

²The Supreme Pontiff.
Jerusalem and Saint James. And the petitioners will pray for the felicitous preservation of Your Holiness.

Quam Deus, etc.

85c. - NEW PETITION FOR INDULGENCES

(Before February 3, 1640)

Most Holy Father,

M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, most devoutly and humbly petitions Your Holiness that, in order to overcome the difficulties frequently encountered in the missions, in which the Missionaries carry out their work at their own expense in different parts of the world, Your Holiness might deign to grant them the restored privileges for France, which would afterward be approved for that Congregation on the recommendation of reputable theologians and especially by the [Most] Illustrious and [Most] Reverend Nuncio to France, and that these faculties be granted for a period determined by Your Holiness as circumstances may demand.


1Saint Vincent was requesting privileges to be granted to the Congregation of the Mission, not to a particular person. Moreover, no specified faculty was requested, just "privilegia reformata pro Gallia."

2This petition was discussed by the Sacred Congregation on February 3, 1640 (cf. Congregation of Propaganda Fide, Acta, vol. 14 [1640-41], fol. 17; printed in Vincentiana [1973], p. 112). Cardinal Spada raised the point that it was not customary to grant faculties for an indefinite period of time to Superiors of Orders or Congregations; they were granted only to a specified person, and only after an investigation of his knowledge and probity. It was decided to ask the Nuncio to France, Bishop Renuccio Scotti, to send a report on the state and usefulness of the Congregation of the Mission and to give his opinion regarding the petition (cf. Lettere volgari della S.C. de Propaganda Fide, vol. 20 [1640-41], fol. 9; printed in Vincentiana [1973], p. 113). This letter of February 11, 1640, gives some indication that the Sacred Congregation might have been disposed to granting the request.

Scotti's response is undocumented; nevertheless, Saint Vincent renewed his request in February 1656 (cf. vol. V, pp. 548-49), in which he specified the faculties desired and the limitations placed on their use. In March of that year he received a papal brief granting the requested faculties for seven years, of which he notified the Superiors (cf. vol. V, pp. 571-72).
And may God preserve Y[our] H[oliness] happily for many years.

85d. - REPLIES TO ROBERT LACHAU ON THE INSTRUCTION OF ORDINANDS

(June 4, 1640)

M. Vincent is asked to send in writing the order observed in their house for the instructions of clerics who are to be promoted to Holy Orders:

(1) By whose authority they are sent to that house.
(2) If it [the instruction] takes place before or after the examination of those clerics by the Archdiocesan officials to ascertain the aptitudes of each one who presents himself for Orders.
(3) If this instruction is given before or after the promotion of those who are admitted to Holy Orders.
(4) How many days they stay at their house to receive this instruction.
(5) On what points they are mainly instructed, and what order is observed in this.
(6) If each one is given afterward some proof in writing of the instruction they received during their stay in that house.

Replies to the points listed above:

(1) As to the first point, it is the Archbishop of Paris who sends the ordinands to the Mission.
(2) The ordinands are examined by the Officialis of the Archbishop before being sent to the Mission.
(3) Admission to the Mission and the instruction take place before the reception of Holy Orders.
(4) The ordinands spend eleven days at the Mission.


On June 4, 1640, in order to clarify various aspects of the work for the ordinands, which the Jesuits were conducting at the Collège de Montferrand in Clermont-Ferrand, the Rector, Robert Lachau, S.J., posed a series of questions to Saint Vincent. The Saint answered his terse questions in a similar fashion.
(5) In the morning they are taught practical theology, which they are made to practice afterward, as with children in catechism class; in the afternoon, the presentation on the Pontifical is given. Throughout the day, in addition to the practice sessions, they are taught the ceremonies. Immediately after rising, mental prayer is made together, and they share the thoughts they had during that time.

(6) The ordinands are not given any written proof that they have participated in the exercises.

86. - AUTHORIZATION FOR LOUIS LEBRETON
TO OPEN A HOUSE IN ROME

(July 11, 1641)

Giovanni Battista Altieri, Bishop of Camerino and Assistant to the Most Eminent and Most Reverend Vicar-General and Judge-in-Ordinary in Rome and its district:

A petition was presented to our Most Holy Father Pope Urban VIII on behalf of Vincent de Paul, Superior General of a Congregation called of the Mission, duly established in Paris by papal authority in 1632 and composed of priests and coadjutor Brothers, whose principal end is to seek their own perfection while attending to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the country people and to be of service to the clergy, that the Pope might deign to allow this Congregation to function in the city of Rome and its district. Our Holy Father entrusted me and the Most Reverend Fathers Falconieri, Paulati, and Ingoli with the task of examining the matter with due diligence. With the vote and assent of the aforementioned Fathers,

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1Louis Lebreton (cf. II, 17, n. 1).
2Giovanni Battista Altieri (cf. V, 1, n. 2).
3Lelio Falconieri, Paulati, and Ingoli. For certain activities within France it was necessary for Saint Vincent to deal with Propaganda Fide, of which Bishop Ingoli was the Secretary (1622-49).
and after due deliberation, having examined the Bull of Erection of the Institute and with full knowledge of the beneficial results of the missions of Father Louis Lebreton, one of the priests of the Congregation, carried on by our authority in the dwellings and huts of the shepherds in this district, we have therefore decreed, after consultation with the Holy Father and by his order and command, that this Congregation be allowed to function in this city; and we do, in fact, permit it to carry out its legitimate functions. We authorize Louis Lebreton to build or rent a house for himself and the members of his Congregation and to work there, freely and lawfully, for the salvation of the clergy and the country people in the city and its district, in accordance with its Institute. All this is to be done in such a way, however, that they remain immediately subject to the Most Eminent Vicar, to us, and to our successors in what concerns work for the neighbor, while remaining obedient in all else to their own Superior General, in accord with the Bull of erection. In consequence of the above, they are granted all the favors and privileges which similar Institutes in this venerable city are accustomed to enjoy, neither may they be harassed nor disturbed for any reason by anyone whomsoever in their enjoyment of these privileges, under penalties to be imposed by us.

In testimony of the above, etc.

Given in Rome from our office, on July 11, 1641, in the eighteenth year of the pontificate of our Most Holy Father Urban VIII, Pope by the Providence of God.

GIOVANNI-BATTISTA,

Bishop of Camerino, Assistant

FRANCESCO GRAMBERTI,

Secretary
Jean-François de Gondi, by the grace of God and the Holy Apostolic See Archbishop of Paris, to our beloved Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, approved by us many years ago, greetings in the Lord.

A petition on your behalf has been presented to us, containing the following: that our Holy Father Pope Urban VIII, by means of the Bull of Erection of the Congregation of the Mission promulgated by our Officialis, was pleased to grant to you and the Superior General the permission and faculty, in perpetuity, of formulating and issuing, when circumstances seem to you or your successors to warrant it, whatever Statutes and Ordinances are suitable for the successful direction and government of the Congregation, its houses, personnel, and property, provided these be legitimate and upright, in no way contrary to the Sacred Canons and Apostolic Constitutions, decrees of the Council of Trent, or the Rules and the Institute of the Congregation of the Mission, and are subject to approval by us and our successors; since experience has caused you to fear that, if the priests of the Congregation remain free to withdraw from it, they may wish to do so at will, yielding to the first future temptation against their vocation, or even as long as they remain in a state of doubt as to their future perseverance—although God in His mercy has granted to many the blessing of perseverance and of keeping its Rules—they may neglect to seek the perfection required for their Institute; furthermore, when you consider that this same God, in the Old Testament, willed to oblige His chosen people by the bond of circumcision to observe His law in perpetuity; that, in the New Law, holy Baptism binds us to serve Our Lord Jesus Christ throughout our lives; that the Church entrusts the spiritual care of its members exclusively to those binding themselves to remain all their lives in the priestly state by the reception of Holy Orders; that...
this same Church commits married couples to one another only by means of a sacrament, with a lifelong obligation; in addition, that all Communities and Congregations, with few exceptions, have always believed it necessary that all their members should be obliged by some vows—originally simple vows and, from the time of Boniface VIII, solemn vows—to ensure perseverance in their vocation and in the observance of their Rules; because of all this, after weighing diligently all the above difficulties, reasons, and examples, you have judged necessary, in order to ensure that the members might remain steadfast in the Congregation and in the due observance of the Rule, to ordain that all those who enter the Congregation from now on, after completing a year of probation in the seminary, will make Good Purposes to spend their entire lives in the Congregation, observing Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience. They make these Good Purposes before the Superior, and, upon completion of the second year in the seminary, they take simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience.

They also take a vow of Stability, that is, they commit themselves in the above Congregation, for the rest of their lives, to the salvation of the poor country people, in accordance with its Rules and Constitutions. This is a simple vow, from which they may be dispensed only by the Supreme Pontiff, by you, or by a future Superior General. It is taken during the solemnity of the Mass, celebrated by the Superior, who hears it but does not receive it. Those who are already members of the Congregation and who wish to commit themselves in it by these vows can and may be admitted to them by you and by your successors, but in such a manner that the Congregation must never be considered one of the Religious Orders by virtue of taking these vows, nor cease to be part of the body of the clergy.

Lastly, seeing that, in the petition made on your behalf, we were requested to approve and confirm your decisions concerning the above matters, and after carefully considering the reasons advanced, we have been favorably disposed and anxious to concur

1Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303).
with your petition, and find your proposal as outlined above in no way contrary to the Sacred Canons, Apostolic Constitutions, Decrees of the Council of Trent, or the Rules and the Institute of your Congregation. In fact, we agreed that they are very helpful in preserving your members in the Congregation and in the observance of its Rules. In addition, since it might be hoped that, with God's grace, we would be doing a work pleasing to God and fruitful for the Church, by this document we have approved and confirmed, and do confirm and approve, your proposal, in accordance with what has been laid down above.

In witness and testimony to each item, we have ordered the present letters to be drawn up and signed by the Secretary of the Archdiocese of Paris, and the seal of our office to be affixed to them.

Given in Paris on October 19 in the year of Our Lord 1641.

BAUDOYNN

87a. - FOUNDATION CONTRACT FOR THE HOUSE IN LUÇON

(December 7, 1641)

Be it known to all that, at the Court of the Royal Seal for contracts at Fontenay-le-Comte, were present and personally recognized in their own right, on the one hand Nicolas Pichard, sieur de la Frainerie, Receveur of the taillon in the jurisdiction of the town of Fontenay, and Dame Marguerite Dejan his wife, duly authorized by

Document 87a. - Annales C. M. (1938), pp. 611-14. This document and annotation were taken from Benjamin Fillon, Une fondation de Saint Vincent de Paul à Luçon (Fontenay: Imprimerie de Robuchon, 1848). This copy differs here and there from the parchment found in Arch. Nat., S 6706.

The contracts for a number of other houses have also been published in this volume: Marseilles (Doc. 90), Sedan (Doc. 92), Saint-Méen (Doc. 117), and Montpellier (Doc. 118). Copies of foundation contracts conserved in the Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Paris, too numerous to publish in this volume, include those of Agen, Annecy, Cahors, Crécy, Le Mans, Montauban, Notre-Dame de la Rose/Aiguillon, Richelieu, Saint-Méen, and Saintes. For further study see José María Román, "The Foundations of Saint Vincent de Paul," in Vincentian Heritage, (1988), vol. IX, no. 2, pp. 134-60.

1The Receveur was a royal tax collector; the taillon was one of the royal taxes.
him for implementation of the contents of these letters, both residing in this town; and, on the other hand, Squire Jacques de Sallo, sieur de Beauregard, in the name of and as attorney for Messire Vincent Depaul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Reverend Fathers of the Mission, and by the order and command Messire Vincent Depaul has from the Most Eminent Cardinal Duc de Richelieu.

Pichard and Dejan jointly, willingly, and voluntarily, separately and one for the other, renouncing the benefices of division, order, and enquiry into assets declared hereinafter, sold, handed over, and transferred, and by these present letters do sell, hand over, and transfer in perpetuity to M. de Sallo in the name of the attorney of Messire Vincent Depaul, Superior of the Congregation of the Mission, stipulating and accepting for him in the future, and for interested parties entitled to it from him, in virtue of a letter missive dated Paris, October 12, and another of last November 24, both signed Vincent Depaul:

Namely, a house commonly called Pontdevie, situated in the town of Luçon and consisting of a main building, cellars, store-rooms, and a large courtyard at one end of which are stables, with a lodge in a corner of the other end. The garden behind this building is where the Reverend Fathers of the Mission are now living. Besides the wine press adjoining the building and small garden, there is at the end a plot farmed by a certain La Tousche, with entries and exits. All of these are surrounded by walls and are dependencies of the Pontdevie house, connected on one side; and from one end of the side, from the main doors of the house to the road coming from the main gates to the almonry of Luçon; from the other side to the garden of Jean Cotterau, sieur de Grandmarais, and on the other to the gardens and stables of Jean Naulot, Marie Merland, the sieur de la Mongie, and others. They also sold him, in the said name, a little garden in front of the main door of the Pontdevie house. The street between the two meets the street in the front and, on the other sides, the garden of the Debonds chapel, of which Laurent Rochereau is

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2Pontdevie was the former townhouse of the seigneurs of Pont-de-Vie, a parish in Le Poiré sous la Roche-sur-Yon, in the Vendée. This seigneurié was in the Bishop's jurisdiction. Étienne de Pont-de-Vie was a monk of the Luçon monastery in 1422.
the present chaplain. The sellers have declared that they believe these houses and gardens belong to the fiefs of the archdeaconry of Aizenay and Les Baronies of Luçon and do not know to what obligations the premises sold above are subject, proposing to declare this when it comes to their knowledge, after the sale, transfer, and transport, for, and on condition of, the price and sum of 4,850 livres tournois, which M. de Sallo gave and paid the sellers in cash, before our undersigned notaries and royal lawyers, 58 sous, quart d'écus, and other coins in the required weight and quality, constituting the said sum, which they obtained, took, and received. They were satisfied and are satisfied with this, and released and do release M. de Sallo from this in the said name.

This sum of 4,850 livres is from the money of Messire Vincent Depaul, a donation given him by my Lord the Most Eminent Cardinal Duc de Richelieu for the purchase of the above-mentioned premises sold by Pichard and his wife. To the said authority, each separately and one for all, as has been said, they resigned, divested themselves, and relinquished, and have vested and referred to M. de Sallo in the said name, willing and consenting that the possession and use they have made of it should be for and in the said name.

The sellers, handing over and transferring to him by the privilege granted by the present letters all rights of property and possession, to be effected beginning now and in perpetuity, promise to guarantee and safeguard him from all troubles, dispossession, and other hindrances, paying in the future the customary debts that may be owed and have to be paid, on condition, however, that all the furnishings in the Pontdevie house belonging to Pichard and his wife remain there until next April 1, at which time they will be obliged to remove them. In addition, they will also be able to take the two receptacles and barrels in the vineyard, provided Pichard and his wife have paid the Reverend Fathers of the Mission the rent they owe them for the house since the month of August until now and are no longer in their debt.

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3 The Archdeaconry of Aizenay had a feudal benefice in Luçon from as far back as the eleventh century.

4 Pierre de Nivelle was Bishop of Luçon at the time.
And the sellers have expressly reserved for themselves and retained in their possession all other goods, taxes, land, and possessions belonging to them in the Luçon parish and its surroundings, apart from the aforementioned things sold there.

All this has been respectively willed, stipulated, and accepted accordingly by the parties, and for this purpose each will have, keep, and carry out whatever applies to his affair and promise—they have obliged and mortgaged each and every one of their goods each separately and one for all, as is said, renouncing the benefice of division, enquiry into assets, and order, of which they have said they are well aware and are such that several obliged together, having renounced the benefice, are bound one for the other, etc., constrained for everything, without enquiry into the assets of the other joint-debtors.

For this and for everything above, the parties, by their consent, will, and request, were judged and ordered by the decision and order of the Court by us, Étienne Robert and Pierre Bonnet, notaries and royal tax collectors, to whose power and jurisdiction they submitted themselves and their possessions.

Drawn up and signed in Fontenay in the house of Pichard on the afternoon of December 7, 1641.

Stamped with the seal under the privileges of the edict.

The draft is signed by: N. Pichard, Marguerite de Jan, Jacques de Salle, and by us, the undersigned notaries:

ROBERT, notary and royal tax collector
J. BONNET, notary and royal tax collector

Review of the draft and the present letters by my fellow notary, 15 livres 12 sous.

Examined in the office of Fontenay-le-Comte, December 8, 1641, by me, Fléau, clerk. Received 13 sous 4 deniers.

I, the undersigned Louis Couillaud, tax farmer of the archdeaconry of Aizenay and seigneurie de Saint-Jaume for the fief in which is situated the mansion of Pontdevie, its appurtenances and dependencies of courtyard, lodge, house, stables, garden, and a vineyard with a small garden at the end of which is a common
boundary, all joined together; also the tax farmer of Les Baronries of Luçon for one half, with Gilles and Baptiste Cicotteaux, my associates, in whom I have confidence, for the other half. Belonging to the fief of Les Baronries is the little garden located in front of the main door of the Pontdevie house, forming the path between the two. I acknowledge and declare having received from the designated purchaser in the present contract the sum of 150 livres tournois for all the lods et ventes of the entire contents of the contract and the surplus I remitted as compensation to the purchaser. I am satisfied with the sum of 150 livres tournois for all the said taxes, and I release and promise to regard the purchaser no longer in the debt of my associates, the aforementioned Cicotteaux, by the present receipt, which I have written and signed in Fontenay-le-Comte, December 8, 1641.

