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By John Timon, C.M. (1861)

Edited and Annotated
By
John E. Rybolt, C.M.

Introduction

John Timon’s memoir of the early history of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States, with particular focus on his part in that history, has never previously been published. It has occasionally been cited, and even formed the major source of Charles G. Deuther’s Life and Times of the Rt. Rev. John Timon, D.D., First Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese of Buffalo.¹ Deuther’s work, however, is inaccurate and incomplete, and it is unknown how Deuther came to have access to the manuscript.²

Timon received a request to write his memoir in 1859, as the following letter to Stephen V. Ryan records:³

Buffalo, Dec. 21, 1859

Very Reverend and Dear Sir:

The Rev. Mr. Perboyer [sic for Gabriel Perboyre] of Paris wishes me to write some statements of our early beginnings in different missions. At my request, Bishop Rosati made a compilation which I have read. But many things are omitted. I would willingly comply with the wishes of our respected confrère, in a work which the Superior General much desires; but it would be useless to write what Dr. Rosati, or others have already written: hence I would request you to send me such documents as you may have, I will have them copied, supply what may be omitted, send back to you your documents, and forward the copy with my additions to Mr. Perboyer.

² Deuther writes: “The following history is partly from the pen of the Bishop himself and from other sources equally reliable.” (Deuther, Life, 26; see also, vi.)
³ Original in De Andreis - Rosati Memorial Archives, (hereinafter cited as DRMA), DePaul University, Richardson Library Special Collections and Archives, Chicago, Illinois, Timon File.
Please to let me hear soon from you and accept my respects and best wishes for all blessing on this holy season and for many happy returns.

Most respectfully, etc.

John Timon was born at the old Catholic settlement of Conewago, Pennsylvania, on 12 February 1797. His merchant father moved the family several times, locating finally in Saint Louis in 1819. Timon came under the influence of Felix De Andreis and decided to study for the priesthood in the Congregation of the Mission at Saint Mary’s of the Barrens Seminary. Bishop Joseph Rosati ordained him to the priesthood on 23 September 1825.

As the memoir notes, he spent the early years of his priesthood in teaching at the seminary and in missionary activity with his friend Jean-Marie Odin. Ten years after his ordination, he was notified of his appointment as the first visitor (provincial superior) of the American province of the Congregation. During his twelve years as provincial, he oversaw the expansion (and contraction) of the major works of the community. He had good advice in managing the finances of the province, and was enlisted by the superior general to manage the funds of the general curia in Paris.

American bishops took note of Timon’s abilities and recommended him several times for the episcopacy. He resolutely resisted, but, for the reasons noted in the memoir, felt obliged finally to acquiesce to the Holy See. He was ordained as the first bishop of Buffalo on 23 April 1847. He died there 16 April 1867.

Timon’s surviving correspondence is extensive. His letters and other papers from his years as the provincial of the American Vincentians consists of approximately 1600 items, and this collection is found at the Archives of the University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana. These letters date from 1826 to 1844. In addition, his many letters and reports to the general curia of the Congregation of the Mission have been preserved in its archives. Fortunately for researchers, both the Notre Dame and the Paris (now Roman) correspondence are available on microfilm. Much material is also available elsewhere, such as Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission and Annales de la Propagation de la Foi. These and other sources have been used to amplify and verify the contents of this document.

Timon’s own sources must have included, besides the documents referred to in his letter above, a diary (now lost), and most likely his
correspondence. In addition, the lengthy letter concerning Rosati’s activities must have remained in his files to be brought out for inclusion in his memoir. It is uncertain whether Timon had access to Rosati’s memoirs. He wrote for them, and asked for other lives and information so that “this winter I will do what I can to fill up lacunae, and perhaps continue till towards the end of my time.”

Since Timon wrote mainly about himself, he occasionally indulged in self-justification and bragging. This somewhat self-serving tone of the document does not, however, take away from its general historical trustworthiness, even though many years had elapsed since the events. External sources, moreover, confirm its historical reliability. Those places where Timon erred, or where other opinions or perspectives exist, have been noted in the text.

The document is untitled. Charles Souvay wrote on the cover: “Father Timon’s Narrative of the Barrens.” A second title appears on the back of page seven: “Father Timon’s Diary of our starting at the Barrens.” Ralph Bayard chose the title “Barrens Memoir,” as being less restrictive than other titles.

As is evident from reading the memoir, the text deals principally with Timon’s work. Titling the text “John Timon’s Memoir,” therefore, would not be out of place. Nevertheless, the Bayard title is the most common, and has been chosen for this publication.

Besides lacking a title, the manuscript also lacks an explicit date and place of composition. There is no doubt, however, that Timon wrote it, beginning in 1861. Consequently, he must have done so mainly, if not exclusively, in Buffalo.

The manuscript is now located at the De Andreis – Rosati Memorial Archives, in the Timon papers. An early copy is also found in a large copy book at DRMA (II-C(MO)-9-D, oversize box 12). This copy has been consulted to verify certain ambiguities in the original.

The manuscript consists of fifty-four numbered leaves, with a cover sheet, generally on 7½ by 9½ ruled paper. The pages are normally

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4 Timon to Ryan, from Buffalo, 22 January 1860; DRMA, Ryan papers.
5 He generally refers to himself in the third person, but on two occasions uses “I” and “us” confirming his authorship.
7 Timon’s episcopal diary states that he began his memoir 15 February 1861, (“begin Hist[ory] for Barrens”) and eventually translated it into French for the motherhouse in Paris. No French text of the memoir has been found in the Archives of the General Curia, however. (Bayard, Lone-Star Vanguard, 420.)
written on one side only. This is fortunate, since the paper is brittle and broken in places. Four different scribes are evident: Scribe One: pp. 1-2; Timon, p. 3; Scribe Two, pp. 4-12; Timon, pp. 13-17; Scribe Three, pp. 18-24a; and Timon, pp. 24b-54. The author regularly made corrections to the text. Nevertheless, the material remains somewhat rough, awkward, and unfinished.

Since the original text is rough, it has been lightly edited here, first for accuracy and clarity, and second, for ease of reading. The original text has been followed exactly, with the restoration of missing text noted in place. Its spelling has been modernized and corrected, but archaic forms have been retained. Capitalization has been regularized, since the four scribes, particularly Timon, were inconsistent in this. Abbreviations have been explained where possible and other explanatory materials, such as names, locations, and dates, have been added in square brackets. Personal names have generally been anglicized, following the standard Vincentian practice of the day. "Father" has been substituted for "Mister" as appropriate. Foreign language materials have been kept in the original, but translations have been given in the text. Punctuation and paragraphing have been altered, also for ease of reading. The sign [p. #] has been used to note the pages of the original manuscript. Underscoring and Timon’s use of the exclamation point have been retained. Lastly, paragraph headings have been added by the editor to facilitate the flow of the text.

Page 54 of the original has been omitted, since it consists simply of notes. These notes, however, have been added to footnotes where applicable. A perusal of existing Timon correspondence and documents shows that he followed elsewhere this policy of making notes on his manuscripts.

**Barrens Memoir**

**Coming to Saint Louis**

Bishop [Louis William] Dubourg, consecrated 24 September 1815 bishop of New Orleans, obtained from Rome a colony of Lazarists.8

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8 The term “Vincentian” gradually supplanted the more traditional “Lazarist” in the United States around 1900.
This colony stayed a while in Kentucky with the saintly Bishop [Benedict Joseph] Flaget, whilst a few proceeded to the scene of their future labors. These were the Rev. Joseph Rosati, Felix De Andreis and Brother [Martin] Blanka, who, accompanying the venerated Bishop Flaget, reached Kaskaskia, in the state of Illinois in September 1817. They went to Sainte Genevieve the day after. Bishop Flaget proposed to make the foundation at Sainte Genevieve, but he was not satisfied with the offers of the people. He then went to Saint Louis on 17 October 1817. There was no resident priest then in Saint Louis. Rev. Father [Francis] Savine, curate [pastor] of Cahokia, on the opposite side of the Mississippi, came to Saint Louis once in three weeks to attend the congregation of Saint Louis. Bishop Flaget made proposals to the assembled Catholics for making Sainte Genevieve the center of the mission; it seems that no great offers were made. In Saint Louis, Bishop Flaget made also propositions to fix the seat in Saint Louis; there was some opposition, but great approval.

Whilst it was still undecided, from thirty-five Catholic families, who were then in the Barrens, deputies came to offer 640 acres of land to the bishop, requesting that the diocesan seminary would be established there. Bishop Flaget, Father De Andreis, and Father Rosati returned to Sainte Genevieve. Rev. Henry Pratte, curate of Sainte Genevieve, went to Saint Louis to attend the building repairs etc., and Father De Andreis, Father Rosati and Brother Blanka, established a provisional post at Sainte Genevieve. The parish embraced a large extent of country: “The Mines” and “Saint Michael’s”, with adjacent country to a great distance. Father De Andreis had to say two masses every Saturday.

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9 The group docked at Louisville 19 November 1816, then moved to Saint Thomas, where the bishop had his rustic seminary. De Andreis, Rosati, and Brother Blanka, with Flaget, left 2 October 1817 for Saint Louis; the entire colony, with Rosati, came from Saint Thomas and arrived at the Barrens in October 1818, and although the exact day is not recorded, it is known that Rosati came 2 October. Joseph Rosati, “Recollections of the Establishment of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States of America,” trans. Stafford Poole, *Vincentian Heritage* (hereinafter abbreviated as *VH*) 3 (1982): 136. Rosati, however, records that he preached there for the first time on 11 October. See Rosati’s “Funzioni,” typed copy in DRMA, Rosati papers, 54.

10 The correct date is 10 or 11 October.

11 The foundation was to be the residence of the bishop.

12 Rosati’s memoir is more detailed; see Rosati, “Recollections,” *VH* 3 (1982): 140-41.

13 Parish records in De Andreis’s own hand run from 22 October 1817 to 30 January 1818. Henry Pratte, the official pastor, was in Saint Louis to see to the repairs to the bishop’s house.

14 Now Old Mines (which eventually bore the name Saint Joachim,) and Fredericktown, formerly known as Mine la Motte.
day, preach two or three times, hear confessions, visit the sick, and teach catechism. His holy example, the zeal and unction of his preaching made a profound impression. For many years the Catholics of that district remembered with veneration the holy man.

Late in 1817, Bishop Dubourg, accompanied by Bishop Flaget, came to Sainte Genevieve, having left his clergy, among whom were some Lazarists, in Bardstown to learn English. The bishop took Father De Andreis with him to Saint Louis. They were received with great joy. Father De Andreis commenced his functions as curate. Whilst his sermons were listened to with assiduity by the most enlightened, he continued to devote a considerable time to the instruction of poor Negroe slaves, the change he wrought in their moral conduct through

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15 That is, those with Rosati: Andrew Ferrari, Francis X. Dahmen, and Joseph Tichitoli. See Rosati, “Recollections,” VH 3 (1982): 149. These men had not yet entered the Vincentians, but did so in 1818.

16 Dubourg arrived in Bardstown 2 December 1817 with a group of candidates for his diocese. He set foot in his diocese on 29 December 1817. (De Andreis to Sicardi, 24 February 1818, from Saint Louis. DRMA, De Andreis papers.) Parish records show that he celebrated a baptism on New Year’s Eve, and Flaget did the same on 4 January, 1818.

17 The earliest recorded baptism by De Andreis is dated 19 January 1818. (Untitled baptismal records, Old Cathedral, Saint Louis, Mo.)
him excited universal admiration. In September 1817, Father De Andreis called Father Rosati and his companions from Kentucky. The voyage of this zealous and holy priest, afterwards bishop of Saint Louis, will be found in the annals of the Congregation. He himself [De Andreis] composed a history of the beginning of the Congregation. It may be gathered from the brief notice how little of human help was given to so great a work: a tract of unfertile land, six-hundred forty acres, that cost eight hundred dollars, promises of help for building, little of which were fulfilled; and this, under a perpetual obligation, which a capital of 100,000 dollars would scarcely pay. Yet more, for many years, the Congregation had to nourish, and in whole or in great part, clothe the seminarians of the diocese without receiving pay. That it did not sink under such a charge is truly a miracle.

Soon Father De Andreis obtained [permission] from Bishop Dubourg to open the novitiate of the Congregation in a part of the episcopal residence in Saint Louis. Three novices, Mr. Dahmen, Mr. Tichitoli, Subdeacons and Father Ferrari, priest. On 3 December 1817, he solemnly opened the novitiate, so that the first novices of the Con-

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18 This call does not appear in any of De Andreis’s extant letters.
20 De Andreis prepared two accounts. The earlier is a little manuscript booklet, “Notizie importanti appartenenti alla Missione della Luigiana nell’America Settentrionale,” in the archives of the General Curia of the Congregation of the Mission, Rome, (hereinafter cited as AGC). De Andreis began it in 1815 and included, besides a partial diary of the journey, notes about the population and Protestant denominations in the United States. The later and more complete work, dated 1819, is “Itinerario-Italo-Gallo-Americano,” AGC, De Andreis Collection, Vol. I, Part I, Section D, 63-82. He relied on his earlier account to draw up the later one. Plans are underway to publish these accounts.
21 Rosati, “Recollections,” VH 3 (1982): 151-52, speaks of it as good and fertile. Timon notes in the rest of the paragraph the very real problems which the Community had with Dubourg.
gregation in the United States of America began their consecration of
the feast of the great apostle of the Indies. Under so holy a superior
and master of novices they advanced rapidly, so that Father De Andreis
could say of them: Notre Seminaire interne promet beaucoup. Le novitiat
est pour moi un sujet de confusion. Je suis enchanté de leur conduite, de leur
exactitude, de leur diligence, de leur ardeur, de leur ferveur. Ils devinent mes
intentions, et redoutent de commettre la plus petite faute contre les règles.
["Our internal seminary promises much. For me, the novitiate is a
subject of confusion. I am delighted with their way of living, their
exactness, their diligence, their ardor, their fervor. They figure out my
intentions, and fear committing even the least fault against the rules."]

Bishop Dubourg established in a house on the same lot with his
own house, a secular college, an external school, and his seminary.
Of this, Father De Andreis was superior, director and professor of the-
ology, whilst he was also parish priest, having to hear confessions, visit
the sick, and preach two or three times each Sunday. It is wonderful
how any man could go through so much work; yet he found time to
write sermons, treatises, poetry, and a vast number of letters! Alas his
writings were sought for with too much avidity. A great part disap-
peared soon after his death.

First Years at the Barrens

The great wants of the mission and the earnest demands of the
bishop soon forced the holy superior to disperse his fervent novices.
Mr. Tichitoli to Bayou la Fourche, parish of the Assumption in Louisi-
ana, and Mr. Ferrari first to Vincennes in Indiana, then to New Or-
leans, and finally Mr. Dahmen to replace Mr. Ferrari in Vincennes. Thus
zeal for the general good of the Church dispersed a novitiate which

24 3 December, the feast of Saint Francis Xavier.
25 Timon has excerpted sentences from De Andreis to Rosati, 9 January 1819, from
Saint Louis, DRMA, De Andreis papers. The original letter was in Italian, not in the
French which Timon is quoting here, without the customary French accents. French
translations were made of some of De Andreis’s letters and were circulated within the
Community.
26 Rosati, “Recollections,” VH 4:2 (1983): 119. Among his students were Leo Deys,
one of the original diocesan companions of De Andreis and Rosati in 1815; Leo De
Neckere, who also taught in the college; Edmond Saulnier, a diocesan candidate; and
John Timon. This academy was the ancestor of Saint Louis University.
27 Several booklets, at least twelve, were eventually taken to Rome and were pre-
ented for the cause of his beatification. (They form part of the archives of the procura-
tor general, and are available on microfilm at DRMA.) His extant letters number sev-
enty-three.
promised so much. Mr. De Andreis called Rev. Mr. Acquaroni from Bardstown and entrusted him with the charge of three large parishes. "St. Charles" on the Missouri River, "La Dardenne" and "Portage des Sioux."  