L. COUILLAUD

88. - ROYAL APPROVAL OF THE BULL SALVATORIS NOSTRI

(May 16, 1642)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to our beloved and faithful Councillors holding our Court at the Parlement of Paris, to the Provost of that place or his Lieutenant, to all our other lawyers and Lieutenants, and to each person dealing with this request as it will pertain to him, greetings.

Our dearly beloved Priests of the Congregation of the Mission have informed and pointed out to us that, having obtained from our Holy Father the Pope the attached Bulls, under the counterseal of our chancellery, bearing the approval for their Institute, they desire to have the Bulls implemented, should it please us to grant them our

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5Important seigneurial dues charged at the time of the transfer of tenures, either by inheritance or by sale.

letters necessary for such action, and they humbly make this request.

For these reasons, giving special consideration to all that concerns the Congregation because of the great successes it continues daily to achieve for the glory of God and the relief and salvation of our poor subjects in the rural areas, we have permitted and approved, and do now permit and approve by these letters; we will, and it pleases us, that the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission be able and entitled to have the Bulls implemented and to carry them out fully, point for point, in accord with their formulation and content.

We inform you today that, by our present letters of permission, authorization, and concession, you may cause, authorize, and allow the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, present and to come, to implement them fully and peacefully, putting a stop to all troubles and impediments to the contrary, provided there be nothing in them contrary to our rights and the concordats between the Holy See and us, and the privileges and liberties of the Gallican Church. For such is our pleasure. We grant you power and special authorization to carry this out.

Given in Paris on May 16, the year of grace 1642, and the thirty-second of our reign.

By mandate of the King in his Council.

Saulger

89. - MINUTES OF THE ASSEMBLY AT SAINT-LAZARE

(October 1642)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, the All-holy and Adorable Trinity.

Today, October 13, 1642.

1Nicolas Saulger.

We, Vincent de Paul, most unworthy Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, in the presence of Messieurs Antoine Portail, François du Coudray, Jean Bécu, Antoine Lucas, Jean Dehorgny, Lambert aux Couteaux, Léonard Boucher, Pierre du Chesne, René Alméras, and Jean Bourdet, all priests of our Congregation, assembled in the hall where we are accustomed to meet, explained to those priests that, since God was pleased to institute this poor Little Company about sixteen years ago, and since He in His goodness has granted us the grace to introduce gradually the practices observed in it, we no longer have to introduce anything into it except the custom of Congregations or General Assemblies, which are common practice in the holy Communities of the Church of God, following the example of its Councils and synods.

I added that I thought Our Lord was asking the same of us, although the number of persons and houses of our Company was very small, and for that purpose I had convoked Messieurs Dehorgny, Superior of our Collège des Bons-Enfants; Jean Bécu, Superior of our house in Toul; Lambert aux Couteaux, Superior of our Richelieu house; Jean Bourdet, Superior of our house in Troyes; and Pierre du Chesne, Superior of our Crécy house in the Meaux diocese. Since I was unable to convoke the Superiors of our houses of Notre-Dame de la Rose in the Agen diocese; of Luçon, of Annecy in the Geneva diocese; and of our house in Saintes—either because of the distance or because they have been established there only a short time, or because, since some Superiors have been sent to these houses just recently, there are certain disadvantages in taking them so soon from their houses—we designated as their replacements Messieurs Portail, du Coudray, Lucas, Boucher, and Alméras.

We explained to them the reasons why we have to hold General Assemblies from time to time, reasons based on: (1) the purpose for which they are held, namely, the election of the General, some matter of major and continued importance, or something that concerns the preservation of the Congregation; (2) the custom of the Church

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1Pierre du Chesne (cf. VIII, 114, n. 3).
2Jean Bourdet (cf. III, 12, n. 6).
at the Councils and synods begun by the Apostles, and the custom in Communities.

We told them in what the assemblies consist; that in General Assemblies there are six things to consider: (1) the purpose for which an assembly must be convoked; (2) who should be present at it and have a deliberative vote at present; (3) and who should have one in the future; (4) the place; (5) the time; (6) the manner.

As to the purpose, I told them that it was: (1) to elect the Superior General or to treat matters of major and continuing importance, etc.; (2) that the first must be conducted by the Vicar-General who will have been named before the death of the deceased General to govern the Company until the election of another General; and that the second must be conducted by the General; (3) that, at present, only the local Superiors should be allowed to take part in the meeting. And, if it should please God that the Company later be divided into provinces, then only the Provincials will participate in the General Assembly, along with two delegates from each province; (4) that the time of holding the General Assembly for the election of the General will be three months after the death of the deceased General; (5) that the place will be the one the Vicar-General will judge most convenient; as to the manner of electing the General, that will be done separately, in writing; (6) that the discussion of business will be handled as follows: when the day arrives and the Superiors have gathered together, the Mass of the Holy Spirit will be celebrated for this purpose, and the Veni Sancte Spiritus or the Veni Creator Spiritus will be said before opening the first session. Then, the Superior General—or, if he is ill, the person he appoints as his Vicar-General—will begin the work by stating: (1) the purpose for which he has convoked the Company; (2) his reasons for doing so; (3) the means to be taken to know God's Will regarding the topic proposed, exhorting the Company to practice those means. He will then have someone present the proposed topics, which have been put down in writing, in the assembly hall, where each one can read them.

In the second session, he will begin to hear the opinions, giving everyone the opportunity to discuss the topic proposed and continuing the sessions until everyone has given his opinion. If all are in
agreement, he will, in that case, have the decision written in the
book intended for this purpose and have it read aloud to the Assembly. In case there is a difference of opinion, the Assembly will elect
four persons, who will settle the question by a plurality of votes to­
gether with the Superior General, and the Company will be obliged
to accept what they decide, as it will promise before the election of
those four persons.

We told them furthermore that, to carry out this work success­
fully, they had to pray fervently and proceed with great humility;
that no one should propose anything for the sake of debating it; that
everything had to be proposed by the Superior General, and furti­
more, that there should be no discussion with anyone whomsoever
outside of the Assembly—not even with those who are members of
it—regarding matters treated at the Assembly, nor about any other
matter concerning the leadership of the Company, under any good
pretext whatsoever.

Whereupon, when I had asked the opinion of each of the partici­
pants concerning what I had just proposed to them, all replied, one
after the other, that they agreed with what I was proposing to them
and accepted it.

When the Company met at four in the afternoon that same day, I
told them that the first item to be discussed was the Rules of the
Company. I said that I had three things to mention to them in this
discussion:

(1) I mentioned the motives we have to give ourselves to God in
order to consider, examine, and finalize the Rules the Assembly
needed to attain its end. The first of these is taken from the purpose
of these Rules, namely, to unite different mentalities and men of
various nations; the second concerned the duration of the Rules,
which should be for entire centuries.

(2) I showed them the draft of the Rules and made a presentation
of them.

(3) I gave them some means for obtaining the grace of God in or­
der to know His Will regarding the draft of the Rules, which were:
[1] to consider them in the sight of God and in view of the purpose
of the Company in order to see whether they are a means to attain it;
to rid themselves of their attachments, inclinations, and personal aversions. And I distributed all the drafts to them so that each might read them and note what had to be corrected, added, shortened, or deleted entirely; after that, we would study the remarks. Everyone in the Assembly agreed to this.

The next day, the fourteenth of the said month and year, the Assembly met from seven to nine in the morning; the members worked in the same hall on reading the Rules, as they did from four to six on the afternoon of the same day.

The day after that, the fifteenth of the month, the Assembly continued the reading and comments on the Rules in the morning and afternoon at the same time as above.

The following day, the sixteenth of the month, the Assembly continued the reading and comments on the Rules, from seven to ten in the morning.

The same day, from four to six, they continued the same task.

The next day, the seventeenth of the month, the Assembly met at eight o’clock in the morning. It was suggested that, given the large number of comments made on the Rules—which would take a long time to put to a vote and would inconvenience many of the individual houses from which the Superiors were absent—it might be more advisable to entrust that to two or three members of the Assembly, who would decide everything together with the Superior General. When all replied that they agreed with this, the Assembly named M. Portail, M. Dehorgny, and Messieurs du Coudray and Lambert, for as long as they are at Saint-Lazare, and, if they leave, M. Alméras will be the substitute.

(2) [sic] The Assembly worked hard at studying and examining very closely the Rules of the Superior General, on which arose several questions that have not been resolved. And from four to six in the afternoon of the same day, after several questions were presented on the topic of the Rules of the Superior General, the Assembly agreed to abide by the terms of the Rule, especially concerning the authority the Superior General will have over the Company, except that it would be added that he should not borrow a large sum of
money unless it was for the good of the Company, and this after informing his Assistants.

The following day, the eighteenth of the month, from eight to ten in the morning, two questions were debated and decided: (1) whether, in the cases specified in the Rules of the Superior General, the Company could remove and dismiss the General, as is stated in the Rule. The reply from the Assembly was that this would unquestionably be the best thing and would be for the good of the Company and of the General himself; (2) whether it would be advisable, beginning now, to divide our houses into provinces. The decision was affirmative, with the change that, given the shortage of men in the places where the Company is now present, the Superior General should appoint a Visitor for more or less three years to look after the provinces, as he judged advisable; and because he can name either a Superior of one of the houses or someone else, and since our houses in Rome and Annecy are far away, they will send their opinions by letter, in the way that will be indicated to them.

The next day, the nineteenth of the month, at the opening of the meeting, M. Portail asked pardon of the Assembly because, by interrupting someone who was speaking, he felt he had failed in the submission and condescension the Assembly requires.

Then (1) the reading and finalization of the Rules of the Superior General was completed; (2) the chapter on the election of the Superior General was presented, and the following was decided:

[1] That as soon as the Superior General was elected, he would make a retreat. At the end of it, after having celebrated Holy Mass, in the presence of God he would write on two separate pieces of paper: on one, the person he judged suitable to serve as Vicar-General of the Company after his death until a Superior General was elected; and on the other, the names of two candidates he would propose to the Assembly, as the chapter on elections states. Then he would seal the two pieces of paper and lock them in a strongbox with two different locks, for which he would have one key and the First Assistant the other. In the event that the man he named as Vicar-General should die or be prevented by illness or something else from working constantly as his duty demands, the Assistant
oldest in vocation in the Company will be considered and recognized as Vicar-General and will take over the government of the entire Company. It was decided at the same time that all this would be included in the Rules for the Superior General; [2] immediately after the death of the General, the Vicar-General should endeavor to hold the General Assembly as soon as possible, due allowance being made for the extent of the Company. Nevertheless, the Vicar-General may not let more than five months pass, no matter how spread out the Company may be.

The following day, the twentieth of the month, the decisions taken in the preceding session were confirmed at the beginning of the meeting. At the same time, it was decided that, besides the exhortation which, according to the chapter on elections, the Vicar-General has to give at the opening of the General Assembly convoked to elect the Superior General, he should give another one—short and moving—on the day the Assembly holds the election. In it he will point out the importance of this action, which is a matter of reviewing the means of preserving or of ruining the work God has placed in the hands of the Company. He will take good care not to show any preference toward anyone whomsoever in the Company.

(2) [sic] It was also decided that the individual members of the Company would bind themselves by simple vows never to seek any position of responsibility or office of Superior in the Company, nor any benefice outside of it. For the latter, they should even vow not to consent to being named or to accept these positions, unless they are obliged to do so by someone who can oblige them under pain of sin. The vows would not be made at the end of the two years in the seminary, but a few years later, as the Superior General of the Company would judge suitable.

The next day, the twenty-first of the month, the Assembly completed what was left of the chapter on elections, and, after having settled a few other difficulties that remained, the Assembly concluded that the chapter on elections would continue in the form that was given to it, except for having a clean copy of it made by the Assembly delegates to work on the Rules and Constitutions.
On the morning of the following day, the twenty-second of the month, the chapter on Triennial Assemblies was proposed and read to the Assembly; both those held in the provinces, composed of the local Superiors, and those that are to be held in the place where the Superior General resides, composed of representatives from each province. It was decided with no opposition that the order stated in the chapter would be followed.

Next, the Assembly determined two things:

1. Henceforth there would be a second probationary period, at Saint-Lazare or wherever else the Superior General would indicate; that it would take place only six or seven years after the seminary for an interval of one year, without, however, limiting the power of the Superior General, who can always either delay the six or seven years or shorten the year of probation, as he deems advisable for the good of the individual and the need of the Company.

2. The Assembly agreed to divide the houses into provinces, beginning now, and did, in fact, divide them: Paris and Crécy into one; Toul and Champagne into another; Richelieu, Luçon, Saintes, and Notre-Dame de la Rose into another; Annecy and Rome into another.

At eight in the evening of the same day, the Assembly confirmed the chapter on Triennial Assemblies. It decided that, considering the small size of the provinces, for the present the Superior General can send a Visitor whom he judges suitable and dispose the members of each province to remain there or to be sent to the provinces and houses to which he thinks God is calling them, now and for always. It also decided that the authority to admit outsiders into our houses should be left to the General, provided he uses it rarely and for very weighty reasons.

At the end, M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation, after having represented to the Assembly how incapable he felt to lead it, earnestly begged the members, in all humility, on his knees, to elect another Superior General. The Assembly responded that it could not elect another Superior during the lifetime of the one whom God in His goodness had elected for them. After a few other entreaties, he accepted, declaring that this was the first act of obedi-
ence he thought he was rendering to the Assembly, and he begged the members to help him by their prayers. The Assembly not only promised to do this, but even to renew the profession of obedience they had made to him.

It was also decided by the Assembly that the Superior General will make an annual retreat, and, at that time—or when he thinks it expedient—after his general confession and the Holy Mass he will then celebrate, he will choose before God two persons from the Company whom he judges most suitable to succeed him in his office, when God will have taken him to Himself. He will write the names on a piece of paper that will be sealed, and will enclose it in a strongbox with two different keys; he will keep one of them and the First Assistant the other. The strongbox will be kept after his death by the oldest man in the house who is not an Assistant, along with the key the Superior General had. It will be opened only in the presence of the members of the Chapter assembled for the election of the Superior General. Immediately after the election of the Secretary and Assistant, who are elected in the Assembly, the strongbox will be opened, the paper unsealed by the new Secretary in the presence of the entire Assembly, and the names written on the paper read aloud and given to each member of the Assembly to be read and acknowledged. Afterward, the Chapter members will see which of the two they will choose, unless they think that someone else is more capable, whom they may take, other than those the Superior proposed. All this will be done by a plurality of votes, which will be collected by the Vicar-General, as is stated in the chapter on elections.

The following day, the twenty-third of the month, the Superior General gave a short, concise exhortation to the assembled Company, in which he pointed out: (1) the importance of making a good choice of two Assistants because they are the two guardian angels of the Superior General and the ones on whom the Company depends for all that concerns the Superior and the Company; (2) the qualities required in them, which are zeal, discretion, and wisdom; that they be well-read, and that all God's gifts should be apparent in them.
For the third point, he put forward whether or not a secretary and some Assistants should be appointed to hold this election. The Assembly decided that, for this first time, each would simply write on a piece of paper the name of the person for whom he is voting, and the Superior General, together with the two men who happen to be beside him, would read them out. This was then done in the sight of everyone. M. Portail was elected First Assistant and Admonitor\(^3\) of the Superior General, and M. Dehorgny Second Assistant. They then promised by oath to keep the Company informed concerning the conduct of the General, in the event that they may be obliged to do so.

It was further decided that, should the Superior General be obliged by the needs of the nascent Company to send out one or both of the Assistants for some important affair or to be the Superior in a distant place, he will inform the provinces of this, if he replaces them with others, so that, if the Visitors accept the choice he makes of the others, he will keep them on; if not, he will take those for whom the majority will vote in writing, and disregard the others.

Drawn up at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris on October 23 of the above year 1642.

VINCENT DEPAUL PORTAIL DU COUDRAY
LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX A. LUCAS
JEAN BÉCU JEAN DEHORNY BOUCHER
ALMÉRAS BOURDET DU CHÉSNE

\(^3\)In the 1954 edition of the Constitutions and Rules of the Congregation of the Mission, revised in accord with the 1917 Code of Canon Law, no. 43 states: "The Admonitor of the Superior General shall be taken from the Assistants, and he is elected by the General Assembly by an absolute majority of the votes, just as in the election of the Assistants General." No. 44 stipulates: "His office is: 1) To remind the Superior General about matters which are of great moment and which affect the latter's person and office, and to do this with the greatest humility, charity and prudence; 2) To pray in a special manner for the Superior General, since he is held by reason of his office to keep watch over the soul of the General." The 1984 Constitutions and Statutes make no mention of this office.
S[a]in[t]-Yves Church in Rome was formerly given by His Holiness to the nation of Brittany to maintain there six Breton priests, and possesses at present a revenue of about eight hundred écus.

Since Brittany was united to the Crown of France, the Congregation of the Priests of Saint-Louis took over the administration of Saint-Yves Church and transferred the six non-beneficed priests and the revenue of Saint-Yves Church to Saint-Louis Church.