In the meantime, amidst poverty and great privations, the seminary of the Barrens was going on. Several small log houses formed the establishment. One of the largest cabins, one story high, was the University. The northeast corner was the theology department for study and lecture, the northwest corner was for philosophy and general literature, the southeast was the tailor’s shop, the southwest was the shoemaker’s department. The refectory was in a small adjoining cabin, but when the rain fell heavy, several of the inmates preferred to remain dry though supperless, rather than rush through rain and storm to buy too dearly a scanty supper.  

A magnificent house, for those times and for that place, was however begun. It was of frame and still remains and serves as an out house for servants etc., but it was not finished till 1834.  

Father Timon often related what also happened to others, that reaching the seminary whilst thinking of becoming a member and being received to hospitality he, like others, had his mattress laid on the floor and slept well, but toward morning felt himself too warm.  

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28 Timon has inverted the chronology. De Andreis called for Acquaroni 26 February 1818 (De Andreis to Rosati, 26 February 1818, from Saint Louis, DRMA). The novitiate opened the following December. Also, Rosati, “Recollections,” VH 4:2 (1983): 119. The text beginning “and Mr. Ferrari first” to the end of the paragraph is missing from the original manuscript, but has been restored from an early copy at DRMA, II-C(MO)-9-D, oversize box 12. Parish records show that Acquaroni’s ministry at Saint Charles ran only from 21 June to 11 August 1818. He returned 3 December 1820, remaining until 16 September 1822. His name occurs in the records of Portage des Sioux from 12 [15?] April 1820 to 4 November 1822. Another record notes that he was “sent to New Orleans, 3 December 1822.” (Rosati) “Catalogus Parochiarum et Missionum Dioecesis S. Ludovici Anno 1816.” Archives of the Archdiocese of Saint Louis [hereinafter AASL], 46.)  

29 Rosati, “Recollections,” VH 4:2 (1983): 112-14, 123-24. Timon’s use of the term University seems to be ironic. See Poole, Rybolt, “Notice,” 90-91, for a more extensive description of their hardships. According to that account, this building was sixty feet long by thirty feet wide.  

30 “Out house” here means not a privy but a separate building for slaves.
the heavy coating of snow on his blankets which so unpleasantly increased the heat. Yet such was the piety and charity under the paternal government of Father Rosati, that all seemed to feel happy and to advance rapidly in the way of salvation.

With the diocesan seminary, a college for seculars was opening in the unfinished house. The seminarians taught, on an average, three hours per day in the college; the rest of study hours was given to prepare their own lessons, and recite them to their professors of Latin, philosophy, or theology. The seminarians on vacation days and during the hours of recreation would fell the trees of the primeval forests, chop up the wood for scanty summer use or for the abundant winter supply. At other seasons they would go, perhaps with sacks on their backs, to gather in the potatoes, beans, etc., or drive the ox cart well laden with the corn which they themselves had hoed. All were healthy, and, with their beloved superior at their head, no labor seemed hard.

[p. 4]

The great majority of the inhabitants of the Barrens, and especially all the rich, were Protestants, and prejudices were very strong against Catholics. The ministers would go to the very door of the poor church to challenge the priests to controversy. How great the change which a few years effected! Father [Jean-Marie] Odin and Mr. Timon used to go, on the weekly day of vacation, around to distances of fifteen or twenty miles, assemble children to a kind of catechism, visit in their

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31 Rosati’s notes on the first seminarians at the Barrens relate that Timon “having lived for six months in Saint Louis at the bishop’s house, went to the seminary, where he arrived 19 July 1822.” The date of his snowy visit was, therefore, in the winter of 1822. (“Catalogus Seminaristarum et Alumnorum Laicorum Seminarii S. Mariae Congregationis Missionis. 1816.” DRMA, II-C(MO)-9-A-5-Box 1. Rosati and others kept biographical notes in this volume.)

32 This same story is repeated in Poole, Rybolt, “Notice,” 90-91. “Thus the missionaries and the seminarians experienced all the inconvenience of rigorous seasons and quite often woke up in the morning having to shake off the snow which had fallen during the night on their poor coverings, under which they took their rest.” Odin, too, reports this in a letter quoted in (Abbe) Bony, “Vie de Monseigneur Jean-Marie Odin,” Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission 60 (1895): 555.
houses families who were far less Protestants than haters of the pope and of papists, and preach whenever an opportunity presented itself. South of Apple Creek they began a station for mass, but transferred it to the present site of Saint Joseph’s Church, Apple Creek. A pretty large hog pen was the first church. The missionaries dug out the dung, cleaned as well as possible the wretched cabin, adorned it with green branches, built a rustic altar, which was for its beauty (?) the wonder and admiration of the neighborhood; celebrated mass, preached, heard confessions, etc. God singularly blessed their apostolic excursions, perhaps the more as they were made in great poverty and through many privations. Especially in Bois Brulé bottom, where all were Protestants, the missionaries would leave the seminary after breakfast, seek the lost sheep till later dinnertime, and then seek a blackberry bush or some fruit tree, and make their dinner out of what nature gave.

The 1824 Mission

In the long vacations of 1824 the [p. 5] same missionaries started for a long mission though on horseback, yet like the apostles, sine saculo et pera. Giving a mission at New Madrid which was long remembered, they crossed the great swamps, not without much danger, having to rest all night in the swampy woods where a dry spot to lay down on could not be found, and where water fit to drink could not be obtained. Their guide, deeming it impossible to cross, retraced his steps; they proceeded, swam a river, and late next day reached almost starving a habitation.

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33 Odin and Timon entered the Congregation together, 25 April 1823; Rosati, “Recollections,” VH 5:1 (1984): 114, 125. Odin, however, arrived at the Barrens 30 August 1822, some six weeks after Timon’s arrival. (“Catalogus Parochiarum et Missionum Dioecesis S. Ludovici Anno 1816.” [In Rosati’s hand.] Archives of the Archdiocese of Saint Louis, 47. Odin’s notes on their missionary work are more explicit than Timon’s text: “Thursdays are consecrated to the missions which I give among Protestants. One of our seminarians [Timon], a young American filled with virtue, zeal, and talents, always goes with me. He is usually the one who preaches. Those days we celebrate mass now in one place, now in another. The most distant post is twenty miles away.” See Bony, “Odin,” 582.

34 A station was a place for celebrating an occasional mass in areas where there were no churches. Many of these developed into parishes. Timon also refers to them as posts.


The Seminary of Saint Mary's of the Barrens. Opened in 1818, the seminary closed in 1863 as a result of the Civil War only to be reopened in 1886. In 1985, due to a lack of incoming students, operations were finally suspended for good.

Vincentiana Collection, DePaul University Special Collections, Chicago, Illinois
Continuing their journey, which was a continual mission among a population that had never seen a priest, and inquiring at each house for Catholics, they reached on a very sultry day a stately mansion, entered, and requested a drink of water. The lady received them kindly, requested us to be seated, and sent a Negro servant to bring water. An interesting conversation began, but one of the missionaries took advantage of a pause to ask, “Madam, are there any Catholics hereabouts?” The kind courteous manner of the lady changed. “Oh, sir, I don’t like Catholics, sir.” “And why, madam,” replied the missionary, “have they ever injured you?” “No, sir, but they are idolaters.” “Oh, madam, how could you think so; there are so many Catholics in the world, far more than all the sects put together, and very many of them men and women of cultivated intellect and deep religious feeling. Can you believe that so many learned and good men would be such fools as to adore idols?” “Well indeed,” replied the lady, “that thought never yet suggested [p. 6] itself to me. I would almost think that you are right, for as you say, it would indeed be strange.” The missionary then pointed to a painting representing Washington. “Do you adore that picture?” said he. “Surely no,” said the lady. “You keep it to put you in mind of the hero and savior of his country. So do we keep the crucifix, pictures, etc., to put us in mind of our divine hero, of our ever-adored savior, or of those that served him best and whom he most loved.”

He then took a fine crucifix from his breast. “Here,” said he, “is what those who malign us say we adore, but God forbid it is for us a book, with hieroglyphics of mighty power to enable us to read in a second what it would take us five minutes to read in the Bible. We have often to instruct poor slaves who cannot read. We tell them what Jesus did for them, and we show them this, and thus speak to their eyes and ears at once and in half the time.” The lady, who never before had seen a crucifix, passed instantly to another order of thoughts which showed how difficult it is by words alone to have a clear conception of things, unless vision in some form be superadded. “Well now, I think that is all good and right. But is that what you call a crucifix?” “Yes, madam.” “And did the savior suffer so?” “Yes madam. They put nails in his hands and feet and he hung thus, dying for us.” Deeply affected, she exclaimed: “Dear me, how much he suffered.” Then, calling her two little boys, she said: “Here children, come and see how much your savior did for you.” The children came, and listened with eager tenderness to the [p. 7] details of the passion, illustrated by refer-
ence to the crucifix, then seen for the first time. Surely missionaries would be well received again in that house! On the route to the port of Arkansas [sic for Arkansas Post], the missionaries generally related this simple incident, and found that in every place the feelings were the same, and the request was generally made to see the crucifix; and often after gazing on it, these words would burst forth, as if unaware: “Well, I see I was mistaken,” or “Well, I see that I had been deceived.”

At the port [i.e., post] of Arkansas, several visits were paid to the Quapaw Indians, then inhabiting the south bank of the Arkansas River. The missionaries erected a rustic altar before the wigwam of Sarasin the chief. The Indians assisted at mass. The missionaries through W. Neuismere, explained the Catholic faith. The Indian priest and medicine man at night was persuaded to tell the dogma of his faith. In general, it is hard to get from an Indian a precise detail, even of the little they profess to know. They are afraid of being laughed at.

In general, like other Indians they believe in God, in subordinate gods good and bad, perhaps vague parodies of our good and bad angels; of future rewards and punishments, in which our views of a three-fold store [heaven, purgatory, hell] are distinguishable. Their old tradition is that they came from the cold north, that the first remembrance their fathers had was their being floundering on the surface of a vast lake; that a god in white from the south, one in red from the north, one in black from the east, one in motley colors from the west, approached. The god in white was the superior. A bird was sent to discover land, but with no result. Different animals then followed. One returned with his feet and legs besmeared with mud. The god in white led them towards the point from whence the animal had returned. Land was found; they knelt to thank and adore the god in white. “No children,” said he, “I am sent by the great Spirit, him you must adore.” He then predicted victories over all the nations they should encounter till they reached the sunny south, and that, in lapse of ages, they would see white men, children of the god in white, whom they should never injure for sake of their guide, etc. Strange gestures and wild episodes accompanied the account of which the above is an abridgement. From their traditions, it seems that besides some vague recollections of the earlier revelations, they retained some remembrances of the deluge and of Noah’s trials to know if it had ceased.

37 Bony, “Odin,” 567-69. Odin gives his own abbreviated version of this account in Odin to Cholleton, Annales de la Propagation de la Foi 3 (1828-1829): 64, where he identifies the woman as a Presbyterian.
Among the whites, Catholics and Protestants, much good was done in the mission by rehabilitating a great many marriages, baptisms of both adults and children, by hearing many confessions, admitting many to holy communion who had had no chance of approaching the sacraments for forty years, by sermons, instructions, and almost continual catechisms.38 [p. 9]

After this laborious mission the two Lazarists returned to teach in the college of the Barrens, but continuing on vacation days their excursions for twenty miles around.

1826-1827

In 1826 the missions embraced a much wider extent of country. The Rev. Father Odin and Timon frequently visited, often together, New Madrid and all the country for about 150 miles south of the seminary. Father Timon began missions in Illinois, built churches in O’Hara’s Settlement, in the English Settlement39 and established the old mission of Kaskaskia, long abandoned, and with such success that in the vast and stately log church of noble proportions, (built in the olden time by the Jesuits, with a magnificent steeple more than one hundred feet high) there was soon a respectable congregation and many converts.40

At Saint Michael’s, too, or “Mine La Motte,” as it was then called, a station was established. The first baptism there which is recorded is that of Frances C. Bellemare and of G. Chevallier, made 14 May 1827 by Father Timon. The missionaries soon extended their labors to Potosi and the Old Mines, thus visiting an extent of country extending for about 250 miles north and south.41

Conversion of a Condemned Man, 1828

Early in the spring of 1828, Father Timon was called to Jackson, about thirty miles from the seminary, to see a murderer [Pressly Morris], who was under sentence of death but who refused to receive any

38 Approximately eight lines of text are missing from the original manuscript, from the early copy in DRMA (II-C(MO)-9-D, oversize box 12), and from Deuther, Life, which either quotes or summarizes the memoir without scholarly attribution.

39 Now Saint Patrick in Ruma, and Saint Augustine of Canterbury in Hecker respectively. Timon, however, did not found the missions mentioned, but merely visited and perhaps re-established Catholic worship, as at Kaskaskia.

40 For a lengthier and more detailed account, see Poole, Rybolt, “Notice,” 94, where an admirer of Timon’s must have written of his work.

41 A similar, and in some instances a more detailed, account of these missions is found in: Ibid., 93-94.
The priest started immediately, arrived at nightfall, sought admission to the prison, but on various pretexts, admission was refused until the Baptist minister (a Mr. [Thomas Parish] Green, editor of the village newspaper [p. 10 and all powerful there] was ready with a band of anti-Catholic bigots to enter into the prison with the priest. Father Timon appealed to the jailer for privilege of speaking alone and in private to the condemned man on affairs of his own conscience. It was refused.

The culprit lay on straw strewn over the clay floor in the dungeon, chained to a post fastened in the wall. Finding that he would only be allowed to speak in the presence of the hostile crowd, the priest laid down on the straw with the prisoner, and began in a clear and loud tone which all might hear, to expound to the poor man the great truths of religion: the holy trinity, the incarnation, future rewards and punishments, the redemption, and the sacraments. The culprit, who up to that moment had laughed at all religious teaching, seemed deeply affected. Tears flowed from his eyes, and the priest, judging the first lesson to be sufficiently long, fatigued, too, by a journey on horseback over a rough road without eating from early in the morning till nine at night, told the prisoner that he would end the instruction by reciting with him the Apostles Creed. The condemned man said the creed aloud with the priest, until both had recited the words, “And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.”

Green, the Baptist minister, then rushed up and said, “Do not deceive that poor man, do not make him lose his soul by teaching him the commandments of men.” “Mr. Green,” said the priest, “I am teaching him the Apostles Creed. Do not you also hold that venerated creed?” “Oh,” replied he, “but your Church is that idolatrous one that worships images, and that gives to Mary the homage due only to God.” The priest replied: [p. 11] “Mr. Green, not long since, I preached in the court house of this village on the very subject you now touch. I proved the charges against the ancient Church to be foul calumnies. You were present. I then called upon any one who could deny the truths which I announced to come forward and show if there was any flaw in the evidence which I brought to prove that Catholics had been cruelly and most unjustly calumniated. You

42 This account is also reported, with some differences, in John Francis McGerry, “‘God is Wonderful in All His Works’,” edited and translated by Douglas Slawson, *VH* 7:2 (1986): 231-90. Identifications of persons and events in Timon’s memoir have been made from this edition of McGerry’s text.
were silent. Surely that was your time, not this when I am preparing an unhappy man who has sent for me to aid him in meeting a death so certain and so near.”