It has followed from this change in administration that the church is being poorly served, for only the Pastor and one other priest reside on the premises, and the non-beneficed priests are dissolve.

Several persons of outstanding piety, seeing that the Priests of the Mission devote themselves not only to the salvation of the poor country people, but also to form priests in spiritual matters, practical theology, the ceremonies of the Church, preaching, and catechizing, think it would be a good work to give them the administration of Saint-Yves Church, on condition that, and for as long as, they continue their duties and carry out the obligations of the church and the formation of the clergy, and nothing else.

The benefits that may accrue from this are: (1) the Church will be better served; (2) instead of the one priest who is there, there will sometimes be more than twelve; (3) the six non-beneficed Bretons will be formed in piety and service regarding ecclesiastical matters and will give assurance to His Holiness that the benefices in Brittany will be provided with good priests; (4) the devoted priests of that province who so desire will be able to find an assured retreat there to study and serve God in that place; (5) some way will be found to remedy the dissolve life they are leading at present and the harm they are doing in the parishes of their area to which they have
been appointed, since the intention of His Holiness in assigning benefices is to prefer them to absentees.

There are no interested parties in this: the Pope finds in it the fulfillment of his plan; the King loses nothing by it, for he makes no appointment to any benefice; Brittany does well by it for it will have the same number of priests maintained in that church; Saint-Louis Church loses nothing by it, for, even though it may lose some of this revenue, it gets rid of an equal expense; the administrators lose by it only the disposal of the parish, which is nothing in comparison with the consolation they will have of seeing God better served; and the Pastor accepts and desires this, and is asking us insistently to do it.

89b. EXCERPT FROM THE WILL OF JEAN DUHAMEL

(April 23, 1643)

The following has been extracted from the last will and testament of the late noble man, the priest Jean Duhamel. It was signed before Bergeon and Richer, one of the undersigned notaries, on the eighteenth day of the present month and year; in it he appointed as its executrix Demoiselle Hélène Alméras, his mother, widow of the noble man Jean Duhamel:

He desires and ordains that his corpse be interred in the house of the reverend Priests of the Mission, called Saint-Lazare, in the place where M. Vincent, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, will decide, not considering himself worthy to be in the sanctuary of the church there with the other Priests of the Congregation because of the bad example he has given them during the time he has had the honor of being in their Company. He entreats him, nevertheless, that it be in a place where the priests of the Congregation pass on their way to their mental and vocal prayers in the church so that they will remember him in their prayers.


1Jean Duhamel (cf. II, 33. n. 7).
As for his funeral procession, he leaves that to the will of Mlle. Duhamel, his mother, wishing that it take place decently and simply in accord with his station as a priest. On the day of his death, if possible, or the next day, he desires that one hundred Masses be said for his intention and one sou be given to each of the poor persons who are in the house at the time of his burial.

He gives and bequeaths to the Congregation of the Mission of Saint-Lazare the sum of 1,000 livres, asking the Priests of this Congregation to have one Mass said annually for his intention and for the late M. Alméras his uncle, who gave them to him for this same intention. He asks also to have made for this purpose a chasuble, alb, amice, and everything else needed to vest the priest who will celebrate the anniversary Mass; the chasuble should be black for mourning and very simple, such as they would have made for themselves, even without a coat of arms.

Furthermore, he gives to the Congregation of the Fathers of the Mission the few books he has, except those of which he will dispose by the present testament, including a bible printed in Cologne, with a red morocco cover.

These bequests and others stated in the present testament will be carried out at the convenience of Mlle. Duhamel, his mother, when it pleases her and not otherwise.

This extract was drawn up and collated on the original record of the testament by the undersigned notaries of the King at the Châtelet of Paris this April 23, 1643, by Richer, one of them.

CHALLONS

RICHER

2The copy reads: Maison [house].
90. - FOUNDATION OF THE MARSEILLES HOUSE  
BY THE DUCHESS D'AIQUILLON

(July 25, 1643)

We the undersigned, Marie de Vignerod, Duchesse d'Aiguillon, Comtesse d'Agenais et Condomois on the one hand; and on the other, the admirable person Reverend Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, established at Saint-Lazare in this city of Paris, Antoine Portail, François du Coudray, René Alméras, and Emerand Bajoue, priests of the Congregation of the Mission, have drawn up, accepted, and agreed among ourselves on what follows:

Namely, that we, the Duchesse d'Aiguillon, have had the wish and devotion to donate 14,000 livres tournois to be paid at one time and to be used for whatever they will find most useful and profitable, and which can bring in the greatest income for the purpose of incurring and paying the necessary expenses for the support, journeys, and works of the priests who will be employed in what will be stated hereafter. The condition is that the Priests of the Mission and their successors in the Saint-Lazare house will be bound always and in perpetuity to establish, provide room and board for, and support in the city of Marseilles four priests of the Congregation of the Mission, and, if they die, to send others in place of the deceased and so onsuccessively in the place of each one who dies.

Those four priests, in accord with the will and intention of the King, will have authority over the chaplains and priests proposed who will be established to administer the sacraments and give the sermons, catechesis, instructions, and necessary help on the galleys of His Majesty. The four priests—or one of them—will have the power to remove those chaplains and clergy and to replace them with others they will choose and find more useful for the glory of God. The chaplains and clergy on the galleys will teach the catechism classes, give the instructions, and administer the sacraments.
The agreement rests also on the condition that, every five years—and not at longer intervals—the four priests of the Congregation of the Mission will board each of the galleys when they are in the port of Marseilles and other ports of the kingdom to catechize and instruct in the love and charity of God the poor convicts and others on the galleys. They will also question the chaplains and priests of the galleys and, when the chaplains or others are found unsuitable and incapable, to dismiss them and choose and establish the most worthy persons possible in their places. The four Priests of the Mission will also assume the care of the hospital for poor galley convicts, located in the city of Marseilles.

Likewise, on the express condition that the Priests of the Mission, always and in perpetuity, send some priests of the Congregation of the Mission to Barbary, when and if they judge proper, to console the poor Christian captives detained in those places and to instruct them in the faith, love, and fear of God. They will accomplish this through missions, catechism, instructions, exhortations, Masses, and the prayers to which they are accustomed; also on condition that the Priests of the Mission offer two low Masses every day of the year, always and in perpetuity: one, a Requiem for the repose of the soul of the great Cardinal-Duc de Richelieu, her most honored uncle and benefactor, and to obtain the blessing of God on the entire household of His Eminence; the other, for the Duchess during her life and, after her death, for the repose of her soul and to ask God’s mercy on us, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon. All of this is to be done to honor the words, miracles, and life of toil of Our Lord Jesus Christ while He was on earth.

And we, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon, wishing to have our will and devotion implemented, proposed the above to the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, who agreed with our intention and devotion and said they were ready to accept the said sum, and, by means of this foundation, to implement and have implemented fully and entirely her intention and devotion. In line with this, we, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon, have given and paid Vincent de Paul and the other Priests of the Mission named above the sum of 14,000 livres, and we [Vincent de Paul and the Priests of the Mission] acknowl-
edge having received it in cash from the Duchesse d’Aiguillon. We satisfy and release the Duchesse d’Aiguillon and all others from this, and by means of it we, Vincent de Paul and the other priests named above, have promised and will be bound by this, and do promise, for ourselves and our successors, to give or have someone give those missions in the places designated above; to offer or have offered two Masses each day of the year; and to carry out all the things herein specified, always and in perpetuity, according to her intention and for the reasons stated above. We also promise to use this sum for investments and an annual income, either in real estate or something else, for the advantage of the Priests of the Mission, in order to bring in some income for the fulfillment of the above, and by this act or contract of acquisition we declare that the money to be paid for the cost of this comes from the money thus received from the Duchesse d’Aiguillon.

Drawn up in Paris in the house belonging to us, the Duchesse d’Aiguillon, July 25, 1643.

MARIE DE VIGNEROD
DU COUDRAY    PORTAIL    ALMÉRAS
BAJOUÉ

VINCENT DEPAUL

91. - APPOINTMENT OF THE SUPERIOR GENERAL
OF THE MISSION
AS CHAPLAIN GENERAL OF THE GALLEYS

(January 16, 1644)

Today, January 16, 1644, the King being in Paris, the Duc de Richelieu, General of the Galleys of France, has pointed out to His Majesty that, given the great success and benefit received both for the glory of God and the instruction, edification, and salvation of the souls of all those who serve on the galleys, by the excellent choice formerly made of M. Vincent de Paul, Superior General of


1Armand-Jean du Plessis, Duc de Richelieu (cf. VIII, 243, n. 3).
the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission, for the office of Royal Chaplain of the galleys, to which he was appointed by royal warrant on February 8, 1619, with command over the other chaplains of the galleys; and given also that, because of his important duties with the King and the Queen Regent his mother, who often call him to their Councils, as well as his office of Superior General of the Congregation, it is impossible for him to be in Marseilles at all times to carry out the duty of Royal Chaplain of the galleys. He needs to have the authority to entrust this duty, in his absence, to the Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Marseilles and to assign it permanently to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission now and to come. His Majesty, having approved the proposal of the General of the Galleys, and the Queen Regent his mother being of the same opinion, has confirmed M. Vincent de Paul in the office of Royal Chaplain of the galleys, with command over all other chaplains of the galleys and, in addition, has granted him the authority to dismiss the chaplains he will find unsuitable and to replace them with others. He may also, in his absence, entrust the Superior of the Priests of the Mission of Marseilles with the use of this privilege, with similar functions, authority, stipends, honors, and rights, and has assigned permanently the office of Royal Chaplain of the galleys of France, with similar power and authority, to the Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, present and to come. His Majesty wills that, in this capacity, he be inscribed and employed on the register of the galleys, by virtue of the letters patent that will be sent to him, in consequence of this one, which His Majesty has willed to sign with his own hand and to be countersigned by me, Councillor of his Council of State and Secretary of his Commands.

LOUIS DE LOMÉNIE

2Anne of Austria (1601-66).
92. FOUNDATION OF THE SEDAN HOUSE

(June 14, 1644)¹

Louis,² by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, to our beloved and loyal Councillors, keepers of our accounts in Paris, greetings.

By his testament and the disposition of his last will, the late King³ of very glorious memory, our most honored Lord and father, bequeathed in alms the sum of 64,000 livres to be used for missions, namely, 24,000 livres for our town of Sedan, both to work there and strengthen the Catholics, and to try to lead back into the fold of the Church many souls whom heresy⁴ had turned away from it, and the remaining 40,000 livres to work in other missions in the places indicated by Reverend Fr. Dinet,⁵ Provincial of the Society of Jesus and His Majesty's confessor at the time, and Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission. With our consent, Fr. Dinet, occupied with various other duties, handed over the direction to him [Vincent de Paul] alone, taking into consideration that, without contravening in any way the intention of our late Lord and father, this good work, which he had intended for only ten years, might be permanent.

For these reasons, since the Queen Regent, our most honored Lady and mother, is of the same opinion, we stated and declared and do state and declare by these present letters, signed with our own hand, that we will, and it pleases us, to have the entire sum of 64,000 livres invested by the Superior General of the Mission, by him and his successors in the generalate in perpetuity, in annuities or legacy redemptions for the revenue accruing from this, and used for the

Document 92. - Archives of the Public Hospital of Sedan, copy made from the original.

¹Louis XIII, who died on May 14, 1643, assisted on his deathbed by his confessor, Fr. Jacques Dinet, S.J., and Saint Vincent (cf. II, 435, n. 9), had made a bequest to the Saint, which was ratified by Louis XIV on June 14, 1644. On April 27, 1645, the Saint notarized this document, which stipulated how the King's bequest was to be used for Sedan.

²Louis XIV.
³Louis XIII.
⁴The Huguenot religion.
⁵Jacques Dinet, S.J. (cf. IV, 178, n. 1).
food and maintenance of six priests and two Brothers belonging to the Mission, who, in conformity with the duties of their Institute, will be working at the time throughout our town of Sedan, as well as in its surrounding areas, where they will discover the most urgent need for the salvation of souls and the spread of the Apostolic Roman Catholic religion.

This we order you by these present letters, which you have to verify and register integrally and unconditionally, with no restriction or modification, and to allow the Father General of the Priests of the Mission and his successors in the office the full and perpetual enjoyment and use of what is contained in them, removing and putting a stop to all troubles and obstacles to the contrary; for such is our pleasure.

Given in Paris June 14, the year of grace 1644, and the first of our reign.

Louis

By mandate of the King, in the presence of the Queen Regent his mother.

DE GUÉNEGAUD, Secretary of the Great Seal.

Today the admirable person Reverend Messire Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission, living at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, appeared before the undersigned notaries of our sire the King at the Châtelet of Paris. He stated and declared that, in accord with the letters patent from His Majesty, a copy of which, checked against the original, is written above, he used the sum of 64,000 livres for the construction of the buildings of thirteen houses\(^6\) adjoining one another. He had these built on a square called Saint-Laurent field, situated in the faubourg Saint-Denis of the city of Paris, above Saint-Lazare, abutting on

\(^6\)Henri de Guénegaud du Plessis (cf. IV, 303, n. 1).

\(^7\)The document that follows is the notarization of the bequest, signed by Saint Vincent, Pauzo, and Arsaut.

\(^8\)During the Saint's lifetime, these thirteen houses (hence the name *Treize Maisons*) served as a home for the foundlings.
one side the property of M. Le Gras, and on another side the Saint-Lazare estates at one end in front, to the roadway of the faubourg leading to Saint-Denis en France, under the control of the fief of Saint-Lazare. These thirteen houses are to remain and belong to the Priests of the Mission of Sedan, to whom M. Vincent de Paul promises to invest profitably for always the sum of 2,200 livres annually each year for the upkeep of the Priests of the Mission established in Sedan, in accord with the intention of His Majesty expressed in the letters patent where it is stated. M. Vincent de Paul has requested and asked that a formal acknowledgment be granted him now for the use of the Priests of the Mission of Sedan.

Drawn up and signed at Saint-Lazare, Thursday afternoon, April 27, 1645.

VINCENT DEPAUL
PAUZO ARSAUT

92a. - OBJECTION TO THE ASSIGNMENT
OF THE GONESSE' PROPERTY
TO THE MARÉCHAL D'ESTRÉES'
(Monday, December 12, 1644)

At the request of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission established in the Priory of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, be it declared to the Chancellor and to M. de Monceaux, Councillor of the King in his Councils and Grand Audiencier of France, that the priests hav-

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1Today, chief canton town of Val-d'Oise (Ile-de-France). Gonesse was one of at least seventeen farms and estates that were guaranteed sources of income for the Saint's projects for the poor and the numerous Religious Communities for which he was responsible: Congregation of the Mission, Daughters of Charity, Visitation nuns, Daughters of Providence, and Daughters of the Cross.

2On December 19, 1643, the Council had purchased a sumptuous mansion from the Maréchal d'Estrees; however, because of heavy war expenses, they were unable to pay him for it. It was the Maréchal who suggested getting the money by auctioning off the mills of Gonesse.

3The document is undated but on the back is written: "Opposition to... Notice served December 12, 1644."
ing been notified that His Majesty had made a gift to the Maréchal d’Estrée[s] or to someone else whose name he used, of the Gonesse property, from which the Priests of the Mission have the right to take annually two barrels of wheat, Paris measure, for this reason be it declared to the Chancellor and the Grand Audiencier that the Priests of the Mission are opposed to any donation of the Gonesse property being given under the name and in favor of anyone whomssoever, unless it be on condition that the priests be paid annually the two barrels of wheat, Paris measure, as stated in the donation made to them by letters patent of Louis VII, King of France and Duc d’Aquitaine, dating from the year 1147;¹ taking up their residence in the person of M. Arnaut Roux, lawyer at the Council.

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

92b. - PETITION TO THE ROYAL COMMISSIONERS

June 19, 1645

To the Commissioners General deputed by His Majesty to implement the decision of the Council of April 26, 1645.

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission established at the Priory of Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, presents this humble entreaty, stating that the property of the mills of Gonesse¹ belonging to His Majesty is assigned and mortgaged to Saint-Lazare Priory for two barrels of

¹On June 11, 1147, the monk Odon records that Louis VII (1137-80), on his way to find the oriflamme of Saint-Denis, visited Saint-Lazare and granted various privileges. Other oppositions were raised, supported by the Parlement. The King wanted to put the estate up for auction; on June 19, 1645, M. Vincent sent a petition to oppose this, citing a second royal act, of Philippe-Auguste (1180-1223), in 1181. Nevertheless, the King decided to sell not only Gonesse but also the Provostship of Paris (cf. Doc. 92b).

Document 92b. - Private collection, original signed petition; photocopy given to the Archives of the Motherhouse of the Daughters of Charity May 3, 1994.

¹For centuries, the French Crown had possessed many estates. In April 1645 the Royal Council wanted to sell off parts of these lands to finance military efforts to fend off incursion into Lorraine. This prompted Saint Vincent to make this petition to the Commissioners General deputed by his Majesty for implementing the decision of the Council of April 26, 1645.
wheat as annual rent and dues, by the brief of Louis VII, of the year 1147; likewise the estate of His Majesty in the Provostship of Paris,² for the sum of 365 livres, similarly due to the priory, by another brief of King Philippe,³ of the year 1181.