The minister, after some vague and insulting charges, challenged the priest to meet him in the court house next day to discuss before the public the merits of their respective religions. The priest accepted the challenge. The minister immediately claimed the privilege of saying night prayers, knelt down with his myrmidons, and made a long extemporaneous prayer, in which among the insulting things he prayed thus: “And, O God of mercy, save this poor man from the fangs of Anti-Christ who now seeks to teach him idolatry and the vain traditions of men.” When he finished, the priest, at the top of his voice, cried to the crowd that then filled the dungeon, “Gentlemen, is it right that, in a prayer to the God of charity and truth, this gentleman should introduce calumny against the majority of Christians?” A deep silence proved that all felt the appeal. It was late at night, and the sheriff required all to leave the dungeon. On quitting the preacher renewed his challenge, and it was arranged that meeting should take place in the court house. The judge [p. 12] of the district [John D. Cooke] was to preside, each one to speak for half an hour at a time. After a discussion of three or four hours the preacher gave up and withdrew. The missionary reviewed for a half an hour the controversy, and exhorted serious and candid men to return to the old religion. He then went to the dungeon. The prisoner had heard the result of the controversy, and asked to be baptized. This request was granted. That day the priest heard the confessions of several who were not before known as Catholics, and baptized several children. This was the cause under God of beginning the flourishing mission of Cape Girardeau.

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43 A slightly different version of this conversion and public debate with Green records that “Mr. Green answered him that he believed baptism to be a useful ceremony, to be sure, but in no way necessary for salvation. Without any other explanation, Fr. Timon asked him if he would support such a doctrine in a public debate. Mr. Green answered yes. The debate was decided on for the next morning at nine. It would last four hours in front of almost all the inhabitants of the town. The crowd was composed of a thousand or twelve hundred persons, all Protestants, with the exception of a single Catholic. The majority were judges, lawyers, or persons attached to the bar. Despite this disadvantage, Fr. Timon confounded him so well that he [Green] has never dared preach again in this town, and enjoys no reputation there. Fr. Timon drew up a report of this conference.” B.***, to editor, Annales de la Propagation de la Foi 5 (1831): 595.

44 The 1838 account in Poole, Rybolt, “Notice,” 97-98, seems to credit Odin with its foundation.
The Daugherty Case

Mr. Ralph Daugherty, an unbaptized Protestant, married to one of the principal Protestant ladies of the neighborhood [Sarah Sanford], had been present during the controversy in the court house of Jackson, and was greatly struck at hearing truths quite new to him.45 [p. 13]

Soon after the conference Mr. Daugherty fell sick, sent for Father Timon, and became a Catholic.46 In a few years, his family, except the wife, who left him, became Catholics. His conversion, followed by that of several members of the Sanford family in Jackson, alarmed the bigot enemies of the Church. Mr. Daugherty became the object of persecution. In the interim the same missionary had begun a mission in Cape Girardeau. For six months on each visit, he would say mass very privately at six A.M. and give communion to a few converts. Then at nine he would begin catechism for all the children he could collect, and at eleven preach for the great many Protestants who flocked to hear him. This was done in Mr. Daugherty’s house. To save him from losing his property under the unscrupulous persecution, it was found necessary to purchase that property from him. It is the most beautiful property in the country. The seminary, with its noble and spacious grounds, and the beautiful church of Saint Vincent stand on part of it. The aged father of Mr. Daugherty soon also became a Catholic.47

Some years after, the cholera raged in that district. Father Timon returning from New Madrid stopped at evening at the log house of the aged Daugherty. As it was full of company, all Protestant, the last convert walked out in the garden to unburden his conscience to his spiritual father. The missionary then continued his journey for ten miles to Jackson, and hoped then to refresh himself and feed his horse. About eight P.M., just as he was starting to ride, as very commonly he had to do, all night, a messenger came to tell him that the old man had been struck with cholera, and begged his spiritual father to return. Through the rain which had begun to fall, the priest hastened to the cabin in the wild forest, which he had left a few hours before. Mr. Daugherty was already dead. The priest [p. 14] said some prayers and a few words of

45 Timon regularly spells the name Dougherty; the spelling here reflects Daugherty’s own usage. See McGerry, “God is Wonderful,” 240, note 15. The expression “unbaptized Protestant” is theologically inaccurate, unless Timon did not admit the possibility of valid baptism by Protestants.

46 Timon dates this as September 1832 in his notes on page 54. Also, Ibid., 242, note 21, where it is dated as 28 September.

47 31 January 1833 is the date given in Ibid., 246.
exhortation. The aged wife of the deceased then declared that she would wish to become a Catholic. After instructing her, as there was but that one room, the missionary requested the company to withdraw and shelter themselves the best they could for a few minutes. During that stay he heard the confession of the mourning wife, as she knelt against the bed on which lay her husband who had just breathed his last. The company was then called in and the old lady was baptized, *sub conditione* ["conditionally"], and expressed her great consolation at being a member of the true Church. 48

The forest was intensely dark, the rain began to fall in torrents. It was impossible for the priest to resume his journey, it was midnight. The convert kindly prepared a place for him to take his rest. The company had to sleep on the floor. The only bed in the house was occupied by the corpse. He was pushed up against the wall, a clean sheet spread near it, and the missionary was invited to share the bed of the dead man. He did so, and slept soundly. 49

**Strange Scenes**

Truly strange scenes frequently occurred in their mission then so poor and wild. The missionary once preached near New Madrid on the banks of the Mississippi. Six young children were offered him for baptism, with a promise by the Protestant parents that they should be brought up Catholics. After the ceremony, he mounted his horse to go fifteen miles to meet an appointment for the morrow. An old man on horseback followed him, and when out of the crowd said, in accents that showed him to be an Irishman: "Ah but my heart warmed to you as you spoke, for I am a Catholic, but you are the first priest I have seen here for forty years. Often these swaddlers 50 tried to get me to change my religion. They told me that I could never expect to see a Catholic priest here, and that it was better for me to have some religion than none. I at times almost believed them, [p. 15] but whenever I thought of joining them, *it seemed as if my confirmation was about rising up in my throat, to choke me!* I couldn't do it. But I married a Protestant who was never baptized, and we have many children. I have often spoken to them of my religion, and they can easily be made Catholics. Come

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48 Conditional baptism is administered when it is doubtful whether the candidate has already previously been validly baptized.

49 The account differs somewhat from that in McGerry, "God is Wonderful," 250, note 34.

50 An archaic nickname for Protestants.
with me, my wife is very sick, it may be her salvation.” The missionary had to turn in a direction quite opposite to his course through a dark forest, amidst the thickening shades of evening, while the rain began to fall heavier and heavier. The priest, on inquiry, found that, as was usual with all frontier settlers, there was but one room in the house, and the sick woman was abed in it. After a moment’s reflection and prayer, he said, “But if I go and baptize your wife, I must marry you and her.” “That’s what I want,” replied he. “But then you should make your confession and be prepared.” “And willingly would I,” replied the poor man, “but how or when can I get confession?” “Here,” said the priest, “even as we ride along this solitary road.” “Will that do!” “Why not,” said the priest, “God is good. He wants us only to do the best we can, and surely there is no other way than this now for you. Prepare yourself, examine your conscience.” The old man took off his hat, made the sign of the cross. Then, riding in silence, he prepared himself, and when he said that he was ready the priest aided him to say the confession, and (priest and penitent still trotting along the night path of the forest) the confession was finished and the priest’s sacred duty accomplished before they reached the cabin.

There the priest instructed the whole family. Before midnight he baptized the younger children; and before morning, [p. 16] baptized the wife, and married the new happy couple. By daylight the missionary had to leave the cabin at a hurried pace, and met his appointment and said mass and preached before noon.
Rosati As Bishop

The Rev. Joseph Rosati, the honored and beloved superior of the seminary, had once been called to the episcopate and refused. In 1824 he was forced to accept and in the church of the Ascension, parish of that name, and state of Louisiana, was consecrated bishop in partibus infidelium ["in pagan lands"], of Tenagra and coadjutor of New Orleans.

The few priests at the seminary [the Barrens] were gradually dispersed. The bishop was forced often to be absent. For a considerable time Father Odin was left the sole priest in the seminary. He had to attend to the duties of the provisional superior, parish priest, confessor of the brothers, students, collegians, and Lorette nuns and at the same time direct the general course of the teaching. Often, on Saturdays, he would be out till ten at night on sick calls; and when he came home would find students and brothers waiting to go to confession, and occupying him a great part of what remained of the night. He went through these excessive labors with a peace and joy of holy zeal which alone can account for not having entirely lost his health. He suffered, however, much, and his headaches, migraines, would often for days be the penalty for having taxed both body and mind too much.

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52 He was ordained bishop, 25 March 1824. A draft of this material, taken from page 54, reads: “Mr. Rosati refused his first call to the episcopacy; he could not refuse the second and on the 25 March 1825 [i.e., 1824] he was consecrated coadjutor of New Orleans and bishop of Tenagra in Partibus Infidelium in the church of the Ascension, parish of Ascension, Louisiana.” Since every bishop is to have a see, a bishop in partibus infidelium was appointed to a titular, or inactive, see when he did not have a territorial see of his own. Coadjutor and auxiliary bishops would be in such a condition.

53 The Sisters of Loretto opened the Bethlehem Convent, near the seminary at the Barrens, in early 1823. For this incident, see also Patrick Foley, “Jean-Marie Odin, C.M., Missionary Bishop Extraordinaire of Texas,” Journal of Texas Catholic History and Culture 1 (1990): 49.

54 A draft of this account, taken from page 54 of the manuscript, reads: “Often, on Saturday night, he would return from a mission, or from a distant sick call at 10 P.M., and then hear confessions of the students, seminarians, brothers, etc., then snatch a little rest, and begin at 5 or 6 A.M. to hear confessions till 11, then sing high mass and preach!” See also Poole, Rybolt, “Notice,” 95.
On 29 May, Bishop Rosati was named first bishop of Saint Louis and administrator of New Orleans. On the first of January previous [1827], he had solemnly laid the corner stone of a new stone church near the seminary, on the plan of the chapel of the Mission, Monte Citorio, in Rome. Father Timon preached the sermon. [p. 17] Bishop Rosati loved the calm retreat of the Barrens, and thought of making it his residence and governing his diocese from it. But a missionary whom he consulted on the subject strongly dissuaded him from the project, showing that it would not serve for the glory of God or the good of souls.

Much dissatisfaction existed among the few priests of the Mission. They did not as yet possess an inch of ground, but they were burdened with heavy debts. Some of the first brothers who had been in America twelve years murmured less at their poverty than at the prospect that they might have to end their days in the Poor House. A meeting of the professed priests was held in the seminary of the Barrens, Bishop Rosati attended, [and] listened to the complaints. Father Timon most respectfully and reverently, but firmly and distinctly, laid before the bishop, as requested by his brother priests, the feelings and the complaints. The bishop kindly consented to give the Congregation a deed of the property and to assume some of the debts, and also to make some provision for such of his seminarians as might not be occupied in teaching.

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55 The date should be 20 March 1827, the date of the Apostolic Brief. Rosati remained as administrator of New Orleans until 4 August 1829.
Rosati’s Labors, 1828-1829

It may not be uninteresting to insert this letter, detailing some of the labors of the saintly prelate. 58 [p. 18]

As I am always pleased to meet with any details, which would enable me to form a general idea of the state and progress of religion in the distant sections of our country, so also I think that even the rough and simple details I am able to give of our reverend bishop’s visit through these extensive dioceses may be acceptable to some of your readers. Nothing, indeed, can mark better the state and progress of religion than the journal of a bishop’s visit through his diocese. Continuing then, from the date of my last letter, I offer you a continuance of his journal. 59

On 20 December 1828, our bishop, the Right Rev. J. Rosati ordained in the seminary of the Barrens, after a suitable time passed in retreat and prayer, Francis Jourdain, the first tonsure, and Peter Doutreluingne, subdeacon; and, on the twenty-eighth, after an appropriate discourse, twenty-seven persons of this parish were confirmed. The rest of the winter was passed in directing the affairs of the seminary and college, in explaining the principles of theology to the students of that class, and in the exercise of the ministry.

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58 This material properly belongs before the previous paragraph, on the basis of the dates mentioned. Rosati had asked Timon to write a letter on his travels (Rosati to Timon, 10 November 1827, from Saint Louis, Archives of the University of Notre Dame [hereinafter AUND], microfilm collection, roll one). That report, written by Timon, bore the date 16 November 1827, and appeared in the Catholic Miscellany (Charleston, S.C.) 7:28 (19 Jan. 1828): 222-23. Another followed, 8:24 (20 Dec. 1828): 191, signed J.T. For reasons unknown, the letter quoted here was not published in Catholic Miscellany. However, Rosati submitted a version of it in French to a Parisian journal which often carried information on the Louisiana missions (Ami de la Religion 64:1647 [22 May 1830]: 54-56). The three English letters are based on Rosati’s diaries, but contain more material than Rosati included there. Like others, Timon had access to Rosati’s diaries.

59 Copies of the diaries are available at AASL. A typed copy, prepared for Frederick Easterly, is available at Mary Immaculate Seminary Library, Northampton, Pa., and a microfilm version of this is available at DRMA, Rosati papers. Some identification of persons and places have been made from these diaries.
On 14 March [1829], Saturday in Ember Week, the bishop held an ordination. Messrs. John Brands\textsuperscript{60} from Belgium and Philip Laurencet from Lyons, having presented the proper papers from their bishops and been aggregated to the diocese, received the tonsure, and Philip \textit{[sic for Peter J.]} Doutreuingne, C.M. was ordained deacon. On the sixteenth the right reverend bishop started for New Orleans, and on 25 March \cite[p. 19]{footnote} he celebrated the anniversary of his episcopal consecration in the parish of the Ascension, Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Five years before, on that same day, he had been consecrated in the same church. From Donaldsonville, he descended to New Orleans where, on 7 April, at the cathedral, he administered the sacrament of confirmation to eighty-six persons who had been instructed and prepared with much ease by the Rev. Father [Louis] Moni, curate of the cathedral, and by his vicars. The persons to be confirmed were placed with orderly and systematic arrangement in the church, which, though a weekday, was crowded. The reverend bishop made a suitable discourse. More than twenty persons communicated at that mass.

On the eleventh, the bishop, assisted by six priests, and according to the ceremonies in the Roman Ritual, placed the first stone of the church of the Presentation, which the Ursuline religious are about building near their vast convent, \textit{one and a half miles} from New Orleans. This church is not a private one for the religious alone, but it is for the public generally, the religious reserving to themselves an ample choir separated from the rest of the church by a grand railing or grate. The building is 105 feet long. It will cost twenty-five thousand dollars and it is built by the religious entirely at their own expense. Thus the Catholics of New Orleans will have five churches for their use, \textit{viz.}, the cathedral, Saint Mary’s Church, belonging to the bishop, which since the reparation of last year is 115

\textsuperscript{60} Brands was the first Dutch Vincentian. See Corneille Verwoerd, “Jean Brands: Premier lazariste hollandais,” \textit{Annales de la Congrégation de la Mission} 102 (1937): 645-61.
[feet] long, (in it a great number of the faithful hear, every Sunday, in French and in English, the Word of God), the church of Saint Anthony near the cemetery, that of the faubourg Saint Mary [Saint Patrick's], and [p. 20] the new one of the Ursulines, which must be finished in October. The Holy Week was passed by the right reverend bishop in New Orleans. In the cathedral, which was always full, he performed the ceremony of the blessing of the holy oils and the other ceremonies of that holy time. He also gave confirmation. There were 175 persons confirmed at New Orleans this visit. The number annually confirmed aug-
ments each visit. 61

On 22 April the bishop visited the parish and con-
vent of Saint Michael. The convent is occupied by the religious of the Sacred Heart. They have eight board-
ers. 62

On the thirtieth, he said mass at the church of the Assumption, gave the first communion to twenty-four children, twenty-six others received communion at his hands, and, after a suitable exhortation, he confirmed thirty-nine persons prepared by a previous retreat under the direction of the Rev. Father Tichitoli, curate of the church. On the next day, the bishop went to direct the spiritual retreat which the Religious of the Sacred Heart convent make annually in the parish of the Assumption. The convent has five religious and more than forty boarders, seven of whom received the first communion and were confirmed on 6 May. On the seventh, the bishop said mass in the church of the Assumption, during which eighty communicated, sixty for their first communion. Immediately after the mass and after a suitable exhortation, seventy persons received the sacrament of confirmation. All these per-

61 Since Rosati was administrator of New Orleans as well as the bishop of Saint Louis, he had these episcopal responsibilities in New Orleans.

62 A marginal note (not in Timon’s hand) reads: “There must be an error in this computation of the Convent of Sc. Ht. School had then existed over three years and the School opened with a much larger number of pupils than 8 boarders.” Saint Michael is now located in Convent, a town on the east bank of the Mississippi.
sons had been carefully prepared and instructed by their pastor, the Rev. Father [John] Caretta.

As soon as these solemn rites were over, the right reverend prelate went to the convent to baptize two young Protestants [p. 21] who had prepared themselves with much fervor for returning to the bosom of their venerable and tender Mother Church. But the superioress at first refused her assent. The parents had indeed, consented, but a more implicit and formal permission was required. The parents, then, to obviate every difficulty, came before the bishop’s arrival, and filled the measure of their daughters’ happiness by being present at the sacred ceremonies. The parents themselves were delighted and touched at the holy engagements made by their children. The bishop’s explanations of the sacraments and ceremonies of baptism made such impression that one of the ladies could not retire until she had requested the bishop to receive her into the Church, promising also to instruct herself so as to be ready for confirmation at his next visit.

The right reverend bishop returned on the ninth to New Orleans, and on the tenth, celebrated in the chapel of the Ursuline convent, where he confirmed seventeen young lady boarders in the house. Fourteen of these made their first communion, and the others also approached. Our zealous pastor, in continuance of his apostolic functions, then started on the twelfth for the confines of this diocese and of the United States. On the sixteenth, he arrived at Natchitoches, but the high waters having prevented a connection between the different parts of this extensive parish, he could only administer confirmation to twenty-one persons. The pastor of the parish, the Rev. [John Baptist] Blanc had been instructing many others who were prepared but who could not avail themselves of the opportunity on account of the flood.

63 The territory of the United States did not extend into Texas at this period.
64 The brother of Antoine Blanc, later bishop of New Orleans.
There are four churches in this parish. The principal one is in the town of Natchitoches. It is built of brick on an elegant plan, and is abundantly furnished with all that is necessary for the splendor of divine worship. Though not yet plastered, it is used for the divine worship. The other three churches are in different quarters at distances of more than twenty miles.65

The bishop started from Natchitoches on the twenty-fourth. The twenty-sixth he arrived at Saint Michael’s, where a few days after [28 May] he gave communion and confirmation to eleven borders, scholars of the convent, Saint Michael’s. Leaving this on the thirtieth, he went to the parish of Saint John Baptist where, the next day, he administered confirmation to eleven persons.66 Many others in the parish were to have received confirmation, but the pastor, Rev. Father [Modeste] Mina, did not receive the letter informing of the visit in time to assemble this sacrament. On 1 June, the bishop was again at New Orleans, and on the third, he ordained Father Joseph Carreta priest. This gentleman is of the diocese of Guadalajara. He brought with him dimissorial letters from Messrs. the vicars general of Mexico.67 The Right Rev. [Monsignor]. Perez, the only consecrated bishop then in Mexico, being on the point of death, (in fact he is now dead,) the reverend vicar of Puebla and Mexico requested the bishop of Louisiana or Saint Louis, as being the nearest, to make the ordination and consecrate the holy...

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65 He refers to Ile Brevelle, Campti and Cloutierville.
66 Saint John the Baptist, at Des Allemands.
67 Antonio Joaquin Pérez (1763-1829), bishop of Puebla from 1814 until his death in 1829. In the aftermath of Mexican independence in 1821, some Spanish bishops returned to their native land, and some died. Others left when the government of the new republic expelled all Spaniards in 1829. The government of Ferdinand VII in Spain was pressuring the Holy See not to appoint bishops in Mexico, for this would have bypassed the royal patronato (the right to nominate bishops) and been a tacit recognition of Mexican independence. The Mexican government for its part was claiming the patronato rights of the Spanish crown. Rome responded by appointing vicars apostolic instead of bishops. After the death of Pérez in 1829 there was not a single bishop in any Mexican see. Hence the Church in Mexico turned to Rosati for ordinations and other episcopal functions.
oils for Mexico. The next day, at a pontifical mass in the cathedral, the right reverend celebrant consecrated a sufficiency of the holy oils for the ten dioceses of Mexico, in which they counted seven thousand churches and about six millions of Catholics.\(^6\)

A solemn and affecting work of filial piety and religious remembrance was exhibited the next day by the bishop’s celebrating pontifically the Holy Sacrifice and the funeral service for our departed Holy Father and Sovereign Pontiff Pope Leo XII.\(^6\) It was offered up in the cathedral church. All the clergy of the city assisted who, with all the faithful present, joined in offering up to the Most High their suffrages for a pontiff whose holy and edifying life gives great hopes but not entire assurance of an immediate admission into the bliss of him, who threatens *Judicium durissimum iis qui praesunt*.\(^7\) All the clergy throughout the two dioceses were invited by the bishop to celebrate, in their respective parishes, solemn masses for the departed visible Head of the Church.

On the ninth the right reverend bishop gave the tonsure and the four minor orders to Messrs. Emanuel De Gardea and Panliteau [Pablito?] Roldan of the diocese of Durango in Mexico, from the vicariate of which they brought the necessary letters and attestations. On the tenth the same gentlemen were ordained subdeacons; on the thirteenth deacons, and on the fourteenth, Trinity Sunday, priests. This closed the visit for the present year. The flock in the diocese of Saint Louis were impatient for the return of their beloved pastor. He arrived among them, to their great joy, on the twenty-sixth, and took up his residence at Saint Mary’s Seminary. As this establishment has greatly increased in importance, a routine of other duties awaited him, all tending to the same end: the glory of God, the progress of virtue, and the real good

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\(^6\) Rosati, “Recollections,” *VH* 5:2 (1984): 135-36. His diary specifies that he consecrated thirty large vessels of oil, containing in all some five hundred gallons. AASL.

\(^6\) The pope died 10 February 1829.

\(^7\) “A most severe judgment on those who rule,” *Wis* 6:6.
of his fellowmen. Nor was he without calls for that part of the ministry which is confined to the immediate successors of the apostles.

**Founding the Parish in Cape Girardeau**

After Bishop Rosati fixed his residence at Saint Louis, the Rev. J[ohn] B[aptist] Tornatore, an Italian priest of great learning and piety, was sent to the Barrens as superior of the whole mission. During his administration, to save Mr. Ralph Daugherty by the intervention of his brother-in-law, Henry Sanford Esq. of Jackson, the property of the Daughertys at the Cape was purchased. Father Timon went to Potosi and negotiated with Mr. John Casey for a loan of two thousand dollars (ten thousand francs). He went to Saint Louis to negotiate it, and, in passing by a village, Selma, got a rich Protestant, Captain I.N. White, to endorse the draft. When the right reverend bishop first saw Father Timon he showed anger at the purchase of which he had heard, but, when he found that the purchase money had been found without calling on him, he was much pleased. Subsequently Father Timon found a number of small tracts of land adjoining the one already purchased and still belonging to the Congregation, and he immediately took them up at a very low rate, less than one-tenth of their value.

A house formerly used as a store house, adjoining the principal residence, was converted into a church. At first once in three months, then once a month, Father Timon rode down from the Barrens, said mass, preached, and catechized, with very happy results in dissipating the prejudices of the people. About two weeks after he had held his regular mission, happy results. Consequently, at a time when no one expected his visit, Father Timon was sent by his superior to complete some arrangements regarding the deeds of the property. He arrived near night, and in about half an hour was visited by one of the most respectable citizens of the place, who, some years after,

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71 For more details, and for biographical information on Tornatore, see Rosati, “Recollections,” *VH* 5:2 (1984): 139.

72 Since Timon had been asked to prepare this memoir for the motherhouse in Paris, he very often used the French franc as his reference. At the time, its value was approximately five to the dollar. The Caseys affirmed their readiness to loan funds in John and Andrew Casey to Timon, from Potosi, 6 July and 3 August 1833, AUND.

73 Selma is a small town in Jefferson County, Missouri.

74 For a more lengthy treatment, see McGerry, “God is Wonderful,” 249-55.

75 The McGerry narrative has Tornatore accompany Timon; Ibid., 253.
was elected mayor. The gentleman 76 requested the priest to visit his stepmother who was dying. "Is she a Catholic?" said the priest. "No, there are no Catholics in my house," said the stranger. Then the priest, thinking that now, as often before, the dying Protestant wanted him only to pray for her, took neither vestions nor holy oils. He found the old lady very ill, and very well disposed. He exposed also the faith of the Catholic Church to her in the presence of her children, and, as she assented to all and declared that she was determined to live and die in the Church, the missionary hastened to get baptismal water, holy oil, etc. Leaving the sick room and entering another, the lady of the house, wife of the gentleman who had called him, followed and said to the priest: "Sir, there is something extraordinary in all this. My mother has never been in a Catholic Church. Only once did she hear a Catholic sermon, yet she has thought for months that she hears a voice saying almost continually to her, 'if you want to be saved you must become a Catholic.' She often related this to us, and

76 Mr. Watson.
begged us to send for you, but we thought it was only a childish freak of a wandering mind, and we refused. A few hours ago she thought that she had a vision of a man dressed like you who gave her a crucifix to kiss, and, at the instant, the same voice said, 'Do what this priest will tell you and you shall be saved.' She started, told us of the vision, and begged us to send for you, but we refused, since it was a long journey, and it seemed a wild fancy. Whilst we were debating the matter with her, a neighbor came in and said that you had just arrived. We determined to send for you.” This recital only hastened the zeal of the priest. He soon returned, and as, in full robes, he presented the crucifix to the sufferer, he remarked that she pressed it with eager emotion to her lips. The priest baptized her _sub [p. 26] conditione_ [“conditionally”], heard her confession, gave her the viaticum and extreme unction. It was near midnight when all was finished. She died a few hours afterward in great peace and joy. The priest inquired something regarding her antecedent life and was told that she had always been distinguished for charity to the poor and sick. It was this, no doubt, that drew down a special mercy on her last end. One after the other, her whole family became Catholic. Many years after, when there was a fine stone church of Saint Vincent on the same spot, Bishop de Forbin Janson confirmed the last convert of that family.

**Bishop De Neckere**

In 1829 Father [Leon] De Neckere was named bishop of New Orleans. He hesitated much, consulted his friends, among others Father Timon who advised him to refuse, fearing that his character and constitution were such as would cause him to sink in a very few years. In effect the saintly bishop died about three years after his consecration.  

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77 Charles-Auguste-Marie-Joseph, comte de Forbin Janson (1785-1844,) bishop of Nancy and Toul in France. Since he was a relative of Charles X, Louis Philippe exiled him from his diocese. He came to the United States and Canada at the request of Pope Gregory XVI, and helped various bishops in their duties as he could from 1839 to 1841. His distinguished and varied career is summarized in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Forbin-Janson.”

78 De Neckere was ordained a bishop in New Orleans, 24 June 1830. His ordination had been put off from 16 May because “he has laboured under a spitting of blood, from an aneurism in the throat” (*United States Catholic Miscellany* 9:49 [June 5, 1830]: 390). He died of yellow fever on 5 September 1833 at New Orleans. See Rosati, “Recollections,” *VH* 5:2 (1984): 137-38.
1829-1835

From 1829-1835, the Congregation of the Mission continued the labor and sacrifices which had marked its early career. Several of the priests fell victim to their zeal: Father [Francis] Cellini, Father [Philip] Borgna, Father [John] Rosti, Father [Bernard] Permoli, and others were separately in a different mission of Louisiana; Father Dahmen laboring with great zeal in Sainte Genevieve and the adjacent country, etc. At the Barrens the college suffered much from sickness. Many of the pupils neglected to pay their bills. That of one family amounted to six thousand francs; it was never paid. Several other bills which were never paid approached this amount. Debts against the seminary accumulated. The house was unfinished. The building of the new church had been stopped after the saintly death of Brother [Angelo] Oliva, fortunately he had finished the stone work before he was called away. 79

Protestant ministers again began to preach in the vicinity of the seminary. One of the missionaries [Timon] was sent to meet him in the court house of Perryville. 80 The minister was put to shame, and forced to avow himself vanquished. But he said that his bishop and several ministers would be at a place he indicated, six leagues off, on a certain day, for a general conference, and that if the priest would go there he would meet his match and have the error of his way proved to him. The priest asked him [p. 27] if he said that as a challenge. “No,” said the preacher, “I didn’t invite you, I only say that you may go, if you will.” The priest then publicly declared that he would not go, and that he sought no controversy, that he would not have been there, had it not been for the calumnies, and public, insulting attacks of the then so justly humbled minister. But all around, at four or five leagues distant from the seminary, counting on impunity, the ministers spread the report that the priest had pledged himself to meet the ministers in public conference. By accident, the night before the appointed day, the priest heard of this artifice and next morning rode hurriedly to the scene of what they hoped would be a bloodless victory. The crowd was so great

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80 The controversy was with a Reverend Pecam [Peckham?], dated 1831, according to Timon’s draft notes on page 54. Also, the name Perryville was not used before 1831. An account of one or more controversies may be found in AGC, and it is available on microfilm, reel 1, 398, undated, 4 pages, in French, and in Timon’s handwriting. Since these controversies dealt with common topics, it is uncertain whether these pages summarized the occasion mentioned here.
that the church had been abandoned and benches hastily formed amidst the mighty trees of the primitive forest. As the priest reached the ground, the preacher was finishing his last prayer. The bystanders whispered in the ear of the missionary that the preacher had shown the folly of the real presence, and the wickedness of transubstantiation, and that he had said that a Romish priest was present, who, if he dared to come forward, would be easily forced to avow his error, “and,” said the informer, “we all thought that he spoke of you.”