For these reasons, my Lords, and because it has come to the knowledge of the petitioner that the properties are being sold before you, in consequence of a decree of the Council of last April 26,⁴ may it please you graciously to accept the opposition of the petitioner to the sale at auction of the properties, and by acceding to the aforesaid objection, to order that these properties shall be and shall remain designated for the Saint-Lazare Priory. Also, that the receveurs⁵ will continue payment in the future of the annual rents of two barrels of wheat on the one hand, and 365 livres on the other, according to and in keeping with the constitutions of rent stated in the briefs. And you will do well.

VINCENT DEPAUL

ROUX (with paraph)

Order is given that the present request be shown to the Procurator of the King in the Commission and communicated to the rival claimant so that this act may be ordered fairly.

Drawn up in the council room of the Château du Louvre in Paris, June 19, 1645.

CARRÉ (with paraph)

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²This included the right to collect certain legal fees from the Châtelet of Paris.

³Philippe-Auguste. Earlier royal edicts earmarked part of the income from royal estates for the care of lepers (one of the functions of Saint-Lazare from its earliest foundation) and, from the time of the transfer of Saint-Lazare to the Congregation of the Mission, for various works of the Community. Saint Vincent was apparently very much aware of the legal basis for his sources of income.

⁴This is one of the many indications from letters and other documents of how closely Saint Vincent monitored his business affairs and felt compelled to take legal means to retain the various sources of income on which he depended.

⁵Receveurs [tax collectors] is written above adjudicateur, [seller], which was crossed out.
92c. - APPROVAL OF A WORK BY JEAN-BAPTISTE NOULLEAU
CONDEMNING BLASPHEMY

August [28] 1645

We, the undersigned, the Superior of the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission and some members of our Saint-Lazare community, declare in the name of all that we have always desired the retrenchment of blasphemies and swearing. We laud the zeal of all those who are working at this and will work hereafter to put a stop to it. We affirm that we wish to do our part to cooperate in this during our missions, according to our modest ability, with the help of God, which we ask of Him for this purpose.

Given in Paris at our Saint-Lazare house on this feast of Saint Augustine, the year of grace 1645.

VINCENT DEPAUL,
Superior of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission

A. LUCAS ALMÉRAS E. BAJOUÉ
LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX, Priests of the Mission

93. - ADVICE TO BONIFACE NOUELLY AND JEAN BARREAU
BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE FOR ALGIERS

(Around May 1646)

M. Nouelly and Brother Barreau, whom the Providence of God is calling to Algiers for the corporal and spiritual assistance of all...
the Christian slaves there, will reflect that this ministry is one of the most charitable they might ever carry out on earth. (1) To fulfill it properly, they should have special devotion to the mystery of the Incarnation, whereby Our Lord came upon earth to assist us in our slavery, in which the evil spirit holds us captive; (2) they will be exact to the Rules of the Company and its holy customs and maxims, which are those of the Gospel, and work tirelessly to acquire the virtues that make a true Missionary: zeal, humility, mortification, and holy obedience; (3) M. Nouelly will be the Director of this little mission and will devote himself to the temporal and spiritual care of the sick, etc.; (4) when they get to Algiers, they will rent a house and set up a chapel in it; (5) they will endeavor to use every precaution imaginable in order to get along with the Viceroy, the Pasha, and the Divan and will willingly bear the insults they receive from the people; (6) they will strive to win over by patience the priests and religious who are enslaved and will see to it that they are held in the honor due them and that they retain their little benefits; (7) they will do all they can to maintain the greatest possible union among the merchants; (8) they will send us news of themselves with every boat that comes to France—not of the state of affairs of the country, but that of the poor slaves and the work Our Lord is entrusting to them.

(9) If, without any danger, they can go to visit the poor slaves who are in the rural areas, they will do so and will endeavor to strengthen and console them, giving them some alms for this purpose.

(10) They will submit to the laws of the country, except regarding religion, about which they will never argue, and will say nothing scornful about it.

(11) They will find out from those who have been living in that country for a long time anything that might anger those in power or give them any cause for suspicion or for provoking an avania, so as to avoid them.

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3Council of State in Turkey and in other countries of the Middle East.

4Payment extorted by the Turks; an insult or affront.
94. - APPOINTMENT OF LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX TO THE CONSULATE OF ALGIERS

(July 5, 1646)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, Comte de Provence, Forcalquier, and the adjacent lands, to all who will read these present letters, greetings.

We make known that, because of the good report given us concerning the person of our dear and beloved Lambert aux Couteaux and his ability, loyalty, integrity, experience, and diligence, for these reasons and others prompting us to this, we have given and granted and do give and grant him by these present letters, signed with our own hand, the post and office of Consul for the French nation in Algiers and the Barbary coast, which Balthazar de Vias, its last peaceful possessor, was formerly pleased to hold and carry out. Charles Moulard had negotiated with him by an Act signed last May 14 before Sausson, a notary in Marseilles; his resignation, here attached under the counterseal of our chancery, was then signed to be tendered in favor of Lambert aux Couteaux, allowing the latter to obtain, hold, carry out, use, and exercise the office, with the honors, powers, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights, benefits, revenues, and emoluments that come within its scope. This is in accord with the verifications of the Consuls in the area of Alexandria and Tripoli dependent on us, as long as it pleases us, provided that the one resigning live forty days after the date of the present letters.

Today we give orders to our beloved, loyal Count, the Lieutenant of our admiralty at Marseilles, that, after he has seen proof of the good life, morals, and Roman, Catholic, apostolic religion of Lambert aux Couteaux and has had him take the customary oath required in such a case, he should place and establish him, or have him placed and established, in the possession, submission of cases be-

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1Balthazar de Vias (cf. VI, 208, n. 3). In 1627 he had received from his father the office of Permanent Consul of Algiers. Saint Vincent subsequently bought the consulate from M. de Vias for Lambert aux Couteaux, with the financial assistance of the Duchesse d'Aiguillon. As seen here, Louis XIV immediately ratified the contract. In the end, Lambert aux Couteaux never went to Algiers.
fore the court, and exercise of the office, together with the aforesaid honors, powers, prerogatives, privileges, exemptions, liberties, benefits, revenues, and emoluments, allowing him to exercise it peacefully and fully, and to see that he is obeyed and heard by all those concerned in matters dealing with and regarding this office.

For this purpose, we ask our very dear good friend, the King of Algiers, to permit Lambert aux Couteaux to carry out the office, not allowing him to be troubled or hindered in any way; for such is our pleasure.

In witness whereof we have ordered our seal to be affixed to these present letters.

Given in Paris on July 5, the year of grace 1646, and the fourth of our reign.

LOUIS

95. - FUNCTIONS OF THE ROYAL CHAPLAIN OF THE GALLEYS

(July 1646)

Louis, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre. . . . By these present letters we have declared that spiritual direction for the consolation of the sick, the administration of the sacraments, the celebration of Holy Mass, and the burial of the dead will, in the future, be within the scope of the duties of the Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission and Royal Chaplain of our galleys, since it has always been within the authority of the Royal Chaplain, which he has exercised over the galleys, officers, soldiers, sailors, and convicts, under the authority of the local Ordinaries.

In the absence of our Royal Chaplain, we will that the Superior of the Mission in our city of Marseilles should assume the administration or direction and exercise the duty of Royal Chaplain. We have united and do unite this office, in perpetuity, with all its rights, honors, dignities, and privileges, to the Congregation of the Priests of the
Mission, to be carried out by the Superior General and, in his absence, by the Superior of the Mission in Marseilles, empowered by him to do so. And, in order that the sick convicts may be better assisted by this, the Priests of the Mission who will be needed to serve them will take up residence in the hospital . . . and, for what concerns spiritual matters, not only in the hospital but even on all the galleys.

We very expressly will and enjoin our Royal Chaplain to see to it that each galley has a good priest as chaplain—one who is wise, exemplary, experienced in the practice of the direction of souls, and approved by the Ordinary—that each chaplain in turn visit the sick in the hospital, according to the order prescribed for them by the Royal Chaplain; and that, in order to fulfill their ministry better, all the chaplains should live together in community under the direction and leadership of our Royal Chaplain. In the event that the chaplains of the galleys are found to lack the necessary qualifications and conditions or have not been living as good priests, the Royal Chaplain will provide the galleys with another good priest in the place of those whom he judges unsuitable, in virtue of the authority we grant him for this by these present letters. The stipends of the chaplains of the galleys will be entrusted to the Royal Chaplain and distributed by him to the chaplains. . . .

Given in Fontainebleau, in the month of July, the year of grace 1646.

LOUIS

96. - REGULATIONS FOR THE PRIESTS OF THE MISSION IN MARSEILLES WHO MINISTER TO THE GALLEY CONVICTS

So that the Priests of the Mission may fulfill their duties toward the chaplains and toward the galley convicts, here are the principal responsibilities they must carry out when they visit the galleys:

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Document 96. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, notebook from around 1670. The regulations are older and were probably drawn up by Saint Vincent himself.
(1) To inquire whether prayers are said morning and evening on the galleys and whether, during them, everyone is in the proper attitude to hear them.

(2) Whether anyone blasphemes the name of God, despite the prohibitions against this, and whether the officers make the offenders pay the fine.

(3) Whether the chaplains are careful to visit and comfort the sick often, hear their confessions, and assist the dying, and whether they come on the eves of Holy Days to hear the confessions of the rowers chained to their benches.

(4) To find out whether there are any converted heretics, to speak with them and encourage them to persevere and to receive the sacraments frequently; to do likewise if there are any Turks1 who are converted and newly baptized.

(5) To see if the chaplains celebrate Holy Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days, whether they attend Vespers, or whether they [the convicts] can say them without them.

(6) To ask whether there are any heretics who visit the galleys to converse with those who side with them.

(7) To find out also whether there are any heretics or Turks who may be disposed to come into the Church, in order to procure for them the necessary instruction.

(8) To inquire whether there are any sick and if they have been to confession, whether doctors and surgeons visit them and treat their illnesses, and if they are given soup, meat, and the bread to which they have a right.

(9) To inquire whether they are dissolute on Sundays and Holy Days, and if gambling and the sale of certain articles is allowed before Holy Mass.

(10) Whether women or young men are allowed on the galleys, and if any of these young men are permitted to spend the night there.

(11) Care must be taken to ensure that all the galley convicts have shirts, underwear, smocks, cloaks, hats, and stockings; note also whether there is a double canvas in the galleys; ask whether the

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1The term Turk was often used to indicate any Moslem slave.
bread they are given is of the prescribed weight and is fresh, and whether they are given beans daily. However, this and the two preceding articles must be investigated at a time when the officers are not present.

(12) To inquire about the invalids on the galleys, and be present during the commissioners' visits in order to appeal for their release. Such visits are to be made twice a year, in the months of March and October;

(13) To be also present on these galleys especially on the day before the eve and on the eves of the major Holy Days of the year in order to encourage the galley convicts to go to confession, and to find some confessors to assist the chaplains, particularly the Italians and the Spanish. In order to make it easier for them to go to confession and Communion, have them given some exhortations on the Sundays preceding the said Holy Days and as often as possible throughout the course of the year;

(14) Finally, to strive during each visit to console some of the most afflicted, such as those who have little time left, and to offer some prayers to God for them;

(15) When something that needs to be remedied on the galleys is remarked, to notify the Company, and, if it is urgent, to consult its Superior in order to do whatever is necessary to remedy the situation, depending on their advice.

97. - DUTIES OF THE CONSULS AND MISSIONARIES IN BARBARY

The Consul has under his protection not only the French, but also all Christian nations that have recourse to him against the affronts of the barbarians, and the Consul points out to the Dey, the Pasha, or the Customs House\(^1\) the injustice committed against them. He reg-

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Document 97. - Arch. Nat., S 6707, notebook from around 1670. This account of the works of the Missionaries in Barbary is probably from Saint Vincent.

\(^1\)The Dey was the head of the Algerian government before 1830; the Pasha governed a province in the Turkish Empire; the Customs House oversaw the administration of customs duties.
isters complaints about the ill-treatment given them. He negotiates the ransom of slaves and has their chains removed so they can be sent home. He settles disputes among the merchants of those nations. He makes sure that no Christian merchant brings the Turks contraband merchandise forbidden by the canons of the Church and the ordinances of the King.

The Priests of the Mission attend to spiritual matters. They are apostolic missionaries, established by authority of the Sovereign Pontiff, who gives them full power and all the faculties proper to this duty. They are Vicars-General of the Archdiocese of Carthage, and in this capacity have jurisdiction over all the priests and religious who are slaves; they are also Pastors of all the Christian merchants and slaves, whose number is very large.

They uphold the Catholic religion and maintain its public and private practices in those places where it is persecuted, and they devote themselves to confirming and strengthening believers in the faith. They administer the sacraments to the healthy and to the sick. They preach, give instructions, and do everything possible for the spiritual and physical relief of the wretched slaves.

97a - PETITION TO THE PARLEMENT

(April 1647)

To Our Lords of the Parlement.

The priest Vincent de Paul, Superior of the Mission established at Saint-Lazare, humbly petitions, stating that he has done everything possible until now to implement the decree of June 2, 1646, after due hearing of the parties, according to M. Gontier, Court

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Document 97a - Arch. Nat., S 6114, copy. Because of the nature of this document, the editors have moved it from Vol. III, Appendix 1, to this location.

1 Date given in the body of the request.

2 This petition is a continuation of the legal proceedings of the Congregation of the Mission against Noël Bonhomme with regard to the Nom-de-Jésus Hospice (cf. Vol. II, Appendix 2, pp. 684-87, and Appendix 4, pp. 690-92).
Counselor, but Noël Bonhomme has done the exact opposite to prevent it. Thus, although the petitioner has entered into payment for the sum of 11,000 livres mentioned in the decree, for the discharge of Bonhomme’s debts toward some of his creditors, and committed himself to furnish replevins from others who had seized the rest of the aforementioned sum of 11,000 livres, he has, nevertheless, managed so well that he still remains in possession of the house, garden, and property of which there is question of being awarded to the petitioner. And to add to the deception, he himself had seized from the hands of the petitioner what the man named Nicolas Janot was claiming as belonging to him from the monies owed by the petitioner.

Thus, this seizure and the contentions that had arisen between him and Janot have given rise to a number of harassments suffered by the petitioner who, although he found no advantage in them, was obliged to defend himself first in one place, then in another, where he consistently stated, to Bonhomme, first of all, that he was prepared to pay the difference by furnishing the release of the seizures presented against him, as he had committed himself to do. To Janot he likewise declared that, in settling the differences he had with Bonhomme, he was also prepared to hand over to the person appointed by the court the monies awarded to him, not exceeding what remained in his possession.

Thus, the petitioner in this agreement had no need to be included in their proceedings. Nevertheless, Janot had served him a subpoena to appear before M. Ferrand the Counselor, where the petitioner renewed his offers. In order that a decision might be made with Bonhomme himself concerning the possession the petitioner was claiming of the goods awarded to him for the sum of 11,000 livres by the decree of June 2, 1646, the petitioner summoned him and declared against him. So, by a decree issued according to the report of M. Ferrand the Counselor on January 8, 1647, it was ordered among other things that the petitioner, in paying what was due by Bonhomme to his daughter, Hélène Bonhomme, and by reason of

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3Legal action for the recovery of goods or chattels wrongfully taken or detained.
which she had foreclosed to the petitioner, would remain clearly and validly released, and once the petitioner had consigned into the hands of a townsman, named officially or by common consent, what remained of the sum of the 1,100 livres in question, or which the petitioner retained for six months, and paying the interest on the monies, the petitioner could enter into possession and use of the house, garden, and property in question. Bonhomme would then be obliged to hand over the keys and the property in the same condition they were at the time of the inspection made in execution of the decree of June 11, except in the case of contestation, in whole or in part, of the valuation of the possessions contained therein, before M. Gontier the Counselor, court reporter of the decree.

In execution of this decree the petitioner paid what was due to Hélène Bonhomme, and consequently took the option of retaining the difference of the monies for the time and under the conditions of the decree of January 8. Bonhomme, however, who does not yield easily, seeing that he was obliged to allow the petitioner the use of the property in question, instead of handing over the keys to him, according to the terms of the decree, refused to do so. As a result, the petitioner registered his appeal on March 19, 1647, and the court ordered that the parties would be heard summarily before M. Ferrand the Counselor. When Bonhomme saw that he was being prosecuted, he resumed and proceeded with the objection he had raised the preceding January 21 against the implementation of the decree of January 8. Given this objection, he had proceedings instituted to respond before M. Gontier.