When the minister had fully ended, the priest got upon the stump of a tree, and, in his loudest tone of voice, announced that he would, in a quarter of an hour, preach on the real presence and transubstantiation. Six preachers immediately surrounded him with violent gestures as if they would strike, declaring that he should not speak or preach in that place. He appealed to the people, who resolved to hear him. After showing the unworthy trick which accident, or rather God’s Providence had enabled him to defeat, he took the Protestant’s [p. 28] bible from a minister, read fourteen texts from it, explained them, showed the meaning of transubstantiation, its entering in a slow yet real manner into the economy of God for the growth and existence of all that lives; and then appealed to the six ministers who sat around him to produce only one text, in the negative, as strong as any one of the fourteen texts, were for the affirmative. The ministers rose to respond, not by giving that one text, but by showing how Catholics worshiped the Virgin Mary and adored images. When the minister had finished, the priest asked the attentive crowd if they could believe that the God of truth would on so important a subject leave fourteen texts, to say clearly and strongly a damnable falsehood, and yet without a single one to say plainly the truth! The ministers were abashed and left precipitately. The priest continued for half an hour to exhort the crowd to profit from this evidence of truth which God’s mercy had vouchsafed and return to the church where alone truth in holy fullness is taught. After this the preacher avoided the neighborhood of the seminary. By little and little, all or almost all became Catholics.

In 1831 the missionary, returning late in the evening from Cape Girardeau, was told that a murderer was in the dungeon, and was to be hung next day and that he had refused all spiritual succor. The priest went to the dungeon, the hardened criminal gradually softened before the truth. Finding that he had been allowed a large supply of liquor, the priest made him promise to drink no more, and stationed some zealous friends around the prison to keep the fatal draught from
him. In the morning early he had a good breakfast brought to him, and begun recommended instruction. About ten o’clock A.M. the priest baptized the culprit, whose tears during the ceremony proved how deeply his [p. 29] heart had been touched. In a few hours he was launched into eternity.  

A number of zealous and talented priests had in the interim joined the Congregation and made their vows, eminent among them were Father [John] Boullier, Father [Joseph] Paquin, Father [Peter] Vergani, and others who, alas, have already passed to their reward; others too who still labor zealously in the missions. In September 1833, Father Odin, who had labored so much and who was so generally venerated, started for France.  

Timon Appointed Visitor, 1835  
The age of the venerated Father Tornatore not permitting him to learn English, at a general assembly of the Congregation held in Paris, at which Father Odin assisted, it was decreed that Father Timon should be visitor, thus for the first time, establishing the American mission into a Province. Father Tornatore and Father Timon had been together to view the state of the mission and property at Cape Girardeau. Letters were handed to each when they returned on 16 November 1835 ordaining the suppression of the college [at the Barrens] and the expulsion of one of the priests, and requiring as a condition sine qua non that the bishop should pay six hundred francs annually for each seminarian. Father Timon determined on refusing, as he

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81 Timon’s draft notes on page 54 mention the date of baptism as 31 January 1833, and the man’s name as Whiston. He was “hung the same day.” McGerry, “God is Wonderful,” 245, note 7, confirms the date as 1833.  
83 Odin had been looking for an occasion to visit his home, recover his health, and search out recruits for the American mission (Bony, “Odin,” 85-95).  
84 15-28 August 1835.  
85 For a partial text of Odin’s report to the Paris authorities, see Bony, “Odin,” 61:96-97.  
86 Timon seems to have overstated the case of the priest. The minutes of the General Curia specify that “Mr. Borgna is not to be recalled, inasmuch as he is no longer considered as belonging to the Congregation.” Felix Contassot, comp., “La Congrégation de la Mission en Amérique du Nord. Notes pour servir à son histoire.” Typescript copy in DRMIA, page 2. The letter referred to is Jean-Baptiste Étienne to Timon, from Paris, 7 September 1835, AUND, Vincentian collection. The text of the decree of suppression is found in American Vincentians, 454-55. Part of that legislation involved the return to community life of confreres scattered in diocesan parishes.
saw difficulties of every kind in the way, and thought that he was not
capable of undertaking such a charge, particularly under such circum-
stances. He requested Father Tornatore to keep the letters a secret at
least until the priests could be convened. Father Timon refused, as-
sembled the whole community and informed them of the change. Fa-
ther Timon still refused. He went to Sainte Genevieve to see Father
Dahmen, and Borgna, and to the “Old Mines” to speak with Father
Boullier. All concurring to condemn his refusal; he accepted, convened
a meeting of the priests, they unanimously requested the new visitor
to suspend all action on the college until the superior general had been
informed of the almost impossibility of present suppression, and the
apparent or real necessity of continuing the college for years, perhaps
for many years to come. Father Odin was one of the most firm in pro-
testing against the suppression of the college. Letters were written to
Paris on the subject. Consultations were held. It was found that the
Congregation owed about sixty thousand [p. 301 francs, that it pos-
sessed nothing except the newly acquired property at the Cape which
was mortgaged for the purchase money, and that great and general
discontent prevailed. Father [Blase] Raho had left for Louisiana with-
out asking permission, Father Rosti and others already there were un-
willing to return. The prospects indeed were most gloomy. After nearly
two months’ efforts at and around the Barrens, the visitor went to New
Orleans. God blessed his efforts. Father Raho, Father Rosti, and oth-
ers, returned to a community life in the Barrens. The superior general
permitted the college to continue. It gradually lost the character of
sickness, which a few years of epidemic and several deaths had fas-
tened upon it. Payments became more regular, the mortgages on the
property were paid, new property now very valuable was acquired in
the City of Saint Louis. [p. 18]

Another Jailhouse Conversion

Whilst in New Orleans preparing for his return, the Rev. Father
[Adam] Kindelon requested him to aid in the conversion of a mur-

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87 Timon’s account is not grammatically clear. His refusal, mentioned three times,
refers to his unwavering decision against closing the college.
88 For example, see Odin to Nozo, from Saint Louis, [no dates] 1836, AGC, micro-
film, series C, reel 2, item 174. Also, Rosati to Timon, from Saint Louis, 13 December
1835, AUND, in which he is so discouraged that he plans to retire and prepare for death.
The order was rescinded in a letter of John Baptist Nozo to Timon, from Paris, 8 April
1837, AUND.
89 Now Saint Vincent’s Church, with other properties.
derer, a rich young man of one of the first families. Father Timon with Father Kindelon accordingly visited the culprit, who was to be executed in ten days, and who had refused admission to many preachers of different sects. The talented culprit at once admitted the priests and seemed to feel the truth of all they said. A time was fixed for his baptism, the priests coming each day, one after the other, to instruct and prepare him. During their visits once when both priests were together, he made the following history:

In early youth I with several other Protestant boys was sent to an excellent Catholic college. I made rapid progress, and soon became a favorite. On my part I venerated the priest, and soon perceived in the Catholic boys something, I thought, almost unearthly of firmness in virtue that I began to wish to be a Catholic. My parents heard of this, and immediately removed me, and placed me with a Baptist minister, who became my tutor and teacher. What I heard from him, what I saw in his house, made me an infidel. At times the bright memory of my youth in that Catholic college would rise before me, and for a moment check the reckless life which I soon began to lead; but it was only a passing check, and I soon succeeded in checking its too frequent return. I lost all restraint over my passion and I must now expiate by a shameful death the bigotry that tore me from the influence of the religion which alone could restrain and save me.

The day before his execution had been fixed upon by the priests for baptizing him and administering the Holy Eucharist.

The few days previous some worthy friends called on him and said, "Our efforts are useless. The governor refuses a pardon; you must die. Here is poison, take it, and save your family from the shame of having one of their number hung." The culprit answered: "I would have taken the remedy you propose had you come some days ago, but lately I have seen a Catholic priest, who has given me quite different views of duty and of the life beyond the grave. I cannot now, consistent with my deep convictions, lay hands on my own life." This conversation was soon noised through the city; all rejoiced in the evidences
of a sincere conversion. The morning before that fixed for the baptism, both priests were together in the prisoner’s cell; the poor man seemed to be in the best disposition. About 11 A.M. the jailer came to request the priests to withdraw, as the mother and sisters of the culprit wished to take their last farewell. The priests retired. Father Timon was an hour after at the archiepiscopal residence, when he noticed a commotion in the street. He descended to know the cause and was told that the prisoner had killed himself. The priest hurried to the prison. Access was forbidden the crowd, but the guard admitted the priest. He found the body yet warm, but life extinct. The jailer declared that he had no weapon before the arrival of his relatives, but at his side was found the fine costly dagger with which the sad deed had been committed. All surmised when and by whom the dagger was given, the whole forming but another sad chapter in the consequences of anti-Catholic bigotry.

Odin in Cape Girardeau, 1836

The visitor returned to the Barrens on 24 March 1836, on 9 April started with Rev. Father Odin, [John] Robert, and servants, to begin a permanent establishment in Cape Girardeau.

Heavy rains made all the creeks so high as to necessitate swimming. There was much difficulty. Father Timon swam across on horseback, examined, found a less difficult pass, recrossed and brought over Father Odin and the company. All had to remain overnight at Jackson, ten leagues from the seminary. Early in the morning the visitor started to say mass according to the appointed time in Cape Girardeau. The rest, who were much fatigued, remained to take breakfast. He reached the Cape, twelve miles distant, at 11 A.M., during the mass. Father Timon introduced Father Odin to the congregation as their future pastor, and alluded, as far as the well-known humility of Father Odin permitted, to the virtues, learning, and zeal of the pastor whom God gave them, and to the great services he had already rendered to religion, with hopes that Providence prepared for Cape Girardeau through him still greater

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90 “Servants” refers to three black slaves, Harry, his wife Minty, and their child Juliana. See McGerry, “God is Wonderful,” 256.
82

blessings. Some persons of bad and impure life had, without even
asking permission, located themselves in an outhouse [outbuilding],
nor could the visitor get them out but by process of law that might
require one or two months time. He consulted Protestant friends skilled
in the law and who already leaned to Catholicity. By their advice, and,
by them under his authority, the house was pulled down whilst the
inmates had gone a-visiting, and thus Father Odin was saved from
annoyance and responsibility.

The Barrens, Community Life, 1836-1837

The visitor returned to the Barrens, and on Sunday 17 April
preached on zeal for building God’s temple. He read from I
Paralipomenon 29 of the zeal which in olden time people had to con-
tribute to building a temple to the Lord. He exhorted them to come
forward and contribute generously, so that their new church, beautiful
even in its unfinished state, might be prepared for celebrating decently
the divine worship. A large collection was ready and more promised.
The work soon began.

Though the visitor had special affection and veneration for the
bishop of Saint Louis [Rosati], and though the bishop also esteemed
the visitor, yet there were some painful and trying scenes [p. 33] be-


91 A document written by a Sister of Loretto M. Angela Augusta (Lucy E. Nesbit), a
niece of Timon’s, records his hopes for the Cape in more detail: “The Reverend Father
Timon having entered a small grocery store, mentioned to those standing by that he had
taken a deep interest in the Cape and that it was his intention at no distant day to estab-
lish a College and Convent there. Mr. Doyle and others who were present listened in
amazement and were convulsive with laughter, which common civility restrained; they
contended themselves by saying such a project [would be] an impossibility. After Father
Timon’s departure, Mr. Doyle said: ‘Well, upon my honor, that Reverend gentleman
talks at random; build a college at this miserable place which boasts but one brick house,
the rest being wretched huts; only five Catholic families here and they poor, Messrs.
Garaghty, Ivers, Smith, Hutchinson and myself. Now, won’t we support a grand col-
lege!’ and he laughed heartily at the idea.” “A Sketch of the Foundation of Cape Gi-
rardeau and St. Vincent’s College and Convent, Mo.”, Archives, Loretto Motherhouse,
Nerinx, Ky.

92 This passage speaks of voluntary offerings made by the people. “Then the heads
of families, [and] the officials . . . undertook to give for the service of the house of God
five thousand talents of gold. . . .” 1 Chr 29:6-7. This passage was not appointed to be
read on that Sunday, the second Sunday after Easter, but was chosen by Timon for the
occasion.
tween the two on account of the order which the bishop tried to execute to restore to community life the priests who were living apart as mere parish priests. A long and painful correspondence was kept up regarding Rev. Peter Doutreluigne, then located at Cahokia, near Saint Louis. It was only after some years that the visitor succeeded. On 11 May 1836 the bishop of Saint Louis wrote to remonstrate again against the departure of Father Doutreluigne from the parish of Cahokia. The letter then says: “I must observe to you to do everything *secundum ordinem* [“in proper order”]. Hence, with regard to the parishes or missions entrusted to the priests of the Congregation of the Missions [sic], the superior has to make a choice of the subject of the Congregation of the Mission who is to perform the functions of pastor of the parish or mission, [and before he sends him he must propose the nomination to the bishop, and after the bishop has sent the letters of mission, and the faculties, then the appointed pastor can exercise his functions. The superior can recall home the missionary,] but he must apprise the bishop of it and propose to him the successor. However, where no change is made, the missionary may leave his parish for a time, for instance to go and make his retreat, and the superior may send in his place some priest to attend the congregation during that temporary absence. This being well understood, and exactly observed, there will be no occasion for any misunderstanding.” The visitor respectfully protested against some details of the above rule. He refused several parishes which the good bishop pressed on him. He had however to take a few, under rules that left the visitor more free.

On 20 February 1837 the visitor begins to raise columns [at the Barrens] to finish the gallery, and house—effected in about three months, making the house much more comfortable, and giving it a far better appearance.

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93 Timon probably meant to write “visitor” instead of “bishop,” but, since he was a bishop at the time of writing, he made this error.

94 The text in brackets has been restored from Rosati to Timon, 6 May 1836, from Saint Louis, AUND. Since the original does not make complete sense as it stands, it appears that the writer failed to copy the text through an oversight. The rest of Timon’s text of this letter differs only in small details from the original.

95 Establishment Creek (Bloomsdale), 1837, Jackson, 1838, Tywappity Bottom (Texas Bend) 1838, are Missouri parishes or missions taken in this period. The correspondence with Rosati, which Timon referred to, covers much of the year 1836, involving at one point the superior general.
Several novices entered the Congregation. The Right Reverend Bishop Rosati came to the seminary, examined the seminarians, ordained one to the tonsure, one to be subdeacon, and four deacons.

**Timon in Europe**

Then, by advice of the priests generally, the visitor started for Europe. On his way he made acquaintances greatly valuable for the Congregation. The archbishop of Baltimore, Dr. [Samuel] Eccleston, offered to him the college of Emmitsburg and the care of the Sisters of Charity in America. The visitor promised to present the request to the superior general. He did so, but the offer was not accepted. In Philadelphia he was requested by Rev. [Peter Richard] Kenrick, now archbishop of Saint Louis, to give a retreat to the seminarians, which he did, then started for New York, where he sailed for France on 24 August 1837, and reached the motherhouse in Paris 16 September, was received most kindly by Father [Jean-Marie] Aladel, and before the blessed sacrament and the sacred shrine of Saint Vincent, the missionary, a native of the New World, poured out his heart in an unexpected and indescribable feeling of gratitude and oblation.

The visit to Paris was of great use to the Congregation. The superior general allowed ten thousand francs to aid in paying off the debt. Rev. Father [Bonaventure] Armengol, [Joachim] Alabau, [Michael] Domenec, Brother [Joseph] Sticca and other brothers went with the visitor. They sailed from Le Havre in the ship *Georgia* for New Orleans on 15 October 1837. The voyage was long and stormy, but not useless nor without consolation. The missionaries had a part of the ship

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96 In the period 1836-1837, the following clerical novices entered in the United States: James Tiernan, John Robert, Nicholas Stehlé, John Escoffier, John Broydrick, Francis Burlando, Joseph De Marchi, Michael Luciano. They all took vows. No brothers entered in the same period.