This, however, is not the object of the petitioner's complaint because what matters to him is not who hears the case, but rather that he is being harassed without cause, since he has no way of paying effectively what he has in his hands and of assuming use of what has been awarded him. So, it seems that what has happened since this objection and the request for the keys for admission to the properties in question should change the contestation and put an end to the disagreements of the parties, for, by means of the payment made by the petitioner to Hélène Bonhomme, as has been stated, the petitioner was informed on April 3 of three official notices dated this
past January 21, March 11, and March 26. These mention the release of seizures and operations executed and presented into the hands of the petitioner by Nicolas Cavelier and Anne Forêt, Nicolas Janot and Marguerite Caulier, Jean de Bournay, his widow, and his heirs, and Hélène Bonhomme. Thus, all the petitioner desires is that the decree of June 2, 1646, be implemented and Bonhomme be required to give release of the seizures and decrees that are still in his hands. One of these, among others, concerns a certain Nicolas Simon, a plasterer, for a sum of 60 livres by a writ of June 27, 1646, and by another writ dated November 27, 1646, from a man named Nicolas Simon, the clauses of which are not expressed. Also to be settled are the appreciations awarded to Bonhomme, the depreciations on them to be compensated, as well as the three and a half years' arrears due on the first of this month of April 1647, rents and revenues due from Bonhomme by reason of the properties in question, in the amount of 65 livres in revenue and 2 sous 9 deniers income for a total of 227 livres 19 sous 8 deniers, plus arrears fallen due since then and which will continue to fall due until the day the petitioner effectively takes possession. Added to this is the sum of 120 livres consigned by the petitioner, that has been used for the trial of the case, in which the decree of June 2 was pronounced, according to M. Gontier the Counselor. There is also the interest, at the rate of the judge's ruling, on the monies paid to the abovementioned Paillet, Soulet, and Hélène Bonhomme, starting from the day they were paid, whereas Bonhomme has been in possession of the property in question, and whereas the petitioner, by paying as he has done, has entered into the place and rights of Paillet, Soulet, and Bonhomme, to whom the interest was due.

Lastly, there are expenses to be reimbursed, deducted, and compensated, which the petitioner was obliged to incur for the implementation of the decrees and up to the day of the release of the seizures made and still to be made by Noël Bonhomme on his account, since the petitioner has never been in arrears of paying the 11,000 livres in question.

4This name was probably inadvertently written for another name.
Considering this, my Lords, along with what is represented above, it is easy to see that there are no further questions to adjudicate between the parties which cannot easily be settled and concluded, since the petitioner is quite ready to hand over and pay whatever remains in his hands to the man called Janot and those in whose names he is proceeding, to the exoneration of Bonhomme and with his consent, as also to reach a settlement and compensation with Bonhomme of the things he must take into consideration, including the remainder of the 1,100 livres and whatever will be awarded him for his improvements, with deductions for delapidations.

To this end the parties will be obliged to retire to the chambers of Païsant the notary, who received the first receipts on the appointed day. Bonhomme will be obliged to seek out Janot to receive what is due to him, sign the receipts and, on the appointed day, furnish the release of seizures which may have been executed against the petitioner by the Act of Bonhomme, apart from those of which he had a copy given on April 3, and even of those noted above. On failure to be present when the writ is served, or in the case of a refusal and contestation by Bonhomme, with no need of any further effort by the petitioner, retaining the remaining monies and the interest from them as stated in the decree of last January 8, the petitioner will be permitted to enter into possession and use of the properties in question, and Bonhomme imprisoned for debt after a simple summons and obliged to hand over the keys; otherwise entry will be forced in the usual way. Bonhomme will be sentenced to pay any damages and interest incurred and to be incurred by the petitioner, notwithstanding the appeal of Bonhomme, who will have no case and will be ordered to pay all costs.

May it please you graciously to grant the petitioner title to all the documents and exhibits of the injunction, even of the garnishee order of June 2, 1646, and the use of those he had drawn up before M. Ferrand, on the appeal of March 17, to be settled and granted on March 26, as well as Bonhomme's appeal of September 6, 1646, settled before M. Gontier. As far as the contents of the present petition are concerned, may everything be complied with in one and the
same decree, which the court will recognize as being properly done, and you will do well.\(^5\)

97b. - PETITION TO THE PARLEMENT

(July 1647)\(^1\)

To Our Lords of the Parlement.

The priest Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Priests of the Mission established at Saint-Lazare-lez-Paris, humbly petitions, stating that, having been informed of the rejoinders issued by Noël Bonhomme, served to the attorney of the petitioner on July 11, he has found the justifications and means therein only tiresome repetitions, contrary to the truth. With all due respect to the court, it is a pure fabrication on Bonhomme's part to state and sustain that the garnishments made into the hands of the petitioner were reported by him to avoid payment of the sum awarded to Bonhomme. The contrary is apparent both from the truth of the garnishments brought forward and adduced by the petitioner, and because those who made the seizure are genuine creditors of Bonhomme. In fact, the garnishee orders state that the petitioner will pay them, as he has done. There are still some existing garnishee orders whose cancellation Bonhomme himself admits he is pursuing. It is strange, therefore, that he alleges boldly that these are chicaneries being used against him.

It is, however, even more unreasonable to state that he should be paid damages, interest, and expenses for this. On the contrary, these are due to the petitioner for two reasons: first, because he is obliged to bear the brunt of an infinity of proceedings on the part of the creditors, resulting from the action of Bonhomme, who is burdened with

\(^5\)Written at the end of the request: "Let it be enacted and notice be given. April 9, 1647."

Document 97b. - Arch. Nat., S 6114, copy. Because of the nature of this document the editors have moved it from vol. III, Appendix 2, to this location.

\(^1\)Note 2 informs us of the month and year of the petition.
debts and, consequently, obliged to bear all the expenses and compensate the petitioner for them. Second, because of all these setbacks and harassments, the petitioner finds himself reduced to a strange extremity: even though he has paid the cost of the reimbursement, he still does not enjoy possession, and Bonhomme, by an unparalleled injustice, still remains in possession and proprietorship of the house and property of which he was dispossessed by decree. This cannot persist because the pretext he advances of alleged improvements (which exist more in his imagination than in reality) is not sufficient to sustain this unjust retention and possession, since the petitioner has paid the principal cost, and very little remains to be paid, which makes him the master and proprietor of the house.

As for Bonhomme's remaining claims regarding the improvements, he must not proceed except in execution of a decree. This can be done just as well when the petitioner is in possession as when he is not; otherwise the judgments pronounced on the eviction will be useless and fallacious, since they have no effect, and some point of law is always arising on the part of the creditors of Bonhomme. Furthermore, the latter will do all he can so as not to withdraw from or relinquish the house. This will greatly wrong the petitioner; even though the court may award him damages and interest (as he hopes and expects from its justice), nevertheless, the most expedient step for him to take would be to enter into possession of the property, which he has acquired so justly, and so onerously. Had he been able to foresee all these various caviling points of law which have been brought against him, he would not have undertaken the repurchase of the property because he thought, in fact, that all he had to do was to pay out his money, which he was always prepared to do.

This having been considered, my Lords, may it please you to give official notice to the petitioner that, as a decision against the above allegations, he may make use of the present petition, written and brought forward by him. And you will do well.²

²A note follows: "Let it be enacted. Drawn up July 1647. Note: the decision is not indicated."
AUTHORIZATION FOR CHARLES NACQUART
AND NICOLAS GONDREE TO TRAVEL TO MADAGASCAR

(March 30, 1648)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, to the beloved confreres in Christ, Messieurs Charles Nacquart and Nicolas Gondrée, priests of our Congregation, greetings in the Lord.

According to our Institute, we are bound to devote ourselves to procuring the salvation of souls wherever God has called us by a special plan, chiefly in places where the need is greater and other evangelical workers are lacking. We are aware, moreover, [that] in the Indies, especially on the island of Madagascar, known otherwise as Saint-Laurent, there is a very great scarcity of workers and the harvest is abundant,¹ both with regard to encouraging Catholics in the faith, and to inviting pagans to the Catholic faith. We desire to comply with the divine call especially since we have been sought after and requested for this mission by the Most Illustrious and Reverend Lord the Apostolic Nuncio² to our Most Christian King and by those honorable men who, in agreement with the Most Christian King, attend to the temporal affairs of the Indies.

Assured, therefore, of your piety, erudition, experience, and zeal for souls we have sent and, by the present letters, do send you to the aforesaid island and other parts of the Indies so that, in line with the functions of our Institute, you may, with the grace of God, apply yourselves with all your strength to the salvation of souls. On this account we ask Their Excellencies the Bishops, the Pastors, and others placed in charge of the churches to permit all or each of you to celebrate Mass, administer the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, especially to those men who, with you, are passing

¹Mt 9:37. (NAB)
²Nicolò di Bagno.

Document 98. - Archives of the Mission, Paris. Madagascar file, copy, written in Latin. The copyist added at the end of this document: "Note that this patent was written in haste since the Madagascar voyage was arranged very quickly, with the result that there was no time to get all the required permissions for it. That is why those granted to other Missionaries who departed for the same mission were subsequently reformulated."

¹Cf. Mt 9:37. (NAB)
²Nicolò di Bagno.
through to the island, and perform the rest of the services of our Institute, since it is clear that all of you are free from ecclesiastical censure. In addition, we ask in the Lord that all Kings, Viceroy, Governors, Mayors, Chiefs of neighboring areas, and guardians of cities and roads, see fit to grant the faculty and permission to come and go freely and safely through their provinces, lands, and seaports for love of Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Meanwhile, we and our Congregation will pray fervently for their well-being.

In witness to the present letters we have signed them with our own hand and have ordered them to be secured with our seal.

Given in Paris on March 30, 1648.

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99. - AUTHORIZATION FOR SEVERAL PRIESTS AND BROTHERS TO TRAVEL TO VARIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS

(April 5, 1648)

Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, to the beloved brothers in Christ Jean-Jacques Mugnier and Gabriel Damiens, priests; Pasquier Blondel, Michel Doutrelet, Edme Jolly, François Pinson, Emmanuel Chardon, Jacques Pesnelle and Michel Giroud, seminarians; and Robert Coutieu, René Champion, and Jean Duchesne, Brothers; all members of our Congregation, greetings in the Lord.

We, who, in virtue of our office, have the obligation to send workers of our Congregation to houses where they are needed, are aware that some are needed in our houses both in Italy and in Marseille. Confident of the integrity, ability, and competence of all of you, we have decided to send you to these houses, and, by these present letters, do send you: M. Jean-Jacques Mugnier to our house in Marseille, Brother Robert Coutieu to our house in Genoa, and the rest of you mentioned above to Rome, the priest Gabriel

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3Cf. 1 Tm 6:15; Rv 17:14. (NAB)

Damiens and the seven seminarians, together with the two Brothers, to remain in each house under obedience to the present Superiors, according to the Rules of our Institute. We therefore order the Superiors of those houses to receive you kindly and count you among the persons we have entrusted to them.

We have been duly informed also of the piety and competence of the priest, M. ... Paussin, who has spent some months at our Bons-Enfants Seminary, founded in Paris. Inflamed with zeal for souls, he has asked us if he could go to Marseilles to help those who were condemned to the galleys, so we are also sending him with you for this work.

In addition, we ask our Bishops, Pastors, and those responsible for the other churches to allow the priests among you to celebrate Mass in their churches [and] to administer the sacraments to your associates, since it has been established that you are free of any ecclesiastical censure. We also ask in the Lord all Governors and Viceroids in charge of the territories and cities and all prefects of guardposts of the seaports to allow you to come and go safely through their territories, provinces, and ports, and to treat you favorably for love of Him who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We on earth, together with our Congregation, will pray fervently to Him for their well-being.

In witness to the present letters we have signed them below with our own hand and have ordered them to be secured with our seal.

Given in Paris on April 5, 1648.

VINCENTIUS A PAULO,
Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission

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1The space reserved for the first name was left blank on the original.
Whereas the Most Eminent Lord Cardinal Sforza has presented the letters of the Nuncio to France regarding the mission to the island of Saint-Laurent, or Madagascar, of Reverend Charles Nacquart, priest of the Soissons diocese, together with his companion, Reverend Nicolas Gondrée, likewise a priest of the Congregation of Priests of the Mission, under the direction and guidance of Reverend Vincent de Paul; the Sacred Congregation, after accepting the explanation as to why the aforesaid mission was established without its own decree, has decided to set it up anew, as having been done invalidly, as indicated below:

(1) It has determined the mission for the priest Charles Nacquart, together with his companion Nicolas Gondrée, approved by the Nuncio for the aforesaid island, delegating and appointing Charles Nacquart as director of the mission, and has ordered that the Holy Office be approached regarding faculties.

(2) It has ordered that the decree of the mission and the faculties be forwarded to the Nuncio, with the attached mandate not to send the decree and faculties to Nacquart until due diligence has been taken to ascertain whether the Discalced Carmelites, who were to be sent to that island to whom it had been entrusted previously as a mission, cannot be sent with the merchants, even after provision for the journey was offered on their behalf.

(3) Nevertheless, so that the above-mentioned Missionaries may not remain idle on the island, the Sacred Congregation has granted the same Nuncio the power to communicate to them at least the necessary faculties of hearing confessions and administering the sacraments to the people, in accordance with what was contained in the decree of the Holy Office.
(1) To dispense in any irregularities, with the exception of those that arise from actual bigamy or voluntary homicide, and in these two cases they may do so in case of necessity if, however, no scandal arises from a dispensation of this kind, with respect to homicide.

(2) To dispense and commute simple vows, even chastity, for a reasonable cause, in all other works, but not the vow of religion.

(3) To absolve and dispense in any case of simony and in tangible matters when benefices have been resigned and other gains have been ill-acquired, by imposing some alms or a salutary penance in the judgment of the one dispensing, even to retain benefices, if they were parochial and no one else can be put in charge of the parishes.

(4) To dispense in the third and fourth degree of consanguinity and affinity, simple and mixed, and in the second, third, and fourth in the case of mixed marriages, but in the second only with regard to future marriages. As for past marriages, even in the second degree, only in the case of those who are converted from heresy or infidelity to the Catholic faith, and in the aforesaid cases, to declare legitimate the offspring already born.

(5) To dispense from the impediment of public propriety arising from espousals.

(6) To dispense from the impediment of crime, when neither of the spouses plotted evil; and restitution of conjugal rights.

(7) To dispense in impediments of spiritual relationship, except between the parent and the [adopted] child.

(8) But these last marriage dispensations—the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh [above]—may not be granted without the clause: Provided the woman has not been abducted and, if she has, that she

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Document 101. - Archives of the Mission, Madagascar file, written in Latin. These same faculties, with the exception of the twenty-sixth, were given to Claude Dufour and Jean-François Mounier on February 20, 1653.

1 Habitual faculties granted perpetually are considered as privileges outside the common law. Privilege means some provision of the common law which gives special rights to certain persons beyond what the law allows.
is no longer under the power of the abductor, nor in each forum [internal and external] where there are Bishops, but only in the forum of conscience; and in expediting these things, the tenor of this kind of faculty should be inserted in the dispensations with a statement of the time for which they have been granted.

(9) To dispense, in the case of heathens or infidels having several wives, so that after their conversion and baptism they may be able to keep whichever one they prefer, if she also becomes a Christian, unless the first of them wished to be converted.

(10) To absolve all kinds of persons, even Catholics, secular as well as regular, from heresy and apostasy from the faith and from schism, but not those who may be from places over which the Holy Office has charge, unless they have done wrong in places in mission territory where heresies abound with impunity, nor those who legally abjured, unless they were born where heresies abound and, having returned there after judicial abjuration, have relapsed into heresy, and to dispense them only in the forum of conscience.

(11) To absolve from all cases reserved to the Apostolic See, even those contained in the Bull Coena Domini.

(12) To bless vestments and other articles necessary for the Sacrifice of the Mass.

(13) To reconcile desecrated churches with water blessed by a Bishop, and in case of necessity, with water not blessed by a Bishop, and to communicate the same faculty to simple priests.

(14) To consecrate chalices, patens, and portable altars with oils blessed by a Bishop in places where there are no Bishops, or where they are two days' journey away, or where the See is vacant.

(15) To dispense, when it seems advisable, with regard to eating meat, eggs, and milk products in a period of fasting, especially during Lent.

(16) To celebrate Mass twice daily if necessity dictates, in such a way, however, that in the first Mass the ablutions are not consumed; from one hour before dawn and another after noon, on a portable altar and without a server, in the open air and even below ground—yet in a becoming place, even if an altar has been built, or one without relics of saints, or if heretics, schismatics, infidels and
excommunicated persons are present, provided the server is not a heretic or excommunicated, and if there can be no celebration otherwise.

(17) To grant a plenary indulgence to those newly converted from heresy, and also, at the moment of death, to any of the faithful who, if they are unable to confess, are at least contrite.

(18) To grant a plenary indulgence during the Forty Hours devotion to be proclaimed three times a year on the most convenient days, for those who are contrite and have been to confession and nourished by the reception of Holy Communion, provided, however, that, in case of a large crowd of people and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, there is no probable suspicion of sacrilege by heretics or infidels and no offense against the public authority.

(19) To gain these same indulgences for oneself.

(20) To celebrate a Requiem Mass on any altar, even portable, every Monday that does not have a nine-Lesson Office; or, if those days are impeded, on the day immediately following, with the intention of freeing a soul from the punishment of purgatory, by way of a suffrage.

(21) To carry the Blessed Sacrament privately to the sick without a candle and to reserve it also without a candle for these same sick persons, but in a place that is fitting, if there be danger of sacrilege by heretics or infidels.

(22) To wear secular clothing, if the person is unable to pass through or remain in mission territories in any other way.

(23) To recite the rosary or other prayers if the person cannot bring a breviary with him or is not well enough to recite the Divine Office because of some legitimate impediment.

(24) To keep and read—but not pass on to others—the books of heretics or infidels treating of their own religion, for the purpose of refuting them, and other books prohibited in any way, except the works of Carlos Molina, Niccolò Machiavelli, and books on fortune telling, dealing with it principally or incidentally, or otherwise in any way, provided that the books are not lent out of those districts.