97 Timon seems to have compressed several accounts in this paragraph. The 1837 ordinations took place in March in Saint Louis, and included both Jesuits and Vincentians.

98 This visit came shortly after the decree of 1835 ordering the closure of the college at the Barrens. It was officially revoked in early 1837. As the visitor of the first non-European province, Timon had particular reasons for the visit.


100 Aladel was an assistant superior general, 1835-1867.

101 The month should be November on the basis of correspondence in AUND. The “other brothers” are not named elsewhere and may refer to Vincentian scholastics, also called “brothers,” instead of to the lay brothers.
to themselves, an altar there, on which, when the sea was calm, they said mass. All made meditation together each morning, other exercises of a community were nearly as regular as in a convent, and the visitor gave daily lessons in English to the Spanish priests who accompanied him. They reached New Orleans in safety late in December.102

Bank of the United States

Religious charitable communities, through the superior general, had requested Father Timon to invest about 200,000 francs in stock in the U.S. Bank. From Paris the visitor sent a portion to a friend in New York, whose acquaintance he had formed in his outward voyage.103 The balance he took with him in letters of credit. When he arrived in New Orleans, he applied to a very rich and intelligent friend to invest the funds in United States Bank stock, which then was selling at twenty per cent above par. This friend told him, in intimate confidence, not to take that stock, for the bank was rotten. The visitor then went up to Saint Louis, there he found letters from his friend in New York, to whom he had sent ten thousand francs to be invested in the same stock, the friend replied that he would invest as commanded if again ordered, but that he requested the visitor not to touch that bank for, though its credit was great and the stock above par, still “the knowing ones” considered it dangerous. The visitor then invested all the funds in the State Bank of Missouri, of whose solvency he had the stron-
gest guarantees. In less than a year the Bank of the United States failed, its stock became worth nothing, and has so remained ever since. The failure of the bank entailed ruin on almost all the banks of the Union, all suspended the specie payment, except the Bank of Missouri. It indeed for a few years would declare no dividend to keep itself strong amidst the frightful crisis. But afterwards it gave very large dividends, and all the property of these charitable societies were safe and bringing a good revenue.

1838

On his arrival at New Orleans the visitor placed his little colony in different clergymen’s houses, and, at the request of Bishop [Anthony] Blanc, gave a retreat to the Sisters of Charity in New Orleans, and other retreats. During this time the bishop of New Orleans offered his seminary to the Lazarists. The visitor waited until the Mississippi River was free from ice. He then embarked and, with his colony reached the seminary [the Barrens] on 10 February 1838. Great were the rejoicings for the help vouchsafed, and for the evidence of the interest which the mother- [p. 36] house took in that distant and infant province.

The personnel of the Congregation was greatly augmented by the recruits which the visitor had obtained. From Paris, Italy, and Spain, were added to the little band Father Armengol, Father [Mariano] Maller, Father [John] Masnou, Father Domenec, Father Alabau, Father [Roman] Pascual, Father [Thaddeus] Amat, Father [Jerome] Cercos, Father [Michael] Calvo, Father [Eudaldo] Estany, Father [James] Burlando, Father [Joseph] De Marchi, Father [Charles] Boglioli, Father [Joseph] 104 The second Bank of the United States had a power over the American economy similar to the present Federal Reserve. To embarrass Andrew Jackson his enemies sought a premature chartering of the bank in 1832 to make it an issue in the election of that year. Jackson responded by vetoing the recharter bill and then began a campaign to destroy the bank. In October 1833 he began withdrawing all federal funds, then deposited in various state banks. This led to a spree of speculation in the various states. This was enhanced in 1836 when Jackson also began to distribute surplus government funds to the states. To cool the speculation Jackson issued his specie circular in mid-1836, to take effect after the November election. The government would henceforth accept only gold and silver for payments, especially for public lands. This compelled banks to call in their specie and this led to a recession that lasted all through Van Buren’s term (1837-1841). When the bank was rechartered in 1836, it was as a state bank in Pennsylvania, not a federal one. It subsequently failed and closed in February 1840.
Giustiniani, Father [Aloysius] Parodi, and several lay brothers. All of those labored zealously in America. Some were called in a few years to their eternal reward, others were sent to Mexico, or recalled to Europe. Others still remain laboring most zealously in the holy ministry.

In March 1838 the visitor contracted with Messrs. Fiena and Taylor for finishing the towers of church [at the Barrens], they indemnifying him, in work, for neglect in the previous contract effected during his absence in Europe. The college began to prosper, many people from Louisiana had arrived. The missions also took a new impulse. In the new church, which had before been opened for divine worship, Father Burlando played the organ, and the other reverend gentleman sang the Gregorian Chant. The church was always crowded, Protestants as well as Catholics being anxious to listen to music which had never before reached their ears. Conversions became more frequent.

Early in December Bishop Rosati offered the mission of Peru to the visitor, he referred it to his council. On 12 December 1838 the visitor with Father Armengol, Boullier, Amat, [James] Tiernan, and Giustiniani, and two lay brothers began the seminary [in Louisiana]. The visitor wrote for a patent, but knowing the disposition of Father Armengol, he also requested that [p. 37] certain restrictions

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105 Timon has joined several bands together, from 1835 to 1840. He omitted Peter Chandy, Hippolyte Gandolfo, John Robert, Francis Simonin (1835); Thomas Burke, Michael Collins, Patrick Ring (1837); John Liebana, Bro. Ramon Sala (1838); Bro. John Cañé (1839); Anthony Penso, Charles Roatta, James Rolando, Bro. Dominic Canepa, Bro. Louis Locatelli (1840).

106 Bonaventure Armengol led the group of Vincentians (including Joachim Alabau and Brother Damien Marimon) to Mexico to found a mission there. Francis Xavier Dahmen and Charles Roatta returned to Europe.

107 Probably Valerio Faina, at one time a postulant brother. He arrived at the Barrens, 18 October 1823; [Rosati] “Catalogus Parochiarum et Missionum Dioecesis S. Ludovici Anno 1816.” AASL, 35.

108 This mission became known more commonly by its main town of La Salle, Illinois. Since Timon was out of the country in December 1837, the date of the bishop’s offer was December, but Timon and his council could not have discussed it until his return to the Barrens, 7 February. The missionaries were established in La Salle by March 1838.


should be imposed on the new superior. The advice was not followed. He also established Rev. Father Boullier, superior of the church of the Ascension in Donaldsonville.

The Republic of Texas

In the month of June 1838, Bishop Blanc had written to Bishop Rosati and to Father Timon, relating the sad condition of Texas, and saying that the Holy See wished him to send a trusty person to examine into the condition of religion in the country, then independent, and report to Rome. The bishop of New Orleans wished the visitor to undertake this commission. By the advice and wish of Bishop Rosati, he consented, and, on 24 December 1838, in company with Father [John Francis] Llebaria sailed for Galveston.

The missionaries expected to meet none but strangers, yet by a Providence of God, almost the first man the visitor met at Galveston was Col. Michael Menard, a distinguished man of the country, who had been one of the [members of the] convention for forming the constitution. Others, some of them former pupils, soon made the missionaries quite at home in Galveston. On the feast of the Holy Innocents [28 December] Father Timon said what was considered the first mass ever said in that place. During the few days sojourn, waiting for a steamer, Father Timon preached often, baptized several, heard many confessions, and ratified several marriages. On 31 December the missionaries started in the steamer Rufus Putnam to ascend the bay river

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111 This letter does not seem to be part of the correspondence from Timon to the general curia.
112 The letter referred to is probably Blanc to Timon, from New Orleans, 30 March 1838, AUND. Timon may have received it only in June.
114 Menard (1805-1856) was the founder of Galveston. He and his brother Peter had recently built a home, where Timon was to celebrate mass.
up to Houston, then the seat of the government. There too he had the consolation to find some senators and members of Congress whom he had known on his extensive missions. He preached in the hall of Congress, the senators and representatives being present. He rented a convention room, put up an altar, and had regular service. Many came to confession and communion. [p. 38]

It would be difficult to estimate the sad and dangerous condition of a Catholic at that time in Texas. Father Timon, passing along in the suburbs under a chill drizzling rain, found a poor Irishman named O’Brien, lying moaning on the ground. He found that he was very sick, but by no means in liquor. A few men were got to lift the sufferer and bring him to the nearest house. Whilst striving to relieve him, the priest revealed his sacred character. Words came hardly except the joy that beamed from the countenance of the poor man. He forgot all his sorrows in the thought that he, a dying man who thought himself hundreds of miles distant from a priest of God, had one then standing at his side. In touching Christian sentiments he made his confession, and received extreme unction and viaticum. Then hearing that there was a kind of hospital in the place, the priest engaged some persons to bring the sufferer thither. And in a few hours he followed, to aid the penitent on the long journey he was soon to take. The missionary found the hospital to be a log hut, with the chill wind blowing through many holes or crevices between the logs upon ten or twelve sick persons, whose straw beds rested on the clay floor. In the middle of the hut was a hole in the clay floor, where fire was made. On the fire the pot was boiling to make the soup. The smoke found its way out above, or through the side chinks, according to its whim or the caprice of the wind. Whilst speaking with the keeper to urge him to take some precautions to keep the wind from the sick and dying, and giving him some help to aid in doing it, the dying O’Brien in his agony groaned much. The keeper hollered to him several times, “be silent.” Poor man! he could not be silent. Death was on him! The keeper then stepped up, and shook his fist in the face of the sufferer saying, “if you don’t be silent I’ll give you this.” The priest interrupted him, but O’Brien was soon beyond his power! [p. 39]

From senators and men of extensive information the visitor got full details of the most scandalous life led by the only priests in Texas: two, both living in San Antonio de Bexar, in the west of Texas, and

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115 He refers to the Congress of the republic of Texas, not yet a part of the United States.
both publicly cohabiting with women whom they themselves called their wives, with children around them whom the wretched men acknowledged as their children.\textsuperscript{116} The mass was said daily because they were paid for it; no instruction, no confession, no catechism.\textsuperscript{117} The poor Mexicans would die for their religion, yet they hardly knew what their religion was. How could they? Their faith was rather a divine instinct that grew from their baptism, than a faith of knowledge.

The visitor returned to Galveston on 9 January 1839. Before leaving he had established a committee to see about getting a lot for a church. These gentlemen met him and showed that there would be every facility to find and pay for a lot and build a church if a priest could be sent. On 12 January the visitor returned to New Orleans and read his official report to Bishop Blanc, who sent it to Rome.\textsuperscript{118}

\textbf{1839}

Whilst preparing for his departure, the visitor preached a retreat in New Orleans, during which he accepted the urgent request of the bishop to make a mission in Natchez on his way home.

On his way up, the visitor stopped at the seminary of the Assumption, blamed the extravagance of Father Armengol, arranged affairs there and at Donaldsonville, then continued to Natchez. He arrived there on 25 January 1839.

It was difficult to find a room in which to say mass. At length, an old lady, the good and pious Mrs. [Félicité] Girodeaux, offered a large room in her house.\textsuperscript{119} An altar was soon erected in it. The missionary gave then a mission which \[p. 40\] produced very happy results. He also preached sermons of controversy, by invitation, in the city hall. Many were baptized, many marriages adjusted, many confessions and communions.

\textsuperscript{116} They were Refugio de la Garza and José Antonio Valdez (Kenneally, \textit{Propaganda}, 1:1843).
\textsuperscript{117} This statement contradicts Odin's testimony that masses were said only on Sundays. Specifically, Odin wrote to Antoine Blanc, as he wrote similarly to others, that “a Mass was mumbled every Sunday and attended by a half dozen old women.” He went on to indicate that de la Garza would not attend to a sick young girl unless paid first. (Odin to Blanc, from San Antonio, 24 August 1840. Catholic Archives of Texas, Odin papers.)
\textsuperscript{118} Blanc to Propaganda Fide, 19 January 1839, from New Orleans (Kenneally, \textit{Propaganda}, 1:1843).
\textsuperscript{119} James F. Pillar, \textit{The Catholic Church in Mississippi, 1837-65} (New Orleans, 1964), 5-6. The same lady offered half of her home for the bishop’s residence when he was first appointed. See also R.O. Gerow, \textit{Cradle Days of St. Mary’s at Natchez} (Natchez, 1941), 68-69, for a sketch of her life. Her name was variously spelled.
Plans were brought by the people, who then seemed enthusiastic for a church in Gothic style. Father Timon recommended them to begin a plain large building which might afterwards serve for their uses. He left them apparently determined to follow the advice. The first bishop, named years after, had reason to regret that it was not followed.\textsuperscript{120}

On return to Missouri the visitor, having received orders to invest other funds, went to Saint Louis, where he was engaged by Bishop Rosati to give a mission to the people which lasted two weeks, and during that same time he also conducted a retreat of eight days for the Sisters of Charity. Measures were also taken for the mission of La Salle, Father Raho being named superior.

After this the missionary made a retreat or mission for the people of Kaskaskia, and at the same time, one for the Sisters of the Visitation, then established in Kaskaskia. During the mission, by special request of influential Protestants, he gave lectures at night in the court house on Catholic doctrine. Many Protestants became Catholics. Many conversions, many fervent communions were the fruit of this mission.

On 5 May 1839 Bishop Rosati laid the cornerstone of a church under title of the “Most Holy Trinity,” to be the church of the seminary at Saint Louis, under charge of the Lazarists, whom he determined to bring to Saint Louis. Father Timon preached.\textsuperscript{121}

On 11 June 1839 letters from Father Étienne were received announcing that Father Timon and Father Odin were proposed at Rome for episcopal sees.\textsuperscript{122} This caused great uneasiness. On 30 August Father Estany and John Escoffier were sent to La Salle. [p. 41] On 7 September Bishop Rosati arrived at the seminary and handed to Father Timon the papal bulls constituting him bishop of Venesi, and coadjutor of

\textsuperscript{120} John Joseph Chanche, bishop of Natchez (1840-1852). For details on the bishop’s drawn-out problems with his cathedral, see Pillar, Catholic Church in Mississippi, 15-17, and Gerow, Cradle Days, 101-02. See also Gerow, 47-49, for Timon’s own immediate report on the mission, in a letter to Bishop Blanc, from Natchez, 31 January 1839.

\textsuperscript{121} See John E. Rybolt, C.M., “Kenrick’s First Seminary,” Missouri Historical Review 71 (1977): 139-55.

\textsuperscript{122} John Baptist Étienne was the secretary general at the time; he became superior general 4 August 1843. The date of the letters seems in error, since the AUND collection does not have such a letter. Two others are possible, the superior general, John Baptist Nozo, to Timon, 29 May 1839, on the possibility of his nomination; or Étienne to same, 20 July 1839, on the same subject. Perhaps another letter is meant. The news spread quickly, as a newspaper report of Timon’s appointment appeared in United States Catholic Miscellany 19:2 (13 July 1839): 15.
Saint Louis, with right of succession. Father Timon returned them next day to Rome with refusal, and to console Bishop Rosati who seemed very sad, pointed out the Rev. [Peter] Richard Kenrick as one eminently qualified for the office. Bishop Rosati, satisfied that he could not change the resolution of Father Timon immediately, wrote to Rome to have Father Kenrick appointed. It was done. The bishop also requested that Father Timon would at once assume the office of administrator of the diocese during the impending absence on business of the Holy See. Father Timon respectfully refused.