(25) To administer all the sacraments, even parochial, with the exception of Holy Orders and Confirmation; and for what refers to
parochial sacraments, in dioceses where there may be no Bishops, Ordinaries, or their Vicars, or in parishes where there are no Pastors, or, in places where there are Pastors, with their permission.

(26) To communicate these faculties, in whole or in part, to their companions in the mission, especially at the time of his death, so that in the interim there may be someone who can fill in until the Apostolic See, having been informed of this, will provide in another way through a delegate. This should be done as soon as possible, and also to revoke the faculties communicated, if need be.

(27) To use these same faculties only in the territories of their own missions.

(28) All the aforesaid faculties are to be exercised free of charge, with no remuneration, and are understood to be granted for fifteen years only.

102. - RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT IN MARSEILLES

(July 9, 1650)

On July 9, 1650, certain resolutions were taken in Paris by M. Vincent, Superior General; M. Bausset, provost of the Major, and Administrator of the hospital; M. Portail, priest of the Congregation of the Mission; and the Duchesse d’Aiguillon concerning our establishment in this city and regarding the hospital.

(1) Whether the direction of the hospital, for both spiritual and temporal matters, should be given to the Fathers of Charity or be left as it is at present; that is, whether the Priests of the Mission should take care of spiritual matters and temporal affairs be under the management of the Administrators:

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1 Pierre de Bausset, chief medical officer of the military hospital in Marseilles.
2 The Cathedral of Marseilles.
3 Administrators of the hospital.
It was decided by the Provost, M. Vincent, M. Portail, and the Duchesse d’Aiguillon that the hospital would remain as it is now, in accord with its institution and the letters patent of His Majesty.

(2) Will it be necessary to put there one priest or two? Should they be outsiders or from the house?

It was decided unanimously to leave this up to M. Vincent, who will arrange it as he will see fit, and that there will always be at least two of them.

(3) Their duties in the hospital:

It was decided that they will do everything stated in the letters patent and will demand good conduct of the servants, in conformity with the articles agreed upon with the late M. de la Coste and the Administrators.

(4) Concerning the residence and lodging of those priests as well as the ones at the seminary and the chaplains of the galleys:

It was decided that some of the money from the 15,000 livres income allocated by the King by letters patent will be used to complete the hospital and to build a new wing there for the priests. And because the functions of the seminary and the chaplains come under the Bishop, and because the place is exempt from his jurisdiction since it is in the judicial territory of Saint-Victor Abbey, the Duchess will take the trouble to write about this to the Archbishop of Lyons asking him to agree to place this house under the jurisdiction of the Bishop. In the event that he does not agree, the priests will stay where they are at present in the city.

(5) Concerning attendance at the conferences:

It was decided that the Superior of the Mission will go with the Administrators of the hospital to the conferences where both the spiritual and the temporal affairs of the hospital will be discussed.

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4Gaspard de Simiane de la Coste (cf. III, 295, n. 2). It was to Saint Vincent, to Bishop Jean-Baptiste Gault of Marseilles, and, in particular, to de la Coste that the establishment of the Hospital for Gally Convicts in Marseilles was due.

5Camille de Neufville de Villeroy.
He, along with the Administrators, will have a deliberative vote there, so that what is decided by them will be implemented.6

103. - SAFE-CONDUCT FOR MISSIONARIES
SEN'T TO CHAMPAGNE AND PICARDY

(February 14, 1651)

By order of the King.

His Majesty has been informed that the inhabitants of most of the villages along his borders of Picardy and Champagne are reduced to begging and absolute destitution, as a result of being victims of the pillaging and hostilities of the enemy and all the armies who have passed through and camped there. Several churches have been plundered and despoiled of their furnishings, and many persons from his fine city of Paris are giving outstanding, generous alms to sustain and feed poor persons and to repair the churches. These alms are being used very profitably by the Priests of the Mission and other charitable persons sent to the places where there is the greatest destruction and disease, with the result that a large number of those indigent persons have been helped in their need and illness. While this was being done, however, the soldiers, passing through or camping in the places where the Missionaries were, stole and destroyed the church vestments and provisions of food, clothing, and other things intended for persons who are poor, so much so that, if

6The copyist added: “These regulations were signed by Messieurs Vincent, Bausset, and Portail, and by the Duchesse d’Aiguillon; the original is among our papers. It should be noted here that, when the above decisions were taken, the Priests of the Mission were living in the city, where they had resided for a very long time, first at the hospital, then in a house a short distance from the hospital, later near Saint-Victor, afterward a little farther away, and, lastly, in the place opposite the Carmelites, where the Mercedarians are now living. It was in this house that the chaplains of the galleys lived with us for a year or so. As soon as that house in the small town was bought, the Priests of the Congregation of the Mission went there to live and constructed the present buildings to house the chaplains wishing to retire there. They are now able to do so, since the Intendant for the Galleys increased their wages by two écus a month at the beginning of 1666, and the same Intendant led them to hope for a better stipend in the future, provided they perform their duty well.”

they do not have a guarantee of safety from His Majesty, it will be impossible for them to continue this charitable work so important both for the glory of God and the relief of the subjects of His Majesty.

Desiring to do all in his power to contribute to this, His Majesty, on the advice of his mother the Queen Regent, expressly forbids the Governors and his Lieutenants-General in his provinces and armies, Marshals and camp Majors, Colonels, Captains, and other leaders and officers commanding both his cavalry and infantry troops, French and foreigners—no matter what their nationality—to house any soldiers or allow them to be housed in the villages on the borders of Picardy and Champagne. The Priests of the Mission will ask them for a safe-conduct to help the poor and the sick, and to distribute the provisions they will take there, so that they will have full and entire liberty to practice charity there in the way and to whomever they think fit.

His Majesty also forbids all soldiers to take anything from the Priests of the Mission and from persons working with or for them, under pain of death, placing them under his protection and special safeguard. He enjoins very expressly all bailiffs, seneschals, judges, Provosts of Merchants, and other officers concerned, to see to the implementation and publication of the present letter and to prosecute offenders in such a way that the punishment will serve as an example.

His Majesty wills that credence be given to the duly verified copies of the present letter as to the original.

Given in Paris on February 14, 1651.

104. - MINUTES OF THE ASSEMBLY AT SAINT-LAZARE

(August 11, 1651)

We, Vincent de Paul, Superior General of the Congregation of the Mission, having endeavored for several years to put our Rules in
the best state possible, and desiring in short to put the final touches to them, have convoked some Superiors of our houses and other men well-versed in the affairs of our Institute in order to seek their advice on the Rules as well as on some other points important to our Congregation. These men are Messieurs René Alméras, Superior of the Rome house; Étienne Blatiron, Superior of the Genoa house; Lambert aux Couteaux, Superior of the Richelieu house; Antoine Lucas, Superior of the Le Mans house; Gilbert Cuissot, Superior of the Cahors house; Louis Thibault, Superior of the Saint-Méen house in the Saint-Malo diocese; François Grimal, Superior of the Agen house; Jean-Baptiste Le Gros, Superior of the house known as the Petit Saint-Lazare; and Antoine Portail, Jean Bécu, Jean Dehorgny, Pierre du Chesne, and Jean-Baptiste Gilles, all priests of our Congregation. With them we began, on July 1 of this year 1651, to discuss our Rules and other points mentioned above, which we have desired to draw up here in writing, along with the resolutions taken on them, to be signed below by us and by the aforementioned persons.

The first topic concerned the difficulty encountered in the practice of our vows, which the entire assembly agreed should be preserved. And in order to make this more authentic, it was decided to seek the approval of His Holiness without delay.

The second proposal was to study whether it was advisable to rule on a time limit among us for having the men give missions—such as fifty or sixty years of age—after which they would be released entirely from giving the missions in order to work at running the seminaries and other duties in the house.

The whole assembly agreed that nothing should be given as a ruling on this topic, but everything should be left to the discretion of the Superior General. For several reasons, the same assembly also agreed not to put the young priests to work right away in the functions of the mission.

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1Étienne Blatiron (cf. VII, 18, n. 9).
2Louis Thibault (cf. V, 109, n. 3).
3Jean-Baptiste Le Gros (cf. V, 75, n. 2).
4Saint-Charles Seminary (cf. VII, 28, n. 9).
5Jean-Baptiste Gilles (cf. IV, 279, n. 1).
The third proposal was to study whether it was advisable to have in each province of the Congregation two or three priests zealous for the salvation of souls and the work of the missions, who might work full time in them without settling in any house of the Congregation, not even during the usual intervals between the missions and the grape harvests, unless it is for eight to ten days, when they would go to the place where the Provincial or the Superior General resides to make their retreat and to give an account of their work.

*It was thought that those God inspired to do this should not be refused, provided they had the requisite dispositions of body and mind that such work demands.*

The fourth topic concerned the Rule regarding the election of the General, which states that he will present in writing to the assembly the names of two men whom he judges most suitable to succeed him; or whether it would be better for him not to designate anyone.

*The assembly agreed to proceed in the way the Rule states, unless in the future this is found to have too many disadvantages.*

The fifth proposal was whether the priests of the Tuesday Conferences should have closer ties to our Congregation.

*The assembly did not agree to this but felt that we should go back to the original practice of inviting them, as well as diocesan seminarians, to come on mission with us—a practice that seems to have been stopped for some time—provided a judicious choice be made from among the above-mentioned persons.*

The seventh [sic] concerned the firmness the Company must have in the sacrament of Penance regarding restitution, and not to give absolution until the penitents have made restitution either actually or by promise and obligation, and in writing.

*The general opinion was that it was strongly advisable to act in this way.*

The eighth was whether to continue in all the missions the practice of preaching in the morning, teaching catechism in the afternoon, and the major catechism in the evening.

*The general opinion was that, except for very large missions, it would be advisable to suppress the afternoon catechism, which could be done in the evening or on its own, including in it some little moral lessons, or to do it for about fifteen minutes before the major catechism, without going into the pulpit, and for this purpose the major catechist should speak no longer than a good half-hour.*

The ninth concerned the length of sermons.
The entire assembly agreed that three-quarters of an hour usually suffices, that an hour was too long, and that Superiors should see that this is observed exactly.

The tenth was to see if we should do what was decided in the last Assembly, on October 20, 1642, page 10, concerning the vows not to seek any office in the Congregation, nor to aspire to any benefice or office outside.

The assembly agreed that what is stated in the article should be observed, not however, with regard to all the individual members of the Congregation, but only those whom the Superior General judges capable, and provided they are priests and have made the second seminary. The Superior General can, nevertheless, admit them to them [vows] before the second seminary, provided they have completed the first seminary at least four years previously. He can also delay as long as he thinks fit those who have made the second seminary, if he does not feel that they are properly disposed for them.

The eleventh was whether we should be more gentle in our conduct toward our Brothers.

It was agreed that it is best to use a gentle tone of voice, accompanied by firmness, to help them carry out their duty, and it was decided that they would not be given the black habit so easily but that this should always be after asking permission of the Superior General.

The twelfth was whether some penances should be determined for certain particular faults.

The assembly said yes to this, and something was put down on a separate sheet of paper, but has not yet been settled.

Thirteenth, in one or three sessions thought was given to the means of keeping and perfecting the Congregation in ever greater charity and union; these means were also put down on a separate sheet of paper.

The rest of the time until August 11 of the same year was spent endeavoring to put the Rules in the best possible order, and an Act was even drawn up by which all acknowledge that they [the Rules] are as stated above and that they want them to be presented to the Archbishop of Paris for his approval. And everyone signed the Act.

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6Cf. Doc. 89.
7Jean-François de Gondi.
Drawn up at Saint-Lazare, August 11, 1651.

VINCENT DEPAUL
FRANÇOIS GRIMAL
LAMBERT AUX COUTEAUX
PIERRE DU CHESNE
JEAN DEHORGNY
A. LUCAS
ALMERAS
JEAN BLATRON
J.-B. GILLES

Proposals submitted to M. Vincent, Superior General, made at the Assembly held in Paris in August 1651 for the good government of the Congregation, especially of the Saint-Lazare house, along with his replies.\

(1) It would seem that a Director of Scholastics should be appointed to form them in piety, interior communication, and better study habits; he would also instruct them in the method of preaching and in practical catechetics.

The Sub-assistant will take care of this, if the Assistant is unable to do it.

(2) It would seem more convenient to postpone the Solemn High Mass on Sundays and feast days until eight o'clock, rather than to celebrate it without a break after the Little Hours.

We will try it for a while.

(3) Some time should be designated for the examination of the seminarians by the Superior and his Assistants, in the presence of their Director, and likewise to observe the progress of the scholastics in their studies and conduct, to approve those who have advanced, and to have those less capable of higher studies apply themselves to other subjects; others may be dismissed from the Congregation, if that should be found helpful.

The Assistant will see to it that these three articles are put into practice as soon as possible.

(4) Since it would be inadvisable for the scholastics to become too familiar and to associate too closely with the older members of the Congregation, perhaps the usefulness of having the older priests share their daily conversations should be discussed.

There are many disadvantages in separating the young from the older men. We who are older should give ourselves to God to be an example to the young. Still, we will try this separation: the senior

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6The proposals, written in italics, are in Latin in the original; the Saint's replies are in French in the original.
men will have their own discussions, headed by someone who will propose the topics of conversation.

(5) Perhaps it would be better for the spiritual progress of the seminarians, scholastics, and Brothers if the original method of preaching be reintro­duced—when, that is, subjects better adapted to them are treated in the presence of their Director alone, within the confines of the seminary, and from a pulpit lower than the one we have now, instead of choosing persons to preach in a very large hall from a high pulpit.

I think it will be a good idea to do it in the way mentioned in this fifth article regarding the method of preaching.

(6) It would seem that greater care should be taken in fulfilling the obligations assumed by the Congregation, especially concerning the foundations of M. Vivien,9 M. Callon,10 and certain others; we do not seem to be grateful enough to our benefactors.

It is absolutely necessary to fulfill these foundations and to show greater gratitude toward our benefactors.

(7) It seems that, as a sign of gratitude toward these illustrious men, the Congregation should place a plaque of the late Prior in the hall of Saint-Lazare and that some epitaph be erected in the church to his memory.

I ask M. Portail to give orders that this article and the others be implemented.

(8) It seems that someone should be appointed weekly to say daily Mass for our founders and benefactors.

I ask him to do the same regarding the Mass for the benefactors.

(9) When someone has undertaken a work but is sent elsewhere because of some need, without completing the work, it would seem proper for him to explain that work in writing so someone else could do it. Because of this failure, many good projects perish.

The observance of this article is to be put into practice.

(10) Spiritual conferences held in the evening are likely to be of less value; they would be more profitable at some other time.

At Saint-Lazare it is very difficult to find a time on Friday, except after night prayers, when the whole community can assemble for the conference; it is easier in other houses. The local Superiors can try to hold it immediately after Vespers on Friday.

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10 Louis Callon (cf. V, 233, n. 3).
Present were M. Vincent, Superior General; M. Portail, Assistant of Saint-Lazare; M. Dehorgny, Superior; M. Bécu, Procurator of Saint-Lazare; M. Lambert, Superior of Richelieu; M. Lucas; M. du Chesne; M. Thibault; M. Cuissot; M. Alméras; M. Blatiron; M. Grimal; M. Le Gros; M. Gilles.

On the eve of the feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, after invoking the Holy Spirit by the Veni Creator, and when all had taken their places at random with no regard for persons or rank, M. Vincent the Superior General, seated near the fireplace, opened the Assembly with a short address on the subject of the Assembly. He noted, first of all, that there are—or can be—three types of Assemblies: (1) the General Assembly for the election of the Superior General, in conformity with the conventions prescribed for the election of a General; (2) the Triennial Assembly of the Visitors and some members of their provinces, to take stock of the needs of the Company or of the general or particular needs of a certain province where the Visitor has not remedied something, or to take steps to attend to the infractions of a General who might go wrong; and (3) the Extraordinary Assembly, called by the Superior General to reflect on certain needs of the Company, for which he might need to receive fuller information and help from the Company. This latter one is composed of persons chosen by the Superior General, whom he finds suited to what he has in mind.

Several reasons have prevented holding a General Assembly, which will take place, if Our Lord is pleased to give it life. This one is of the third type, to find a solution to difficulties that have arisen concerning the practice of our vows, to review our Rules, and a few other problems that have arisen.

Having said that, he proposed two things: (1) the reasons we have to give ourselves to God to treat properly what has to be treated in this Assembly, and (2) the means to do so.

Document 105. - Archives of the Mission, Paris, original manuscript of Antoine Lucas. This account, written without too much attention to detail, contains many unclear passages. The texts in italics are written in Latin in the original.

1July 1. This feast, formerly celebrated on July 2, is now celebrated on May 31.
The reasons. The consolidation of the Company is the work of Our Lord. He strongly emphasized this reason.

We have to discuss there the above-mentioned topics: the practice of the vows and the difficulties that have arisen in this regard, etc.

The means. Prayer. The Apostles, Our Lord, and the Church recommended private and public prayer for their undertakings. Place all our trust in God and in God’s help. Make no concessions to nature nor expect anything from it; put on Jesus Christ and His sentiments. Disregard our inclinations and passions. Do not interrupt others. Value the opinions of others more than our own. Do not propose anything, but leave that to the Superior and, if there is something, propose it to him in private. Do not speak either to members of the Assembly or to others about what is said there. Respect confidentiality—he strongly insisted on this.