The mission of the Cape [Girardeau] had now become important, a convent for the Lorettine Sisters had also been established there. On 21 July Bishop Rosati consecrated the new stone church under the title of Saint Vincent.

On 6 October, the visitor with the Lazarists already there made a very successful mission at La Salle.

On 21 [October], the visitor began a retreat [at the Barrens] for the members of the Congregation who were not too far off to attend. Twenty priests, three students, and nine brothers of the Congregation attended. On 1 November 1839, the visitor commenced a mission for the parish of the Barrens. It lasted two weeks. Father Timon and Father Odin preached in turn. God greatly blessed this mission.

During all this time the internal seminary [novitiate] and the college prospered. Some opposition was made even by the truly pious and venerable Father Tornatore to what he thought innovations. For

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123 The letter of appointment, dated 11 May 1839, and Timon’s refusal, dated 8 September 1839, are found in Kenneally, Propaganda, 4:410, 421, and 1:1897. Timon seems to have misspelled the name here, which at the time, he spelled “Verensi,” and which Rosati calls “Verensem.” (Timon to Étienne, from Barrens, 8 September 1839, draft in DRMA, Timon file; and Rosati’s diary for 4 September 1839.) These are both curial Latin forms, probably for Vera, a location, according to Bayard, in the province of Tunisian Carthage (Bayard, Lone-Star Vanguard, 101). Rosati had expected, at least since early 1835, that Timon would be his coadjutor (Ibid., 6:118).

124 The bishop was going to Europe on affairs of the diocese, and would represent the Holy See in Haiti. He left New York 1 June 1840, and returned to Boston 18 November 1841. He left again, without returning to Missouri, 9 February 1842, and never returned to the United States.

125 Reports of the consecration appeared in several publications, such as the United States Catholic Miscellany 19:9 (31 August 1839): 71. The same account mentions the convent of the Lorettines. The sisters were established 28 October 1838, according to the manuscript of Sister Augusta, “Sketch.” Timon had been the ecclesiastical superior of the sisters in Missouri since the time of their foundation at the Barrens, and took an active interest in them.
instance, from the beginning, the new visitor, who had great confidence in the theological knowledge and unbending severity of Father Tornatore, had chosen him for his confessor. But on 29 January when Father Timon came to him for his weekly confession, Father Tornatore refused to hear the confession of the visitor, alleging as reason that Father Timon had introduced into the college a drawing master (maître de dessein), and yet Father Tornatore considered les arts d’agrément pernicieux [“the arts of entertainment (to be) pernicious”]. The visitor referred the matter to his council, which declared that “les arts d’agréments,” music and drama, should continue.

Whilst visiting the posts in Louisiana, the visitor at the request of the bishop, made a mission on the Ouachita. He found a people, all descendants of Frenchmen and speaking French, on a bank of the Ouachita River, who were even more abandoned as to religious helps than those whom he had once found in Arkansas. The mission did much good, but a priest was much wanted to reside there. [p. 42]

1840

During this mission, the visitor, on 26 March 1840, received Mr. [Anthony] Andrieu in the novitiate. Now that there were many Lazarists, who could not yet speak English, his council advised him to place them in missions where they could learn to speak English whilst exercising the holy ministry. And as the bishop [Blanc], too, was in great want of priests, on 1 April 1840 he consented to take, ad tempus [“temporarily”] the church, house, and parish of Natchitoches, on the Red River, it being, on the land side, the key of Texas, which, the visitor had been informed by Father Étienne, was to be assigned to the Congregation.

On 12 April 1840, the visitor returned to the college of the Barrens with a number of good boys, sons of highly respectable gentlemen of Louisiana. 126 He found letters appointing him prefect apostolic of Texas, with power to administer confirmation. 127 After consulting with his council, he sent Father Odin to be vice prefect and Father Doutreluingne

126 College financial records do not list names for these new students on the date mentioned. However, other students from Louisiana arrived within a few weeks: Adrien Haydel, John Grayson, Emile Picou, Joseph Barthelemy, Sidney Grimshaw, Severin Ferrand, Emanuel Lopez. They ranged from 10 to 17 years of age. Perhaps these are the “good boys” intended by Timon. (Untitled account book, DRMA, II-C(MO)-9-B-1, Box 3b.)

127 He was appointed on 12 April 1840.
as his assistant. Father Odin was almost miraculously saved from a
tornado at Natchez as he descended the Mississippi for Texas. All
prayed that God would preserve him for his greater honor and glory.
The visitor, as prefect apostolic of Texas, entrusted to Father Odin a
letter to the two priests in San Antonio, taking from them all faculties,
and requiring them on pain of suspension to desist from all. 128

On 22 June, Father Paquin being appointed superior of the semi-
nary [Barrens], the visitor assembled all the priests. After a discourse
urging a cheerful obedience to the new superior, he briefly alluded to
the state of the house, without funds or property, except the Cape prop-
erty mortgaged for the purchase money and yet burdened with debt.
He showed debts reduced, mortgages paid, large property worth
250,000 francs acquired, every department well furnished, books, philo-
sophical apparatus, etc. 129 All seemed to echo his words, “To God the
glory! God be praised!”

On 5 July the visitor began an interesting mission at the extensive
hospital of the Sisters of Charity for the poor [p. 43] sick. 130 It was a
touching thing to note the fervor for those poor people, and to see the
lame conducting the blind, who supported their conductors, as they
gave mutual help to reach the communion table. Sainte Genevieve
had been long served by a priest of the Congregation. It was offered as
a permanent mission. As it would have been difficult to abandon it,
the Council thought better to accept it and the Old Mine, and establish
them as regular houses. 131

In August 1840 the venerable Bishop Flaget sent for the visitor,
going with him to the motherhouse of the Lorettones in Kentucky, and
kept him for some days revising the rules of that congregation. 132 Whilst
giving retreat, making missions, and visiting the newly established

required them to desist from all priestly activities.
129 “Philosophical apparatus” refers to apparatus for experiments in the physical
sciences.
130 Saint Louis Hospital, renamed Mullanphy Hospital in 1874 (Hannefin, Daugh-
ters, 43-46). They are correctly called Sisters of Charity, since the union of the Mother
Seton Sisters with Paris did not take place until 1850, after which they gradually came to
be called Daughters of Charity.
131 Sainte Genevieve was staffed from 1822 to 1849, and Old Mines from 1821 to
1841. (John E. Rybolt, “Parish Apostolate: New Opportunities in the Local Church,” in
American Vincentians, 232.)
132 See Florence Wolff, S.L., From Generation to Generation. The Sisters of Loretto, Their
Constitutions and Devotions. 1812 – Vatican II (Louisville, 1982), 9. Flaget and Timon
were joined by Simon Fouché, S.J., a professor at nearby St. Mary’s College.
houses, he received from Texas reports of the prudent and zealous course pursued by Father Odin, and wrote to Rome to obtain for that most worthy and saintly deputy the power of conferring the sacrament of confirmation.

Bishop de Forbin Janson visited the mission in the summer of 1840. He was pleased with the seminary of the Barrens. He went to Cape Girardeau, rejoiced at the great change effected there, and confirmed some of the late converts. He also visited Sainte Genevieve, and, as the people in Kaskaskia were in a state of anger and strife, arrayed for or against their priest, the zealous bishop of Nancy, accompanied by the visitor, went thither to calm the strife. The zealous, just, but strong language of the good bishop only increased the irritation. Things looked badly, when someone proposed to leave the whole dispute to the visitor, who had formerly been their missionary. The offer was accepted, and, through the blessing of God, peace was restored to the agitated community.

From Cape Girardeau the missionaries had gone several times on a mission to Cairo. A post had been fixed there, with vestments, etc. In the summer of 1840 through the influence of the visitor with Hon. E[lias] K[ent] Kane and C.P. Menard, Mr. [Darius Blake] Holbrook, the agent, gave a lot there for a Catholic church, and commenced building a neat frame one at his own expense.133

During the autumn months, the visitor, in his visits to different houses [p. 44] found that, in every point, much good was doing; occasionally, neglects rather in the temporal than in the spiritual order. Thus he found at the Cape horse wagons, purchased at great expense, that had been quite idle for several months because they had no persons able to drive the wagons, whilst they could earn twenty francs per day by hauling wood from this farm, and a first-rate driver would cost less than five francs per day. This oversight as well as some others were corrected. At the Assumption [Louisiana], the evil was of greater magnitude. Father Armengol, who was most obsequious to the visitor when present, but who often went directly contrary to his advice when ab-

133 Of the presence of the two missionaries in Cairo before 1840, no record exists, particularly since the town of Cairo had been established in 1818 but remained mostly undeveloped. The present city of Cairo owes its origin to the trustees of the Cairo City Property and the Illinois Central Railroad Company, but more strictly to Holbrook and his Cairo City and Canal Company. The same source asserts, however, that the church building was begun in 1838. (John M. Landsden, A History of the City of Cairo, Illinois [Chicago, 1910; repr. ed., Carbondale, Ill., 1976], 96, 138.)
sent, had built a new church [and the (?)] priest’s house was within a 
short distance of the church and seminary of the Assumption, which 
caused dispute between the two sections that could not be healed but 
by a total separation.\textsuperscript{134} Still the work of God was going bravely on, 
and the Congregation increasing in numbers and in general estima-
tion.

\textbf{Texas Visitation, 1840-1841}

On 1 December 1840, the visitor, with a missionary destined to aid 
Father Odin,\textsuperscript{135} started for Texas. He reached Galveston on 5 Decem-
ber. Father Odin was in Austin, then the seat of government. As at his 
first visit, so now he had much difficulty in finding a room fit for pub-
lic worship. On the sixth he had a large audience, preached at [or ‘af-
ter’] the gospel, and again after mass; and after vespers began a sub-
scription for building a church. Two thousand francs were at once 
subscribed. He also explained to the people the necessity of support-
ing their priest, all promised to do so.

A Mr. [Colonel James] Treat, who had been minister from Texas to 
Mexico, had died on his passage home, and the body was landed as 
the visitor prepared to start for Houston.\textsuperscript{136} The mayor [John H. Walton] 
called on Father Timon to perform the funeral rites. The priest politely 
explained that his church forbade him to celebrate any but Catholic 
rites, and that she did not wish her rites to be forced upon Protestants; 
and that the departed, could he reanimate his corpse, would probably 
repel as an insult the [p. 45] holy water I would have to sprinkle over 
the body. The mayor was satisfied with this explanation. On board 
the Steamer, as he went to Houston, the visitor met General [James 
Pinkney] Henderson, who had lately returned from Paris whither he 
had been sent as ambassador from Texas. This gentleman, who was 
present at the burial and there heard the visitor answer to the mayor,

\textsuperscript{134} The “two sections” may refer to the parish and the seminary. The expression is 
unclear. Regrettably, in several places in this memoir Timon only hints at his problems 
with Armengol. From other sources it is known that excessive slave buying was an 
example of Armengol’s mismanagement.

\textsuperscript{135} Nicholas Stehlé.

\textsuperscript{136} James Treat, a British subject, had been authorized to work confidentially for a 
treaty between Texas and Mexico. In a strict sense, he was not, therefore, a minister. His 
ten-month mission was not successful. See Rupert Richardson, Ernest Wallace, and 
introduced himself humbly to the priest aboard the ship and said that though a Protestant he had approved the principle which induced the priest to refuse his ministry.

At Houston, the visitor preached, as formerly, in the late Capitol, and held an assembly of Catholics for getting a church. Mr. Neill and Mr. Donnelan made a donation of land for a church, and a committee was formed to solicit donations for building a church. The visitor then, with Rev. Father Stehlé, started for Austin, several hundred miles off and through a country then infested with Indians. He reached Austin on 19 December 1840.

The visitor brought letters from Cardinal [Giacomo] Fransoni, cardinal prefect of Propaganda, to the president of the republic, Mr. [Mirabeau Bonaparte] Lamar. The letter was a virtual recognition of the independence of the republic, and, as such, it was hailed with joy. The president had just started, on account of ill health, for the United States but, as the prefect apostolic had informed him of his approaching visit, he had left a letter with the vice president for Father Timon. Judge [David G.] Burnet, the vice president, received the visitor most courteously, read to him the president’s letter, and requested him to translate for him the cardinal’s letter.

Mr. [Alphonse Dubois] de Saligny, the French minister to the republic, was very kind, and earnestly pressed the visitor to become his guest.137

The visitor’s first thought was to fix a chapel and enable the few Catholics there to hear mass. With much difficulty he proceeded and on 23 December 1840 said the first mass that was ever said in Austin. The next day, the twenty-fourth, Father Odin also said mass, and both met the vice president, Judge Burnet, and the prominent members of Congress at dinner at the French minister’s. The conversation at table turned much on a sermon preached the day previous by the visitor in the hall of Congress before the vice president, senators, and representatives. The missionary had, in a discourse of two hours, given a general view of “the Body of Christ,” the faithful, members of that mystical body; the sacraments, *veins*, divinely instituted, to bring a life divine to every member of that vast and venerable body. “Why,” said

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137 Odin and Timon both recommended that Dubois de Saligny be honored by the Holy See as a papal count (Kenneally, Propaganda, 1:1972, 15 December 1840; 1:1979, 29 December 1840). Instead, Rome made him a Knight of Saint Gregory, a lesser distinction (Ibid., 6:1458, 10 March 1843).
the vice president, “if that be the real doctrine of the Catholic Church, I could easily subscribe to them.” “Yes,” said a leading senator, “yes, gentlemen, the Catholic Church has been greatly calumniated, we have heard this before, now we know it.” [p. 46]

Father Odin had already prepared a bill to restore Church lands to the Church. The guests promised to go for it, and declare that justice ought to be done to the Catholic Church. On the twenty-seventh the visitor preached again in the senate chamber, and a subscription was begun to build a church. Colonel [William] Porter and Colonel Floyd were peculiarly zealous in the cause. On the twenty-eighth the missionaries were invited to a complimentary dinner, at which the acting president, and the leading senators and representatives were present. Colonel Porter again expressed his esteem for the Roman Catholic Church when the president remarked that the Mexicans had not been saved by it from great degradation in priests and people. Father Timon then, whilst all were profoundly attentive, accounted how the American hero and scholar, General [Zebulon] Pike in 1808 had traveled through Mexico, and, though a Protestant, had given a glowing account of the high standing and holy life of the priests, of their blessed influence upon the people, and the general happiness and morality of the population. But civil war began in 1810, and its evil consequences were soon felt. After ten or twelve years of civil war and almost anarchy, the independence was declared. Demagogues banished all the Spanish bishops and priests. The poor people were left with very few pastors, and, to increase the evil, each Indian family had received a farm from the Spanish government. It was exempt from taxes, but the Indian had only the perpetual use of the land, he could not sell it. After independence he was permitted to sell. Speculators prowled through the land, almost every farm was bought for a mere nothing, and, as soon as the legal robbery was consummated, the Indians were driven from their homes, forced to toil for a miserable pittance in worse condition than slaves on land once their own, or driven to highest slopes of the mountains, near the line of perennial snow. They could get no spiritual advice. They soon sank far below the cheerful innocence and

138 Church authorities wanted to reclaim lands which were formerly Church property under the Spanish crown. See Bayard, *Lone-Star Vanguard*, 171-83. A partial text of the petition is found in Castañeda, *Church in Texas*, 56-57; the Texas legislature approved it.

139 The events of 1810 were a revolution, not quite a civil war. The year of the expulsions was 1829.
sound morality which twenty years before General Pike had so justly praised. [p. 47]

The prefect and vice prefect started on 31 December for Mr. [Napoleon] Van Hanims on the Colorado River.¹⁴⁰ They said mass there on 1 January 1841, and continued their journey down along the west bank of the river on a high bluff, four miles from the river, and about five hundred feet above the level of the sea in the Gulf of Mexico. The visitor discovered a rock projecting above the prairie some three or four feet, and on the rock a reef of oysters, apparently as fresh as if the sea had receded but yesterday. He broke off some of the oysters, and brought them with him as incontestable evidence that the sea had once swept over highlands now two hundred miles distant from it.

The journey down to Houston was a continued mission. There again the mission continued with fruit. A deed was made for a lot on which to build the church, seven hundred dollars, equal to 3500 francs, were subscribed. The missionaries continued their journey and reached Galveston on 12 January 1841. The altar erected by the visitor on his arrival last December was still in the same large room. The visitor obtained it and in it on 15 January baptized the first convert of Texas, Mrs. [Caroline] De Lacy, and confirmed her on the eighteenth. On the same day the visitor with [Nicholas] de Labadie and Mr. [Peter] Menard made a contract for building the first church in Galveston.¹⁴¹

The missionaries had to return to Houston. On their way they reconciled a family to God, baptized the children, ratified the marriage of the parents, and reconciled them in the sacred tribunal. Torrents of rain inundated the country. The river became a torrent, and they had to quit the frail boat in which, by rowing, they tried to ascend. Hiring horses and occasionally swimming the creek they at length reached Houston.

Father Timon and Father Odin then continued their course to Nacogdoches, through a wild and rough country never before trodden by priests, making their course a continued mission, crossing rivers or creeks, that the rainy season had swollen to torrents, in little canoes, swimming their horses alongside; or by sinking some log, or intertwining branches of trees that permitted a passage from bank to bank across the stream, to permit Father Odin to cross, whilst Father

¹⁴⁰ This extremely difficult journey is related at length in Castañeda, *Church in Texas*, 61-67.

¹⁴¹ De Labadie had been a student at the Barrens, and Menard an acquaintance of Timon’s from Illinois.
Timon would swim the horses over the dangerous pass. On 30 January the missionaries reached Nacogdoches. The visitor, as usual, sought a place for worship, found an old stone house built more than one hundred years ago, fixed an altar, said mass and preached on the thirty-first and preached again at 3 P.M., the little chapel being crowded. A kind of mission was begun and continued. On 1 February after mass Mr. [Charles] Chevalier gave a lot for a church and offered his house for the priest that might be sent. On the second many went to communion, the solemn blessing of the candles took place, Father Timon preached, a subscription to build a Catholic church was begun.

The missionaries then started for San Augustine. There they were received most kindly, but they were told then no Catholics lived there. Before their departure they found many. Protestants who had known the visitor and Father Odin crowded round them. The visitor was forced to preach at the mass which Father Odin celebrated. During two hours he explained the Catholic doctrine to those who had never before heard other than calumnies against the church. For several days the visitor preached for a willing people. The principal men of the place, Mr. [John] Thomas, Mr. [Alanson] Canfield, Judge Hanks, Dr. Griffin, Mr. [Donald Mc]Donald, Mr. Border, Mr. Francus, and others came to declare themselves Catholics. Mr. [George] Nixon offered half a league of land for a church, five or six other lots were offered, and a subscription started for building a church. At San Augustine the visitor parted from Father Odin, leaving to the zealous missionary all his shirts and clothing, for Father Odin’s were sadly worn and almost useless. The visitor that evening crossed the Sabine River, which separated Texas from the United States, and the next night found himself in Natchitoches in the United States. He was then most kindly received by Father Giustiniani, superior of the mission, and Messrs. Pascual and Alabau his assistants.

1841

The visitor began his official visit. He found that much good had been done and great edification given by the Lazarist community. But he had to reprimand Father [p. 49] Giustiniani (son of an Italian noble-
man, and allied to some of the noblest houses of Europe,) for denying himself many of almost the necessaries of life, in order to save for finishing and beautifying the church.

The visitor reached New Orleans on 18 February and paid a debt of about six thousand francs which Father Odin had incurred with Mr. Benoist of New Orleans. Then [he] visited the seminary of the Assumption, re-established the order which Father Armengol, through excess of zeal, had deranged, and then started for the Barrens. Some difficulties had occurred there, but he soon restored the peace which had been disturbed during his absence.

On leaving Father Odin in Texas, the visitor had requested him to report in May 1841 to the Barrens, to perfect arrangements for the Texan mission. Father Odin accordingly reached New Orleans, was most kindly received by Bishop Blanc, who, after scolding the good missionary for appearing almost in rags, handed him bulls, by which he was appointed coadjutor bishop of Detroit, and insisted on keeping him until he could consecrate him. Father Odin declared that he could not take any step without first consulting the visitor. He then started, and on the night of 5 May, gave his bulls and urgent letters from Cardinal Fransoni to Father Timon, leaving the subject to his decision. The visitor said, “No, Odin, I beg of you to say the mass tomorrow morning for my intention, that God may guide me to the fitting answer, and I will offer the holy sacrifice for the same intention.” After mass next morning, the visitor gave his decision. “Father Odin, good men can easily be found for the bishopric of Detroit where things are already in a prosperous way; but it would be difficult to find a competent person now to take so poor and difficult a post as yours in Texas. Hence I think it more for the glory of God and for the good of souls, that you send back the bulls, and return to your post.” Father Odin immediately refused the [p. 50] sacred office in Detroit, and returned to Texas. The visitor, without letting Father Odin know his intention, wrote to Rome and to Paris urging the nomination of Father Odin as vicar apos-

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144 For example, at the same period, there were two Cardinals Giustiniani, Alessandro (1778-1843) and Giacomo (1769-1843).

145 The banking firm of Hackney and Benoist is meant. It also managed some accounts of the superior general in Paris. See Bayard, Lone-Star Vanguard, 116.

146 Odin was appointed by a brief dated 15 December 1840. His letter of refusal is dated 7 May 1841. The appointment is in Kenneally, Propaganda, 1:1971, and the refusal in 1:2015.
tolic of Texas, and bishop *in partibus infidelium* [“in pagan lands”]. This was soon effected to the great benefit of that country.\textsuperscript{147}

The visitor was called to Paris in June 1841.\textsuperscript{148} As at his first visit, so now, was he greatly edified by the fervor of the inmates of the motherhouse. He visited, by permission of the superior general [John Baptist Nozo], many houses, taking notes to imitate, as far as possible, the holy works which so much edified him. On 20 November he left the motherhouse to take shipping at Marseilles for New Orleans. Father Étienne, since the worthy and much honored superior general, accompanied him to the diligence [coach]. On 2 December 1841, he with nineteen companions, priests, students, and brothers sailed for America.\textsuperscript{149} Part of the ship had been allotted for their sole use. An altar had been erected, at which, each morning, when the sea was not too rough, mass was said. The missionary quarter was “a convent at sea,” with meditation in common each morning, conferences, classes, the visitor being teacher of English for all. Each Sunday, after mass in the chapel, the visitor preached on deck for the crew and all. Vespers were sung every Sunday, and each night, in the poop, the missionaries would sing some sacred melody and hymn to the Virgin, the “Ave Maris Stella” [“Hail Star of the Sea”], or some other, and the Protestants would gather round, evidently feeling the influence of Catholic devotion.\textsuperscript{150}

The journey over the ocean was a mission. Carolo Testa, a sailor whose brother Cesare Testa lived in Alessandria, Piedmont, had long neglected his religion. The visitor began to instruct him, for he was sickly, and though [p. 51] obliged each day to work, seemed as if he might each day be called to his account. On the fourteenth the visitor was called up at midnight for the poor man. He did what he could for him and left him apparently as well as usual, said mass at 7 A.M., and as he finished it, was called again. He found that the poor man had been struck with death as he had eaten about half his breakfast. There was barely time to repeat the absolution and give extreme unction. To-

\textsuperscript{147} Odin was appointed vicar apostolic of Texas, 16 July 1841. See Bony, “Odin,” 61:239.

\textsuperscript{148} Timon took part in the sexennial assembly, 27-31 July, 1841, held in Paris.

\textsuperscript{149} Timon gives the names of twenty-four recruits for the American province in a letter, Timon to Nozo, 25 November 1841, from Marseilles, AUND.

\textsuperscript{150} It was standard procedure on vessels with Catholic crews to gather at sunset and sing a hymn to Mary. An unscientific but widespread explanation of her Hebrew name, Miriam, was “light [or star] of the sea.” This made any prayerful appeal to her at sea especially appropriate.
wards evening the missionaries saw, for the first time, the sad spectacle of “a burial at sea,” rendered however something more consoling by all the sacred rites of the Church.\footnote{Perhaps drawing from his own imagination, Deuther adds the following: “The body was enclosed in a coarse sack, the opening of which was sewed together, and the whole placed upon a large plank. This plank was then mournfully raised by the sailor crew, carried to the side of the vessel, and as it was raised from a horizontal to an inclined position, with the feet foremost, down went the body into the depths of the ocean. In an instant, all traces of the grace were obliterated, and poor Carolo Testa consigned to his watery tomb.” (Deuther, Life, 87.)}

1842

The missionary band reached New Orleans 17 January 1842. Bishop Blanc received most kindly the little colony, and they were soon placed in different houses of the Congregation, where they continued with zeal and fervor, \textit{the hard and meritorious penance of learning English}. The bishops of Cincinnati [John Baptist Purcell] and of Louisville [Benedict Joseph Flaget], of course Philadelphia [Francis Patrick Kenrick], and of New York [John Joseph Hughes] urged the visitor to take charge of their respective seminaries; and by the advice of his council, he did so.\footnote{The data on these seminaries are summarized in Stafford Poole, “Ad Cleri Disciplinam: The Vincentian Seminary Apostolate in the United States,” in American Vincentians, 115-25.} They continued under charge of the Lazarists for a few years, with happy results for the students. That of New York was discontinued under the form it had assumed as a seminary separate from college, and again reunited to the college. That of Bardstown in Kentucky was suppressed. From that of Cincinnati, the superior general ordered the priests away because they were not duly furnished.\footnote{This letter is no longer extant, if it ever existed. Timon’s explanation does not square with the account in Poole, Ibid., 124-25, nor with Timon’s own correspondence. His further explanations below demonstrate some conflict in his approach to the seminary and bishop of Cincinnati.} That of Philadelphia was given up by the Lazarists when its superior, Rev. Thaddeus Amat, was named bishop of Monterey in California.\footnote{Timon has confused the dates somewhat. Amat was named bishop, 29 July 1853. The official day of departure of the community was 3 July 1853, according to an unpaged record book, “Catalogus seminaristarum,” in the Archives of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.} The bishops of Philadelphia and Cincinnati were greatly grieved at the departure of the missionaries. The seminary of Vincennes, and
other seminaries were afterwards offered [p. 52] to the Lazarists, but they declined to take them.155

During these years the visitor and others of his Congregation had given many missions in Philadelphia, and other cities, and in many country places, and also many retreats for the clergy, and for religious houses in different dioceses.156

Conclusion

On 5 September 1847, Father Timon received his bulls as bishop of Buffalo, a new see just erected.157 The nomination surprised him much, as no one had yet thought of that. He refused to take them from the archbishop of Saint Louis, but after consulting his councilors, other clergymen advised him to accept, it being then generally known not that he was named for Buffalo, but that he was named coadjutor of the venerable Bishop Flaget, and also successor of the bishop of Vincennes [Célestin de la Hailandière]. Both nominations were at Rome. Both were then, in a human view, far preferable to Buffalo; hence his own brethren of the Congregation advised him to accept, since his refusal would, it seemed, only be the rejecting a poor mission in order soon to

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155 The other seminaries offered in this period (Mobile, Nashville, Pittsburgh, Vincennes, Emmitsburg) are described in Poole, Ibid., 125.

156 For reasons not known, Timon has omitted much of the information from nearly five years, 1843-1847. His surviving correspondence shows that he spent much of that time managing the province’s numerous seminaries. As the following note shows, Timon was also involved in more serious matters concerning the future of the Congregation. “In 1842, Father Timon was implicated, although despite himself, in a grave matter which seriously interested the future of the Congregation. That year, Bishop Garibaldi, the internuncio in Paris, received an order from the cardinal prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars to negotiate with Guizot [the minister of foreign affairs, and a Protestant] that the pope had nominated the new superior general of the Lazarists, and that he could choose Father Timon, the provincial of the United States, with the promise, however, that he would reside at Paris; secrecy was demanded of François Guizot on this development. Since others who had recourse to the pope assured him that the changes called for were asked by the province of the United States, Father Timon was consulted by Father [Marc-Antoine] Poussou, at that time vicar general of the Congregation. He responded that this affirmation was not true, and that his province, on the contrary, deplored the least change to be made to the constitutions. As a result of this declaration, the pope authorized the convocation of the general assembly, which should elect a superior general in conformity with the constitutions, and it elected Father Étienne on August 4, 1843.” (From “Martyrologie de la Congrégation de la Mission,” in the Archives of the Congregation of the Mission, Paris, 371-372, in Casier 86.) On the subject of ongoing French-Italian antagonisms, see Stafford Poole, A History of the Congregation of the Mission. 1625-1843 (Santa Barbara, Ca., 1973), 410-11.

157 He was nominated 23 April 1847. His acceptance is dated 15 September 1847 (Kenneally, Propaganda, 2:207).
Another motive, which the visitor kept in his own bosom, added strength to those councils. For some time he had been soliciting to be removed from office. Several members, almost all of whom since left the Congregation, had greatly misrepresented affairs to the motherhouse. Among other consequences, the priests of the Congregation were ordered from the seminary of Cincinnati against the wishes of the visitor, who however had to keep silent and bear the reproaches of his former friend, the bishop of that diocese. It seemed that a change was needed, and that, as it could not be done in the way he had wished, it was well to let it be done in the way that providence decreed.

He found the Congregation scattered, discontented, almost disbanded, without property but with heavy debts. He left them numerous, and, unless as to what is hinted, possessing large property quite unencumbered, and with less debt than at his commencement. When he assumed the government, and for some years before, there had been no repetition on Sundays, no office of the little hours of the day, no lecture for brothers on Sundays and holidays, no humiliation, no asking to be warned in chapter, no missions, no cases of conscience. All this, whilst he was superior at the Barrens, was changed.

After his retreat, the visitor took several days to make deeds and conveyances of property held in his name; after which he found himself perhaps the poorest priest in the Church, without one dollar in money, and with a little trunk not half full of clothes, not indeed enough to keep him warm, as all his earthly possessions. He applied to the bishop of Saint Louis, requesting a loan of money enough to bring him to his destination. It was readily promised for the next day. In the interim some friends learned of his approaching departure and poverty, and in the course of the day, they handed him a purse of two thousand francs and a trunk full of clothing. He started rejoicing in the holy Providence that provides for the poor of Christ.

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158 “Repetition” involved sharing in common the results of one’s mental prayer; “humiliation” was the custom of self-accusation in chapter of faults against the rule; “cases of conscience” were generic moral cases which a priest might encounter in confession, and which were proposed for solution in a group as a means of continuing education.
Just let Him to His Will in you and in him, and await it in all your exercises. All you need to do is to devote yourself entirely to God. Oh! How little it take to be very holy: to do the Will of God in all things.

(Saint Vincent de Paul, letter 437, To Saint Louise, Between 1638 and 1650)