He next proposed that the vows be discussed: whether the practice of the vows should be continued in the way that has been done since the last Assembly [of 1641] until now, or whether to abandon them entirely; whether what is offensive to some people will be changed, such as reserving dispensation from them to the Pope and the Superior General; and, if they are to be preserved, the means of making them.

After dinner, around two o’clock, the Assembly began with the Veni, Sancte Spiritus, everyone seated as in the morning. M. Vincent proposed the topic for this session, namely, the vows and how they should be practiced in the Company.

(1) To see whether the Company should preserve the practice of its vows.

Reasons in favor: (1) Because, says Fr. de Condren, General of the Oratory, Our Lord took them, although Saint Thomas is of the opposite opinion, as God, says this saint; but Fr. de Condren says that He made them as man: I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the sight of those who fear him.

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2Charles de Condren (cf. II, 346, n. 3).
3Cf. Summa Theologica 2-2, q. LXXVIII, art. IV, ad. 3.
4Cf. Ps 22:26. (NAB)
This is a holy action in use for a long time in the Church and in the synagogue. *Take your vows and fulfill them to the Lord*, etc.⁵ It is a holocaust very pleasing to God, in which the fruit and the tree are offered; and thus the whole person is consecrated to God. Actions are more meritorious with them; subjects, who by nature are like what is written on sand and on water, are strengthened. A solid foundation of prayer is needed, for *a person never remains in the same state*. The Company is more perfect with them; a better disposition is made of its subjects. Here he remarked that two priests in a Company that was not bound by vows came for an explanation of the needs of the border areas. They were planning to go there to work, but when they heard of the misfortunes and the need of the people and the region, they changed their minds. Two Capuchin Fathers he requested of the Provincial and the Guardian, who had promised to go, did nothing about it. A Superior would not be able to dispose of his men so freely, and they would more easily resist when they might have to go to difficult ministries in far off places, etc.

(2) *Reasons against*: Several Companies without vows are flourishing and doing much good, such as the Oratory of Rome and of France,⁶ Saint-Nicolas, Saint-Sulpice,⁷ etc. The difficulty people find with them within and outside. It seems that a person could live on with greater freedom, and therefore with greater merit. *He could have transgressed and did not*, etc.⁸ This will not make good men any less steadfast; we will be more in line with the clergy, of which we are members and a part; secular priests will have greater confidence in us and feel freer with us; Bishops will have no reason for taking umbrage, and all difficulties will disappear.

(3) If the vows are to be retained, it seems that anything offensive should be removed, namely, reserving dispensation from them to the Pope and the General, and the rights of the Bishops should be

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⁵Cf. Ps 50:14. (NAB)
⁷Community of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet Seminary (the Nicolaites), founded by Adrien Bourdoise, and the Community of Saint-Sulpice, founded by Jean-Jacques Olier.
⁸Cf. Sir 31:10. (NAB)
left alone, although it seems that the Archbishop of Paris might have done what he did as representative of the Pope in this matter. That is the opinion of his council and of some Doctors. Meanwhile, send someone to Rome expressly to petition for this affair in person and to do nothing else, because the late Commander de Sillery⁹ used to say that, with time and patience, everything could be settled in Rome; and M. de Molé, Chief Justice of the Court, says that he has never seen a good affair fail in the Parlement. Those difficulties will cease with time because this decision was made after praying much and seeking advice. Clement VIII¹⁰ had dreamed that God was damning him because he had received Henry IV¹¹ after asking the advice of several Doctors. Tolet,¹² on his return, said to him: “That is a temptation, for you did it after much prayer and with good advice.” And he himself was cured of a difficulty by the late M. Pillé when he had to plead the case of Saint-Lazare, because he said: “Do not go to any trouble without seeking advice and praying a great deal.”

Sunday, July 2. M. Vincent repeated the reasons for uncertainty regarding our vows: that the Pope refused them, saying We shall see; that the Doctors do not agree with one another regarding their value; that several men in the Company have difficulty with them.

M. Grimal stated that we should hold fast in favor of the vows and tend toward solemn ones rather than abandon them, because therein is the consolidation of the Company.

M. Thibault said the same but remarked that the Bishop of Tréguier¹³ had some difficulties with this.

M. Blatiron noted that moderation should be used with regard to the Italians, who have a problem with vows and the religious state, which they think consists in the vows; and if that could be separated, we could accept those who would take vows and those who

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⁹Noël Brulart de Sillery (cf. V, 558, n. 5).
¹⁰Pope Clement VIII (1592-1605).
¹¹Henry IV, King of France (1589-1610).
¹²Francisco Cardinal Toledo (Tolet), S.J. (cf. V, 317, n. 6).
¹³Balthazar Grangier de Liverdi.
would not, like the Jesuits, some of whom take the four vows, and others do not; nevertheless, the vows must not be eliminated.

M. Gilles defended the vows and pointed out that (1) the Company could not exist without vows; (2) it would be desirable not to be able to inherit, or there could be an attorney for inheritances, and individual members would not get involved in them *because they offer scrawny sheep and carry off the plump ones*; the condition of the Mission would be worse than that of an assistant; the Bishops are delighted to have Missionaries *because they belong to the clergy and are well versed in clerical matters*; as long as we have property, or the hope of having some, we look back, like Lot’s wife; if there were only the missions, it would not be necessary to take vows *because it would be a very wretched situation for the senior confreres*, who like a fixed state; and the instability of the Mission is very hard to bear *because human beings, like trees, put down roots*. The Bishops have no reason to complain because they have stable servants. He stressed that, even if he had to live on bread and water, he would not leave the Mission. He added that our vows *do not bind in the external forum but do so in the internal forum*: that everyone should be obliged to take vows at the end of two years; the older men should not be pressured to renew them, *provided they do not speak badly of them*; *but, if they do, let them be bound by them or punished*. (2) *[sic]* When someone speaks badly of them, remedy this immediately by withdrawing him from the house where he can do harm, as in a small house, and by keeping watch over him in a large one, etc.; do not admit those who are unwilling to take vows, unless it is in Italy, because of the difficulty that people there have with our vows.

M. Dehorgny spoke in favor of simple vows, but not in favor of the reservations because the person who drew up our Bull in Rome told him that the Pope never intended to give that authority to the Archbishop of Paris. Those vows put the Company in a higher state, and that is not a simple Rule, and that, when particular law is uncertain within the general law, the Superior is not authorized to grant this particular right, unless he expresses it; he also agreed that we should send someone to Rome for that, as has been proposed.
M. Portail agreed that the reservation should be eliminated and that a man who will get things moving should be sent to Rome, etc.

Monday the third. M. Alméras said that it [the reservation] should be eliminated in the usual way. (1) They are null and void. Urban and Innocent\(^1\) refused them. Nevertheless, M. Vincent remarked that he had instructed the late M. Lebreton to ask Urban for the vows of religion, not as we make them, and Bishop Ingoli wanted to unite us to the Congregation of Propaganda Fide, but that would have broken off relations with the Prelates. This is a big problem for the Company, and the Doctors hold that they are null and void because [a privilege] granted in a particular case is not deemed to be admitted in a general concession, as in our case. They do not come under a general concession... 

He is very uncertain about whether we should take them. They offend persons within and outside; they prevent people from coming; they are the path to our becoming religious; they will be of some use; besides, a dispensation will easily be obtained by a special Bull, as with the Jesuits, although no matter what they do they do not succeed and have become apostate [religious].

But the ministries are difficult. — We will not stop working in them if we do not have vows, nor will we refuse them any less because of the vows, like the Capuchins, who found no one to go to Picardy. The Superior will have them obey him in this as in other things, and his firmness will serve as a vow; otherwise, that is mistrusting God.

That means making a change. — Sometimes this is good, and M. Vincent himself demonstrated this with regard to ceremonies, showing that God Himself changed.

It is more perfect. — So then, we have to become religious. Great difficulty in Rome.

M. du Chesne was of the same opinion, saying that the vows were uncertain, to say the least. In doubtful matters [of law], the interpretation more favorable to the subject is to be followed. If they have to be eliminated, this can be discussed in three ways: either to

\(^{1}\)Popes Urban VIII (1632-44) and Innocent X (1644-55).
take them as is done at present, or have the entire Company take simple ones, or receive them only from those who ask for them. In the first two cases the Pope has to pronounce because it must be universal law, and both cases experience almost the same difficulties. It is even doubtful if they should be taken because [1] they go against our purpose; they are constitutive of a religious Order; among the Jesuits they experience many difficulties and have little success, since few people are restrained by vows; and if that is the only thing that restrains them, it is better that they leave. The third case should be retained but without having to go to the Pope. Nevertheless, if people want one of the first two that are mentioned above, we must send to Rome about it, etc.

M. Lambert felt that the form of the vows should be changed because we do not know how to explain them, or we should even eliminate them altogether because that goes against the purpose of the Company. The vow of poverty may be incompatible with having a title, the right of inheritance, etc.; we do not know how to explain this, etc.; nevertheless, a vow of obedience to the Superior General would be necessary, etc.

M. Bécu declared that he would accept any kind of vow, provided it not make us religious.

M. Cuissot is against vows; he thinks, nevertheless, that there must be some bond in the Company.

M. Le Gros remarked that vows are necessary, but gave no explanation.

M. Vincent stated that much prayer is needed, that it is a question of knowing God's Will for the peace and consolidation of the Company. It is also a question of doing away with a great part of the reason for divisions, and he said that we would continue to discuss this topic until greater agreement is reached.

*Tuesday the fourth.* M. Vincent stated that he felt obliged to clarify this matter to the Company. He had two things read: one from the Bull *Ascendente Domino*, which I had quoted: *We have laid down in specific form; that it was part of Church law in an approved Order; that vows must be taken in an approved religious Order*. He stressed that, in the Lyons and the Lateran Councils *under Innocent*
III, it is forbidden under pain of nullity to create any new religious Order that does not follow one of the four Rules of the time. Now, the Popes and the Council of Trent made an exception for the Jesuits. The rest of us, etc. (2) They say there is no pressure. He explained it by the analogy of a wife or a gathering of widows, having heard that they were forcing, etc. It is dangerous to back down in that way; once a law is established it is not easily revoked. We cannot please everyone. (Comparison of Clement VIII and of that man with his son and his donkey, etc.) Lastly, after one hour of discussion, he proposed that they see whether the Company should be bound to maintain its vows once the reservation is removed.

M. Bécu does not think so because they tend toward a religious Order, etc.

M. Grimal is in favor of them because of the bond.

M. Cuissot has a problem with them.

M. Blatiron is against them because they will make us out to be religious, especially in Italy, where we will not be well accepted with our vows. Priests will collaborate less easily with us, especially in Italy. We are helpers of the Bishops, who will be upset with us and will choose instead more learned religious like the Jesuits, etc. There is as much advantage in not taking them; and this is obvious to anyone who considers the point; we can be strengthened by admitting to vows those who will ask to take them and by obtaining that a dispensation may be given only by the Holy See; that will be easier.

M. Thibault is against vows, as above.

M. Gilles supports [the vows for] many [reasons]: (1) It is not good to make a change after a decision is taken in a General Assembly, even in a single case. What then, did not the Holy Spirit preside over it? Where will the Spirit preside? Great difficulty with such change. It was the vows that kept him when he had a twenty-five-year-old Superior, etc. Doubt will also be cast on the

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15Pope Innocent III (1198-1216); the Fourth Lateran Council was held in 1215. Innocent IV (1243-54) was Pontiff at the time of the First Council of Lyons (1245).

16Council of Trent (1545-63). During that period four Popes sat on the papal throne: Paul III (1534-49), Julius III (1550-55), Paul IV (1555-59), and Pius IV (1559-63).
first Assembly. This would be to do harm to the Company or to put it at risk because "every change," says Aristotle, "is a disease"; it is going from intense heat to bitter cold, etc. One day a statesman said to him: "It is easy for one to change his state." "Yes," he said to himself, "but he will die five times beforehand." One day a man who belonged to the Oratory said to him: "The Oratory is just a respectable inn"; its seminary is not much, etc. What a difference from the Jesuits! (1) Their vows are in an approved Order, as is evident from the Bull Ascendente; when they are coadjutor [Brothers], they cannot inherit; the fourth vow is solemn; the professed house can have nothing; they are exempt from the Ordinaries; those who leave are excommunicated and are considered apostate [religious]; they can enter only the Carthusians; they take several vows and oaths; their duties and habits are different. This is the thinking of the General. There is no one in the Company who is not ready to take them. His teacher, the late M. Mazure,17 told him that one must consider in everything whether there is more to be feared than to be hoped, and in that case it is folly to take them; whether there is as much to be feared as to be hoped, and that is imprudence; whether there is more to be hoped than to be feared, and that is prudence. The Italians? The mother has to lead the daughter and not the other way around. For to follow a Doctor is not sure in conscience, as what Navarre18 says about the commandments of the Church not obliging under pain of sin, or about the benefice holder who does not pray his office having the right to its fruits; he read in the works of the theologians of Coimbra that there is no opinion so foolish that it has not been upheld by some lawyer . . . powerful in lips [a powerful speaker]; that he would ask to leave rather than to give up the vows; that he does not think it necessary to come to a decision on this question; that a Catalan gentleman with whom he was in Cahors was ready to jump on him for having stated that religious are not so well thought of because they behave badly; so we should not reach the point here of advising a young man to become a bad monk

17Nicolas Mazure, Canon of Coutances (cf. I, 376, n. 4).
18Martín Navarro, a Spanish canonist.
rather than a soldier, that many good acts are performed in religious Orders, but none in war, etc.

M. Le Gros regards the Company as a building whose Rules and vows are the foundation; neither one nor the other must be removed.

M. Dehorgny says that, since our vows are not good, we should contact Rome as soon as possible and go along peacefully in the meantime.

M. Portail agrees with this.

M. Alméras also agrees.

And so do I.

And M. Lambert says that the vows seem good to him but we should send someone to Rome. He reported what the Bishop of Tréguier said to him: “If all Companies or the Mission were to disappear, it would be [better] to let the other things go, etc.”

M. Vincent speaks strongly in favor of the vows, saying that he thinks Our Lord wills us to make them; he will send a man to Rome as soon as possible to do only that, etc.

_Tuesday the sixth._ The question was raised as to whether a time will be fixed to go on the missions and another to rest, or whether there will be permanent missionaries who would not move from the mission. Note that he had thought that the Superior General should not be chosen from among the latter men. —Reasons against: that cannot be easily decided. We . . . the missions only as the advancement of . . . 19 We give up the most important thing in the Company. The Jesuits have not fixed the time of the professed house. —Reasons in favor: a man cannot always work. That will be a consolation for the Company.

M. Bécu says yes for the first; the second is difficult because of the vacation period.

M. Gilles thinks that both are good.

M. Cuissot agrees because we are doing the first; the second is similar.

M. Blatiron agrees and is open to it.

19The word here is illegible.
M. Thibault thinks that the first is good; so is the second, except that they would have to come back during vacation time when people seek relaxation. They receive comfort from the Company. This can create some inconvenience. Superiors should be zealous for the missions and see to it that everyone goes to them.

M. Gilles says that there should be a set time for teaching for the missions; nevertheless, he thinks this is difficult. Be concerned about those who are working; follow the inclinations, etc. He finds the proposal of a permanent mission a difficult thing because nature might not provide for it; they would have to preach with no preparation; the spirit of interiority might be lost; our men would become worn out in a short time.

M. Dehorgny feels the same way. No ruling should be made on anything, but much consideration should be given both to the elderly and to the young. The other does not seem feasible to him.

M. Portail agrees.

M. Alméras says that consideration should be given to the elderly and to the young; although the other suggestion is difficult, it is not impossible and should be tried.

M. du Chesne thinks that both are easy but no ruling should be made about anything; regarding the latter one: because of the state of their vocation some would hold that we should place our hope in the mercy of God; there are some who volunteer.

M. Lambert suggests a house in each province for future Missionaries, without retreatants, etc.

Discussion on both proposals was concluded without making any ruling or prescribing a set time for missions; it was agreed that help should be given those who want to go on mission, providing them with furniture, beds, linen, dishes, etc., a Brother cook, etc.

The following day. It was suggested that they be concise in their deliberations. (1) That is how it is in Councils, in which thirty to forty important business matters are settled; each gives his opinion and two reasons briefly. There are two ways of knowing the truth: (1) By a simple elevation to God; (2) By reasoning. Two or three reasons are given on the nature of the matter; others cause confusion. There should be two or three lawyers to consult on an affair,
any more would confuse matters; that is how it is for physicians. The King’s chief physician; [the King] puts himself in the hands of just one physician. Among his resolutions M. de Bérulle had: “I will make decisions on affairs by elevation to God.” Much time is lost. There are dangerous consequences and bad results. This is imposing one’s own opinion and way of thinking.

See whether one is permitted to cut a person short and interrupt the one who is speaking.

Everyone says yes, etc.

The question was proposed as to whether the election of the General made on the proposal of two persons by the preceding General [should be maintained]. This is what the Sisters of Sainte-Marie do. No one knows the Company better; there is nothing to fear in doing it as the Rule states. —Reasons against: the Jesuits do not do that; they have always had great men. This is from M. Vincent: “Wretch that I am,” he said, “I was afraid.”

Alméras also says yes because that is what has been laid down. He sees, nevertheless, three difficulties: that the Company seems bound; that the General can become mentally confused, like Vitelleschi, who let himself be governed by his assistant. This is a concern, or, if refused, will encourage vanity. We will vote on them if they reject them, or ... to correct that Rule after the death of the one who abuses it.

Saturday the eighth. See whether a distinction will be made of degrees in the Company. —Reasons in favor of this: because the Jesuits do it or did it very appropriately in order to become Superiors; there will be competition; naming a poor Superior will not be so simple. —Opposed: it is not easy; envy is to be feared; we did not begin that way; it is difficult to see how to make a distinction.

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20Visitation nuns.
It was rejected. Nothing about degrees, but a list will be made of the most virtuous and learned men, which the Superior General will keep and will choose the Superiors from among them.

The same day. See whether the members of the Conference should have closer ties than they do at present. —The reply is no, because there seems to be no reason for it.

See whether they should be invited to work on the missions. —Reasons in favor: they have already begun to do so, and the work of missions began with them; God is granting them the grace for it; men are formed by it; many people will be served; they keep us in check. —Reasons against: we find this difficult; they may see our weakness; they may be scandalized and have little regard for us; it is no longer like it was in the beginning.

We must abide by this, etc. Better to dismiss members of the Company who have difficulty with it. Observe, nevertheless, that they must not be given any posts as Superiors; and that our men may be fewer than they are; one or two of our men; choose some of our men and some of those who participate in the Conference.

It was agreed to send our men who might be disposed to go there in place of the Pastors, and to take them on mission . . . to Vaucresson.

See whether restitution before absolution will be obligatory. —M. Blatiron says that this happens in Genoa; if it is a public matter, the person should be made to pay immediately or to give his word to do so; if the matter is confidential, even with inconvenience, they said it should be handed over to the Pastor, who will find a solution for it (This is difficult.). Enough of that! It can be either an upright man or their Pastor the first time. This did not please everyone because the mission is special. Fr. Eudes does it this way and finds it helpful. It was also proposed that the principal cases requiring restitution be indicated. Keep them in mind when giving a penance; say that he says such and such, but we think it better to recall, etc.

22The Tuesday Conferences
23In Hauts-de-Seine, northeast of Versailles.
24Saint John Eudes (cf. VIII, 366, n. 1).
M. Gilles gives absolution in private and says he has never given it publicly. —Rejected by everyone because a judge should pass sentence honestly in the presence and with the awareness of the accused. This is duplicity in the sacraments, and the form of the sacrament must be perceptible.

Monday the tenth. One of the things to be observed in giving missions together with outsiders is to choose the men carefully—even our own men. As a general rule, there should be only one or two of our men. They should come to the conference and repetition of prayer. They should be housed together. The Director should know how strong they are both spiritually and physically.

Consideration was given as to whether we should continue to hold the conference on days of relaxation. —Each was instructed to voice his difficulties and his reasons in favor of this. In summer, the best time to take a walk is four o’clock in the afternoon. It is difficult to subject the members of the Company and priests from the outside to it. It should be held at two o’clock or at eight o’clock in the evening. They are not together in the morning, and they have to be in church on Sundays.

It was suggested that we see whether punishments for ordinary faults and simple ones should be regulated. —That is what God did in the Old Testament, and the Church does in the Canons and legislation. The Visitation nuns, also. It moderates those Superiors who are either too irascible and testy or too meek. —Reasons against: it is not the custom of the Jesuits; three things can make up for these things: punishment, warnings, and having one kneel during repetition of prayer.

It was decided that a distinction would be made among them, and Messieurs du Chesne, Thibault, and Blatiron should be delegated to work on that after dinner and the following day.

Next, M. Vincent asked M. Blatiron how he spent his time on the missions. —His reply: 7½ hours sleep; ½ hour of prayer, not including reading and the litany; Office together; confessions; recreation; cases of conscience; certificates for confession are given to persons

25Repetition of prayer (cf. VIII, 572, n. 28).
who have been properly instructed. Conference is held for ½ hour on the day after the day off, or on Sundays and feast days, etc.

Wednesday the twelfth. Does one sermon suffice? —The answer is yes, after a fashion, divided into catechism class and a sermon.

Are both the sermon and catechism necessary? —The answer is yes.

Should the noon catechism be eliminated? —Yes, we have already begun to do so. Very few men come to it; we make up for it by the morning and evening catechism class. Do not divide the evening activities into catechism and preaching. People get too tired; they forget; we have only children in front of us and they cause a disturbance. The conclusion was to try, nevertheless, to do both until the next Assembly.

Should sermons be allowed to go beyond forty-five minutes or an hour? —No, a penance should be imposed if they do. They have to want this, pray for it, deprive them of preaching and of wine, etc. Put that among the faults.

Thursday the thirteenth. It was [resolved] with regard to the vows not to seek any office or benefice. —Response: They have to be made as soon as possible, and the Company is open to this. Admit those who will participate in Provincial Assemblies and will be Superiors General and Visitors. It was decided to work on the Rules concerning Provincial Assemblies, where everything has to be corrected.

The same day, work was done on the causes of a lack of charity and the means to obtain it.

Causes of disunion. M. Vincent lists: nature, which involves both likes and dislikes if we follow it; a desire for possessions, honors, and pleasure; a spirit of stubborn contradiction; offending one another by rash judgment; talebearing and malicious gossip through unkind judgments; failing in the duties of charity; excessive self-love; discussing the faults of others, especially their abilities; refraining from defending oneself for not contributing enough to the conversation; lack of respect; envy; arrogance; being too reserved; poor leadership in certain Superiors; being disagreeable; mixing persons strong in their vocation with others; lack of unifor-
mity; too few General Assemblies (nevertheless, the Jesuits say that they should take place only rarely, etc.); poor communication among the houses; manifesting little regard for what others say or do; haughtiness; lack of mortification; failure to be compassionate.

**Remedies.** Keep these causes before our eyes and detest them; have a lowly opinion of oneself; great openness of heart; do penance for gossip and report it to the Superior; hold frequent conferences on this subject; dismiss unsuitable persons; Superiors should enforce the observance of this; have communication often; bear in mind respect for others; love of our own abjection; accept the suggestions and sentiments of others; speak well of the absent; tell those who are admitted that they should not be haughty; build compatible communities, avoiding antipathies; mutual support and graciousness; humility and mortification; mistrust of self in our duties; let everyone know that disunity is not tolerated, and go so far as to dismiss persons who create it; share with the houses the means of being united; have a spirit of creating unity; confidentiality and discretion in speech; love of God; do to others only what we would wish to be done to ourselves; ask God for a unifying spirit; do not mock others, and warn those who do; animate conversations and instill this in others.

*After dinner on the fourteenth.* Should we direct the Daughters of Charity? — This is a work of God and of the Company, which does much good and which we cannot easily set aside, etc. As a rule, no; in extraordinary cases, yes.

M. Alméras.—Yes, in the parlor at a set time; they should be kept at a distance, and someone else should always be there.

*Saturday the fifteenth.* The question proposed was whether there was any problem with the Rule concerning the property of individual members. — The answer was yes (1) with regard to repairs; (2) for families with children who are minors; (3) for titles confused with other property of relatives; (4) for receiving property through a proxy or from the one to whom it belongs; (5) if a man leaves, and there are arrears remaining, how to receive them; (6) the Parlements, families, and the public will have a problem with it.
Possible solutions. (1) The plan is to see how we can find a way of preserving the property of individual members without leaving the management of it to them, and still allowing the Company to profit from it without being responsible for paying something back, since it provides for the individual and it is only fair that the one who has the means should help to provide for his brothers. (2) Write down the plan with all its difficulties, propose it to some lawyers, counselors among our friends, and two Doctors who are experts in Community affairs.

The entire day was spent on this, without coming to any conclusion on the matter.

Among other remarkable things M. Vincent said is that he hopes that the Congregation will never initiate any lawsuit at court unless (1) the advice of lawyers has been sought, and the Congregation has asked them if it has a good case; and, if it is doubtful, it should be dropped; (2) everything possible has been done to settle the affair out of court, as he did for the business of M. Delattre.26

Those who will enter the Congregation and will have simple benefices or pensions, as well as those who will actually have the use of their property, or which they will inherit after their entrance into the Congregation, will leave the management and use of the revenues of the benefices, pensions, and other above-mentioned properties to the Congregation. This will be done in such a way, however, that they will be free to dispose of their money according to the laws and customs of the place, without, however—should they happen to leave the Congregation—recovering the use and management of the revenues of the benefices and other property received and to be received by the Congregation up to the day of their departure.

The following was asked concerning this: (1) Can a particular Congregation established in the Church by authority of the Pope and of the King, having the power to make Rules and Constitutions, make this Rule and insert it into its Constitutions? And, in the event that it can do so:

(2) Under what terms will the Congregation be able to enjoy the use of the property mentioned therein and will it be unable to claim

26Guillaume Delattre (cf. IV, 38, n. 2).
it either because of the departure of the one to whom it belongs, or because of his death, since he or his heirs are entitled to their rights?

(3) Who will have the right to give the receipts—the proprietor or the procurator of the house? Will it be necessary to sign a power of attorney for the receipts and to administer the property?

(4) How should we proceed to collect the inheritances of those to whom they are due from the time of their entrance into the Congregation: will they themselves see to this or should it be done by proxy, either from within or from outside the Congregation?

(5) What obligation will they have for the upkeep of the buildings and dependencies of the property, and will the repairs fall to the Congregation if the owner leaves the Congregation or dies?

(6) How can the arrears on them be recovered if the owner either leaves the Congregation or leaves this world by his death?

Sunday the sixteenth. A proposal was made to study the list of faults drawn up according the agreement of Monday, July 10, and see how to proceed with it, noting that, at their General Assembly, the Jesuits drew up a list of major faults and ordered them to be read annually in the refectory.

Debate took place regarding conversations with married and unmarried women, that the bedroom . . . allowing them to come into our house; whether to speak to them in church and in what way. How would this decision be made? There are three ways: By invoking the Holy Spirit, many saints have thus been chosen; by a test with two beans, or by a card, or by one or two containers so placed that no one can see what choice is being made; or by an arbitrator; that is how . . . Gregory chose this from John 21, to be selected by him, one ses[ston].

Monday the seventeenth. —Concerning coadjutor [Brothers], how they should be governed, and their habit: Three ways of governing them: (1) With unreserved love and cordiality; they are servants of God and are our brothers. . . . (2) With great strictness. Proverbs are words of truth. Oignez vilain.27 The Discalced Carmelites were well served when their Brothers were of the nobil-

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27 *Oignez vilain* is the beginning of a French proverb: "Tender-handed stroke a nettle, And it stings you for your pains; Grasp it like a man of mettle, and it soft as silk remains."
ity. (3) A combination of both. That is how God governs. In Genoa, strictness is necessary. Some give cause for concern because they wear the black habit and are unwilling to do anything.

Several say that all three ways of governing are necessary; others, that there should be a combination; still others, with unreserved love; if they are incapable of this, they should be dismissed. Observation: neither prayer, nor repetition, nor Conference should be in common; at table, especially on pilgrimages and journeys; if they are not in charge in a particular duty, they should not initiate anything without the authorization of the person responsible for the duty. There should not be too much involvement with them and no familiarity; their collar should be different, even if they wear black; priests and seminarians must neither be corrected nor praised in their presence; their travel expenses should be checked. Sometimes they grumble if they do not eat with us, and even quarrel. The Carthusians do not allow theirs to serve the priests, etc. They do not have enough . . . when traveling.

The eighteenth. M. Vincent says that a mixed governance is necessary, but it must be assumed that Christian leadership implies and requires humility. I did not come to be served, but to serve, etc. There are no slaves among Christians except those who are sent to the galleys for their crimes. Gentle, amiable governance is the best in practice, and experience has proven this. They are our brothers, etc. Resolved therefore: do not change the habit, but do not give it easily and reserve the authority for doing so to the General; be firm in dismissing those who misuse it and who go back on their resolution; when they are in town or traveling, have them eat at table with us. He did so at Mme. d’Aiguillon’s table; give them the same food and horses as we have—if not with slight differences—or send them on ahead. It is difficult to regulate expenses when they have to go to the country; do not give the priests servants when they are available. He has often thought about whether to invite them to repetition of prayer, but after they have spoken, res indigesta. Here many members insisted that we should fear making our weaknesses
(2) There are many things to be corrected in the Brothers, seminarians, and priests, etc.

After dinner. Should we retain the Rule that states that they will teach? Reasons in favor: this is what is being done; they have the aptitude; Do not stifle the Spirit (1Thes 5:19): they are successful at it; that consoles and encourages them. Reasons against: some abuse it; it has unpleasant consequences. It should be removed from their Rule and placed in the Rule for the Superior so that its practice will be preserved, and that it not be in their Rule.

Next, they discussed supervision of duties. Note that some want to act like absolute bosses in their duty and find it difficult to have someone supervise them. —It was decided never to put anyone but a priest in charge of the storeroom; as for shopping at the markets, some thought will be given to that, as also to introducing some professed.

Thursday, July 20. Discussion on a note that had been given to M. Vincent, asking what to reply to persons who might question us regarding our vows.

Answer: There are two sorts of persons: those who have no business asking; and they should be told that, yes, we make simple vows, etc.; and more serious persons; these should be given an answer. He then gave a long, intense discourse, saying that we made vows: (1) because that is what binds persons most perfectly to God; (2) binds the Company and its members, whereby it is no problem sending a man fifty leagues from here for a seminary or to go to the Indies, etc. They help us resemble Jesus Christ more closely, and to be more capable in our ministries. There is greater equality among us and more steadfastness in the members.

But you are depriving Bishops of their authority. —Answer: This can be done in two ways: either in relation to their authority, such as depriving them of the power to confirm and absolve from heresy, as the Pope might demand; or by the removal of persons. Bear in mind that jurisdiction is for the benefit of the subjects and not for those in charge. Or, if I withdraw from the power of the Bishop by leaving his diocese, I remove from him the authority he has over me, but I do him no wrong. That is how it is with us, but this
topic should be given a great deal of thought. . . . The Pope did not give the power. If, in the beginning, he had been led to understand this, he would have done so. A Superior is obliged to give a person the means to attain an end for which he designates him. Thus . . . because the Superior sins mortally if he errs in this, etc., and consideration should be given to these matters. The Archbishop of Paris, the Pope’s representative in this matter, studied it closely for three years and raised strong objections to it; nevertheless, he said that he felt it necessary, declaring that he did not think it necessary to go to Rome; but someone will go, just the same.

But people take vows that have to be dispensed at a later time. —The Jesuits have done that. In fact, people vow, not to observe the Rules, but to observe the vows in accordance with the Rules.

But what is our poverty? Answer: The Canons of Saint Augustine take a vow of poverty and are Pastors and Canons; the Knights of Malta hold the office of Commander with their vow of poverty, etc. Everyone should uphold the vows, etc. It is said, however, that we could not have made this Rule. On the contrary: we can make a Rule for something that is lawful, fair, and not contrary to the holy canons. Now, this one is such, etc.; he proves this by induction, etc.

Exhortation of August 9. In conclusion, we have great reason to thank Our Lord for what has been accomplished during this Assembly because: (1) owing to the state of affairs, it has made us aware that we can hope for God’s assistance; (2) our Rules have been finalized—or almost finalized—and can remain fixed; (3) we see how necessary it is for us to work constantly to have both our Rules and our vows approved; (4) we are aware that we will have to deal with a very serious matter in the event that the Rules are not approved before the death of the Superior General; that those who are voting for the election of his successor will be the Superiors of all the houses of Europe—including Ireland and Africa—along with one priest elected by the house, who will accompany him [the Superior], and not [just] the Assistants and the Visitors; in this way they will remain faithful to the terms of Common Law. The convocation

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28 Jean-François de Gondi.
will be made by whomever the Superior General has named Vicar-General, who will preside over it, etc. And, in the event that none has been named, the Assistant of Saint-Lazare, who represents the Superior General, will be the one by right.

So, two things were proposed:

1) To decide whether the Rules will be read over again. The decision was taken to have them reread by only two or three men; nevertheless, everyone would sign them because Rules are like our hands: the more we wash them, the more they have to be washed; or like hens who always find something to peck at in a place through which they pass a hundred times.

2) To decide whether the first Assembly will be bound by oath to follow the Rules, in the event that they are not approved. If the present Pope does not approve our vows, or the one who comes after him, three or four years after his coronation, we will go back to the original way of taking them. That the General will not be elected unless he swears to observe and have others observe and approve the Rules as they are, for fear that his supreme authority may lead him to want to change something.

The means. Prayer and union. Reverend Mother de Chantal used to say that neither the holiest, nor the most learned persons, nor great minds were suitable for being Superiors, but only those committed to their vocation, to the Rule, etc. Always respect confidentiality. The Assistants should see that the Rules are observed and endeavor to get them approved.


(August 11, 1651)

Although it pleased the most holy Lord, Pope Urban VIII, of happy memory, to grant us through the Bull of Erection\(^1\) of our

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\(^1\)\textit{Salvatoris nostri} (cf. Doc. 84a).